



# The Silver Slug

The Official Newsletter of the UCSC Retirees Association

Addendum May 2020



## 2020 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS – Part 2

Our tradition has been to honor the scholarship recipients at an annual luncheon held in May. Due to COVID-19, we cannot gather in person this year, therefore, we are honoring and meeting these remarkable students remotely. You met four of the scholarship recipients in the April issue of “The Silver Slug” Newsletter. You will meet four additional students in this eBlast, with the rest of the scholarship awardees to be sent in about 3 weeks.

The students shown below accomplished much before they arrived at UC Santa Cruz, and, as you will read, continue to pursue their academic pathways to attain their life goals. The Association thanks each of you for your generous donations to the scholarship endowment funds which support the awards.

### SILVER SLUG AWARD SCHOLARSHIP



**Katharina Pierini** has been a groundkeeper at UCSC for eleven years and was readmitted as a student last spring to finish the degree she started on 26 years ago. Her goal is to learn as much about linguistics as she can and graduate in the spring of 2021, possibly continuing her education towards a Masters degree after that. Receiving the Silver Slug Award scholarship for the second year will be extremely helpful and the money will be used for the next year’s tuition. This will help her to be able to focus on school and not have to work beyond the 40 hours at UCSC. She is hoping that being finally able to get her degree will allow her to put her skills and knowledge to good use and help others that have struggled because of language barriers.

## RETIREES ASSOCIATION BRUCE LANE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS



**Marco Carmona** enlisted in the U.S. Army National Guard in 2006 and was honorably discharged in 2012 after a one-year tour in Iraq. He mainly worked in communication security as a radio operator and was the company's Electronic Warfare Officer. The responsibilities inspired him and encouraged him to go to college and major in Computer Engineering, specializing in robotics. The military had shown him how to be patient and disciplined in pursuing a goal and how to be a team leader. His goal is to receive a PhD in Computer Engineering with a thesis on Autonomous Driving. His greatest challenge is having enough time to complete his assignments and research. Being a TA takes a lot of time from his schedule, but it helps to pay his way. He doesn't make

enough money to afford books, tools, or attend necessary conferences. The difference between his monthly bills and income is about \$400 and doesn't account for unforeseen expenses. The Retirees Association Bruce Lane Scholarship will help him tremendously.

**Nicholas Mason** was in the Army for 6 ½ years spending time in South Korea, Kentucky, Hawaii, Iraq, and India. The Army taught him patience, the ability to focus on the task at hand, the ability to identify unsafe behavior, and "stick-to-itiveness." He is in his second year of graduate school and hopes to publish his research findings soon. His future goal is to work as a professional geologist and maybe teach at a community college. His greatest challenge was being dyslexic so some things were difficult to contend with. But he is a hard worker and that pulled him through. He spends a little over 50% of his VA benefits on rent. That doesn't include food or any other life-sustaining things that must be purchased. He will use the Retirees Association Bruce Lane Scholarship money for food and textbooks. He commented on how much this scholarship means to the veteran community.



**Heather Rose Mentzer** feels that time in the Marine Corps fortified her character by instilling discipline, leadership, managerial skills, and the technical acumen to secure any aviation-related occupation she may want. Her duties as a Helicopter Crew Chief included mechanical maintenance systems troubleshooting, repair of the aircraft, and aerial gunnery and cargo management while in flight. She was promoted and became an instructor in her field. While deployed to Afghanistan she witnessed the deaths of several men she was close to. She felt she could let grief consume her or choose to live her life in their honor. She chose to become a physicist. While her position as a Physics Teaching Assistant

(20 hrs/wk) provides many benefits, this scholarship will help her cover a number of campus fees.