

Alicia Verdugo

My name is Alicia Verdugo (she/they) and I am running to be your 2021-2022 Cultural Affairs Commissioner with Students Organizing Active Resistance (SOAR) slate.

As a first-generation low-income queer person of color, I have become hyper-aware of the struggles associated with belonging here in my time at UCLA thus far. As we recuperate from several crises that exacerbate campus inequities, students must begin to reclaim the power they have within this institution. The platforms I have created and expanded on are grounded on viable optimism as I assure they are long-term, accessible, and sustainable.

This past quarter, I was able to participate in the longest sit-in in UCLA history. I joined my fellow students and slept on the floor of Murphy Hall every day for 16 days. This transformative experience helped me find the community that I longed for. I found agency from knowing that we created change and broke cycles of acceptance within the administrative-induced conditions against students.

Through my involvement in student advocacy, I have become impassioned about innovating the radical realm that embodies various aspects of Cultural Affairs at UCLA. As your Cultural Affairs Commissioner, I will use the power that comes with this space to uplift and advocate for marginalized students on campus as we address our artistic and creative identities next to our academic ones. With guidance, I will study and work towards the overall mission to ensure culturally relevant, inclusive, and conscious spaces created for and by Black, Indigenous, and peoples of color.

Platforms

Healing Hearts

- By implementing spaces where students can access non-traditional methods of therapy, such as programming methods of Dance Movement Therapy and other forms of mental health care, CAC can provide students with avenues for students to heal with ResLife, Holistic Wellness Coalition, the BRC, and cultural dance troupes.

Please Deliver To

- With the support of the Facilities Commission, ResLife, and ARC, CAC will provide free access to postage stamps and letter-writing materials so students can write to their loved ones; especially for students who may need to reach out to family and loved ones through snail mail.

Opening UpARC

- Continue the expansion of the Arts Restoring Community Initiative by working on the establishment of a student-led mutual aid fund to provide students with a less institutional form of material support. I hope to also increase community programs and further the development and support of student-led advocacy.

Grounding The Future

- I will push for the establishment of a community center because it is necessary. While this cannot be done within a year, this will serve as a place for holding communal experiences where we can rest, create, study, or do anything we cannot do elsewhere on campus.

Qualifications

- As a new **member of the Student Wellness Commission**, I am passionate about what we can do regarding health accessibility, disparities, and politics on campus. By establishing a DiverSWC committee, I plan to account for vast amounts of health issues that must be addressed in the SWC office.
- In order to express my creativity and love for handmade jewelry, I also **run a small business** in which I make affordable earrings and charms; it also helps me pay for meals when my meal plan is not enough.
- For over two years, I have **babysat and tutored** the children of healthcare workers in all subjects through the volunteer program COVID Childcare in San Diego. Now, I branch out into the Los Angeles community and offer my knowledge to kids through the student affairs' Leadership and Educational Advancement Program.
- I am a current **volunteer for Pride Admit Weekend**. I want to reproduce the joy I experienced last year and make sure other baby Bruins feel the love from acceptance and welcomed by an unexpected place.