

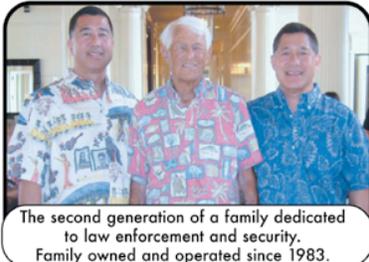


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A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III, piloted by alumnus Lt. Col. Brian Peters, flies over Cal State LA during the 2018 Veterans Day Ceremony. Photo credit: J. Emilio Flores/Cal State LA.

## Air Force colonel flies over his alma mater during annual Cal State LA Veterans Day Ceremony

Cal State LA alumnus Lt. Col. Brian Peters returned to his alma mater Thursday, two decades after walking the campus as a student. But this time his view was 1,000 feet up from the university, overlooking Alhambra.

Lt. Col. Peters piloted a massive U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III over Cal State LA as part of the university's 2018 Veterans Day Ceremony. The roar of the 174-foot aircraft broke the silence of the crisp fall afternoon air as the crowd gathered in the University-Student Union Plaza stared up at the sky in awe.

"When I went to Cal State LA, it was never something I dreamt of," Lt. Col. Peters said of the flyover. He graduated in 1997 with a bachelor's degree in industrial technology. "Now, how cool is this? My career is coming full circle."

The flyover opened the Nov. 8 event, which honored the service and sacrifice of military veterans, including Cal State LA's more than 360 student veterans.

Dani Molina, a U.S. Army veteran and director of the Cal State LA Veterans Resource Center, delivered opening remarks acknowledging the sacrifices of those who have served in the military.

The keynote speaker was U.S. Marine Corps veteran Marshall W. Thomas, director of Active Duty and Veterans Affairs at the California State University Office of the Chancellor.

Mr. Thomas told guests the story of Cal State LA's founding in 1947. The university was created by the state legislature in response to a rapid influx in veterans and others in Los Angeles seeking an education

after World War II. "The foundation of this institution is veterans," Mr. Thomas said. "That generation of veterans that Cal State LA served in the '40s and '50s went on to do some amazing things."

The ceremony was sponsored by the Division of Student Life, Veterans Resource Center and Associated Students, Inc.

The C-17 Globemaster III from the flyover has a wingspan of nearly 170 feet and is assigned to the 452nd Air Mobility Wing at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County. The cargo compartment can fit helicopters and tanks or be converted into a mobile hospital.

In his 18-year Air Force Reserve career, Lt. Col. Peters has often flown the same model of aircraft on trips to airlift patients out of combat zones or deliver equipment to military bases overseas.

Thursday's flyover was his first in Los Angeles County and second ever. Earlier this year he flew over Angel Stadium in Anaheim for Major League Baseball's opening day.

"There's a different electricity in the air when the flyover happens," Lt. Col. Peters said, who is also a pilot for Alaska Airlines.

Military flyovers give the public a chance to see large military aircraft in action up close without being in danger, Lt. Col. Peters said. But, he emphasized, flyovers are more than a celebration of a particular aircraft.

"I am just the lucky one that gets to fly," he said. "It's in honor of those who served — it's for them and their families — to remind them that they're not forgotten."

Sam's Barber shop is marking its 45<sup>th</sup> year of collecting and distributing toys and money to Friends of Foster Children in San Gabriel Valley. Donations are accepted until December 15<sup>th</sup> so they can be distributed to the children in time for Christmas. Drop donations off at the barbershop or at the entrance to Santa Anita Mall in Arcadia.

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