

BREN HALL GRAND OPENING

Donald Bren School of Environmental Science & Management

University of California Santa Barbara

April 19, 2002

Key note address by Kermit the Frog

INTRODUCTION by Dean Dennis Aigner:

Since Donald Bren Hall is a state-of-the-art "green building," we thought it would be appropriate to invite the world's ultimate authority on green to speak to us today. And while we have many distinguished scientists and researchers here today, I think we can all agree that on the subject of green, this next speaker stands head-and-shoulders above us all. Ladies and gentleman, it is my pleasure to introduce that internationally recognized environmentalist, entertainer and amphibian, Kermit the Frog.

KERMIT THE FROG

Hi ho! Thank you. And thank you Dean Aigner for that introduction. When you're only a foot-and-a-half tall, you don't usually get to stand head and shoulders above anyone. At least not without a few dozen recycled telephone books under you. Anyone who needs a phone number, see me after the ceremony.

Chancellor Yang, Dean Aigner, distinguished faculty, students and guests, it's an honor to be here today. Thank you for inviting me. Now some of you out there might be wondering why I was invited to speak to you. To tell you the truth, I was a little puzzled, too.

I mean, you folks have all gone to college and earned advanced degrees in science and management. I've been going to "Sesame Street" for 33 years, and I'm still working on numbers and letters.

Then I thought: well maybe you invited me because I'm green. But, late Saturday night I was down at Dargan's and I saw quite a few underclassmen who were looking a lot greener than me. Reminded me of my tadpole days, back when I dropped my tail.

But I think I finally figured out why I'm here: It's because I'm a talking frog. As the scientists among you know, the subspecies *Chit-chattius Amphibious* is a very rare breed. Most of us are hunted down by pigs. Trust me, it is not a pretty sight.

Why is it important to hear from a talking frog? Well, y'see, the way I understand it: frogs are what they call a "bellwether" species. That means when something happens to us it's a sign that things are changing in the environment. So when frogs are dying off or being born with strange mutations, it's not just a bad day for amphibians; it's a wake-up call for everyone.

And that's why I'm here today, to speak on behalf of frogs and all the other animals who are lower than you on the food chain. Our message is simple.....Help!

Yup, that's it. We need your help.

Most of all, we appreciate the fact that many of you here have dedicated your lives to helping us. You work tirelessly to preserve and protect the environment. You've helped to make this a healthier world—one that's safe for humans, amphibians, and millions of other species - even pigs.

You also help to educate future generations, so that they can make even greater efforts to clean up the planet and keep it clean. And you're teaching them the most important lesson of all: that each of us can make a difference.

This new building is part of all that. It's an environmental landmark that will teach others that there are better ways to use resources and share the planet. It's a place that....well, between you

and me, it's a place that makes it a lot easier being green. I really like it here. In fact, I'm thinking of moving in. I could work the information desk. I'm already set with phone numbers.

From all of us non-humans, thank you for listening to our message, thank you for the great work you continue to do, and thanks for building a place like this that can make such a big difference for generations to come. You all deserve a cheer. Yaaaaay!

Thank you.

Now, I'd like to introduce someone who is a friend to frogs and humans alike. Someone who knows when you're really green, and not just out for a night on the town. My good friend, president and CEO of the United States Green Building Council, Christine Ervin!