

## Interview with UCI Police Dept.

# Officer Sam Soon



Sam Soon  
Officer, UC Irvine Police

### Why did you choose law enforcement as a career?

When I was in college, I attended the University of California, Irvine. I had started out as an undecided/undeclared major but eventually decided on majoring in criminology because I had some general interests in that field of study. I had a desire to work in a field that I will not get tired of.

### Is UCIPD the kind of place, where you don't get tired of coming to work?

Everyone here is a good person... everyone wants to help. I enjoy the company of my coworkers and there is always something new that is present at work.

### How many years have you worked in law enforcement? How many years at UCI?

I spent six years in the academy. After that I went on to work for two and a half years in law enforcement, both those years have been at UCI.

### Why work at UCI specifically?

I am originally from Temecula with some family in Hawaii but I decided to work at UCI because that was how everything had worked out for me. UCI was the first to respond to me as well as giving me the best offer.

### What is your favorite sports team?

I love playing basketball so it is obvious that my favorite sports team is the Los Angeles Lakers. I enjoy playing basketball with students at the ARC who have no idea that they are playing with a police officer. Along with basketball, I also enjoy watching the Steelers play football.

### What's your favorite food?

This question is a no brainer my favorite food is Japanese food.

### Where do you want to travel to next?

I am interest in traveling to Europe, specifically London and all of Spain. Along with those place, I also would like to travel to Iceland.

### What's your most memorable moment as an officer?

When I was just starting out on my job during the first couple of months, I went out on a call for an armed student with plans to "shoot-up the school." I had to search the campus quickly without allowing the other students to panic as well as not letting the suspect find-out.

*"I've been everywhere... UCI is awesome."*

### What's your advice for students at UCI?

My advice for students at UCI is to first, take advantage of all the opportunities present at UCI because this school provides better opportunities than most in the entire world. I believe that students should enjoy UCI's unique, diverse, and welcoming community while they still can. I've been everywhere... UCI is awesome.

### What's the one thing you want the campus to know about why you come to work every day?

I want the campus to know that I come to work every day is to simply keep people safe by dealing with everything on a broad scale such as car accidents and escorts. I also want to help people understand that what you see on the media is not the full story. I believe that people should contextualize what they see in the news such as the demographics and the way things are as well as the quality of life because it is different out there.

Remember to contextualize what you see in the news; the demographics and the way things are done — just the quality of life, is different out there. I am also passionate about people not being too quick to judge a police officer, many people do not want the police to judge based on looks yet they themselves judge and profile the

*"A majority of the time, my job involves simply talking to people."*

police. A majority of the time, my job involves simply talking to people.

There was a time where I had opened the door for a lady and the lady had said to me, "thank you – don't shoot!" This had made me very confused for there are rarely ever any shootings in Irvine, let alone by a cop.

What can come from a fight, or use of force there is the criminal aspect and the civil aspect, you could lose your home, your job — I don't understand that people would risk it. Try not to think of it as good guys and bad guys but what would be the right thing to do. Remember that just taking someone to jail does not necessarily solve anything. That is how you make a difference with people. The sad thing is, certain areas require different police work. To adapt to that, certain authorities need to take-on a powerful and forceful persona. It's very "Hollywood" to de-contextualize that fact. A stolen laptop or a car accident is just not as exciting as anything else. No-one likes to think about the boring stuff we do. That would be my recommendation: to just make money and be with people you like — you don't need anything else.

