

# UCSB Heals United

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[Convergence 18 - Summer 2014](#) [1]

8

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## UCSB Heals United



For the UC Santa Barbara community of students, faculty, and staff, the tragic events of May 23, 2014 will never be forgotten. The death of six UCSB students was devastating to the entire campus and to our alumni and supporters who put their faith and pride in UCSB. The following weeks were some of the most difficult we have experienced; the mourning on campus was palpable.

Then, something quite amazing happened amidst sorrow. The community at UCSB came together to support one another in a collective spirit that was beyond moving. As official letters were promptly issued from the Deans and the Chancellor addressing concerns and communicating important details about safety and support, thousands of us gathered in Isla Vista for a candlelight vigil. The student community mobilized to build memorials and organize events. Counselors and academic advisors opened their doors on weekends and after hours to support students ? in part because spring finals week, already a challenging time, was fast approaching. Resources were made available to every person on campus to process and heal, and to prepare ourselves for the aftershocks of mourning.

There was an awareness among us that it didn't matter how long we worked into the night, or which classes were postponed, or what meetings we had to cancel ? we were going to get our UCSB community through this heartbreaking time.

Perhaps the largest gathering of people in the history of UCSB took place a few days later as more than 20,000 people attended a memorial service at Harder Stadium for George Chen, Katherine Cooper, James Hong, Christopher Ross Michaels-Martinez, David Wang and Veronika Weiss. The news of the tragedy had traveled the world, and ?We Stand with UCSB? tributes were organized at every University of California campus. Thousands of UCSB alumni broadcast their #GauchoStrong support on social media and through the UCSB Alumni Association. Hundreds of people gathered at an Isla Vista beach for a Paddle Out Memorial, on surfboards and rafts, holding hands in a giant chain as flowers drifted into the Pacific Ocean.

This June, we celebrated our graduating seniors who have worked incredibly hard for their education and their careers. They leave UCSB knowing grief, but also knowing solidarity. For students whose graduation is yet to come, UCSB is a stronger and more connected place today.

In response to requests by the UCSB community, alumni, and our donors, a scholarship fund has been established in the names of the victims. The fund supports student scholarships, as well as counseling and academic assistance resources at UCSB. To donate, visit [bit.ly/victimfund](http://bit.ly/victimfund).

This is our message of gratitude to everyone who has stood beside UCSB after the tragedy, and has joined us in remembering six students who had tremendous potential and embodied the wonderful qualities of a Gaucho: hard work, community involvement, fun spirit, and positivity. Thank you, UCSB.

*From Deans Rod Alferness and Pierre Wiltzius, on behalf of the staff and faculty of UCSB Engineering and the Sciences.*

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