









From left are Mehran Mazari, director of the Sikand SITI Center; Raphael Sonenshein, executive director of the Pat Brown Institute; Emily Allen, dean of the College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology; Mark Sikand, president of Sikand Engineering Associates; Lauren Faber O'Connor, chief sustainability officer for the city of Los Angeles; Mark Pestrella, director of Los Angeles County Public Works; and Cris Liban, executive officer of environmental compliance and sustainability for LA Metro. Photo by Robert Huskey/Cal State LA.

Cal State LA opens Sikand SITI Center with inaugural symposium on urban sustainability

Cal State LA recently marked the opening of a new center on urban sustainability with a symposium that explored key issues in the field.

The new Sikand Center for Sustainable and Intelligent Infrastructure (Sikand SITI Center) was established through a five-year, \$1.25 million gift from The Sikand Foundation to the university's College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology.

Cal State LA President William A. Covino said the gift and the center will expand the university's research in urban sustainability and its leadership in the field.

"We are honored to continue our partnership with The Sikand Foundation," Mr. Covino said during the inaugural Symposium on Urban Sustainability. "I look forward to the great work that this center will do."

The center's kickoff event brought together researchers, policymakers, students, and industry leaders. The participants discussed current and future urban sustainability policy, practices, and research.

With the launch of the center, The Sikand Foundation continues the legacy of Gunjit Sikand, an entrepreneur and professor who taught in Cal State LA's Department of Civil Engineering for more than two decades. Mr. Sikand valued the university's role in providing first-gen-

eration college students an outstanding education. Through philanthropic gifts, he supported that work.

In tribute to Mr. Sikand, who passed away in 2014, The Sikand Foundation launched the Gunjit S. Sikand Faculty Endowment for Research in Urban Sustainability at Cal State LA in 2015. The Sikand SITI Center will be responsible for administering the faculty endowment, which supports advanced technical research while educating the next generation of sustainability leaders.

Mark Sikand, who is president of Sikand Engineering Associates and the son of Gunjit Sikand, spoke on behalf of the Sikand family and their foundation: "Our vision now is to create a center that provides opportunities for greater numbers of faculty and students to engage in urban sustainability research. This research will spark innovation that enables us to live, work, and play in more sustainable ways."

The new center's director will be Mehran Mazari, assistant professor of civil engineering at Cal State LA. Designed as an incubator for successful sustainable solutions, it will support faculty and students in promoting, advancing, and implementing multidisciplinary research, education, and professional development in urban sustainability.

