

# THE *Current*

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## **COVID-19 Vaccines for Veterans**

To assist in providing COVID-19 vaccines to military veterans in the Santa Barbara area, UC Santa Barbara is making the vaccination facilities at Student Health available to the Veterans Administration Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System.

The university is providing only the space. The VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, which serves Santa Barbara County, will operate the vaccine clinic, slated for Saturday, April 24. The VA will provide the vaccines, drawn from a national supply; related supplies and vaccine storage equipment; medical and administrative personnel; IT support; and even its own independent power source.

“Since the start of the pandemic, the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System has been focused on vaccinating as many Veterans as possible,” said Rob Merchant, the organization’s executive director for ambulatory care. “We’re very grateful to have community partners like UC Santa Barbara because it allows us to better fulfill our mission of serving those who served.

“Because of our collaborative efforts, the Veterans Administration will be able to serve Santa Barbara County veterans in their own community with this safe and highly effective vaccine,” Merchant continued.

The VA will be providing the Pfizer vaccine, with first doses administered April 24 from 10 a.m. 2 p.m. and second doses given at a follow-up clinic at the same location Saturday, May 15. All veterans, their family members and their caregivers are eligible for the vaccines. Roughly 300 veterans are expected to take advantage

of the clinics. Appointments may be made by calling (310) 268-4900.

“We welcome this opportunity to partner with the Veterans Administration in support of veterans in our area and to work together to protect the health and wellbeing of our entire community,” said UC Santa Barbara Chancellor Henry T. Yang. “We are grateful to the Veterans Administration and to our Student Health staff for making this collaboration possible, and to our veterans and their families for their dedicated service to our country.”

The VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System serves approximately 1,700 military veterans in the Santa Barbara, many of whom have already received their COVID-19 vaccinations at clinics elsewhere in Santa Barbara County.

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## **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.