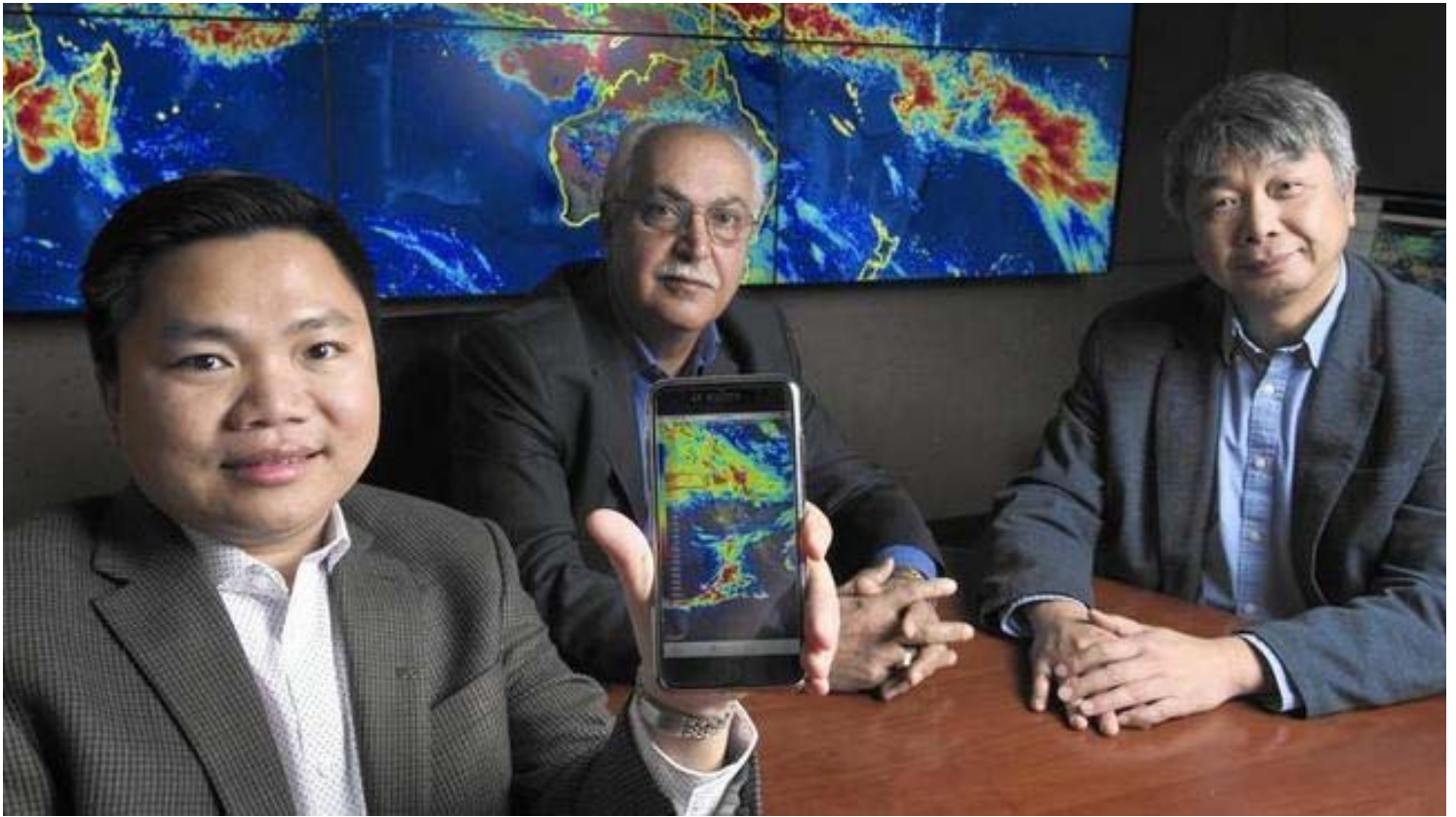


How much rain did we get? Ask the iRain app, created at UC Irvine



Phu Nguyen, from left, Soroosh Sorooshian and Kuo-lin Hsu of UC Irvine present the iRain mobile app. (UC Irvine)



By **Alex Chan**

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With forecasters predicting the most powerful storm in a decade in Northern California this weekend — and more precipitation likely throughout the state in the coming days — UC Irvine engineers are hoping researchers, hydrologists and weather enthusiasts will make the most of their iRain mobile app.

Launched in November, the free app displays animations of rainfall amounts around the world. Users can zoom in on local areas and choose specific time periods to track.

Users also can submit reports on rain and snow in their areas to the application, which is available for iPhones and Android devices.

The concept was developed by Phu Nguyen, an assistant adjunct professor of civil and environmental engineering.

He started working on the application years ago as a UCI graduate student, along with civil and environmental engineering professor Kuo-lin Hsu and Soroosh Sorooshian, director of the university's Center for Hydrometeorology and Remote Sensing.

Using an algorithm created by Hsu, the iRain app gets information on rainfall around the planet by processing data from orbiting satellites.

"Using the app to track down how much rainfall there is and the movement of the rainfall is useful for everyone, particularly disaster managers," Hsu said.

"This has provided an alternative," Sorooshian said. "Usually, rainfall info is collected through gauges, or some countries have radar systems. But many of the countries' resources are lacking, so they don't necessarily have good comprehensive coverage."

Though the app isn't quite able to provide real-time updates, Hsu said it has reduced the wait for data retrieval, processing and distribution to about an hour.

Many of the app's capabilities can be viewed and used at the [iRain website](#).

"As far as I know," Nguyen said in a statement, "we're the only institution offering such a device."

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