

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,

As we enter this season of reflection and gratitude, I extend my warmest greetings to each of you. Your commitment and hard work form the backbone of our division, and I am continually inspired by the dedication you bring to your roles. In this newsletter, I'm excited to share important updates and initiatives that will guide us into the coming year.

During yesterday's town hall, I emphasized two significant areas of focus: the campus budget model and strategic planning within our division.

In the late summer of 2022, we initiated an evaluation of [UCI's projected structural deficit](#), focusing on the general campus's core operating budget (excluding the medical center and auxiliaries like dining and housing). We are exploring a new budget model to bridge the funding gap by allocating funds consistent with actual revenues and in alignment with strategic priorities. Be on the lookout for campus communications that will further delve into our plans.

Work continues on our divisional strategic planning journey, and we have made notable progress navigating through the structured steps of our [strategic framework](#). We have begun efforts in step four, while completing work in steps two and three. As we continue this journey, our aim is to have all department strategic goals finalized in January, followed by an in-person town hall in March, where we will unveil the finalized version of our strategic plan. This gathering will provide an opportunity for open dialogue, allowing us to collectively celebrate our achievements and discuss the road ahead.

To maximize the benefits of our strategic planning endeavors, it is crucial that we approach our work with careful consideration. The [Program Development and Execution \(PDE\)](#) team will help coordinate many of our initiatives by carefully assessing incoming requests and determine their feasibility for internal support before looking at alternative resources. Although this process may seem

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 DFA Employee Information

extensive, it is a fundamental step in establishing a solid foundation for our planning efforts. It requires us to examine all processes and projects from a holistic perspective to ensure we make the most of our resources and maintain a focused, concerted effort.

Resources, such as technology, will also proactively support our strategic planning initiatives. DFA-IT's function has evolved significantly since its establishment in March 2019. Effectively immediately, DFA-IT will transition to an approval role versus a consultative role in how we approach our technology strategy. Read the article "Expanding and Formalizing the Role of DFA-IT" below for more details on how these strategic changes will impact our approach to IT investments and contribute to the broader goals of DFA.

As a reminder, the [Strategic Advisory Network](#), also referred to as SAN, has been established to help drive the development, communication, and execution of our strategic plan. Please direct your questions and suggestions to your respective department's members.

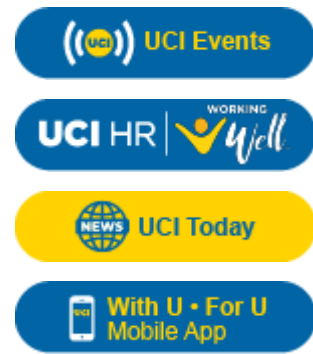
Your active involvement in these ongoing initiatives is invaluable, and I appreciate the dedication each of you brings to this transformative process. Together, we are shaping the future of DFA, and I look forward to sharing the finalized strategic plan with you in the coming months.

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

Thank you for your dedication, hard work, and commitment to our shared goals.

Sincerely,

Mary Lou D. Ortiz
Chief Financial Officer
Vice Chancellor, Finance and 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.](#)



HR Important Reminders

- Review your benefits and make changes during Open Enrollment:
 - 10/26/23–11/17/23 (by 5 p.m.)
 - <https://hr.uci.edu/partnership/oe/>
- Annual Flu and COVID Vaccination Compliance:
 - Deadline is Friday, December 1
 - <https://hr.uci.edu/partnership/workingwell/uc-covid-policy.php>
- Please add these important Payroll Deadline reminders to your calendars:
 - **Thursday, December 21, 2023 by 5 p.m.:** Biweekly employees submit timesheets for the December 10-23, 2023 pay.
 - **Friday, December 22, 2023 by 12 p.m.:** Supervisors must approve these timesheets.
- Upcoming 2023-24 Winter Closure Dates
 - December 27, 28, and 29, will not be paid holidays.
 - To cover these three days, employees can elect one of the following options:
 - Use paid vacation time. For this period only, vacation may be used in advance of accrual.
 - Use compensatory time off or Paid Time Off (PTO), if available, with approval of your supervisor and in accordance with applicable policies and labor agreements.
 - Take up to three days as leave of absence without pay
- Please review your UCPath income and tax info for accuracy and to make any changes ahead of 2024:
 - <https://ucpath.universityofcalifornia.edu/home> → Employee Actions → Income and Taxes
 - CA State W-4 (DE-4)
 - Federal Withholding (W-4)

Article provided by DFA Human Resources



Expanding and Formalizing the Role of DFA-IT

DFA-IT, introduced in March 2019 with Director Pejman Khoshkhoo's appointment, has evolved by establishing a project management framework for IT projects to effectively coordinate the IT investment review and approval process between requesting departments, DFA leadership, and other stakeholders. This structured approach ensures timely funding and sound technical decision-making for IT investments.

The coordination and tracking of IT investments have cultivated greater decision-making discipline, enabling us to establish a comprehensive record for continuous improvement. Following a divisional survey last October, DFA-IT consolidated data to develop a proof-of-concept business systems roadmap. We are now operationalizing this roadmap, aligning it with ongoing strategic planning efforts in DFA.

As we develop the operational version of the business systems roadmap, DFA-IT has taken on an expanded role in prioritizing IT investments across DFA. Notable changes include an increased approval threshold to \$35K (up from \$25K) and a requirement for DFA-IT approval above this limit. Departments

are encouraged to engage DFA-IT early in their investment selection journey to prevent implementation delays.

As a result of these changes, the monthly ISPG meetings have been replaced with alternative information sharing mechanisms. For funding approval requests, departments can continue to submit [forms](#) to DFA-IT (DFA-IT@uci.edu).

Article provided by DFA IT Services



Continuous Improvement Tools and Templates: Flowchart

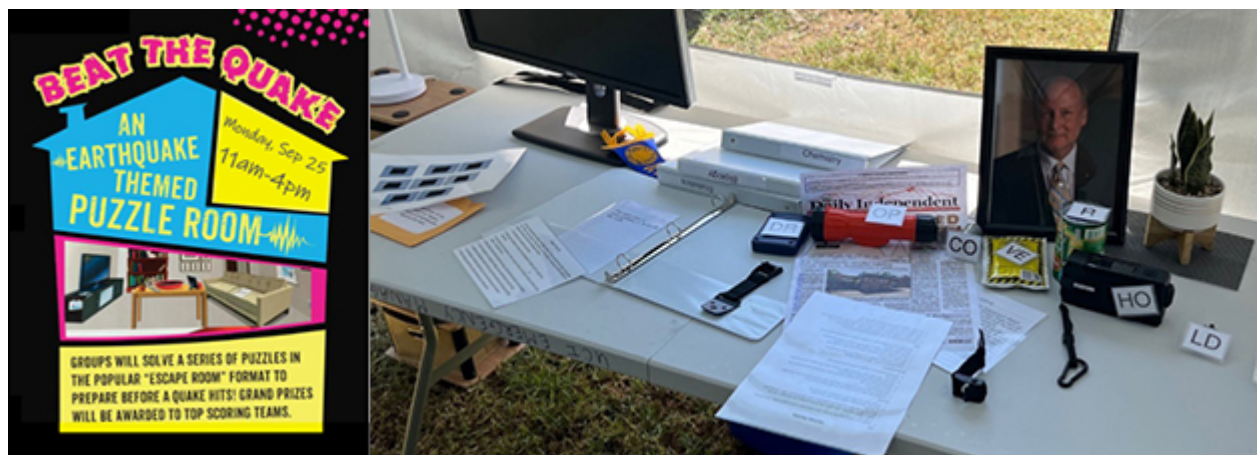
[DFA's Program Development and Execution website](#) features a variety of tools and templates in the areas of process improvement, project management, and change management to support staff in their process improvement projects and efforts.

Tool Spotlight: Flowchart

Flowcharts are used to document current state processes as well as the future state of a process. A flowchart is a visual representation of the separate steps and decision points in a process in sequential order. It can be used to describe various processes, such as an administrative or service process, a manufacturing process, or a project plan. [Learn more](#) about this tool and [download a template](#).

Email WithUForU@uci.edu with any questions and suggestions for additional tools.

Article provided by DFA Program Development & Execution



Earthquake Themed Escape Room Challenges College Students to Beat the Quake!

UCI Emergency Management (EM) put on the Beat the Quake Escape Room for the first time this year during the Anteater Involvement Fair (AIF) on Monday, September 25, 2023. Three identical tents (escape rooms) were set up with a moderator and we had about 200 students participate.

Teams were presented a scenario with clues spread throughout the room. Students had to solve the clues that would introduce them to utilizing earthquake mitigation techniques to physically secure items in the room. They also had to collect preparedness items hidden throughout the room in order to build a kit and practice “drop, cover, and hold on” when the earthquake hits at the ninth minute.

The escape room created an interactive educational experience, teaching students important preparedness concepts in a hands-on environment. Universities are not only educational institutions, but also regional cultural hubs. While students are members of the campus community, they are concurrently members of other cities, neighborhoods, and social groups, and will bring their most memorable and impactful lessons back to their present and future home communities.

Thanks to our student volunteers for facilitating the escape room, Jenny Novak (Director of Emergency Management & Continuity at CSU, Office of the Chancellor) for facilitating and helping us adopt her puzzle room concept into an escape room at UCI, and to our UCR Emergency Management partners, Andy Flores and Tom Stoner, for moderating and facilitating.

Article provided by UC Irvine Emergency Management



UCI Employee Experience Center (EEC)

The [Employee Experience Center](#) (EEC) is a centralized UCI service team that supports all UCI employees, dedicated to answering commonly asked questions and providing support related to HR policies, UCPATH, benefits, leaves, payroll, and HR systems.

Get help now by contacting the EEC at [949-824-0500](tel:949-824-0500) or accessing the [EEC support site](#).



Flu and COVID-19 Vaccination Deadlines are December 1, 2023

To support the health and well-being of UCI students, faculty, and staff, as well as our local community, the [University of California Policy on Vaccination Programs with Interim Revisions](#) requires employees to attest to having received or declined the 2023-24 influenza (flu) vaccination and the 2023-24 COVID-19 vaccination by **Friday, December 1**.



Giving Back: Clash of the Cans **Wednesday, November 1 – Thursday, December 14**

Hunger hurts our family members, neighbors, and friends. You can make a difference in our community by donating to [Clash of the Cans](#), UCI Transportation’s annual food drive, through December 14. Get involved by making a [monetary donation](#) to the [Orange County Food Bank](#) or by dropping off your non-perishable goods at any of the [donation bin](#) locations on campus and the UCI medical center to support the [UCI Basic Needs Center](#). Both organizations lead remarkable initiatives that provide essential food and personal care supplies to those in need. Show your Anteater pride and help our community in the fight against hunger!

Article provided by UC Irvine Transportation & Distribution Services



Giving Back: Toy Drive **Wednesday, November 15 – Wednesday, December 20**

UCI Police Department is hosting an annual Toy Drive, a community engagement initiative, to provide gifts to children ages 14 and under at UCI Health and other local children’s organizations. This is a collaborative effort with UCI Police Department, UCI Athletics and UCI Health. Additionally, UCI Police Department will be partaking in the Toy Toss at the UCI Men’s Basketball game on December 16 at 7 p.m.

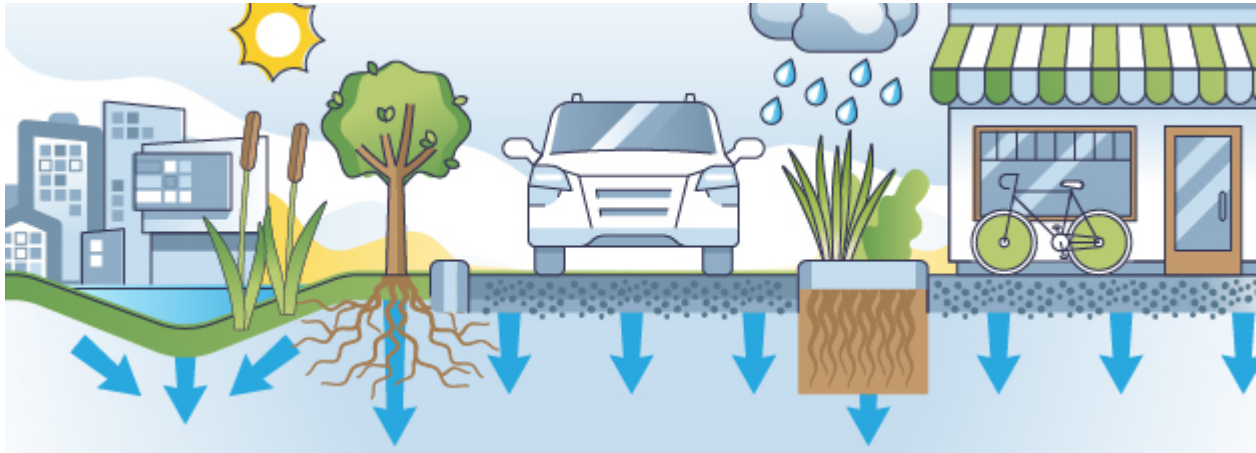
Out of an abundance of caution, we can only accept items that are packaged by manufacturer. Following is a list of drop off locations:

- [UCI Police Department](#)
- [University Hills Community Center](#)

- [UCI Student Center Information Center](#)
- [UCI Health Douglas Hospital Lobby](#)

For more information, contact Officer N. Akingbemi (nakingbe@uci.edu).

Article provided by UC Irvine Police Department



Stormwater Pollution Prevention

Amid the vibrant surroundings of UC Irvine, there's a remarkable opportunity to create a positive impact - stormwater 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.

Stormwater 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 stormwater 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 on storm water pollution prevention please visit <https://www.ehs.uci.edu/enviro/storm-water/index.php>

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.

Article provided by UC Irvine Environmental Health & Safety



Capital Planning & Space Management Spotlight

As new buildings spring up across the campus, have you ever wondered how they've come to be? It takes planning. Capital Planning. Capital Planning manages the planning, review, and approval process for UCI's capital building program. Key functions include:

- Advising campus leadership on capital needs, project alternatives and funding requirements.
- Development of detailed planning documents that serve as the basis of design for new building projects. Over the last five years, our department has planned projects totaling approximately \$2 billion.
- Preparation of project approval documents such as Regents items.
- Development of the multi-year Capital Financial Plan for Regental approval.
- Administration of the Small Capital Improvement Program, which provides funding for capital projects up to approximately \$1 million.
- Management of the Facilities Inventory System (FDX)—the official record of campus and Medical Center space.

Another arm of the department – Space Management – supports campus decision-making associated with the effective management and efficient use of existing campus space resources. The current emphasis is on identifying opportunities to reduce lease costs through consolidation of leases or relocation of units to campus space.

Article provided by UC Irvine Capital Planning & Space Management



Sustainability Corner: Health Sciences Parking Structure

Completed in the summer of 2023, the Health Sciences Parking Structure (HSPS) enhances the Health Sciences District with over 2,000 parking spaces, just a 10-minute walk from the campus core. Anticipating Gold certification from



Diversity & Inclusion: National Native American Heritage Month

November marks National Native American Heritage Month, during which we celebrate the resilience and contributions of indigenous communities. This month we can join in honoring, appreciating, and cultivating the countless contributions made by indigenous

[Parksmart](#) for sustainable design, management, and programs, the HSPS project features:

- Provides 50 Level 2 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging parking stalls with provision for an additional 110 stalls.
- Incorporates 100 bike parking spaces.
- Diverted at least 50% of construction waste from the project away from landfills.
- Built the first phase of the Wellness Trail with bicycle and pedestrian pathways.
- Introduces native and low water-use plants.
- Reduces potential stormwater pollution through innovative biofiltration basins.

people. The UCI campus does so with a [land acknowledgement](#) recognizing and respecting the original land on which the campus sits. We recognize the Tongva and the Acjachemen nations who, in the face of ongoing settler colonialism, continue to claim their place and act as stewards of their ancestral lands as they have for the past eight millennia caring for the land from the Santa Ana River to, but not limited to, Aliso Creek.

DFA EMPLOYEE PROFILES



Adolfo Martinez
Groundskeeper, Facilities Management

I have been with UC Irvine and in my current position for 16 years. I do landscape maintenance, prune trees, and new projects.

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most? When we do new projects and mowing grass.

How has UCI/department helped you in your career development? UCI has helped provide me good benefits, a job, and be a better person at work and at home.

What do you like most about UCI/department? I like the benefits and the way we work and in my department. What I like most is that we provide good services so that everything looks beautiful.

Favorite travel spot? Mexico.

What is the weirdest thing you've ever eaten? Snakes.



Sarah Petersen-Rubarth
HR Generalist, DFA-HR

I have been with UC Irvine and in my current position for 16 months. I provide general HR support and counsel for leaders and employees across the division.

What is one accomplishment at work that you are most proud of? Why? I take a proactive approach in establishing and nurturing partnerships with the departments I support. This has not only enhanced communication and synergy between our departments but has also resulted in the successful progress of several key initiatives. I am constantly striving to improve DFA and UCI's overall efficiency, teamwork, and the attainment of collective goals.

What piece of advice would you give to a new employee? For a new employee joining the Division of Finance and Administration, it's crucial to familiarize oneself with university policies, build relationships, and continuously learn about the field's evolving practices. Embracing these practices will help navigate the complexities of the role, contribute effectively, and grow professionally within the university.

After a long day at work, what do you look forward to the most? There's nothing I love more than spending time with my husband Dana, our daughter Elliott (5), and our son Wells (nearly 2), alongside our three loving dogs. Whether it's ushering our kids to activities, exploring new adventures, or enjoying quiet family time at home, these moments are what I look forward to most.

Favorite travel spot? Not necessarily a location but rather a tradition. Each year, I take each of my children on a quick solo trip to focus on alone time for each child. This year, I took my daughter to the Eras Tour for our mother/daughter trip and my son and I went to Big Bear for our mother/son trip!

Before your time at UCI, what was your most interesting or oddest job? I played college basketball; being a collegiate athlete doesn't allow much free time for work so I delivered the newspaper in the early morning before classes and practice/games!



Justine Eisner
Web and Graphic Designer, DFA Program Development & Execution

I have been at UC Irvine and in my current position for four years and 11 months. I am responsible for the design, production, and maintenance of all websites, online properties, print, and multimedia materials for DFA for departments without dedicated supports in these areas. I ensure all DFA websites and online properties are dynamic, current, and accessible.

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most? I love working with all our DFA departments and learning about what they do and the services they provide to the UCI community.

What are 3 words to describe your department? Collaborative, empathetic, and nurturing.

Favorite travel spot? Oxnard Shores and Ventura Harbor in California.

Before your time at UCI, what was your most interesting or oddest job? My very first job was working for Cal State Fullerton's student-run newspaper, The Daily Titan, my senior year. I was one of two graphic designers; my specialty was advertisement layout and the classifieds section, where I would make up horoscopes.

My oddest job was working as an intern for a German film score composer and music producer, Hans Zimmer. He has composed music for over 100 films, including Hollywood blockbusters such as the Pirates of the Caribbean series, Gladiator, The Lion King, The Da Vinci Code, and much more. I was able to walk through his music studio and meet Pharrell Williams, who he was collaborating with at the time. It was a neat and unique experience.

People would be surprised if they knew: For over seven years, I work part-time at the happiest place on Earth, Disneyland. For the first five years I worked in Resort Transportation and Parking and for the last two plus years I work as an attractions cast member in Star Wars Galaxy's Edge.

DFA NEW HIRES

DFA new hires hired between September 1, 2023 to October 31, 2023.

Accounting & Fiscal Services:

- Aaron Bryant
- Sheralin Klinthong

Budget Office:

- Sullivan Galindo

Design & Construction Services:

- Michael Penh

Environmental Health & Safety:

- Abe A Terrell
- Luis Enrique Candia

Facilities Management:

- Michael Rasmussen
- Samuel McGrue

Police Department:

- Justus Moore
- Luis M Gonzalez Aguirre

UCI Division of Finance and Administration | With U • For U

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