

UCLA Today

Faculty and Staff News

[Advanced Search](#)

- [Home](#)
- [All Stories](#)**
- [Top Stories](#)
- [People](#)
- [Voices](#)
- [Around Campus](#)
- [Faculty Bulletin Board](#)
- [Archives](#)

[Contact Info](#)

Quick Links

- [Faculty Resources](#)
- [Human Resources News](#)
- [UCOP at Your Service](#)
- [UCLA Sports](#)
- [UCLA Health Care](#)
- [UCLA on YouTube](#)
- [UCLA on Facebook](#)
- [UCLA on iTunes U](#)

[UCLA Today](#) → [All Stories](#)

Share: [t](#) [+](#) [f](#)

Jul 22, 2011 • By [V. Claire Jadulang](#)

[Print this Page](#) [Mail this Page](#)

Vietnam vet collects money, friendly waves for wounded warriors



Ric Ryan (left) takes a tour of the helipad at the Reagan UCLA Medical Center with Richard Azar, director of Operation Mend. Ryan came to the hospital to present \$6,500 in checks, money he raised for Operation Mend.

Former Marine Ric Ryan knows the value of a friendly wave from a passing driver as he walks the roads near his rural hometown in Calaveras County.

It not only makes him feel supported by his community, but for the last three years, it's meant 25 cents more that he added to a fund to help wounded service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan get expert medical care.

For the past three years, Ryan, a Vietnam veteran, has undertaken a one-man effort to raise money for UCLA Operation Mend, a program that provides reconstructive surgery and other medical specialties at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center to service members injured in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition to

his quarters-per-wave, others in and around his hometown heard about Ryan's one-man fundraising effort, drivers who spotted him on his walks began pulling over and handing him donations.

After walking more than 3,000 miles while wearing a bright orange safety vest marked USMC, Ryan and his family came to UCLA Friday, July 22, to donate \$6,500 he's raised from his "wave" campaign. Ryan said he learned about Operation Mend from a television news story. Having served two years from 1964 to 1968 in Vietnam, Ryan knew that Vietnam veterans were treated with disrespect after returning home.

He said he realized he could make a difference in the lives of today's service members by raising money to provide medical care to America's wounded warriors.

To find out more about Operation Mend, visit [this website](#).

-  [Sign Up for UCLA Today Headlines by E-mail](#)
-  [Sign Up for Our RSS](#)
-  [Contribute News Tips](#)

UCLA Today

[Waging war against the superbug](#)

[Vietnam vet collects money, friendly waves for wounded warriors](#)

[UC med centers save \\$1B-plus in purchases](#)

[View All Stories](#)

UCLA Newsroom

[UCLA faculty expert advisory: Debt ceiling debate](#)

[UCLA Headlines July 22, 2011](#)

[Life scientists use novel technique to produce genetic map for African Americans](#)

[Visit UCLA Newsroom](#)