We’ve Moved!

The Veteran Services Office has relocated to G304 Student Center. Our office is just down the hall from our original location. We are now a freestanding center and are very excited to have a place solely for Veteran Services! We have lounge space and computer workstations. It’s a great location to study. Please come visit our office Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm!

UC IRVINE Veteran Services Office is on Facebook!

Our Mission

The Veteran Services Office provides Veterans, Reservists, and their dependents assistance in obtaining the educational benefits to which they are entitled. The office is responsible for submitting entitlement requests for new and continuing students to the V.A., answering any questions veteran students or dependents may have concerning their educational benefits, and providing resources to assist veterans in navigating their transition to civilian and student life.
Veteran’s Week Events: Excellent Tribute to those who Served

Alexander Louie, Veterans Liaison of the Associated Students and co-founder of the Veterans Fraternity “Alpha Psi Omega,” noted, “In terms of last week’s events for Veterans Week, we had a great series of events showcasing the major issues of America’s veterans. Our objective was to educate UCI Students about who we are as people and more importantly who we are not. We wanted to showcase our service and explain what we did in military service and the hurdles many veterans face in transition to civilian and student life.”

Flag Display- Nov 7-10, (All Week Event), The Alpha Psi Omega Veteran Memorial in Aldrich Park behind Langson Library.

Pub Night- Nov 8, (7 to 10 pm) Veterans night at the Anthill. Veterans enjoyed Happy Hour prices with military ID.

Operation: In Their Boots Film Screening- Nov 9, (5 to 7pm) in Emerald Bay B. Q&A session with Aaron Huffman and Kyle Hartnett, featured subjects of The Academic Front and No Religious Preference, respectively.

“Who are these Veterans?” Panel Discussion- Nov 10, (5 to 7pm) in Pacific Ballroom A. Students learned from UC Irvine veteran students about the diverse experiences and unique challenges of our community.

Remembering the Fallen- Memorial Service for Spc. Ricardo Cerros took place November 10, 2011 at 12pm at the UCI Flagpoles.

Coming Next Quarter...

- Veterans Career Fair presented by ASUCI Veterans Liaison & UCI Career Center on 1/26/12 at the UCI Student Center
- Check out the new VSO website at www.veteran.uci.edu on 1/9/12 to see the upcoming VSO winter events
- Remember to fill out FAFSA by the 3/2/12 deadline at www.fafsa.ed.gov/
- Peer Academic Advisor applications are due by 4pm on 1/20/12
- Look out for the dodge ball tournament sponsored by ASUCI Vets Liaison to benefit the veteran “Bridging the Gap” scholarship
Remembering Spc. Ricardo Cerros  
“He truly was selfless, he was happy.”

The UCI community celebrated and honored the life of 2009 UCI alumnus, Spc. Ricardo Cerros, on November 10, 2011. Army Specialist Ricardo Cerros Jr. was tragically killed by direct fire from enemy forces during a firefight while conducting combat operations in Logar Province, Afghanistan on October 8th, 2011. During his time at UCI, “Ricky” was an active member of the Taekwondo team and worked for the UCI Police Department.

The memorial opened with The Presentation of the Colors and followed with the singing of The National Anthem. The flag was then lowered to half-staff and speakers began to share their fond memories of Ricardo. Speakers included Chancellor Drake, Major Jackson, Chief Henisey, Lauren Manzano, 2nd Lieutenant Peralta, Jack Williams and Joe Bessolo.

Ricardo’s close friends reached out to Veteran Services a few weeks ago, asking for help with planning a memorial to honor his amazing and admirable sacrifice. Close friend and former Taekwondo teammate, Lauren Manzano, stated, “The service was everything we wanted. When we first approached Veteran Services and found out that Ricky was the first alumnus to be killed in action, we wanted something to celebrate him, and we just wanted it to be an opportunity for people to speak about what kind of person he was. And everyone summed it up perfectly. He truly was selfless, he was happy, he really did have a smile for everyone, even if he didn’t know you. If you needed someone in your corner, he was there before you asked. I had the privilege of knowing him for three or four years, and my experience at UCI was better because I knew him.”

The American flag used at Ricardo’s memorial will be folded in a display case and sent to his family. The memorial concluded with the playing of TAPS, a moment of silence, and the inviting of guests to sign a frame of Ricardo. The Veteran Services Office would like to send our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Spc. Ricardo Cerros, Jr.

Photos by Peter Huynh
UCI Leads The Way in Guaranteeing Housing to Veterans

UCI is one of the first universities nationwide to establish not only the guarantee, but a comprehensive policy, to benefit service members. The UCI Veteran Services Office worked with Kerri Sherwood, Palo Verde Associate Director of Residential Life, representing UCI Housing to write and launch the Veterans' Housing Guarantee in April 2011. Under the guarantee, eligible service members, reservists, and veterans receive an offer of on-campus housing for four years or normal time to degree (whichever is greater). The guarantee will remain in place during their deployment, providing housing when they return and allowing family members to stay in on-campus housing if they choose. In Fall 2011, nineteen eligible service members applied for housing under the new guarantee. Tanisha Santana, a U.S. Army veteran, took advantage of the policy this fall when she and her 9-year-old daughter, Nyla, moved into the Palo Verde grad student and family apartment community. "It helped me out tremendously by alleviating the stress of searching for a place to live," says Santana.*  "The guaranteed housing for veterans was also a factor in selecting campuses. It let me plan ahead and I was able to budget appropriately and register my daughter for school on time, since I had an address far in advance." *In recent months, UCI has showcased the policy by presenting at the WACUHO Conference and NASPA Regional Conference. In December 2011, "Serving Those Who Have Served -- Veteran Housing Policy" won a NASPA Silver Excellence Award in the Housing, Residential Life, etc. category.

*UCI Today Spotlight, 11/7/11

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MEET OUR STAFF

Name: Adelía Durón  
Title: Veteran Coordinator  
Motto: “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”  
-MLK Jr.

Name: Carrie Dilluvio  
Grade: Junior  
Major: Literary Journalism  
Motto: “Nothing to me feels as good as laughing incredibly hard.” –Steve Carell

Name: Gladys Rojas  
Grade: Junior  
Major: Political Science  
Motto: “Difficulties mastered are opportunities won.” -Winston Churchill

Name: Lyle Bacallos  
Grade: Junior  
Major: Political Science  
Motto: “Impossible is Nothing.”

Name: Tanishia Santana  
Grade: Junior  
Major: Sociology  
Motto: “Insensitivity makes arrogance ugly; empathy is what makes humility beautiful.” –Rendford Reese

Name: Paul Lee  
Grade: Sophomore  
Major: Mechanical Engineer  
Motto: “I never sleep, cause sleep is the cousin of death.”–Nas