

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 time of year naturally invites reflection, and across UC Irvine there is much to be proud of. I want to begin by celebrating a few highlights from our UCI community. UC Irvine recently finalized the [acquisition](#) of the Orange County Museum of Art, forming the UC Irvine Langson Orange County Museum of Art. The new institution will expand opportunities for education, creativity, and public engagement in our region. To support access, a complimentary shuttle service, [MuseumConnect](#), is available. We were also recognized again for leadership in sustainability, ranking [#20 on the Princeton Review's Top 50 Green Colleges list](#) — a reflection of our campuswide commitment to innovation and environmental stewardship.

Here in DFA, we continue building toward our shared strategic vision. Thank you to everyone who joined October's virtual town hall, where we shared updates on our strategy and budget, our division's approach to AI, and ongoing accessibility efforts. As always, these touchpoints help ensure we remain aligned, informed, and focused on serving the UCI community.

For those who would like to revisit the resources shared during the session, we encourage you to explore:

- **Strategic Planning [website](#)**
- **AI training and tools**
 - ZotGPT [Academy](#)
 - DFA's SharePoint [site](#)
- [Digital accessibility](#) and [brand resources](#)

This month also marks the final stretch of [open enrollment](#). If you have not already done so, please take time to review your benefit options and submit any changes before the Nov. 21, 2025, deadline.

As we look toward the end of the year, I am grateful for the collaboration and commitment you bring to our work every day. Together, we have made meaningful progress — and I look forward

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to carrying this momentum into 2026 as we continue to support UCI's mission and community.



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

Open Enrollment Reminder

Friday, Nov. 21, 2025, at 5 p.m. PST is the last day to review your benefits and make any changes via [UCPath](#). Watch for a confirming email in early December to validate accuracy of your 2026 benefit elections. A full schedule of events, presentations, and virtual help desk hours is available to support you during open enrollment.

Vaccination Attest or Decline Reminders

Friday, December 5, 2025 is the deadline to submit your flu vaccination. Per [University of California Policy on Vaccination Programs](#), please use this link to [attest OR decline the 2025 influenza \(flu\) vaccination](#).

Holiday Payroll Submission Deadlines

Please keep an eye out for a detailed email regarding curtailment dates and timesheet due dates in early December. Please note the following upcoming

[Biweekly Deadlines for Dec. 7-20 timesheets](#):

- **Employee timesheets due:** Wednesday, Dec.17 by 5 p.m.
- **Supervisor approvals due:** Thursday, Dec.18 by 12 p.m.
- TRS schedules for monthly employees are not impacted.

Article provided by DFA-HR



Continuous Improvement Focus: AFS: UCI UCPATH Cases Exceeding Target by 100+ Days

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

Accounting & Fiscal Services completed a [CPI project](#) to reduce UCPATH cases for UC Irvine employees that were open for more than 100 days. The team conducted weekly reviews, followed up with project managers and partners across UC Irvine and UCPATH departments, and escalated cases when needed to ensure progress. This focused effort resulted in a 32% reduction in long-standing cases between January and March 2025. For more information or to discuss this project, please contact [Jesse Madrigal](#) and [Andrea Knaub](#).

AFS: UCI UCPATH Cases Exceeding Target by 100+ Days



Problem: There were a rising number of open UCPATH cases, specific to UCI employees, exceeding 100 days in the system.



Goal: To reduce the number of cases that have been open for more than 100 days.



Solution: Researched cases over 100 days on a weekly basis, followed up with project managers and other UCI and UCPATH departments regarding case status and next steps, and escalated if needed to move the cases forward to resolution/closure.



Result: From January to March of 2025, we helped reduce the 100+ day cases from 37 open to 25 open (a 32% reduction). Work on this project is ongoing.

Project Contact: [Jesse Madrigal](#) and [Andrea Knaub](#), Accounting & Fiscal Services

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



Digital Accessibility & What This Means to Me

Starting April 24, 2026, federal law requires UC Irvine to make all of our digital content accessible to people with disabilities. This means everything we create or use online needs to work for everyone: training materials, websites, Zoom meetings, MS Office files, and PDFs.

Please visit [DFA's SharePoint site](#) for more information.



Holiday Safety

Let's get into a ZOT-tastic holiday season with some friendly safety tips to keep you and the community safe. Maintaining a good ambiance with holiday lights can be safely achieved by using only UL listed lights, using battery operated candles, and keeping other holiday decorations away from all exits. Please visit [Holiday Safety Reference Guide](#) to learn more.



Clash of the Cans Food Drive Monday, Nov. 3-Friday, Dec. 12

Hunger hurts our family members, neighbors, and friends. You can make a difference in our local community by donating to UC Irvine's annual [Clash of the Cans food drive](#) through Friday, Dec. 12. Get involved by dropping off non-perishable goods at any [donation bin locations on campus](#) and the UCI Health Medical Center, or by making a monetary donation to support the [Orange County Food Bank](#) and the [UC Irvine 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



UC Irvine Police Department Toy Drive Friday, Nov. 14-Friday, Dec. 12

Your donations of new, unwrapped toys and teddy bears will be gifted to children ages 14 and younger at UCI Health and other local children's organizations. Out of abundance of caution, we can only accept items that are packaged by the manufacturer.

Donations accepted at these [locations](#):

- UC Irvine Police Department – Front Desk
- University Hills Community Center
- UC Irvine Student Center – Information Center
- UC Irvine Health – Douglas Hospital Lobby

- UC Irvine Health – Wen Family Center
- UC Irvine Health – Irvine Cancer Center

For more information, please contact: Sgt. Bessolo at jbessolo@uci.edu or PSR Flavio Ramos at ramosf@uci.edu.

Article provided by UC Irvine Police Department



Capital Planning and Space Management: Helping to Build UC Irvine's Future

Ever wonder who's behind the blueprint of UCI's evolving campus? From groundbreaking health science facilities to new student housing, [Capital Planning](#) works in collaboration with campus partners to help shape the university's physical development consistent with DFA's strategic plan goal to support campus growth. Key functions include:

- Advising campus leadership on capital needs, project alternatives and funding requirements.
- Development of planning documents that serve as the basis of design for new buildings.
- Preparation of project approval documents such as Regents items.
- Development of the multi-year Capital Financial Plan.
- Administration of the Small Capital Improvement Program.
- Management of the Facilities Inventory System (FDX).

Partnering closely, **Space Management** focuses on making the most of existing space. Last year, lease reduction efforts generated nearly **\$1.9 million in annual savings**, and new initiatives are now assessing and optimizing on-campus space to better support UCI's mission of innovation and excellence.

Article provided by UC Irvine Capital Planning & Space Management



Sustainability Corner:
Recycling & Refuse

UCI is committed to achieving the University of California Office of the President's (UCOP) Zero Waste goal, which aims to divert 90% or more of campus waste from landfills. By maximizing recycling and composting, UCI reduces its carbon footprint and promotes a cleaner environment. Currently, five campus buildings have been certified as Zero Waste facilities, demonstrating UCI's dedication to sustainability as an everyday practice, not just an initiative.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:
Cultivating Community
Workshops 2025-26

Join UC Irvine's Office of Inclusive Excellence for upcoming Cultivating Community Workshops: **Engaging Equity: Navigating Power and Privilege** ([Nov. 17, 1–2:20 p.m.](#)) and **Beyond the Surface: Exploring Social Identities** ([Dec. 2, 11 a.m.–12:20 p.m.](#)). These Zoom sessions foster understanding of identity, belonging, and equity through interactive discussions and skill-building activities. Attend five of six workshops over a two-year period (2024–2026) to earn a certificate of completion.

DFA EMPLOYEE PROFILES



Darryl Meadows
Fire Safety Inspector, Environmental Health & Safety

I have been at UC Irvine and in my current position for four months. I am a fire inspector for the acceptance of fire alarm, fire sprinkler, and fire resistance testing.

What has surprised you most about working in your department or UCI? The number of projects and buildings that exist on campus.

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most? The team of people I work with.

What is one accomplishment at work that you are most proud of? Why? Finishing the new Mesa Tower dormitory before the start of school.

What are some upcoming trends or challenges that you see in your field? Code changes.

Favorite travel spot? Hawaii.

Before your time at UCI, what was your most interesting or oddest job? NFL football player.

If Hollywood made a movie about your life, who would you like to see cast as you? Denzel Washington.

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



Luis Gonzalez
Fire Safety Inspector, Environmental Health & Safety

I have been at UC Irvine and in my current position for four months. I serve as a fire safety inspector, performing fire and life safety inspections, enforcing fire code compliance, and partnering with academic, research, and facilities teams to support a safe campus environment through proactive risk reduction, training, and regulatory guidance.

What has surprised you most about working in your department or UCI? What surprised me most is how welcoming and team-oriented everyone is here. Coming from the fire service, I wasn't sure what to expect in a university setting, but I quickly realized people here really care — about safety, about the campus community, and about helping each other succeed. It's a place where folks take pride in their work and support one another, and that's been great to be a part of.

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most? What I enjoy most is getting out around campus and working with all the different people who make this place run. I really like helping folks understand fire and life safety in a way that supports what they're doing, whether it's new construction, renovation improvements, research, labs, or student projects. It feels good to be part of keeping this community safe while still helping people accomplish their goals.

Favorite travel spot? My favorite travel spot is exploring the Hawaiian Islands. There is so much variety from the hustle and bustle of Oahu to the peace and tranquility of Kauai. The Aloha spirit is infectious, and the moment I leave, I am already planning my next trip back.

Before your time at UCI, what was your most interesting or oddest job? One of the most interesting jobs I've had was being part of the Ramona Helitack Crew with the U.S. Forest Service. We traveled throughout the Western U.S. fighting wildfires by helicopter and even rappelling into remote areas when needed. I'll never forget flying low over the Rocky Mountains — under 500 feet above the ground — it was an incredible experience.

Motto or Personal Mantra: Esse Quam Videri — “To be, rather than to seem” — is a motto that hits home for me. It's a reminder to show up as my real self, do the right thing, and put in the work even when no one's watching.

DFA NEW HIRES

DFA new hires hired between Sept. 1 – Oct. 31, 2025.

Capital Planning:

- Enrique Melcer
- Jackson Losey

DFA Program Development & Execution:

Police Department:

- Andy Reyes
- Corey Chavez
- Ivan Chavez
- Kris Straziuso
- Michael Mebane

Transportation & Distribution Services:

- Nadine Stephanie Lievanos

- Pearla Velasco

Facilities Management:

- Israel Ortega
- Thomas L. Mora

- Raymond Joseph Ruiz-Herrera
- Terrell Coleman

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

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