

**UC Tech Awards 2023 Candidate**

**Category:** DEI LEADERSHIP
**Name:** Safa Hussain, ED Risk and Safety Solutions (1)
**Number of people:** (1)
**Location:** UC Davis

1. **Person submitting the application/nomination**
	1. Emily Slonim, Lead Communications Analyst, Risk and Safety Solutions, UCOP, Staff
	2. **Email address:** eslonim@ucdavis.edu
	3. **The name of your organization:** UCOP
2. **Award category** DEI Leadership
3. **Name of person, name of the team, or name of the project to receive the award** Safa Hussain
4. **All project team members - if applicable** N/A
5. **Which location was affected by the work? UC Davis, UCOP**
6. **Summary** Safa Hussain, nominated for the DEI Leadership Award, has shown exceptional dedication to creating a diverse, inclusive, and equitable work environment at Risk and Safety Solutions. His commitment extends beyond the department, with a focus on creating accessible solutions that meet ADA compliance, use gender-neutral language, and consider people's faith to ensure everyone can work safely.
7. **Narrative**

I am nominating Safa Hussain for the DEI Leadership Award on behalf of Risk and Safety Solutions because of his unwavering dedication to a diverse, inclusive, and equitable work environment. Risk and Safety Solutions (RSS) is a unique workplace, and that’s in large part because of Safa’s commitment to fostering a culture of safety, closing the gender pay gap, and supporting underrepresented groups in the technology industry. I have spent my career in many roles across many industries, but Risk and Safety Solutions is the first department I’ve been a part of that truly supports women in the workplace. Over 50% of the leadership at RSS are individuals who identify as women, and all our teams, from developers to marketers, have representation from all genders.

Risk and Safety Solutions provides safety technology for the ten University of California campuses and the six health systems. Over the past fifteen years, we have grown substantially and expanded to support safety programs in organizations across industries nationwide. With Safa at the helm, our solutions are inherently equitable for everyone who uses them.

Safa addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion proactively and transparently so that every team member is aware of and involved in the University of California’s mission and values. Safa encourages our participation in civic engagement, whether it is through action campaigns (e.g., exercise your right to vote), formal department dialogue, written statements issued to the community giving our stance on current events, or conversations with colleagues.

He promotes diversity by encouraging the creation of internal workgroups and provides the resources for those workgroups to be successful. Safa created the Social Justice group where interested staff can gather to share information, host events, and develop and implement initiatives to the benefit of the RSS staff. Safa has spearheaded several initiatives to support engagement and believes the team should feel safe sharing ideas at work. No matter how small these efforts seem, he has created a culture where every step is valued as necessary.

Safa instigated the Accessibility Committee, whose focus is to review our website, solutions, and communications on a continual basis to ensure that we are making every effort to be inclusive in what we provide to the community. The Accessibility Committee is an interdepartmental group that meets bi-weekly to discuss current trends and concerns in the world of accessibility. The committee ensures that Risk and Safety Solutions is accountable to our inclusion and accessibility goals, whether digitally, within our office, or in our community.

As a department, we are encouraged to seek accessibility training, share best practices, and reflect on our practices to see where we can improve. We also research current technology to make our digital assets more inclusive, for example, purchasing voice-over software that includes subtitles and ensuring that all videos are accessible to all audiences. Instilled at RSS is the understanding that accessibility is an iterative process, and we should strive for constant improvement.

Safa’s dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion expands beyond our department. Safa believes that our solutions should reflect the culture of RSS; therefore, they are designed with every user in mind. Safa created a UX/UI team that is dedicated to user experience and is trained to implement accessible features within our products. Every textual, visual, and interactive component is scrutinized so that people with all abilities can use our solutions easily. Our solutions are developed with gender-neutral language, meet accessibility and ADA compliance, and consider people’s faith and how that might impact their use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). There is an understanding within RSS that a person’s beliefs should never compromise their safety and that understanding has been integrated into our technology being used across the nation.

Safa’s genuine compassion toward all people is inspiring, and I enthusiastically put his name forward for the DEI Leadership Award.