



UCLA Veterans Initiatives & Partnerships July Newsletter

VetJet Veterans were featured at UCLAx

Veterans pave new professional pathways through UCLA VetJET

by Johnathan Van Dyke

Program celebrates a year providing no-cost certificates through UCLA Extension



For as long as she can remember, Army veteran Ineka Smith has always enjoyed working with computers, but she has never found the right moment to pivot her career toward that passion – until now. Through UCLA VetJET (Veterans Job, Education & Training), the California native was able to earn her Cybersecurity certificate from UCLA Extension and propel herself toward achieving her professional goals.

Smith initially received a degree in business and a minor in computer information systems after completing her military service.

“I’ve known for a long time that I love working with computers,” she said. “I’ve been fascinated with the wonderful things technology can do. I was growing up when the internet really became something.”

In need of a job right out of college, Smith instead started working in the medical field as a lab technician and found herself unable to find a path toward changing her job to the field she preferred.

“I kind of regret that because I never got professional experience in the IT field except for when I was in the military, where I was in telecommunications,” she said, adding that she put together mainframe and telephone systems.

For many veterans, there can be roadblocks to an education that would allow them to compete in an ever-evolving professional world in need of people with updated skillsets and expertise. UCLA VetJET, a program offered by UCLA Veterans Initiatives & Partnerships (VIP) through UCLA Extension, aims to help veterans gain the education they need to make big changes to their

professional lives.

Read more about Ineka and more at the [full story here!](#)

Out VFWC Team continues to grow



VFWC brings on additional specialized therapist

The UCLA Veteran and Family Wellbeing Center has hired Joanna Lord, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, as their newest Resilience Trainer.

Joanna holds a Master of Science degree in Counseling with specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy from California State University, Northridge (2022).

Joanna has experience working in a variety of settings such as residential, partial hospitalization/outpatient, and private practice and has experience supporting a variety of populations utilizing evidence-based practices such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy.

A San Fernando Valley native, Joana had been interested in therapy from a young age, but her own healing journey drove her to help others. During her college years, during her commute, Joanna was an avid radio listener and had a guilty pleasure listening to Love Line, a radio show focused on relationships and love. She knew many of the stories were extreme and entertaining but she felt empathy for many callers. Those early morning drives, her own experiences, and many other examples of the power of empathy led her to pursue her masters.

Additionally, she has worked for Southern California treatment centers such as Phoenix House of Los Angeles, Tarzana Treatment Centers, and Harmony Place providing special support to populations affected by substance use and post-traumatic stress.

Joanna utilizes a trauma-focused lens in her work and is trained in evidenced based modalities designed to emphasize distress tolerance and resiliency skills and is particularly passionate about supporting veterans in this capacity. Joanna also has experience serving as a sexual assault advocate with Strength United in the San Fernando Valley.

We also hosted our 11th amazing Success Academy Graduation!



We saw 16 graduates move into alumni status after the 8-week course. Congratulations to all of our graduates!

Finally, we had another great Expo with the VFWC and community partners!



Check out What's Happening!

UCLA

VET JET

FREE access to certificates for Veterans

Information Session

Learn about Veterans Job Education and Training; offered certificates, support, curriculum, and more!

When:

July 29, 6 pm

Aug. 6, 6 pm

Where:

VIRTUAL

Have a good connection and the Zoom app

Certificates

Head over to **vip.ucla.edu/vetjet** for information and a list of certificates!



Scan the code to sign up, or go to bit.ly/UCLAxVetJET

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Veterans Initiatives & Partnerships

Take advantage of everything UCLA has to offer

UCLA Veteran Family Wellbeing Center



The Veteran Family Wellbeing Center (VFWC) provides evidenced-based resilience building services to Veterans, Guard and Reserve members of all eras (regardless of discharge status) and their family members residing in California. Located on the West LA VA campus, appointments are available both in person and remotely using a computer or laptop.



The VFWC services help individuals, couples and families:

- Improve communication
- Express and respond to emotions
- Feel closer to loved ones
- Solve problems
- Plan for the future
- Increase overall wellbeing
- Overcome challenges of all kinds, including marital difficulties, parent-child relationships, grief and loss, reintegration, caregiving, feelings of isolation and many others

Services are free, confidential and offered regardless of military discharge status. Whether you have served or supported someone who has, we look forward to helping you achieve your wellbeing and relationship goals.

Location:

**VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System
West Los Angeles Medical Center
11301 Wilshire Boulevard
Building 220, 3rd Floor Room 316
Los Angeles, CA 90073**

Appointments available

**Monday-Friday 8:30am-7:00pm
and Saturday mornings.**



Veteran Family
Wellbeing Center



U.S. Department of
Veterans Affairs

**For more information, contact our Family Services Coordinator
310.478.3711 ext 42793 | info@vfwc.ucla.edu | vfwc.ucla.edu**

UCLA Veterans Legal Clinic

Need **legal** advice?

What types of legal issues do we handle?

Veterans Benefits: Pension and service-connected compensation benefits.

Citations & Traffic Infractions:
Violations in traffic court, not DUIs.

Criminal Record Clearing:
Expungements and 290 removals
Housing: Assistance for tenants in disputes with their landlord.

(424) 248-9783



2nd & 4th Tuesdays

8 a.m. - 12 p.m., 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Located at Building 218, ground floor Room 5A.

Call or walk in.

Any person who served in the U.S. military, regardless of discharge status, length of service, or era of service may be eligible for services. **The service is for low-income, Los Angeles-area Veterans.** Additional criteria apply. Services are not guaranteed. Referrals are available.



Take ownership of your health care

Operation Mend heals our nation's post-9/11 military service members, veterans and caregivers by providing innovative, comprehensive, world-class care for the physical and psychological wounds of war.

Veterans who have gone through the in-person intensive outpatient program (IOP) have shown improvement in mental health symptoms within 3 months after program completion.



Scan, call **310-267-2110** or visit
uclahealth.org/programs/operationmend
to learn how you can get help today

UCLA Health



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