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Salute to the Fallen

Memorial Day means standing together to honor the sacrifices of Americans in uniform. UC Santa Barbara's Veterans & Military Services (VMS) will do just that — virtually.

"Memorial Day is one of the most important commemorations in our nation's collective memory," said Coby Dillard, VMS coordinator. "Americans from all walks of life have given their lives to the American ideal, and it is important that we pause to reflect and honor those who gave of themselves so that we all may continue to enjoy the freedoms we have."

To mark Memorial Day, VMS will hold a virtual ceremony Monday, May 25, from 11 a.m. to noon. Those interested in participating are encouraged to register here. They'll receive a link to view the scheduled speakers and events.

"For our Memorial Day ceremony," Dillard said, "in addition to speakers from the UCSB Military Staff Association, Military Families Organization and our Student Veterans of America chapter, our two invited guest speakers are Command Sgt. Maj. (retired) Jonathan Church from Santa Barbara VFW Post 1649, as well as Steve Baird from Band of Brothers in Santa Maria."

Additional speakers are Boris Palencia, co-chair of UCSB Military Staff Association; Nicholas Schierman of Student Veterans of America at UCSB; and Xenia Suarez of the UCSB Military Families Organization.

VMS is also partnering with UCSB's Department of Recreation and the nationwide group wear blue: run to remember for the first "iRun with Rec," a virtual 5K and 10K walk/run over three days, Saturday, May 23, to Monday, May 25. There will be a live warm-up on the 23rd at 10 a.m.

The run is free and open to anyone. Register here to be part of it. Participants will race the clock. Visit the "iRun with Rec" page for details.

Despite the pandemic lockdown, VMS has continued to serve UCSB's military-related students, Dillard said.

"For our students who remained local during the spring quarter, the Veterans Resource Center has been open as a study area, with appropriate guidelines for social distancing and safety," he said. "We have 36 prospective graduates who are student veterans or reservists; each will receive a service stole to wear with their regalia. Our 114 prospective graduates who are military dependents will receive a red, white and blue honor cord. Additionally, we have six student veterans and two ROTC cadets who will be our inaugural members of UCSB's chapter of SALUTE Veterans National Honor Society."

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.