

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Gaucha Day of Service

More than 1,800 Gauchos from around the world are expected to turn out for the annual Gauchos Day of Service events that will run from Sept. 7-Sept. 13. This year's theme is "Civic Engagement: More Than Just a Slogan."

Now in its fourth year, the event enlists UC Santa Barbara alumni in public service projects in their communities. While past years have involved everything from beach cleanups to food pantry volunteering, this year's event will be virtual. Alumni are being urged to find meaningful public service work while maintaining social distance and public health guidelines.

Since the inaugural Day of Service event in 2017, the number of participants has increased more than four-fold.

"This turnout is clear evidence that even in the midst of a worldwide pandemic our Gaucha alumni are committed to helping serve their communities," commented Assistant Vice Chancellor for Alumni Affairs George Thurlow. Last year's Day of Service included planting fruit trees in Isla Vista parks and in beach cleanups up and down the coast, from San Diego to San Francisco Bay.

According to Associate Alumni Director Samantha Putnam, who launched the program in 2017, the Gauchos who have signed up so far are involved in many home-based charity efforts, from making face coverings to writing checks to their favorite nonprofit organizations. It might also involve bringing food to a local food pantry or donating blood.

Along with the Day of Service week of activities the Alumni Association is sponsoring a series of virtual workshops on civic engagement in the era of COVID-19. The workshops are open to the public. More information is available at alumni@ucsb.edu.

All those participating will receive a special edition Gaucho face covering emblazoned with the UC Santa Barbara logo.

More than 230,000 UC Santa Barbara alumni live in countries around the globe, and more than 17,000 live in the greater Santa Barbara area.

This year's Day of Service event is being underwritten by UC Santa Barbara alumna and Alumni Association Board Member Diane (Hilbert '68) Dodds.

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.