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UCI HIRES THREE EXPERTS IN ABRUPT CLIMATE CHANGE

By Gary Robbins

UC Irvine -- which is already home to such well-known climate scientists as Nobel laureate Sherry Rowland and former Bush administration advisor Michael Prather -- has hired three assistant professors who specialize in abrupt climate change.

"This group ... was hired as part of a 'cluster of excellence,'" says Susan Trumbore, chair of the Department of Earth System Science, where the new scholars will hold their appointments.

The department began as a program under Ralph Cicerone, the current president of the National Academy of Sciences. ESS' full and joint faculty include Rowland, Prather, Trumbore (a leading figure on carbon), and Charles Zender, who recently published a paper in Science that says that up to one-third of warming the Arctic could be caused by "dirty snow," or snow tinged with soot and other pollutants.

The three new climate experts are Claudia Pasquero, Kathleen Johnson and Todd Dupont.

Trumbore provided the following mini-bios:

Pasquero is an oceanographer who studies how the oceans act to influence the distribution of energy and therefore climate at the global scale. The mechanism she studies include tropical cyclones (i.e. hurricanes and typhoons), and the deep overturning circulation, including how these might be altered by and participate in climate change.

Dr. Pasquero's research combines data analysis, theoretical models, and numerical models of the ocean-atmosphere system. Dr. Pasquero's PhD is from Politecnico di Torino, Italy, and she has did research at the Weitzman Institute, UCLA and Caltech prior to joining UCI.

Johnson is a geologist who studies abrupt changes in past climates as recorded in cave (speleothem) deposits. Her current research uses cave deposits from China to
study abrupt changes in the Asian Monsoon. Prof. Johnson's PhD is from UC Berkeley and she comes to us from Oxford, where she was a Lecturer in Earth Science.

Dupont studies the behavior of ice streams and ice shelves, in particular how fast large ice sheets like those in Greenland will respond to climate warming, and the consequences for future sea level rise. His PhD is from Penn State University.