UC Irvine alum receives 2023 MacArthur “genius grant”

A. Park Williams to use funding to study climate change and its connection to droughts, wildfires.

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A. Park Williams received his bachelor of science degree in Earth and environmental sciences from UC Irvine in 2003.

Picture Credit:
Courtesy of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

UC Irvine alumnus A. Park Williams has been named a 2023 MacArthur Fellow by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Williams will receive a what is known as a “genius grant” for his research on climate change and its connection to terrestrial events like droughts and wildfires. It is considered among the most prestigious fellowship programs in the world. While there are no quotas or limits, typically 20 to 30 Fellows are selected each year. Since 1981, 1061 people have been named MacArthur Fellows.

The MacArthur Fellowship is a $800,000, no-strings-attached award to extraordinarily talented and creative individuals as an investment in their potential. The MacArthur Fellows Program is intended to encourage people of outstanding talent to pursue their own creative, intellectual and professional inclinations. Recipients may be writers, scientists, artists, social scientists, humanists, teachers, entrepreneurs, or those in other fields, with or without institutional affiliations. They may use their fellowship to advance their expertise, engage in bold new work, or, if they wish, to change fields or alter the direction of their careers.

Williams received his bachelor of science degree in Earth and environmental sciences from UC Irvine in 2003. He currently is an associate professor of geography at UCLA who as a hydroclimatologistuncovers new insights into how climate change influences drought, wildfires and tree mortality.

Richard Schoen, Distinguished Professor of mathematics at UC Irvine, received a MacArthur Fellowship in 1983.

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