

WITH U • FOR U

DFA Employee Newsletter



A message from
Chief Financial Officer &
Vice Chancellor, Mary Lou D. Ortiz

**Managers/Supervisors: Please share this email with DFA campus temporary and contract employees. For those who do not have regular access to emails/laptops/PCs, please print and share this email accordingly.*

Dear DFA employees,

UC Irvine has once again been recognized among the top public universities in the nation, ranking ninth in U.S. *News & World Report's* 2024-25 "[Best Colleges](#)" list. This is the 10th consecutive year UCI has secured a spot in the top 10. Additionally, our overall ranking of 33rd matches the highest position the university has ever achieved, a distinction we also earned in 2019 and last year. What an incredible achievement for our university!

This week, we also welcome new and returning students, faculty, and staff back to campus. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of you for your hard work in preparing the campus for the new academic year.

Earlier this month, I hosted a day-long DFA cabinet meeting focused on aligning our strategy with our operating plans and budgets. Starting in October 2024 and continuing through April 2025, departments will be asked to review and update their strategic goals to align with our rolling five-year plan. This will involve refining current initiatives and thoughtfully evaluating and adjusting goals as needed. I will also be conducting a second round of strategy roadshows from October through the end of the year.

I encourage everyone to familiarize themselves with [DFA's strategic plan](#), which includes [ten strategic priorities](#) and [seven divisional goals](#) aligned with [UC Irvine's four strategic pillars](#). Our commitment to these goals strengthens our organizational performance and fosters a culture of innovation, process improvement, adaptability, and resilience. For us to succeed, we need to stay aligned with our goals and consistently work toward them. I trust in everyone's contributions to make this happen.

Additionally, the Chancellor will be hosting a town hall on October 30. Stay tuned for more information on how to register. In light of this event and the upcoming strategy roadshows, we have decided to cancel the DFA town hall previously scheduled for October 23. Department contacts will update their respective calendar invites accordingly.

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 Employee Profiles

 New Hires

Featured Events

Sat., 10/05 | UCI Aldrich Park
[UCI Anti-Cancer Challenge](#)

Wed., 10/23 | 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
[Data Disposal Day](#)
Located in parking lot 12A near the Natural Sciences buildings.

CANCELED
~~**Wed., 10/23 | 10-11 a.m.**~~
[DFA Virtual Town Hall](#)

Wed., 10/30 | TBD
UC Irvine Town Hall

As always, please feel free to share your comments and suggestions by sending an email to WithUForU@uci.edu.

Sincerely,

Mary Lou D. Ortiz
Chief Financial Officer
Vice Chancellor, Finance & Administration



DFA's Vision, Mission, and Values

We are **With U • For U**. We are proud to support the UC Irvine community. Our vision, mission, and values set our direction, guide our decisions, and foster a shared culture. [Learn more.](#)



DFA-HR Corner

A new tool, provided by central HR, is now available as part of UC Irvine's ongoing commitment to modernizing talent acquisition and enhancing the recruitment experience. The [Talent Connect](#) system, powered by iCIMS, is a user-friendly applicant tracking system designed to streamline hiring processes and improve candidate engagement.

In addition to this system upgrade, UC Irvine has revamped its main [career page](#), offering enhanced navigation and new resources for job seekers and hiring teams alike.

Please visit the [Talent Connect Resource Page for Hiring Teams](#) for more information, and reach out to [DFA-HR](#) with any questions or further assistance.

Article provided by DFA-HR

Continuous Improvement Tools and Templates: Impact Effort Matrix

DFA's Program Development and Execution (PDE) [website](#) features a variety of tools and templates in the areas of process improvement, project management, and change management to support staff in their process improvement projects and efforts.

Tool Spotlight: Impact Effort Matrix

Process improvement initiatives often produce a multitude of great ideas. The [Impact Effort Matrix](#) is a tool which can help identify the most impactful ideas that require the least amount of effort, making it easier to prioritize which solutions to pursue. It involves making a list of the available process improvement ideas and ranking them based on the impact to solve the root cause and the effort needed for implementation. [Learn more](#) about the Impact Effort Matrix and other tools for selecting and testing solutions.

Article provided by DFA Program Development & Execution



Budget Office Spotlight

The Budget Office is responsible for stewardship and oversight of the campus's \$3.3B operating and \$2.3B capital budgets. Significant projects include leading and supporting the transition to a new mission-based budget model* and implementing a multi-year financial stability plan.

Additional activities over the past year include:

- Launched a multi-year planning process to improve predictability, transparency, and the alignment of resources with strategic goals.
- Initiated a bi-weekly [Budget Office Open Forum](#) to increase engagement with financial managers.
- Developed financial reports to improve data and tools in support of informed decision-making needs.

- Implemented the Common Fund Initiative (CFI) to alleviate the administrative burden on units by reducing fund complexity.
- Improved the processes for reviewing new academic programs and Interlocation Transfer of Funds (ITF).
- Started work on a commitment tracking tool to improve management of central obligations.

*[UCI Pillar 4 & DFA Strategic Priority D](#)

Article provided by UC Irvine Budget Office



National Preparedness Month

[National Preparedness Month](#) emphasizes the importance of readiness for disasters. This year's theme, "[Start a Conversation](#)," encourages personal and community preparedness by talking about the disasters or emergencies you could face. To enhance your safety at UCI, consider these steps:

- [Know Your Zone](#): Know what evacuation zone you live and/or work in to help expedite your response time during emergencies.
- [Assembly Areas](#): Be familiar with the assembly area locations around the facilities you frequent or know where you can access this information during emergency that require evacuation.
- [Emergency Response Procedures](#): Learn the specific emergency response procedures for potential campus hazards.
- [zotALERT](#): Sign up to receive text messages regarding emergencies happening on campus and make sure your profile remains updated.
- [Build A Kit](#): Assemble emergency supplies tailored to your needs, with a 25% discount available from [Ready America's](#) webpage.

Article provided by UC Irvine Emergency Management



Align Performance Program

In August 2024, UCI launched a new performance program for non-represented staff. Align replaces ACHIEVE, and has been designed with significant input from staff and leaders across the organization. Align is



Beat the Heat

As temperatures rise, stay cool and be prepared while working in hot or humid conditions. Stay hydrated when you are working outside. If at any time you are experiencing minor to moderate symptoms of

purposeful, flexible, and simple, and reflects recent shifts in workforce needs while focusing attention and effort in areas of strategic and operational priority. Visit the [Align](#) for more information.

heat illness, contact your manager or supervisor.

Make sure to drink enough water throughout the day. Keeping your body hydrated can help you to feel better and reduce your risk for dehydration.

Check out UC Irvine's [Heat Illness Prevention Program](#).



2024 Procurement Supplier Showcase

The 2024 Procurement Services Supplier Showcase was a great success, highlighting UC Irvine's commitment to fostering strong relationships with service providers, and small and diverse businesses. The event featured 33 sponsors, including four platinum sponsors, five gold sponsors, and 24 silver and small business sponsors, offering a varied range of products and services.

Over 350 campus staff from various functional areas attended, creating valuable networking opportunities. Notable guests included representatives from UCOP Systemwide Procurement, the UCI Passport Office, and UCI The Hill Bookstore, all of whom had dedicated booths. This event continues to be a pivotal platform for collaboration, enabling departments to connect directly with suppliers, explore new solutions, and streamline procurement processes. The Supplier Showcase underscores the importance of strategic partnerships in driving efficiency and innovation within UCI.

Article provided by UC Irvine Procurement Services



DFA Information Security Incident Response Plan



Earlier this year, [UC President Drake outlined](#) several cybersecurity requirements to be met by May 2025, including timely escalation of cybersecurity incident response by all units in alignment with UC standards.

To support this goal, DFA IT has documented the [DFA Information Security Incident Response Plan](#), ensuring our staff are well-prepared to detect, react to, and recover from information security incidents. The plan aligns with OIT security guidelines and includes clear roles and responsibilities.

(Click image to enlarge)

Plan Details:

STAGE 1: Detection and Reporting - main action is to contact [OIT Helpdesk](#) and send an email to security@uci.edu.

STAGE 2: Containment, Eradication, and Recovery - main action is to follow specific guidance from OIT security to recover from incident.

STAGE 3: Incident Closure and Follow-up - main action is review OIT incident report and implement any corrective actions.

Stay informed and vigilant to protect our information assets. For more details, please refer to the [full plan document](#).

Article provided by DFA Program Development & Execution



Helping Hands Needs YOU!!! The UCI Tradition of Helping Others is Still Going Strong!

The tradition of community service runs strong in the Anteater culture. A great example is Staff Assembly's annual [UCI Staff Holiday Helping Hands Program](#)! This was created over 20 years ago to anonymously match staff families in need of assistance getting through the winter holiday season with those able to help. It's the UCI staff version of paying it forward with acts of kindness.

Since its inception, the program has grown immensely. What began with just 17 sponsored families has now blossomed to an incredible 160! One of the most rewarding experiences is seeing staff members who were once recipients come back as sponsors, giving back and continuing the cycle of kindness.

On average, the program sees around 60 sponsors each year—this is where **Helping Hands needs YOU!** Look for the email around October 1 and sign up to make a difference. You can sponsor a small family yourself, join with co-workers to adopt a couple of medium-sized families, or have your department pool resources to adopt larger families. Together, we can make this season brighter for our fellow Anteaters in need.

Spotlight on Stephanie-Jean Hinojosa

A key figure behind the success of the Helping Hands Program is Stephanie-Jean Hinojosa from DFA. Stephanie-Jean has been an integral part of the program for over 20 years, playing a pivotal role in its coordination and growth. Her dedication to UCI's tradition of giving back is inspiring, helping ensure that more families benefit from the kindness and generosity of our community each year.

Article provided by DFA Program Development & Execution



Sustainability Corner: UC Sustainability Policy

The [UC Sustainability Policy](#) has set a 90% diversion rate for solid waste from each campus. UC Irvine is dedicated to becoming a zero-waste campus. Waste is a cultural issue that everyone can help change. Remember, "reduce, reuse, recycle" emphasizes *reducing first*. Cutting back on purchases and usage minimizes waste and conserves resources. [Learn more!](#)



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: Understanding Generational Bias

DFA DEI Conversation Engagements continue in September and October with the topic of [Understanding Generational Bias](#), designed to increase our awareness of the expectations and communication styles of different generations of employees as a first step to solving potential challenges, avoiding generational conflict, and fostering generational collaboration. Visit [DFA's DEI Toolkit](#) for more resources to enhance your understanding about various diversity and inclusion topics.

DFA EMPLOYEE PROFILES



Rick Ternet
Assistant Director of Grounds Services, Facilities Management

I have been at UC Irvine for 17 years and have held my current position for the past four months. As the assistant director of Grounds Services for FM, I oversee a vital role in managing the extensive outdoor spaces, encompassing the university campus core. UC Irvine boasts a sprawling campus adorned with over 24,000 trees, covering 1,425 acres of grounds. I facilitate environmentally responsible sustainability practices in land management and stewardship for grounds, irrigation, integrated pest management, urban forestry, and exterior construction. These outdoor areas serve not only as a picturesque backdrop for academic pursuits but also as vital ecosystems supporting biodiversity and enhancing the well-being of the campus community. Responsible land stewardship can only be accomplished through the coordinated efforts of our talented grounds staff members and partners.

What has surprised you most about working in your department or UCI? The grounds staff members are very eager to assist in the event of an emergency. Through voluntary efforts, our team members are willing to help as needed, to provide a safe environment for our students, staff and visitors to the campus.

What do you find the most challenging at UCI/department? I'm sure most departments would agree...budgets. Budgets are challenging to any operation. It is increasingly difficult to provide the best services on a limited budget. Although, we have found ways to stretch the budget and increase our sustainability program at the same time. For instance, we have started a program where we re-use our wood chips from tree trimming operations for mulching purposes, etc.

Who is one colleague that deserves praise and recognition? Why? One colleague who deserves praise is Alfredo Mendez, FM grounds and irrigation superintendent. Alfredo has been a rock with FM grounds since landscape maintenance was in-sourced in 2007, although Alfredo has been on campus managing the grounds since 1984. His straight forth, honest approach to work and his ability to help staff is always genuine and very consistent. He shares his purpose and inspires others, while remaining humble and confident. He is always willing to learn something new, and he remains flexible to the many changes throughout our daily operations. He is a valuable asset to the grounds team and we are happy that he made UC Irvine his home.

Favorite travel spot? The mountain...anywhere in nature with trees, lakes and blue skies.

Before your time at UCI, what was your most interesting or oddest job? I spent several winters working in a Sawmill alongside the Amish. We cutdown trees for specialized projects, seasoned the wood, cut, graded and sorted tree slabs into linear boards. It was very demanding and hard work, in a cold environment for a minimum wage. It was a great learning environment for me and diversity. To be around different people, with such a unique way of doing things without electricity and a zest for life.

People would be surprised if they knew: It might surprise some that I like to drive motorcycles and quads. The freedom that driving a motorcycle creates while being on high alert at the same time...is actually calming to me. A time for processing ideas. It provides a time to think and gather your thoughts, by yourself, in a unique way.

Motto or Personal Mantra: "This too shall pass." It reflects the temporary nature of the human condition, that neither the negative nor the positive moments in life ever indefinitely last. Live in the moment and enjoy each day.



Mike Bathke
Director, Internal Audit Services

I have been at UC Irvine for 21 years and in my current position for the last 12 years. I lead a staff of professional auditors and am responsible for developing and implementing an effective internal audit function that provides independent and objective assurance, consulting, and investigation services designed to add value and improve UC Irvine and UCI Health operations.

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most? The variety of the projects and industries/operations we review make the job challenging but enjoyable and exciting. I love my job!

Who is one colleague that deserves praise and recognition? Why? All of them. I am fortunate to work with such an experienced, talented, and highly educated group of colleagues, most that have advanced degrees and licenses/certifications (certified public accountants, certified internal auditors, certified fraud examiners, etc.).

Favorite travel spot? The Bahamas.

If you were stuck on an island, what three things would you bring? A seaplane, seaplane pilot, and enough fuel get me home ASAP (I would not do well stuck on an island).

People would be surprised if they knew: I was the quarterback and placekicker on the Orange Lutheran High School football team.



Stephanny Gonzalez de Paz
Subpoena Coordinator, Risk Services

I worked three years as a student-employee for UCI Housing and the Langson Library and almost two years with Risk Services! I facilitate the record collection and production process for subpoenas, as well as insure fine art items and art exhibits around campus and [UCI Langson Institute and Museum of California Art](#) (check out the museum!). I also collaborate on process improvements for Risk Services and manage/assign ServiceNow tickets for Risk Services.

How has UCI/department helped you in your career development? Being part of Risk Services exposed me to a new layer of intricacies of higher education that contribute to my previous student affairs experience. I am able to help the campus with niche items and am not afraid to troubleshoot. I have wonderful risk colleagues who share their expertise with me and encourage my professional development on the daily.

What piece of advice would you give to a new employee? Adjust one day at a time and ask questions, people are graciously patient and willing to help.

After a long day at work, what do you look forward to the most? I look forward to walking with my two doggies, Puzzle and Enzo. I sometimes let them decide which route to take and they love it 😊 .

Before your time at UCI, what was your most interesting or oddest job? I became a dental assistant during my senior year of high school and worked in a few pediatric dental offices as a dental assistant and scheduling coordinator during my summers throughout undergrad!

People would be surprised if they knew: I have watched two demolition derbies at county fairs, and I love them! The last one was at Orange County Fair and I had tons of fun. I highly recommend!

DFA NEW HIRES

DFA new hires hired between July 1 to August 31, 2024.

Capital Planning & Space Management:

- Aarushi Gupta

DFA Program Development & Execution:

- Beatrix Regasz
- Rossana Caro

Environmental Health & Safety:

- Kevin Bass

Facilities Management:

- Aaron Alderfer
- Allan Sveta
- Edric Wong
- Walter Zelaya
- Jeremy Giehll
- William Kroger

Police Department:

- Brett Sua
- John Paul Riganan
- Sharon Kang

Transportation & Distribution Services:

- Gaylene Elam

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