

# WITH U • FOR U

## DFA Employee Newsletter



A message from  
Chief Financial Officer and  
Vice Chancellor Ronald S. Cortez

*\*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,

I would like wish everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday filled with the warmth and happiness of the season. Additionally, I want to make sure each of you saw the [email](#) from David Souleles, director of COVID-19 response team, about gathering safely this Thanksgiving.

Many of you are aware that I am leaving UCI to begin a new position at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. as Under Secretary for Administration beginning December 6, 2021. I am sincerely grateful for our team and the many accomplishments we have achieved together during my time here. The interim vice chancellor will be announced by the end of next week, and I am confident DFA will continue the outstanding work of advancing UCI's brilliant future.

For those of you who attended our town hall earlier this month, you heard from Brian Pratt, associate vice chancellor and campus architect, about the numerous campus projects: Susan & Henry Samueli College of Health Science; Sue & Bill Gross Nursing and Health Sciences; Verano 8 Graduate Student Housing; Health Sciences Parking Structure; Center for Advance Care; and UCI Medical Center Irvine. These \$2 billion in construction projects are aimed to support the increase in student enrollment and further UCI's foundational mission of teaching, research, and public service.

We also heard from Dr. Haynes, vice chancellor for equity, diversity and inclusion, who provided information on UCI's approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion as well as how we can support their [action plan](#) on community, thriving, and wellness. His presentation supports DFA's diversity and inclusion initiative which started in October of 2020. Earlier this year, diversity and inclusion were added to [DFA's values and strategy map](#) and a [workgroup](#) was formed to help [promote a culture of diversity and inclusive](#)

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### DFA Events

Now – December 2021

[DFA Lean In Sessions](#)



[excellence](#) within our division to align with our institutional goals.

Please remember to take a moment to recognize and [nominate](#) your coworkers under [DFA's Employee Recognition program](#)— anyone can nominate employees in the following categories: CARE, IDEA, SAFE, and TEAM. Deadline for this cycle is December 31.

It has been a true pleasure serving you, and I truly appreciate all the contributions each of you make to DFA and UCI. I look forward to seeing many of you next Tuesday at my farewell celebration.

With appreciation,

**Ronald S. Cortez, JD, MA (Pronouns: he/him/his)**  
Chief Financial Officer  
Vice Chancellor, Division of Finance and Administration

### [DFA Balanced Scorecard Strategy](#)

*The Division of Finance and Administration (DFA) serves all UCI students, faculty, staff, and visitors. We are **With U • For U**—working alongside you, in support of you—as planning partners, problem solvers, and solution providers. We maintain a safe and attractive physical environment, offer professional services and support, and are committed to diversity and inclusive excellence.*



## Learning & Growth: DFA Lean In Series

[Register now](#) to attend DFA Lean In session [Practice Makes Perfect: Negotiate Now to Achieve More When It Matters](#) on December 15, 2021 from 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

DFA Lean In Series is wrapping up its second year, having delivered over 20 sessions on topics such as networking, time management, confidence building, compassionate leadership, communication, and work-life balance. Over 100 DFA staff members have attended at least one of the monthly sessions facilitated by volunteer DFA Lean In Champions from across our division.

We are inviting you to consider becoming a DFA Lean In Champion and facilitating a session in 2022. Email [WithUForU@uci.edu](mailto:WithUForU@uci.edu) if you are interested or have any questions.

*Article provided by the Office of the CFO and Vice Chancellor*



## Cliff the K-9

With campus returning to its vibrant beauty of activity, Officer Jordan Leyland and K-9 Cliff have been making their debut appearances to students, staff, and faculty. People who meet Cliff are instantly enamored with him. Seeing the chocolate Labrador naturally reminds them of their own furry friends waiting for them at home. Naturally, they're often eager to share their favorite pet stories with Officer Leyland. An observer might notice that the unique aspect of having a dog – even if it's a police dog – is that it attracts people to casually engage with Officer Leyland to learn more about UCI's first police K-9. From a community policing perspective, this is an extraordinary benefit because Cliff has single-handedly bridged the UCI community and our police officers for friendly chats wherever he goes.

Please visit UCIPD's [website](#) to view [FAQs](#), find out how you can meet Cliff, read fun facts about Cliff and his habits, and download a Zoom background!

*Article provided by UCI Police Department*



**UCnetwork**



**Ergonomics**

UCnetwork is a systemwide newsletter about working at UC. If you are not already receiving it and would like to, [subscribe here](#). The current issue contains resources to support your professional development and career goals, UC stories and profiles, and ways to stay healthy, on and off the job.

Readjust to working safely in your office or at home by heading to the newly designed [Ergonomics webpage](#) to get information on ergonomics training, evaluation services, and working remotely resources. Have any questions? Check out our new [Ergonomics FAQs page](#). Safety can't wait, so contact us today at [Safety@uci.edu](mailto:Safety@uci.edu).



## DFA IT Strategic Planning Group (ISPG)

DFA's IT Strategic Planning Group (ISPG) was formally established in July 2021 with the approval of its origination charter. ISPG is a standing committee of DFA cabinet members and senior department leaders who meet monthly to review and advise on IT project prioritization and implementation. The group consists of seven standing members and five rotating members who will be selected periodically from remaining DFA cabinet leaders. In addition to overseeing IT project intake, ISPG aims to improve IT project resource utilization and execution capability through reviews of IT project status data and coordination of support and issue escalation activities.

In September, over 75 senior staff from DFA and OIT completed an introductory project management (PM) training class covering PM fundamentals and ISPG processes—more classes will be scheduled in the future.

You can visit the [ISPG website](#) to view ISPG's current project dashboard, templates, and various project management guides. Contact Pejman Khoshkhoo ([pkhoshkh@uci.edu](mailto:pkhoshkh@uci.edu)) with any questions.

*Article provided by DFA IT Services*



## Environmental Health and Safety Services Overview

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) strives to provide reliable, innovative, and proactive services to the campus community. Our goal is to integrate safety into the culture of our community while supporting academic and research excellence. The result is a safe and healthy environment with appropriate compliance, protection of assets, and efficient business processes.

Our team at EHS has developed the [Environmental Health and Safety Services Overview](#) document to provide detailed information on the breadth and scope of our services and responsibilities at UCI. This document was developed to explain direct services offered and to provide clarity related to EHS work processes for new faculty, department/unit leadership, staff, and non-campus stakeholders (e.g., CALOSHA, Orange County, etc.). This document showcases EHS services that illustrate the complexity of our work, how the staff interacts with campus units and organizations, and the various efforts and initiatives we utilize to achieve environmental, health, and safety compliance at UCI.

For a summary of our EHS Services, review the [EHS Services Overview Quick Reference guide](#) or [watch the video](#).

*Article provided by UCI Environmental Health and Safety*



## AASHE STARS Platinum Rating

[UCI becomes two-time recipient of STARS Platinum rating for sustainability.](#) In October 2021, UCI achieved a rare [platinum rating](#) through the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (AASHE STARS), maintaining its status as one of the environmentally outstanding universities in the world.

With more than 900 participants in 40 countries, AASHE's STARS is the most widely recognized international framework for publicly documenting comprehensive information related to the sustainability performance of a college or university. UCI's 2021 sustainability report earned the highest score ever obtained by an institution: 88.59 points.

All in collaboration with:

- Campus Physical & Environmental Planning
- Design & Construction Services
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Facilities Management
- Procurement Services
- Trademarks & Strategic Contracts
- Transportation & Distribution Services

*Article provided by UCI Campus Physical & Environmental Planning*



### **UCI Annual Sustainability Annual Report (2020-2021)**

This past year, UCI has demonstrated its ongoing commitment to the sustainability and climate goals outlined in the [University of California Sustainable Practices Policy](#), as evident in its perseverance to achieve sustainable progress in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please enjoy learning about the collective [sustainability highlights and achievements](#) of our campus departments.



### **Diversity Corner: UCI Be Well**

[Wellness](#) is one of the three pillars of [UCI Office of Inclusive Excellence Action Plan](#). Promoting health and wellness in our community, UCI Be Well offers a tool for searching UCI wellness programs and initiatives. If you are looking for wellness programs aimed at mental health and personal wellness, or wondering what campus resources and initiatives are available for students, faculty, and staff, please visit Student Affairs' [Be Well website](#) to learn more.

Complete the [Be Well scavenger hunt](#) by December 15 to be entered into a raffle for \$25 gift card.



## DFA Employee Recognition Program

Every day is an opportunity for colleagues and managers/supervisors to recognize the great work of our people in the following categories:

- **CARE** (Customer Appreciation Repeatedly Expressed)
- **IDEA** (Innovate Discover Encourage Achieve)
- **SAFE** (Safety Award For Excellence)
- **TEAM** (Together Everyone Achieves More)

Submit your online [nomination!](#) [Click here](#) to view a list of past nominees.

# EMPLOYEE PROFILES



**Osvaldo Contreras**  
**Sr. Custodian, Facilities Management**

I have worked at UCI and been in my current position for eight months as a senior custodian with Facilities Management. I maintain Aldrich Hall by cleaning and reporting any maintenance issues. I also provide detailed cleaning and emergency response.

**What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most?** I enjoy being able to give staff, faculty, and students a clean and comfortable work/learning environment.

**What are 3 words to describe your department?** Hard working, innovative, and humble.

**Who is one colleague that deserves praise and recognition? Why?** I consider Eduardo Anaya a great example of a leader and an educator in our department.

**Before your time at UCI, what was your most interesting or oddest job?** I was working in Riverside as a security guard during the night shift.

**If you were stuck on an island what three things would you bring?** Fishing pole, journal, and a glass bottle.

**What is the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?** Frog legs.



**Chris Taylor**  
**Senior Loss Control Analyst, Risk Services**

I have worked at UCI and been in my current position for over 12 years. I am part of the UCI Risk Services team headed by the Risk Manager who manages all UC's insurance programs, claims, lawsuits, UC Insurance requirements, emerging risks, etc. I provide best practices advice on Student Center events, campus departments, registered student organizations planning programs with minors, and emerging risks e.g., drone flights by researchers. I also collaborate with all DFA departments e.g., EHS, Facilities Management, Transportation, Police Dept. etc., to analyze incidents that lead to insurance claims and devise loss control initiatives funded annually by UC's loss control program Be Smart About Safety (BSAS).

**What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most?** Over the last 12+ years I have developed working relationships with colleagues in all DFA-Administration Departments, in HAS-Housing, BFMI school facilities managers and many other campus departments to discuss & resolve loss control issues arising from UC insurance claims. I learn how departments manage their operations and dialog with them on loss control needs so they also feel able to contact me with new issues they need assistance within the future.

**What has been your favorite project at UCI/department?** Developing Risk Services Minors liabilities outreach to all campus depts. to support their work inviting middle/high school groups to on/off campus programs. This work entails learning the dept. program goals, drafting UC waiver language, raising the awareness of the 2021 updated UC CANRA reporting policy and legal requirements for all staff & volunteers working directly with minors.

**Who is one colleague that deserves praise and recognition? Why?** Jen Swann – DFA IT solutions. Jen has guided me patiently since March 2020 teaching me the use of a new Docusign Group account system so the campus can collect online legally signed waivers of liability from parents of Minors. Thanks to Jen I am now proficient at guiding campus departments in the use of this online program when they have not used it previously.

**Favorite travel spot?** Indian Wells, CA. Tennis Tournament. Where Wimbledon comes to the desert! I get to watch the best tennis players in the world practice and play matches.

**Before your time at UCI, what was your most interesting or oddest job?** I grew up in England and worked for over 10 years in the Lloyd's of London international insurance market. That's where I first got the inclination to work in the USA and was introduced to my future Los Angeles employer in 1986. I arrived in Los Angeles in 1987.

**People would be surprised if they knew:** As an ex-Englishman I love baseball, and can't go to a game without scoring it in a scorebook. I live in hope the next game I score will be a no-hitter or perfect game! GO DODGERS!



**Eira De Los Reyes**  
**Health Physicist, Environmental Health and Safety**

I have been at UCI and in my current position for one year. I help oversee UCI's radiation safety programs. My responsibilities range from performing radiation protection surveys and assessments to developing procedures to assure compliance with regulatory requirements.

**What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most?** I enjoy being able to educate people about radiation and its uses. There are many times when people are overly concerned or even scared of it due to a lack of knowledge or misrepresentation

**What has been your favorite project at UCI/department?** Dr. Joyce Keyak's implantation of radioactive material into live sheep spines for future potential cancer treatment. This project brought up new challenges and served as a great learning experience.

**Favorite travel spot?** Huatulco, Oaxaca in Mexico! I love their beaches, food, and overall ambiance.

**Motto or Personal Mantra:** "Work smarter, not harder."

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

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