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,

This fall marks an exciting milestone for UC Irvine as we celebrate 60 years of growth, achievement, and impact. From our early days as a new campus to becoming a top-ranked public university, UC Irvine continues to demonstrate what is possible when innovation, access, and excellence come together.

We are proud that UC Irvine was recently ranked sixth among the nation's public universities by *Forbes*. This recognition highlights not only our outstanding academic outcomes and alumni success, but also our commitment to opportunity for all students—underscored by the fact that 37% of our graduates receive Pell Grants, the highest percentage among the top 25 institutions.

Here in DFA, we continue advancing our own strategic priorities which also help support the university. Two years ago, we launched our strategic plan, and last year we published our first annual report. Since then, we've moved from developing our strategy to where we are now: testing and adapting our approach. For this year's update, we've shifted from a static report to a more dynamic format. You can now explore our progress through an interactive Power BI dashboard on the DFA strategic planning webpage. The dashboard allows you to filter goals by department, strategic priority, status, and overall health—making it easier than ever to see how our work contributes to UC Irvine's mission.

Looking ahead, I encourage you to join us for the upcoming DFA virtual town hall on Tuesday, Oct. 21, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. In addition to divisionwide updates, we'll highlight the growing role of artificial intelligence (AI) in our work. I encourage you to explore UCI's ZotAcademy to learn about the tools already available and consider how they might support your daily work. As you test new ideas, please connect with DFA-IT to ensure alignment and share insights. If you have not received the town hall calendar invite, check with your department head or email WithUForU@uci.edu.

As we celebrate our past and look ahead to the future, I want to thank you for your continued commitment to advancing UC Irvine's

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Tues., Oct. 21 | 11 a.m.-12 p.m.
DFA Virtual Town Hall

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UCI Events

UCI HR | Working Well

mission.

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 Reminders

UCPath Update
UCPath has a new, enhanced security feature that requires users to provide their bank account number linked to their current direct deposit in order to view or make changes to their current direct deposit information.

August Align Extension
The extended grace period for August Align completion is Sept. 30. Once you finalize the August cycle, we encourage you to enter deliverables ahead of your next performance review cycle in March. We are also looking for ways to link individual staff goals to the DFA strategic plan goals. Further guidance will be provided through DFA HR this fall.

Article provided by DFA-HR

Continuous Improvement Focus:
EHS: Digitizing Ladder Safety Inspection Process

DFA's CPI project library features process improvement projects from all DFA departments, including proposed, in progress, and completed.

Environmental Health & Safety recently completed a CPI project to digitize the ladder safety inspection process by labeling each ladder with a scannable QR code that links to the user guide and a mobile-friendly inspection checklist, enabling on-site inspections and tailgate safety reviews from any mobile device. This eliminates the need for paper forms and the associated administrative overhead. The section below provides details on the problem and goal statement, the implemented solution, and the results. For more information or to discuss this project, please contact Daniel Paek.

EHS: Digitizing Ladder Safety Inspection Process

Problem: Ladder inspections were previously conducted using paper forms, which created inefficiencies and made tracking, documentation, and accessibility difficult. Safety resources were not always available on-site in real time. Administrative workload of handling, filing, and maintaining paper records was time-consuming.

Goal: Improve compliance, accessibility and efficiency in portable ladder safety management.

Solution: In May 2025, QR code labels were created that link directly to the UCI Portable Ladder User Guide and a mobile-friendly Google Form inspection checklist covering step ladders, extension ladders, and specialty ladders. The QR code labels are distributed to departments to attach directly to ladders or place in accessible locations so employees can easily complete inspections and access safety guidance on-site via mobile devices.

Result: The project improves ladder safety compliance by making inspections quick, consistent, and easy to complete on-site. Additionally, it streamlines documentation, reduces errors, and eliminates paper forms, saving time and resources while ensuring real-time access to safety tools. The full benefits in compliance and efficiency will be demonstrated once full adoption is achieved and sufficient data is gathered.

Project Contact: Daniel Paek, Environmental Health & Safety

Our goal is to showcase completed projects from various departments which might benefit or inspire others. Please reach out to WithUForU@uci.edu to help us showcase your project.

TAKE CPI ACTION

Incorporate CPI in your daily activities. Identify a bottleneck, own it, and improve it!
View and download the DFA CPI flyer.

Submit Ideas/Projects

Submit information about a [process improvement project or idea in your department](#).

Browse Existing Projects

Explore [DFA's CPI dashboard](#) for current, proposed or recently completed process improvement projects in our division.

Explore DFA's CPI Toolkit

Explore the [DFA's CPI toolkit](#). Contact us at WithUForU@uci.edu with any questions and suggestions for additional tools.

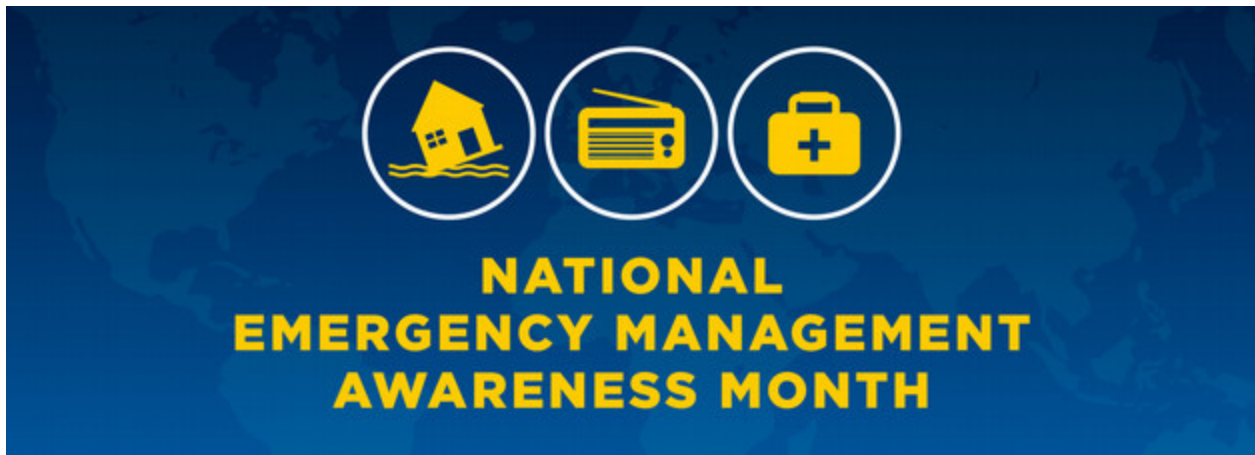*Article provided by DFA Program Development & Execution*

Work Smarter: Embrace Campus Accessibility

[UC Irvine's Accessibility website](#) offers essential tools and resources to foster inclusion in our daily workflow. From IT Accessibility and digital-access training to "SiteImprove" auditing tools, faculty and staff can make websites, documents, and events more usable for everyone. Employee accommodations are available to ensure equal access on the job. Join the AccessibiliTrees badging program or take the Accessibility Pledge to become a disability champion across campus.

Faculty and Staff Mental Health Services

UC Irvine provides multiple mental health support options for faculty and staff. While routine clinical counseling isn't offered by the [UCI Counseling Center for employees](#), they assist in crisis situations and provide referrals. Available resources include the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through Life Resources, 24/7 access via Guidance Resources, behavioral health benefits via UC medical plans, and dedicated Faculty/Staff Support Services including training and referrals.

Recognizing Emergency Management
& Empowering Preparedness

August was National Emergency Management (EM) Awareness Month—a time to recognize the professionals behind the scenes who plan for and coordinate responses to emergencies that impact our communities. At UC Irvine, the emergency management team works year-round to ensure our campus is prepared, from managing emergency plans and training to leading the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during major incidents.

This month is National Preparedness Month—a nationwide initiative encouraging individuals, families, and communities to take proactive steps to be ready for emergencies. Whether it's assembling a go-bag, making a family emergency plan, or simply staying informed, your actions can make a meaningful difference. When each of us is ready, our entire community becomes stronger, safer, and more resilient.

Watch this quick video to learn more about the importance of emergency management and visit emergency management's website to become familiar with how we support the campus.

Article provided by UC Irvine Emergency Management

Procurement Services Supplier Showcase:
Driving Partnerships and Innovation

Procurement Services hosted the 2025 Supplier Showcase at the Bren Events Center on Sept. 10, drawing over 300 campus attendees. The event brought together more than 130 representatives from 39 sponsoring suppliers, including 12 certified small businesses, along with UC and UC Irvine departments such as UC Systemwide Procurement, the UCIBuy+ Project Team, OIT, The Hill Bookstore, and Transportation & Distribution Services.

The showcase highlighted support from platinum sponsors Avantor, Avidex, bluespace interiors, Manhattan Stitching (small business), Office Solutions, Tangram, and Verizon, as well as gold and silver sponsors including FedEx Office, Medline, Amazon Business, Dell Technologies/Intel, Enterprise Mobility, HD Supply, and WAXIE/BradyPLUS.

Departments had the opportunity to connect directly with suppliers, explore new tools and services, and learn about upcoming projects. The event reinforced DFA's commitment to partnerships, process improvement, and small business inclusion, bringing our values to life across campus.

Article provided by UC Irvine Procurement Services

Sustainability Corner: Storm Water Pollution Prevention

Amid the vibrant surroundings of UC Irvine, there's a remarkable opportunity to create a positive impact – storm water pollution prevention. Our resilient community of students, dedicated staff, and innovative faculty can collectively lead the way towards a healthier campus and a better tomorrow.

Storm water pollution occurs when rainwater washes over surfaces and collects various contaminants, eventually draining into nearby bodies of water. Pollutants such as oil, chemicals, trash, and pet waste can harm our local ecosystems and even our own health.

Preventing storm water pollution starts with small actions. Simple steps, such as disposing of trash in designated bins, cleaning up after pets, and maintaining vehicles to prevent oil leaks, can significantly reduce pollution. For more information, visit EHS' website on storm water pollution prevention.

Let's unite as a community to take individual but impactful steps in preserving the environment we all cherish. Together, we can make a positive difference for our campus and beyond.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: What Matters to Me and Why Speaker Series

UC Irvine's Office of Inclusive Excellence hosts the *What Matters to Me and Why* series, featuring faculty and staff sharing personal motivations, values, and journeys. The final talks for 2025 are on Oct. 25 and Nov. 17, offered in person and via Zoom. Registration opens three weeks prior. Since 2012, this informal series has celebrated diversity, dialogue, and community connection.

DFA EMPLOYEE PROFILES

C.J. Valentine
Director, DFA Human Resources

I have been at UC Irvine and in my current position for over three months as the HR leader for the DFA organization.

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most? I enjoy meeting employees and seeing all the great things our employees do to support the university, from our dedicated police forces, our maintenance teams to our accounting teams that create a safe, clean and effective environment that supports our students, faculty, and the staff.

What piece of advice would you give to a new employee? Patience is essential here, as there is much to learn – from terminology and processes to people, culture, and systems. UC Irvine is a unique complex community, and I'm still learning how to navigate all of the layers. What makes the journey rewarding is that each interaction offers insight into how we work together to support the education and the service of our students, faculty, and staff.

Favorite travel spot? Travel has been a big passion of mine – 37 countries so far – and what I value most is the chance to immerse myself in different cultures. I don't think of one place as my favorite; instead, I see travel as an ongoing journey, and I'm excited about the possibility of visiting places like Japan, Bali, Thailand, and Australia in the future.

People would be surprised if they knew: As a proud former Anteater, I was actively involved in student life, from sports to student government. Returning now, I am experiencing the university in a new light and am amazed at how much it has grown, evolved, and strengthened its community since my graduation in 1997.

DFA NEW HIRES

DFA new hires hired between July 1 – Aug. 31, 2025.

Facilities Management:
- Julio Antonio Salvatierra

Police Department:
- Aaron Ray Brannan
- Abdul Saboor Hashimi
- Adam Ezra Hawekotte
- Adolphus Mayfield
- Hugo Zuniga
- Ian Sean Merea
- Jason Garcia
- John Kenneth Gil Layosa

- Alejandro Gonzalez
- Alexander Dababneh
- Amer Obaji
- Antonio Mendoza
- Britney Savannah Ortiz
- Byron Geovani Ramirez
- Carlos Edwardo Ascencio
- Dana Edward Harper
- David Guia
- Duncan Beasley
- Fernando Garcia
- Frank Juarez De La Rosa
- Gavin Touakeng Moua
- George Jeffrey Gibson
- Hector Isaac Bautista
- Jonathan Omar Gallardo
- Jose Bautista
- Jose Velazquez
- Matthew Candelaria
- Miguel A A Orellana
- Ricardo Perez
- Rogelio Daniel Lopez
- Rudy Omar Miranda
- Ryan Edward Rose
- Ryan Robert Bowser
- Saroeun Phok
- Steven Albert Barreda
- Soufi Fazai
- Vladimir Sanchez Mucio
- Zachariah Ruiz

UC Irvine Division of Finance & Administration | With U · For U

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