

ITEM FOR ACTION

ESTABLISHMENT AND NAMING OF ENDOWED CHAIR [OKEY], COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES, BERKELEY CAMPUS

The Chancellor recommends to the President that the establishment of an endowed chair, Department of Nutritional Sciences and Toxicology, College of Natural Resources, Berkeley campus, be approved, and that the chair be named ***The Ruth Okey Chair in Nutritional Science and Toxicology***, contingent on establishment of an endowment of \$1,000,000 with the University of California, Berkeley Foundation, to be matched with \$1,000,000 under the Hewlett Foundation Chair Challenge, for support of the chair and contingent on a binding commitment from the Foundation that it will distribute to The Regents the payout from the chair endowment held and invested by the Foundation.

BACKGROUND

The proposed *The Ruth Okey Chair in Nutritional Science and Toxicology* would be supported by an endowment of \$2,000,000 to be held and invested by the University of California, Berkeley Foundation (UCBF). In July 2011, the UCBF received a pledge in the amount of \$1,000,000 from Ms. Li-chiang Chu to establish the proposed chair, which would be matched with \$1,000,000 through the Hewlett Foundation

Chair Challenge. As of January 1, 2014, the UCBF has received pledge payments in the amount of \$402,045.23, plus \$181,506.00 matched by the Hewlett Foundation. The remaining pledge balance of \$597,954.77 is to be received before December 31, 2016.

The honoree, Ruth Okey was born in Ohio in 1893 and grew up in its northeastern hills on a farm which had been in the family for a century. She attended Monmouth College, in Monmouth, Ohio, and graduated with a major in chemistry and another major in German. She was told "no woman could make a living as a chemist," a dogma that she disproved. She entered graduate school at the University of Illinois, and held a teaching assistantship in chemistry and qualitative analysis for two years. She was awarded her Ph.D. in 1918 for research on the organic chemistry of plant glycosides.

In 1919, she came to Berkeley as assistant professor in the new Department of Household Science. Her research budget of \$250 a year "was considered extremely generous." The teaching load was heavy and it was rather a surprise to have a class of ex-army nurses, who were preparing for a B.S. in public health nursing, rise and stand at attention when she met the class for her first lecture.

In June 1961, Professor Okey retired from Berkeley and in 1962, she received the Borden Award in Human Nutrition. She was also a Fellow

of the American Institute of Nutrition, a member of the American Society of Biological Chemists, and a 50-year member of the American Chemical Society and a pioneer in the chemistry of blood lipids. She passed away in 1987.

Prior to her retirement, donor Li-chiang Chu was a budget manager at Alza Corporation, where she worked for 25 years. She was born on July 28, 1941 in Hangchow, China. Her affiliation with UC Berkeley began early in her life. Ms. Chu received her B.A. in Biochemistry in 1964 and went on to receive her M.S. in Nutrition in 1967 from the College of Natural Resources. While studying to get her masters, Ms. Chu was mentored by Professor Mary Ann Williams of the Department of Nutritional Science and Toxicology (NST). Ms. Chu loved her work and research in the department and after graduation she kept in contact with colleagues and friends from Cal, particularly Professor Williams. In 2005, Ms. Chu was asked to participate in a feasibility study for the renovation of Morgan Hall - the primary building for CNR's Nutrition Program - and the building where Ms. Chu had completed her studies while at Berkeley. As a result of this request, Ms. Chu generously stepped forward and offered to support the capital campaign with a lead gift. She is currently a member of the UC Berkeley Board of Trustees and has donated over two million dollars to the Berkeley campus. She continues to be an ardent supporter of the Nutritional

Science and Toxicology Program at the campus as illustrated by her commitment to create this new chair in honor of Professor Okey.

The Ruth Okey Chair in Nutritional Science and Toxicology would support a prominent scholar in the Department of Nutritional Sciences and Toxicology in the College of Natural Resources at the University of California, Berkeley. The teaching and research of the Ruth Okey Chair holder will focus on the connection between diet, genetics, and human health.

Payout from the chair endowment would be transferred to The Regents, to be made available annually to support the chair fund. At least 50 percent of the annual payout would be used to support faculty compensation, and the remainder would be used to support graduate students and to provide discretionary research funds for the chair holder, in accordance with the gift instrument, campus guidelines and University policy. Chair appointments are determined by campus guidelines.

In keeping with University policy, the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate has been consulted regarding the establishment of this chair.