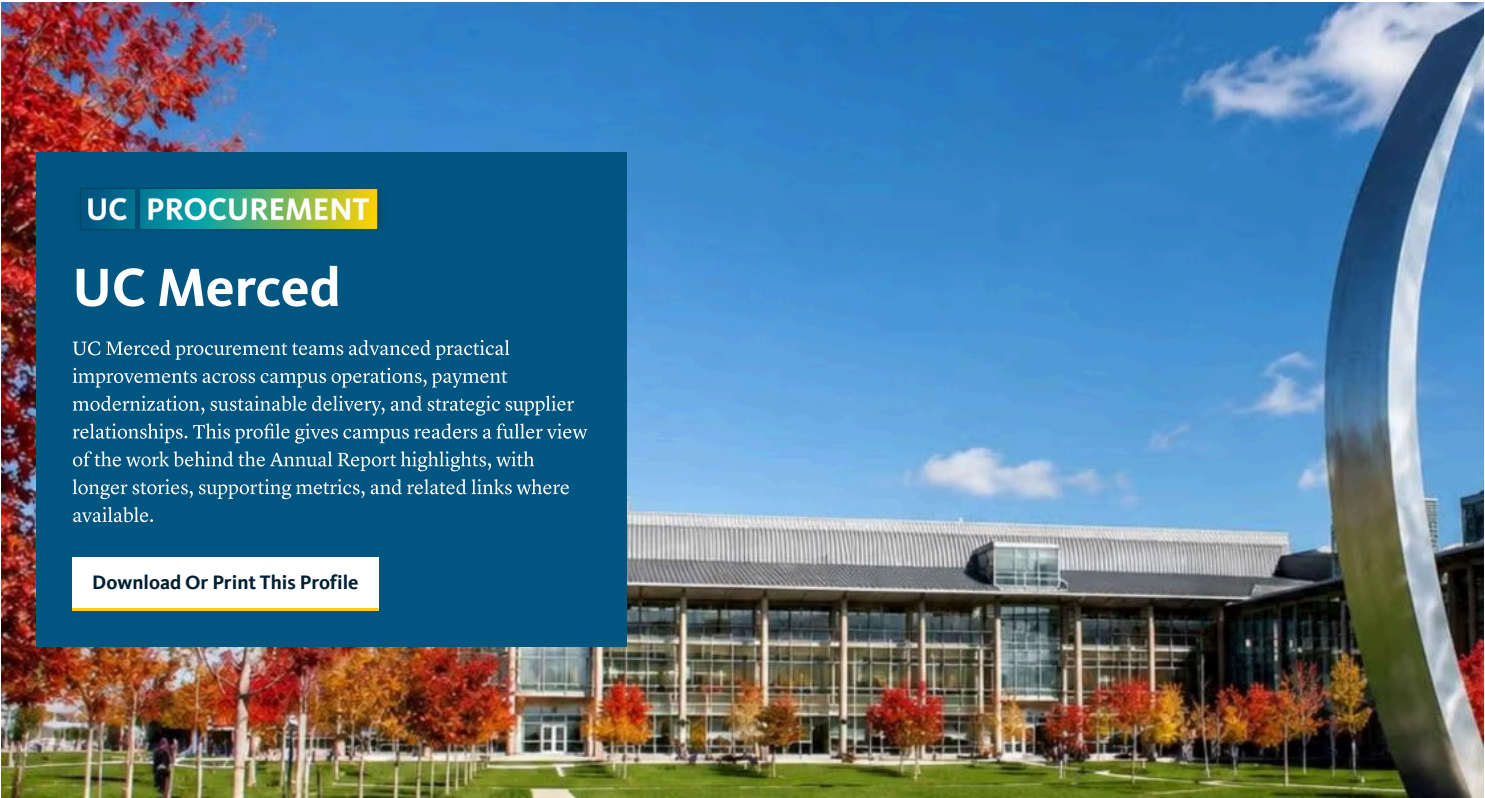




UC PROCUREMENT

UC Merced

UC Merced procurement teams advanced practical improvements across campus operations, payment modernization, sustainable delivery, and strategic supplier relationships. This profile gives campus readers a fuller view of the work behind the Annual Report highlights, with longer stories, supporting metrics, and related links where available.

Download Or Print This Profile

\$5.2M

Benefit Delivered

The value procurement delivered back to the university

23.5%

Economic Impact Spend

Toward UC 25% goal

~\$170K

Documented Cost Avoidance

Via implementation of its BobcatBuy+ Labviva platform

UC Merced Achievements by Strategic Pillar

- Economic and Community Impact
- Strategic Partnerships
- Drive Value and Savings
- Continuous Improvement
- Risk Management

Economic and Community Impact

Advancing Sustainability Through Strategic Purchasing

UC Merced strengthened sustainable purchasing practices and earned its first EPEAT Purchaser Award for environmentally responsible electronics procurement.



Challenge

Environmentally responsible electronics purchasing and related campus sustainability projects needed closer supplier, marketplace, and Sustainability Office coordination.

Approach

UC Merced received its first EPEAT Purchaser Award, recognizing the University's leadership in environmentally responsible electronics procurement. Merced strengthened its sustainable purchasing practices through supplier partnerships, marketplace configurations, and eProcurement guided buying that prioritizes sustainable products.

Result

Why it matters

These efforts reduced reliance on less sustainable products, supported lower energy use and waste, and embedded environmental considerations more directly into everyday purchasing decisions.

At a Glance

First EPEAT Award

UC Merced's first Purchaser Award recognition

Sustainable Buying

Marketplace configurations and guided buying prioritize environmentally preferable products

Procurement also deepened its partnership with the campus Sustainability Office by providing sourcing and acquisition support for environmental initiatives, including a fast-tracked sustainable hydration solution for commencement ceremonies.

Related Links:

[2026 EPEAT Purchaser Awards](#)

[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Innovating Asset Recovery and Circular Economy Practices

UC Merced launched a digital surplus storefront within UC to make asset reuse, resale, and recovery more accessible.



Challenge

University assets ready for reuse were hard to see and sell. UC Merced needed a digital surplus channel that could recover value and keep usable equipment out of the waste stream.

Approach

UC Merced launched their first digital surplus-property storefront of its kind, creating a new channel for the sale, reuse, and recovery of university assets. Led by the Equipment and Surplus team, the online storefront expands visibility into available property, improves customer access, and simplifies sales transactions.

Result

The platform reduces administrative effort, creates new opportunities to recover value, and helps keep usable equipment out of the waste stream.

Related Links:

[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Why it matters

Its scalable design positions UC Merced as an innovator in surplus management and circular-economy practices, with the potential to inform similar approaches across other UC locations as interest grows.

At a Glance

Greater Visibility
Makes available surplus property easier for customers to find

Circular Economy
Supports reuse and keeps usable equipment out of the waste stream

UC Merced Advances Renewable Energy and Sustainability Through Strategic Partnership

UC Merced is helping shape the next generation of renewable infrastructure through an agrivoltaic and battery-storage initiative.



Challenge

Modernizing the campus solar field with agrivoltaic and battery storage required a sourcing strategy that balanced innovation, risk, compliance, and lifecycle value.

Approach

Why it matters

The collaboration shows how early procurement engagement can shape complex infrastructure investments and align them with long-term institutional priorities.

At a Glance

Agrivoltaics
Combines renewable-energy generation with agricultural land use

Early Procurement Engagement
Sourcing strategy balances innovation, risk, compliance, and lifecycle value

Long-Term Focus
Designed to support sustainability and future utility-cost reduction

UC Merced Procurement & Contracting Services partnered with Facilities Management on an initiative to modernize the campus solar field with agrivoltaic and battery energy-storage technology. Procurement translated technical, environmental, operational, and financial objectives into a sourcing strategy balancing innovation, risk management, compliance, and lifecycle value.

Result

The project expects to strengthen energy resilience, improve reliability, reduce future utility costs, and advance campus sustainability goals. Its agrivoltaic approach combines renewable-energy generation with agricultural land use, increasing the value of campus resources.

Related Links:
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

UC Merced Procurement Boosts Smart Farm Partnership Revenue

Strategic procurement helped UC Merced’s Experimental Smart Farm generate nearly \$485,000 while supporting research, restoration, and student opportunities.



Challenge

The Experimental Smart Farm needed financial and operational terms that would support native seed crops, research, restoration, and student work without leaving value on the table.

Approach

UC Merced Procurement partnered with Valley Eco and campus researchers to establish and manage native seed crops at the 40-acre Experimental Smart Farm, supporting the Merced Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program.

Result

Working with Professor Joshua Viers and Valley Eco, Procurement optimized financial and operational terms and helped maximize total project revenue to nearly \$485,000.

Related Links:
[UC Merced's Experimental Smart Farm](#)
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Why it matters

The project expands research capacity, advances climate resilience and regional restoration, and creates student employment opportunities while demonstrating how strategic procurement can support sustainability, agricultural innovation, and community-focused land repurposing.

At a Glance

Nearly \$485K
Total project revenue

40 Acres
Experimental Smart Farm supporting native seed crops

Student Opportunities
Partnership creates employment and hands-on engagement

Classic Movie Inspires UC Merced Massive Book Donation

UC Merced turned a surplus challenge into community impact by donating an estimated 10,000–15,000 books to federalprison libraries.



Challenge

Nearly 10 months of stored books, about 20 pallets, had few takers. UC Merced Surplus needed a home for an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 volumes.

Approach

UC Merced Surplus and Equipment Management stored approximately 20 pallets of books removed during a facility consolidation. With few organizations interested in accepting such a large collection, finding a new home

Why it matters

A surplus challenge became an opportunity to support literacy, learning, and rehabilitation.

At a Glance

10K–15K Books
Estimated number donated to federal prison libraries

10 Months
Collection remained in storage while the team searched for a recipient

Community Impact
Surplus materials redirected toward literacy, learning, and rehabilitation

for the books proved challenging, until inspiration struck from an unlikely source - the Shawshank Redemption movie.

Result

Inspired by the film's prison library storyline, Equipment Manager Rick Talamantes contacted the Atwater Federal Penitentiary. Working with the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Education Department, the team coordinated the sorting and donation of an estimated 10,000 - 15,000 books to federal prison libraries.

Related Links:

[UC Merced's Shawshank Redemption Inspires Massive Book Donation](#)
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Strategic Partnerships

Enabling NCAA Advancement Through Cross-Functional Partnership

UC Merced supported NCAA advancement by accelerating the contracts, technology, equipment, and infrastructure needed for the transition.



Challenge

NCAA designation required an accelerated set of athletic acquisitions and contracts. Procurement had to move with Athletics, Finance, and campus leadership on a compressed schedule.

Approach

As UC Merced pursued NCAA designation, procurement partnered with Athletics, Finance, and campus leadership to meet an accelerated schedule of acquisitions and contracts.

Result

The team negotiated agreements for ticketing and athletic-performance platforms and supported required infrastructure and equipment.

Related Links:

[Procurement Powers NCAA Transition with Tech Wins](#)
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Why it matters

The effort demonstrates how responsive service, supplier negotiation, and cross-functional planning can advance a high-priority institutional initiative.

At a Glance

NCAA Advancement

Procurement supported a high-priority institutional transition

Cross-Functional Effort

Athletics, Finance, Procurement, and campus leadership worked together

UC Merced PepsiCo Agreement Delivers Long-Term Value

UC Merced transformed a routine contract renewal into a broader PepsiCo partnership delivering immediate incentives and ongoing campus value.



Challenge

Why it matters

Beyond the financial value, the agreement includes marketing support, Gatorade Sideline Fund resources, opportunities to pilot emerging food and beverage programs, and flexibility to support future campus needs.

At a Glance

\$77K

Actualized incentives secured through the agreement

~\$22K Annually

Estimated value-based benefits

Broader Value

Includes marketing support, Gatorade Sideline Fund resources, and

A routine PepsiCo renewal was not enough. UC Merced needed a multi-year agreement that aligned Athletics, Housing, Hospitality, and Sustainability with measurable value.

Approach

UC Merced transformed a contract renewal into a multi-year strategic partnership with PepsiCo, securing \$77,000 in actualized incentives and an estimated \$22,000 in annual value-based benefits.

Result

Led by the campus Category Manager for Auxiliary Services, negotiations brought together Athletics, Housing and Auxiliary Services, Hospitality and Catering, and Sustainability to align the agreement with institutional priorities and UC policy.

Related Links:
[Strategic Partnership Delivers Long-term Value for Merced](#)
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

At a Glance

opportunities to pilot new programs

Drive Value and Savings

Leveraging Digital Procurement Solutions to Deliver Value

BobcatBuy+ is helping UC Merced improve purchasing decisions, expand supplier access, and generate measurable cost avoidance through digital procurement tools.



Challenge

Campus users needed better supplier access, pricing transparency, and decision support in BobcatBuy+. Tail spend and equivalent-product choices were still hard to manage.

Approach

UC Merced continued to expand the value of BobcatBuy+ powered by Labviva, improving supplier access, pricing transparency, and purchasing decision support for campus users. During FY26, the platform generated approximately \$170,000 in documented cost avoidance, including \$77,000 linked to tools that identify lower-cost equivalent products across suppliers.

Result

Procurement also collaborated with Labviva to enhance search, introduce AI-enabled quote processing, and improve supplier visibility.

Related Links:
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Why it matters

Marketplace participation has grown by more than 40 suppliers over two years, increasing competition, supporting economic and community impact, and helping consolidate tail spend.

At a Glance

~\$170K

Documented cost avoidance

\$77K

Cost avoidance linked to lower-cost equivalent product tools

40+ Suppliers

Added to marketplace participation over two years

UC Merced Earns Best in Class Recognition for P-Card Program

UC Merced earned Best in Class recognition as expanded P-Card use helped strengthen payment efficiency and reduce reliance on one-time purchase orders.



Challenge

UC Merced needed to expand P-Card adoption and reduce one-time purchase orders for eligible non-catalog buying, with card use strong enough to earn external recognition.

Approach

Program improvements included promoting Amazon Business, shifting utility bills and approved contracted services to P-Card, and prioritizing P-Card over one-time purchase orders for eligible non-catalog purchases.

Result

UC Merced received a Best in Class award at the UC/U.S. Bank Annual P-Card Conference in October 2025, recognizing the campus's work to strengthen card adoption and payment efficiency.

Related Links:

[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Why it matters

The quarterly report cites 20.45% growth in P-Card usage in 2024, demonstrating the program's momentum as UC Merced expands card-based purchasing and reduces reliance on more labor-intensive payment pathways.

At a Glance

Best in Class

Recognition received at the UC/U.S. Bank Annual P-Card Conference

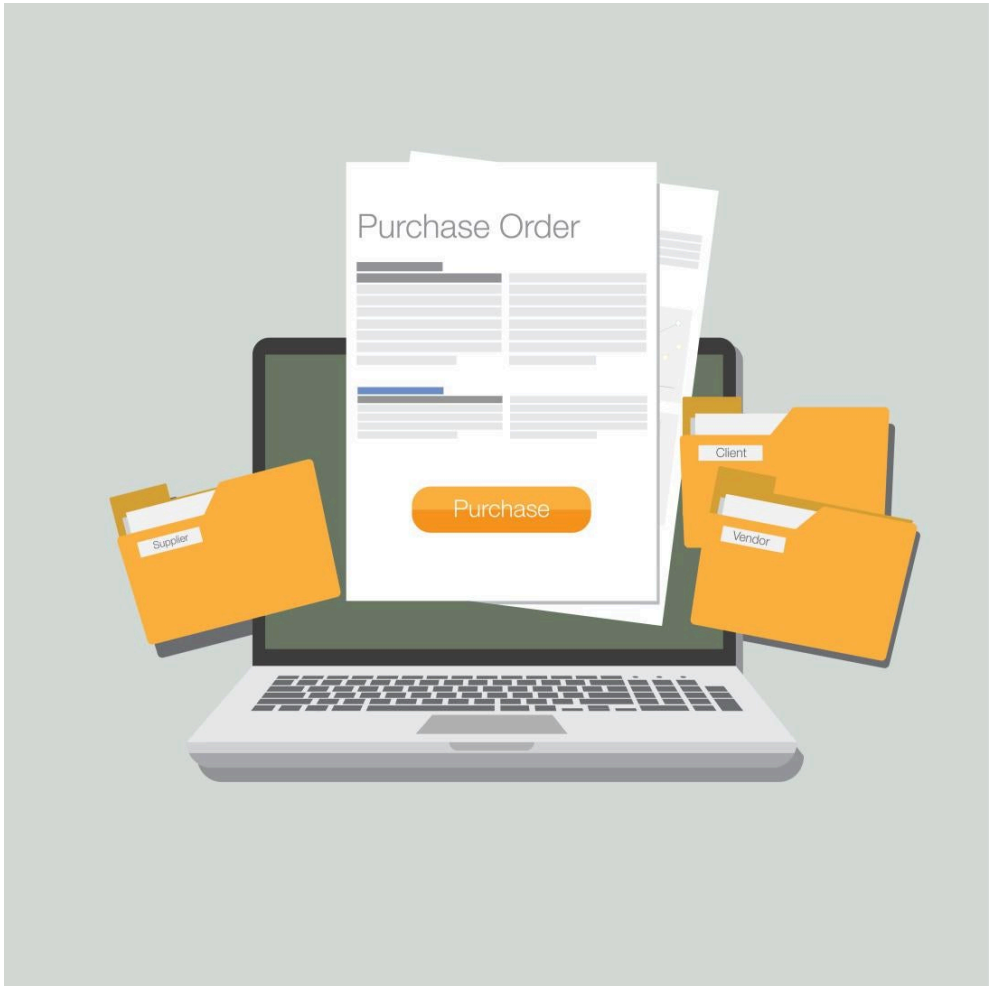
More Card Adoption

Amazon Business, utilities, and eligible contracted services shifted toward P-Card use

Continuous Improvement

Driving Operational Excellence Through Process Innovation

A redesigned annual PO workflow helped UC Merced issue 92% of annual purchase orders on time for the start of the fiscal year.



Challenge

Annual purchase-order renewals were mixed into daily transactional work, leaving too little time to review, approve, and validate pricing before the fiscal year began.

Why it matters

The redesigned workflow produced a major improvement in service delivery: 92% of annual purchase orders were issued on time on July 1, compared with 37% in the prior year.

At a Glance

92% On Time

Annual purchase orders issued on July 1

Dedicated Workflow

More time for review, approvals, and pricing validation before the fiscal year begins

Earlier Preparation

More time for review, approvals, and pricing validation before the fiscal year begins

Approach

UC Merced Procurement partnered with Financial Information Systems to redesign the annual purchase order workflow in Oracle, creating a dedicated process that separates annual renewals from daily transactional activity.

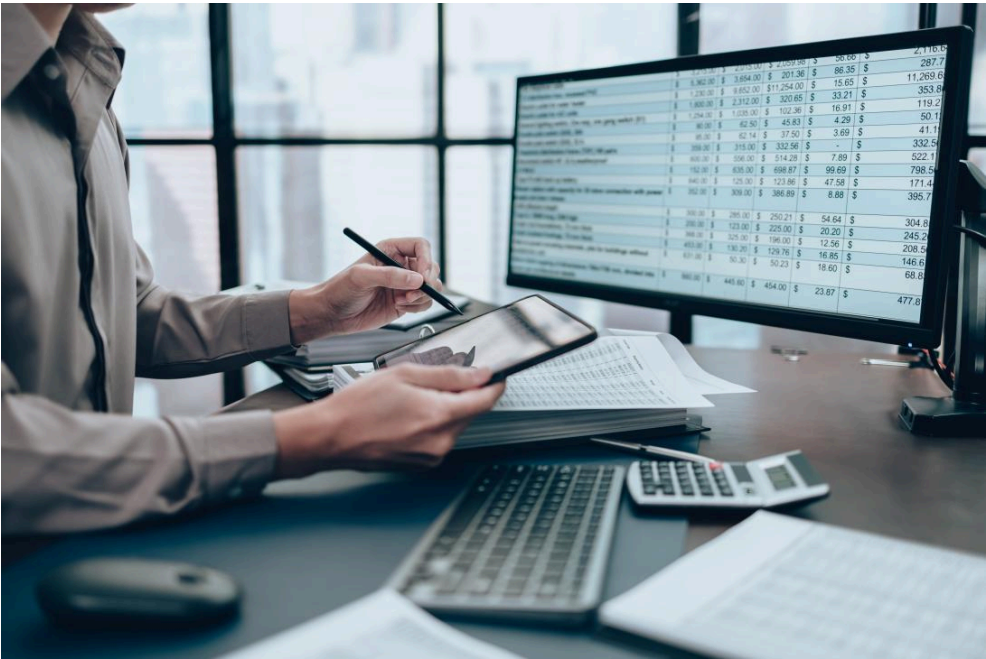
Result

The new approach allows buyers to prepare transactions in advance, complete reviews, secure approvals, and validate pricing before the start of the fiscal year while maintaining compliance and balancing team workloads.

Related Links:
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Expanding Self-Service Procurement Capabilities

UC Merced expanded self-service purchasing to give campus users more direct buying options while preserving Procurement capacity for higher-value work.



Challenge

Too much routine buying still required procurement staff. UC Merced needed controlled self-service options that would improve the user experience and free time for sourcing and contracting.

Approach

UC Merced expanded self-service purchasing through training and targeted outreach, granting catalog access to 128 new users and moving an academic support organization to the Procurement Card program.

Result

The effort contributed to a 2.6% year-over-year increase in Procurement Card spending, representing about \$175,000 in additional activity.

Related Links:
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Why it matters

By increasing controlled self-service options, Procurement improved the user experience and preserved staff capacity for strategic sourcing and contracting.

At a Glance

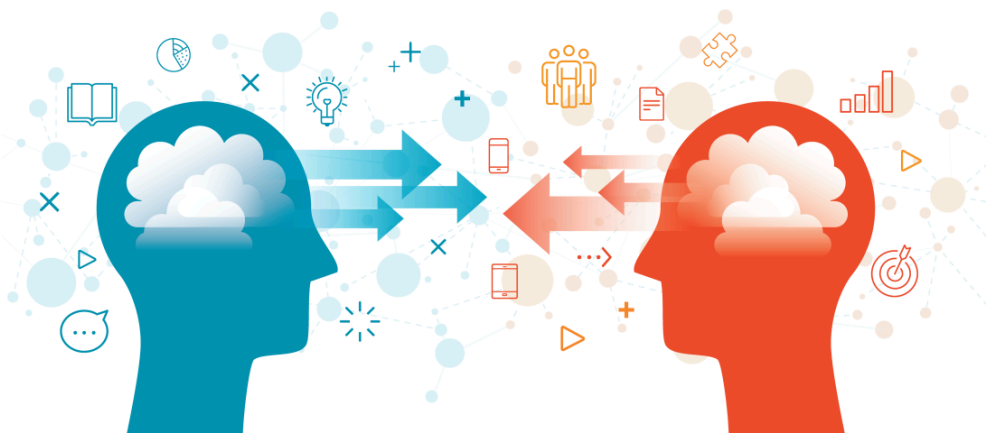
128 New Users
Granted access to catalog purchasing

2.6% Growth
Year-over-year increase in Procurement Card spending

~\$175K
Additional P-Card activity

Supporting Student Success Through Strategic Sourcing

UC Merced Procurement helped source a modern student-success platform designed to replace fragmented systems and support more connected advising and case management.



Why it matters

The selected approach is designed to replace multiple decentralized systems and integrate with existing enterprise technology, demonstrating Procurement’s role in guiding complex acquisitions tied to institutional priorities.

At a Glance

Competitive Sourcing
Market research, supplier

Challenge

Student-success advising and case management ran on multiple decentralized systems. The campus needed a competitively sourced CRM platform that could integrate with existing technology.

Approach

UC Merced Procurement partnered with Information Technology and campus stakeholders to source a modern CRM, advising, and case-management platform supporting student success.

Result

The competitive process included market research, supplier demonstrations, stakeholder engagement, and formal proposal evaluation.

Related Links:
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

At a Glance

demonstrations, and formal proposal evaluation

Cross-Functional Effort
Procurement partnered with Information Technology and campus stakeholders

Integrated Platform
Designed to replace multiple decentralized student-support systems

UC Merced Micro-Conference Builds Systemwide Capability

UC Merced brought more than 400 participants together to strengthen property and equipment lifecycle knowledge across the UC system.

Challenge

Property and equipment lifecycle practice was uneven across UC. Campuses needed a shared forum on acquisition, system-of-record controls, reporting, disposition, and sponsor compliance.

Approach

UC Merced's Property & Equipment Life Cycle Management micro-conference brought together more than 400 in-person and online participants from across the UC system.

Result

Featuring Stanford Senior Director of Property Management Ivonne Bachar, the November 2025 event focused on the full property lifecycle - from acquisition and system-of-record controls through reporting and disposition - while reinforcing UC and sponsor compliance requirements.

Related Links:
[Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

Why it matters

The event strengthened cross-functional knowledge sharing and increased awareness of capital-asset classification, property controls, and campus procedures.

At a Glance

400+ Participants
Joined in person and online from across the UC system

Full Asset Lifecycle
Covered acquisition, system controls, reporting, disposition, and compliance

Risk Management

Building Partnerships to Deliver Solutions and Support Student Success

With only five days to act, UC Merced coordinated contracting and risk approvals in time for students to compete—and win—the Timber Strong Build Competition.



Challenge

Five days before the Timber Strong Build Competition, UC Merced still needed a recreational-space rental agreement and nonstandard insurance approval.

Approach

Five days before UC Merced's Timber Strong Build Competition, Procurement & Contracting Services received an urgent request for a recreational-space rental agreement with Merced Irrigation District and approval of nonstandard insurance coverage. Recognizing the importance of the event for students, Procurement immediately

Why it matters

This outcome demonstrates how strong campus and community relationships, clear communication, and a solution-oriented mindset helps Procurement navigate complex requirements and deliver results under intense time constraints.

At a Glance

5 Days
Available to complete the rental agreement and insurance approvals

Cross-Functional Response
Procurement partnered with Risk Management to expedite requirements

coordinated contract negotiations while partnering with Risk Management to expedite review, approvals, and certificate issuance.

Result

All requirements were completed in time for the competition, and UC Merced students went on to win the event against UC Berkeley.

Related Links:

- [Bobcats Outbuild Bears in Timber Strong Competition](#)
- [Related Annual Report pillar page](#)

At a Glance

Competition Win

UC Merced students went on to win the event!!

Explore the FY26 Annual Report

Economic and Community Impact

Enhance opportunities, sustainability, and community value.

Strategic Partnerships

Partnerships that extend campus and systemwide impact.

Drive Value and Savings

Financial stewardship, savings, and total value.

Continuous Improvement

Better processes, tools, services, and training.

Risk Management

Compliance, resilience, and risk reduction.