

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

March 6, 2018

[Andrea Estrada](#)

## **Beyond the Call**

The Thomas Fire and subsequent mudslides wrought havoc on the entire Santa Barbara and Goleta community. Between the flames and ash and the mud and debris — not to mention the closure of Highway 101 for nearly two weeks — no one was unaffected.

Despite the natural disasters, UCSB's doors remained open. In addition to regular operations — albeit curtailed in some areas — the campus served as a Red Cross emergency shelter and housed 100 mutual aid law enforcement personnel from the California Highway Patrol and the National Guard.

And none of that would have been possible without the dedicated service of UCSB staff members.

“Over the years, we have repeatedly demonstrated that we come together in difficult times,” said Chancellor Henry T. Yang. “The most valuable resource we have at UC Santa Barbara is our people, and I feel great pride to be a member of this dedicated and compassionate community.”

Here are just a few of the many UCSB staff members who went above and beyond, showing just what it means to be a Gaucho.



Mickael Blancho

**Feeding the Masses**

In anticipation of a busy finals week, UCen Dining stocked the shelves and loaded the refrigerators to keep satisfied the hordes of hungry students. When the announcement was made that final exams would be rescheduled, all those provisions had to go somewhere. Enter Mickael Blancho, UCen food service production manager. On his own, he coordinated the pickup of prepared foods from the various UCen Dining units and delivered them to the Red Cross emergency shelter on campus. Then he gathered all the perishable non-prepared foods and brought them to the Food Bank of Santa Barbara County.



Ambar Campos

## **Home Office**

When budget analyst Ambar Campos couldn't make the commute from Fillmore to UCSB, she worked her 8-5 from home. Among her responsibilities in the Office of Budget and Planning is coordinating financial and budget transactions for all departments on campus — a particularly important task at the end of the month. Despite road closures and other impediments that prevented her from getting to campus, she was able to create, review and approval all the necessary actions to ensure the campus financials remain accurate and up to date.

MarkRousseu-LaurenWeiner-SimonHerreraGomez

Mark Rousseu, Lauren Weiner, Simon Herrera-Gomez

## **Mutual Aid**

The request came in around noon Saturday, Dec. 16, from the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management. Could the university assist in housing over 100 California Highway Patrol office and National Guard members who were part of a mutual aid effort? Residential Operations staff — namely Jesus Gama and Mark Rousseau — and the Conference & Hospitality Services team — Sally Vito, Lauren Weiner and Simon Herrera-Gomez, in particular — jumped into action. By evening, they had The Club & Guest House ready to check in emergency personnel. Over the next five days, The Club served as their 24/7 home away from home.



Thelma Gomez

## **A Long Day at the Shelter**

Senior custodian Thelma Gomez didn't hesitate when she saw how she could be of service. She took action. Without asking what needed to be done — and while still carrying out her regular duties — she provided services to the Red Cross emergency shelter for 13 days straight, sometimes working 12- to 16-hour days. Her thoughtful assistance made the shelter a more welcoming and comfortable place for those who were forced to leave their homes.



Annalee Locke

## **Committed to Student Health**

The fire affected Annalee Locke both professionally and personally. The student health clinic manager who lives in Ventura was herself evacuated. Still, she came to work every day the freeway was open. After the mudslide, she worked from home for several days, but as soon as Santa Barbara County arranged emergency transport for essential personnel she took the escorted bus, leaving Ventura at 5 a.m. and returning at 7 p.m. That resulted in a week of 14-hour days, but she was determined to help keep Student Health Services open and provide assistance to

students.



Robert Zeyssig

The freeway closure also affected pharmacist Robert Zeyssig, who lives in Carpinteria. A commercial pilot, he arranged for a friend to fly him to Santa Barbara, leaving from Oxnard airport — a 26-mile drive south. He also commuted via the ferry from Ventura, when necessary, until he, too, got a seat on the escorted bus. His dedication enabled the Student Health Pharmacy to operate despite numerous other absences so essential medicines could be supplied to students on campus

## **Network Operations**

Alex Carreño, a senior network and security service engineer, was in Oxnard and heading back toward UCSB Monday, Dec. 4, when the Thomas Fire caused power outages in the Santa Barbara area. By 11 p.m., he was at the North Hall Data Center monitoring the campus core data network for outages. He remained at his post until 5 a.m., restoring service to several buildings, including the Student Resource Building (SRB), and making sure they were operational before the start of the next business day. As a result of restoring network service to the SRB, the campus wireless networks were subsequently accessed via the SRB by 3,801 user accounts.

Over at the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management, the Compute Team, which includes Steve Miley, Brad Hill and Geoff Jewel, kept its critical servers up and running amid power fluctuations throughout the Santa Barbara area Sunday, Dec. 10. Backed by an eight-hour-capacity diesel generator, their efforts enabled students to access their files remotely.



Mike Lindner

**Power to the People**

When the fire shut down power to the campus, HVAC technician Mike Lindner was instrumental in making sure the generators started up and had enough fuel to keep going until power was restored. In the ensuing days, he continued to refuel all campus generators to ensure they were ready in the event of another outage. He worked long hours, hauling the fuel trailer all over campus to top off each fuel tank. When Red Cross emergency shelter opened, he made sure the generator was fueled and operational became one of his top priorities, assuring staff and occupants that they'd have power no matter what.



Emma Parker

**A Complex Orchestration**

Both the fire and the mudslides complicated final exams for fall quarter. When it was determined that finals would be postponed to the first week of winter quarter, the immense rescheduling effort fell on Emma Parker, scheduling systems manager in the Office of the Registrar. It turned out to be a two-part task. There was the initial rescheduling, but after debris flows closed Highway 101, Parker had to make adjustments again to accommodate the many students who couldn't get back to campus. And she got it done despite having a baby at home due to the children's center closure. When she couldn't make it to her office, she worked from home.



Scott Summerville

## Rain All Around

When the torrential rains began during the early morning of Jan. 9, Scott Summerville, a painter with Facilities Management, along with a team of custodians was on campus at 1:30 a.m. checking buildings for leaks. Repairs he'd made previously at Marine Biology, KITP and Bren Hall held tight in the driving rain and the gusting winds that reached 30 to 40 miles per hour. He assessed new leaks identified by the custodians and prioritized the order in which they needed to be repaired.



Enrriqueta Peinado (l) and Saray Rubio

## **In Service to the Community**

Following the mudslides, UC police officers Saray Rubio and Enriqueta Peinado were working a 12-hour shift together, assisting with security and rescue in the most ravaged areas. On a call in Montecito to check on an elderly woman whose family hadn't heard from her in a few days, Rubio took a step onto what she thought was hard ground. In reality, it was a huge mud-covered hole. She found herself waist deep in the stuff and required Peinado's assistance to extricate herself. Shortly thereafter, warnings were issued regarding swimming pools hidden beneath blankets of mud and debris, and the extreme hazard they presented.

---

## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.