UCR’s 62nd Commencement Evokes Memories of Perseverance, Triumph

Approximately 5,400 students have earned degrees this year

By Amy Zahn and Kris Lovekin

It takes perseverance and courage to make it to one of the seven graduation ceremonies to be held between Friday, June 10 and Monday, June 13 at UC Riverside’s 62nd annual commencement.

Approximately 5,400 students have earned degrees this year, and they join the ranks of more than 100,000 living UCR alumni around the world. Each graduate has a story about the support they received from family, faculty, staff and donors. Read about just a few.

Physics major Connor Richards, an academic star, will go from UCR to the University of Cambridge next fall to complete his masters in applied math and theoretical physics. After that he heads to Princeton University to begin his doctorate. He is one of the 4,662 UCR students registered to walk across the stage in the weekend ceremonies held outdoors, near the carillon tower.

Richards attributes the courage and determination that has driven his accomplishments at UCR – including winning the Donald A. Strauss, the Gates Cambridge and the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarships – to the support he received from his advisor and mentor, Professor of Physics Owen Long.

“I almost didn’t apply,” Richards said about the prestigious Goldwater scholarship he won when he was a sophomore. On the day before the deadline, he still didn’t have an essay he was happy with. His professor convinced him to persevere, despite the fact that it was rare for a sophomore to succeed.

“He cleared his calendar and sat down with me on the spot and spent two hours helping me with the essay that ended up winning this award,” said Richards. That success gave Richards the confidence to apply for – and win – other scholarships and to continue in his path to becoming a physics professor.
Creative writing major Jasleen Rivera, a single mom, said she has also seen the power of UCR’s faculty and staff. She was hospitalized near the end of her third year, unable to finish her spring quarter. A campus social worker helped her find a therapist and talked to her professors.

“Even though I went through that, they helped me stay in school and not give up,” Rivera said.

“When I first met her, she hid behind bangs that covered her face,” said Geoff Cohen, the director of UCR’s CHASS First program. “By the end of the quarter, you could see her eyes. During the third quarter, she had a class with novelist Susan Straight and that gave her the opportunity to find her voice.”

Rivera’s family feared that she would not graduate after the birth of her son, Akylas, during her fourth year. Now 10 months old, her son will be with her as she walks across the stage, waving at her proud family.

Without resources like the UCR Child Development Center, Rivera said completing her degree would not have been possible.

Maurice Kenner, a captain in the U.S. Army, will graduate with an MBA from the Anderson Graduate School of Management. His next move will be to the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he will work as one of the chief admissions officers, choosing qualified candidates to the very selective school. He said his MBA classes at UCR will help him apply business techniques and theory to advance the nation’s men and women in uniform. He hopes to be a general one day.

Nicholas Carrillo is graduating with a degree in Media and Cultural Studies and he uses theater, music and social media to make a large handprint on the world.

“He likes to unite the community and make sure everyone feels like they are part of the family,” said William Caganap, the director of the Asian Pacific Student Programs office.

Carrillo has starred in musicals, written his own songs, held elected office for ASUCR, all while getting his academics taken care of. “He is an amazing individual with a warm personality that makes you feel more at home,” Caganap said.

Biology majors Jade Zamorano and Hanni Schoniger have spent the last several years involved in various campus organizations, but their proudest achievement is co-founding and funding a science outreach club called Change in Scientific Importance for Youth, or Delta SIFY, they said.

“We try to bridge the educational opportunity gap in the Inland Empire,” said Zamorano. The club, funded by a Donald A. Strauss Scholarship that the pair won in 2015, holds career presentations about different STEM fields and financial aid workshops at local high schools to get younger, disadvantaged students interested in science.

Both Schoniger and Zamorano say experiences such as co-founding the club pushed them to become more confident.

“One thing I learned about UCR is that a lot of students are really involved in community outreach,” said Zamorano. “So I saw that as an opportunity to get involved in things that I was passionate about while at the same time feeling comfortable.”

Sammy Mbisike, 28, is graduating because of a work ethic and an optimistic nature that helped him hold down two jobs as well as full time studies as a political science major. A native of Nigeria, he came with his mother and sister to the United States in 2009. A resident of Chino, he transferred into UCR from community college. He works at Costco, drives for Uber and Lyft, and holds down a full-time academic schedule.
“UCR is very peaceful. My professors were willing to help me, and my counselors mapped out the classes for me to take,” he said. “UCR has been a life-changing experience.”

A naturalized citizen, he plans to live in Southern California, working in a career that combines art and the law.

**Friday, June 10**

6 p.m. The School of Business Administration.

**Saturday, June 11**

8 a.m. Graduate Division and Teacher Credential Program

6 p.m. College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

**Sunday, June 12**

8 a.m. College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Group one

6 p.m. College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Group two

**Monday, June 13**

8 a.m. College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Group three

6 p.m. Bourns College of Engineering

While many of this year’s ceremonies promise lots of sun, guests who are sensitive to the heat will have the chance to view a large screen live video feed of any ceremony from the climate-controlled University Lecture Hall or Watkins 1000. Tickets are not required to view these feeds, and the live feeds will also be available from the commencement homepage at www.commencement.ucr.edu.

All guests attending a commencement ceremony must have a ticket, and seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. For details regarding when to arrive and where to check-in and information about a specific ceremony, graduates should refer to the commencement homepage.

---

**Building Leaders from Within**

*UCR staff and faculty reflect on their participation in the inaugural CORO Fellowship program in 2015*

By Sandra Baltazar Martínez

Vice Chancellor Ron T. Coley and Provost Paul D'Anieri have a shared vision: to build UC Riverside’s future leaders.

How? By fostering and developing UCR’s own staff and faculty. For a second year in a row, UCR has sent personnel to participate in the CORO Fellowship program, a one-year leadership training session aimed at strengthening the skills of UCR’s own employees.
CORO is a San Francisco-based non-profit whose mission is to prepare people for leadership roles via hands on, collaborative learning. This is the second year the fellowship expanded to include participants from all UC campuses.

In the inaugural 2015 Southern California cohort 16 faculty and staff participated, including seven from UCR:

- Michael Nduati, associate dean of Clinical Affairs, LACE director, and director of hospital medicine;
- Tiffany Ana López, professor in the Department of Theatre, Film and Digital Production and Tomás Rivera endowed chair;
- Peter Graham, professor of philosophy and associate dean of student academic affairs;
- Jadie Lee, associate vice chancellor for human resources;
- Georgianne Carlson, associate vice chancellor and chief financial administrative officer for the Office of the Vice Chancellor, Business and Administrative Services;
- Jorge Ancona, assistant vice chancellor of alumni and constituent relations;
- Bobbi McCracken, associate vice chancellor of financial services.

The 2016 UC-wide cohort, already in session, has 42 participants. Of those, 22 are part of the Southern California group, eight of which are from UCR. The Southern California cohort is made up of UCR, UCI, UCLA, UCSD and UCSB. UC President Janet Napolitano encouraged this systemwide initiative.

Having a campus with strong leaders translates into a successful organization, said Coley, whose office sponsored the 2015 cohort.

The fact that both staff and faculty are willing to participate in CORO “speaks to the fact that our community really appreciates the value of leadership... exercising it, becoming more experts at it,” Coley said.

Commitment to the year long experience required all-day sessions once a month and putting in additional hours to complete their end-of-year project, “Recommendations for UC Revenue-Generating Business Contracts.” It was then presented to key UC stakeholders at the Office of the President.

Being a CORO fellow meant having access to UC’s senior leadership, which gave the team insight and in-depth understanding of how the UC system operates. Also, having a mix of staff and faculty, created opportunities for participants to learn from everyone’s job responsibilities and think of ways to help each other at UCR, as well as across the UC campuses.

For Provost Paul D’Anieri, supporting leadership training for both staff and faculty is something that he – and the rest of the leadership team – value. They want to support this type of environment, from the bottom up, he said.

UCR has many employees with great skills and his job, along with Coley and the rest of the leadership team, is to identify those skills and support the employee with training to reach their full potential. UCR is the only campus that sends both staff and faculty to this CORO program, he said. Both he and Coley are working on strategies to reinforce leadership here at UCR, he said.

“Our emphasis on CORO is really only the beginning of leadership development,” D’Anieri said.
Michael Nduati, for example, said CORO helped shape his goal of becoming a dean. He also completed the program understanding the importance of having a macro vision. In the medical field, he is now looking at how UCR and the rest of the medical campuses can have a larger impact across California.

“I’m thinking about the collaborative power and the impact as a whole UC system, working together, rather than working as individual campuses,” Nduati said.

The skills learned are skills that can be implemented immediately, said Peter Graham, who in the future sees himself as a dean, a provost or vice provost. The fellowship gave him a new set of tools to grow as a leader and to perfect things such as effectively running a meeting, delegating, and creating a culture of empowering people who work with him.

Also, based on recommendations from the inaugural Southern California cohort, the CORO Women’s Initiative for Empowerment was created. It’s a three-month program where currently 25 female UC employees participate in, and in which Tiffany Ana López serves as the only adjunct faculty member within the group. During one of the sessions, for example, they role-played how to negotiate when “high stake” ideas are on the table, López said.

“There is a need to cultivate more female leaders in the UC, something this branch of the CORO program seeks to address,” López said.

2015 CORO fellows reflect on their experience

Jorge Ancona

I can say without hesitation that the CORO program through UC has been one of the best leadership experiences in my 23 years with the University of California.

CORO gave me the gift of self-awareness; how I am perceived, an appreciation for that which I can offer, and stronger confidence in my ability to lead. It provided the tools to recognize and understand that which I am experiencing and the ability to adjust as needed. A quote that really resonated for me from the program was “We don’t learn by doing, we learn by reflecting on what we’ve done.”

Georgianne Carlson

Although rigorous, the CORO program was the best leadership development program that I’ve ever had the pleasure of participating in. The tools and methods covered in the program content were relevant to my position as associate vice chancellor and chief financial and administrative officer in BAS, and easy to implement. An unexpected benefit of the program was that it provided me with an opportunity not only to connect with leaders from other UC campuses, but also to build upon existing relationships with colleagues from UCR in a completely different setting and role. I can’t say enough about how valuable the program has been to me and highly recommend it.

Peter Graham

This ended up making a really big difference as a manager, as a supervisor, as someone that is goal-oriented. Developing people skills, communication... a lot of this is emotional intelligence, finding constructive and productive ways to get things done.

We acquired a tool set: for example, how to spend a budget for courses and reorganize staff. You recognize that there are the things you know – and the things you don’t. But then there are things you know that you don’t
know ... and if you don’t know them, you make a decision in the dark. This is when you bring in people to help you think things through. You have to become really methodical about thinking things through, on any topic.

**Jadie Lee**

The CORO Fellowship helped me build a network of colleagues from across the system. It gave us unparalleled access to campus leaders. We had a lot of time with them. That was an incredible experience. It helped to get a deeper understanding of the complexity and also the possibilities [within the UC system].

I came back with a deeper understanding of the role of a leader and the importance of a leader in creating an atmosphere to thrive.

We worked on a project on exploring revenue-building opportunities for the UC System and made a presentation at the Office of the President and to various chancellors who were there... it was gratifying to work on something that will have a systemwide impact.

**Tiffany Ana López**

I think CORO is an amazing leadership organization. What we learned became very generative for our students...and for mentoring our colleagues. It gives you really specific tools to make the work more impactful, from managing meetings, to innovating initiatives, managing teams, asking questions. Another thing CORO has done: it has allowed me to focus on the specificity of the UC.

For me, it’s about thinking of the UC as a business, thinking how we move the UC forward, seeing it as a whole. The success of UC depends on all of us, staff and faculty.

**Michael Nduati**

What I wanted to know was how all these pieces fit together.

One special piece from the fellowship is that you get to interact with the senior leadership team from every UC, you get one-on-one time with them and you learn about strengths and weaknesses. You get crucial insights you don’t get to hear on a daily basis.

For the future I’m thinking of how we can set up a relationship with all UC medical schools, how to bargain together with business vendors, for example.

One of the things we wanted to highlight was how important and valuable it is to include a combination of staff, faculty and administrators in one place. It allows you to see things from other peoples’ perspective and it creates synergy.

**The 2016 Southern California CORO cohort, UCR participants:**

- Kendrick Davis, director of medical education, research and evaluation, co-director of LACE and assistant adjunct professor
- Rebeccah Goldware, chief of staff for research and economic development
- Jennifer Hughes, associate professor of history
- Mariam Lam, vice chair for UCR Academic Senate, director of southeast Asian studies and associate profes-
A Look Back at a Year of Organizational Excellence

Several case studies were presented to demonstrate how OE actually facilitates change across campus.

By Kris Lovekin

During the May 11 Organizational Excellence (OE) campus wide event cohosted by Vice Chancellors Maria Anguiano and Ron Coley, the purpose and drive of OE came into focus: OE seeks to create a culture that inspires all members of our campus community to improve the use of available resources so that we operate at maximum productivity.

Seated to capacity, the event brought together faculty and staff from across campus to not only receive updates of what has recently been accomplished, but to also consider how OE might impact their individual work environments.

Provost Paul D’Anieri opened the event with a campus update, noting the significant increase in UCR federal research awards over the last several years, which is unusual for a public university given the current funding environment. The Provost also highlighted UCR’s impressive graduation rates among the diverse student population, calling it “the envy of other universities.” Later, he presented work group members with certificates in recognition of their significant efforts and contributions.

Members of the OE work groups also presented their research and recommendations to their peers. Founded last year, the work groups were charged to consider how best to incorporate OE throughout campus in four critical areas: creating a culture of collaboration and innovation, standardizing and streamlining business processes, and facilitating professional development.

“The work groups chronicled their respective journeys, candidly describing the importance and, at times, difficulty of collaboration and engagement,” Coley said.

“The work groups also provided recommendations to the campus regarding change management and LEAN methodology, clearly stating that none of the changes or productivity improvements are intended or expected to result in a reduction to campus staff since the campus is growing and needs additional capacity in every area.”

Several case studies were presented to demonstrate how OE actually facilitates change across campus, translating the OE principles and work group recommendations from theory into practical, relatable examples. For example, CHASS FAO Tanya Wine and Analyst Amanda Labagnara discussed recent capacity building efforts...
within the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS), including the transition of the CHASS payroll function to BAS Shared Services which has allowed CHASS staff to focus on other priorities.

CHASS also noted that the payroll change has been coupled with Dean Peña’s support of and regular attendance to the CHASS LEAN Book club. The example clearly resonated with the audience as the presenters expressed how the open support and encouragement of a senior leader, combined with OE efforts, has made a significant impact on their own professional development, with a corresponding increased capacity to perform their work. The event also provided an opportunity for the campus to collectively outline the path forward for OE. A participant survey identified onboarding, staffing constraints and the performance management process as the top “pain points” in need of improvements. Participants also indicated the need for leadership development and team-building training opportunities in order for OE to promote change at the departmental level.

The session closed with a workshop component where OE Ambassadors led table discussions, encouraging participants to consider how they could incorporate OE into their individual departments.

“The enthusiasm in the room was palpable during the robust report out as participants envisioned how OE could literally transform their organizations,” said Anguiano. “It is clear that Organizational Excellence will have its strongest impact when individuals within each organization take ownership of these OE principles and partner with leadership to bring forth effective solutions and improvements.”

---

**Staff Assembly Recognizes 20 Nominees That Go ‘Over and Beyond’ to Fulfill Their job Duties**

*The finalists met at the Chancellor’s residence on Monday, June 6 for a special evening*

By Sandra Baltazar Martínez

Twenty UC Riverside staff members have been recognized by their peers for going the extra mile in their respective jobs.

Eight finalists were distinguished within five award categories during a June 6 reception with Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox at the Chancellor’s residence.

“It’s to recognize the staff that is going over and beyond here at UCR,” said Vanessa Rocha, Staff Assembly’s director of involvement and recognition. Nominees were announced on May 17.

The eight winners were presented with a plaque, and all nominees received a certificate along with their nomination attached to it.

This annual awards recognition is for staff members only, but students and professors can also nominate them, Rocha said.

People interested in nominating a candidate for 2016-1017 should visit staffassembly.ucr.edu. Nominations can begin as early as fall for the following June awards, Rocha said.

A committee of 16 UCR employees read the nominations and voted for the finalists; the Volunteer of the Year Award winner is chosen by the Staff Assembly Board.

The five award categories are: People Helping People Award; Tartan Soul Award; Volunteer of the Year Award; Diversity Award; and Staff Who Make a Difference Award.

Meet the nominees in each of the five categories (winners are in bold):
Staff Diversity Award

• **Rebecca Freeland**, UNEX Student Services, admissions advisor

Staff Who Make a Difference Award

• **Yvette Equihua**, Housing Services, customer service specialist
• Isidra Martinez, bioengineering, financial analyst
• Holly Morris, telecommunications, communications analyst
• **Amber Nicholson**, Health Professions Advising Center, assistant director/advisor
• Lisa Laws, Housing Services, assistant director of resident services
• **Sandra Martinez**, Facilities Management, resident halls housekeeping manager
• Dawn Demeritte, School of Medicine Department of Education, executive administrative specialist
• Tom Windekecht, Housing Services, media communications specialist
• **William Southwick**, Computing and Communications, network services analyst/wireless engineer
• Thomas Barnett, Recreation IT

People Helping People Award

• **Thomas Oliver**, SOM/Biomedical Sciences, project coordinator
• Jeff Girod, Student Affairs Communications, senior visual content manager
• Tami Friedrich, Telecommunications, administrative officer IV

Staff Tartan Soul Award

• **Annette Webb**, University Extension, director of education
• Alyssa Carillo, Athletics, associate athletic director of marketing
• Abigail Esparza, Dinning Services, senior food service worker

Volunteer of the Year Award

• **Christene Burgett**, Housing Services, resident relations coordinator
• Ray Bolles, Grounds Services, senior grounds supervisor
• Ross French, School of Medicine, digital communications coordinator
UCR Family Student Housing Complex to Be Closed in Summer 2017

New Physical Master Plan Study calls for mixed-use development with more housing to replace the facility.

By James Grant

The modest collection of more than 250 bungalows opened in 1940 to serve as military housing for U.S. personnel.

Seventy-eight years later, after serving generations of UC Riverside students with families, the 55-acre Canyon Crest Family Student Housing will be closed to make way for more modern facilities.

UCR announced the change to residents on May 31 – a year before the closing – to give people a chance to make a smooth transition. Those families who need new space will be offered apartments at Oban campus apartments, located at Canyon Crest Avenue and Linden Street, right across from the UCR Police Department.

The Canyon Crest Family Student Housing complex will be at the end of its useful life in July 2017, campus officials said. The water, sewer and electrical systems need constant updates, and service outages have become too common. It is not keeping up with modern family demands.

“Unfortunately, the Canyon Crest Family Student Housing facility has neared its viable limit as a place to properly house students and their family members,” said Andy Plumley, assistant vice chancellor for auxiliary services, which includes campus housing. “We must close the facility down to make way for a possible future development that is envisioned to provide a mix of student housing, shops and restaurants, and other amenities.”

The site was acquired by UCR in 1955.

As mentioned in recent campus wide Town Hall meetings, the current location of family housing has been designated for mixed-use activities, including future student housing, recreation, retail, and a campus events center, in the campus’ Physical Master Plan Study.

The following components represent the initial stages of the phase-down process in Canyon Crest Family Student Housing:

**Current Residents**

In general, current residents may continue their residency up to July 14, 2017. Those residents who have an expected graduation date beyond spring 2017, will be offered alternative apartment-style housing at a discounted rate, which would escalate over two years until it meets the going rate in year three.

**Waiting List**

Family Housing at Canyon Crest will no longer be available to students on the current waiting list. Alternative apartment-style housing and rate structure will be announced by this summer and will be available for occupancy beginning fall 2017. Students currently on the waiting list will be given priority for spaces available at the new site and rate structure.

Plumley noted that there are ample housing opportunities in the community adjacent to UCR. To begin a search for local apartments and homes for rent, he suggested that UCR students with families utilize some of
The many online search services available at housing.ucr.edu.

---

The Top: Highlights of Spring 2016

By Bethanie Le

Welcome to The Top!

Each issue, we present a list of UCR staff and faculty favorites — from walking spots to gardens to events.

This week we’re reflecting on the top moments this spring at UCR.

If you have something you’d like featured in The Top or an activity you’d like to share, email kris.love-kin@ucr.edu!

1. 10 Year Anniversary of UCR’s Partnership with Givaudan

On March 8, Chancellor Kim Wilcox hosted a dinner for Givaudan executives to celebrate 10 years of collaboration and partnership with Givaudan, a Swiss manufacturer of flavorings and fragrances. The dinner celebrates 10 years of Givaudan’s TasteTrek program at UCR, which encourages flavorists to work outside the laboratory to discover new ingredients for flavor development. It was also held to thank Givaudan for its $1 million gift to establish the Givaudan Citrus Variety Collection Endowed Chair Fund.

2. University Innovation Alliance Conference

UC Riverside and the other 11 universities that make up the University Innovation Alliance (UIA) met in a two-day conference held at UCR in March to share ideas and provide thoughtful support around implementing strategies at closing the graduation rate gap, and building diversity.

3. GrowRIVERSIDE Conference

UC Riverside hosted the 3rd annual GrowRIVERSIDE conference, an initiative led by the city of Riverside to cultivate food and agricultural activities across the city on March 21.

4. Odyssey of the Mind Finals

On April 2, UCR hosted the statewide competition of Odyssey of the Mind with more than 1,000 K-12 students and their families converging on campus. The competition challenged about 200 teams in providing creative solutions to problems that can only be solved merging math, science, engineering, and art with technology.

5. César E. Chávez Run/Walk

UCR Chicano Student Programs hosted the 15th annual César E. Chávez Run/Walk on April 2. The yearly race was held in conjunction with César E. Chávez Day of Service and Learning, a holiday honoring the life, work and values of Chávez. In addition to the 5K run/walk, there was community service fair, with higher education information tables, crafts, vendor booths, art, speakers, and music.
6. GradSlam

In a high-pressure three minutes, UCR graduate students explained their research, April 4, in a contest is called GradSlam. Held at every University of California campus, UCR’s champion, Peter Byrley, went on to the final round in San Francisco. Byrley, graduate student in the Department of Chemical and Environmental Engineering, took home the “Slammy” and was named UC’s newest Grad Slam champion.

7. Etiquette Dinner

UCR Housing and Dining hosted an “etiquette dinner” for students who have worked on campus in catering and dining services on April 20. They learned more about high-end business dinners to make sure they are prepared to graduate out into the world.

8. UCR Women’s Golf Winning the 2016 Big West Championship

On April 29, Chancellor Kim Wilcox and Provost Paul D’Anieri congratulated the UC Riverside women’s golf team for winning the 2016 Big West Championship and wished them luck as they head to the NCAA regional tournament.

9. Insect Fair

UCR and the Riverside Metropolitan Museum held the 2nd annual Riverside Insect Fair on April 30. There were vendors, live insects and a presentation from The Bug Chef, David George Gordon. Attendees were also able to touch live insects, walk through a butterfly tent, participate in family-friendly crafts and games and sample food made with insects.

10. Spring Splash

The UCR Extension International Education Program celebrated 40 years of international visitors with a barbecue May 10.

11. International Education Program’s 40th Anniversary

Show both your Highlander Pride and your “Star Wars” fandom by wearing these T-shirts available for purchase at the UCR Campus Store. The Darth Vader and the Stormtrooper tees are $19.98 each.

12. Organizational Excellence’s One Year Anniversary

On May 11, Organizational Excellence (OE) workgroups reflected on the one-year journey that UCR has been on in determining what OE principles would best be applied across campus.

13. Enterprise Risk Management Unit’s Grand Opening

A ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 17 marked the grand opening of the UC Riverside Enterprise Risk Management unit, housed in the brand new Environmental Health and Safety building off Linden Street.

14. UC Walks

The 7th annual UC Walks on May 18 promoted an active lifestyle among UCR faculty, staff, and students. The more laps one walked, the more chances one had to earn prizes! The two-hour event drew about 400 staff, faculty and students for an afternoon of exercise.

15. Donors and Scholars Luncheon
Presented by the UC Riverside Foundation and the UCR Alumni Association, a luncheon was held on May 21 at the Mission Inn Hotel and Spa to acknowledge all donors and recipients of UCR’s scholarships and fellowships.

16. School of Public Policy’s Trip to Sacramento

UCR’s Master of Public Policy students spent a day-long trip at the State Capitol on May 26, in Sacramento. During the visit the students met with several state officials and listened to experts in government and policy talk about their careers.

DID YOU KNOW?

New Metrolink Line Will Provide Access to UCR Community

Metrolink has opened the 91/Perris Valley Line service, which extends service 24 miles from the Riverside–Downtown Station to South Perris. The extension will provide access to Metrolink service for residents in Menifee, Murrieta, Temecula, San Jacinto, Hemet, Lake Elsinore and Wildomar.

Two stops are adjacent to UC buildings; the Riverside-Hunter Park stop, three miles from UC Riverside, is next to the College of Engineering, Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT). The Moreno Valley/March Field is adjacent to the UCPath Center (the University of California system’s shared services center serving UC’s 10 campuses and five medical centers). An RTC shuttle will service the Hunter Park station and stop at Bannockburn in UCR every 10 minutes. The shuttle will be free for students with a UCR ID.

For more information, go to https://ucrtoday.ucr.edu/37816

Film Boot Camp this Summer

UCR’s Department of Theatre, Film and Digital Production will launch its inaugural summer film production and festival.

The two-session program will train, film and edit an original film; the festival will feature this original piece. This summer class, TFDP 170, requires registration. Contact Carmen Gomez, production manager: carmen.gomez@ucr.edu.

The festival will include short films from faculty, alumni and current UCR students. Submissions are due Friday, August 1 and should be sent to root.park@ucr.edu.

Filmmaker, Scholars to Discuss Ethnic Futurisms

A yearlong exploration of ethnic futurisms at the UCR concludes with a conference on Thursday, June 9, that will feature scholars of science fiction and fantasy literature and a SF filmmaker.

The all-day conference, “Narrating the Future,” will begin at 9:15 a.m. at the Center for Ideas and Society, located in College Building South. It is free and open to the public. Parking permits for Lot 6 may be purchased at the kiosk on West Campus Drive at the University Avenue entrance to the campus.

The event wraps up the yearlong Sawyer Seminar on Alternative Futurisms, a program of scholarly discussions, graduate-level courses, and public lectures, panels, readings, and performances funded by a prestigious $175,000 Sawyer Seminar grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. It built on the success of a Latino science fiction conference UCR’s Science Fiction and Technoculture Studies program presented in April 2014, an event believed to be the first of its kind in the country.
“The Sawyer Seminar on Alternative Futurisms has hosted an extremely fruitful year of conversations about speculative fiction and diversity, highlighting the dynamic and innovative work in the field by authors and other artists of color and holding a number of panel discussions among scholars of these fields,” said Sherryl Vint, professor of English and a co-principal investigator on the project. “Our events have explored how speculative fiction is a tool that can illuminate the ways that distinct experiences of colonialism, transnational flows of labor, and minority experiences of diaspora are shaped by a multitude of technosocial configurations.”

Artists, authors and scholars who visited UCR in the last year represent the cutting-edge of contemporary work in speculative fiction, she added.

Who Says?

UCR staff and faculty weigh in on the issues of the day via media outlets at home and abroad

“After more than a decade of policy gridlock on immigration in Washington, DC, California began to embark on a series of pro-integration policies that have accumulated over time, forming what we call the California Package of immigration reform.”

Karthick Ramakrishnan, professor of political science and public policy, on California’s integrative approach to the immigrant population as the state continues to extend benefits to undocumented immigrants

MSNBC

“It’s really important to understand how greenhouse gases affected habitability early in Earth history and changed in the history of the atmosphere.”

Timothy Lyons, distinguished professor of biogeochemistry, on the significance of understanding the Earth’s atmosphere and how it has changed through time

NEW SCIENTIST

“When you list off and name people from the Marvel Universe that use metals you have Iron Man, you have Wolverine’s claws and skeleton, you have Thor’s hammer made out of Uru metal, you have Captain America’s shield. All of these iconic features rotate around light weight and super strong metals.”

Suveen Mathaudhu assistant professor of mechanical engineering, on how stories behind famous comic book characters can act as an aid in teaching science and engineering to the general public

KVCR

“The premise was always important, the science fiction elements, all of that I could always do research on, but I would say to them at Disney Channel is ultimately if your audience doesn’t get involved or invested in the characters and their relationships, it doesn’t matter. No matter what the special effects are, it’s the characters and how they engage.”

Stu Krieger, professor and chair of theatre, on Disney Channel Original Movies and why these films continue resonate with the public

THE DAILY DOT

“DEET is the oldest option. It was produced by the military and has been on the market since the gold stan-
standard. It has gone through the most tests.”

*Omar Akbari, assistant professor of entomology, on DEET being the most effective repellant to prevent mosquito bites*

**THE HUFFINGTON POST**

“These elaborate rafts are some of the most visually stunning examples of cooperation in ants.”

*Jessica Purcell, assistant professor of entomology, on the discovery that raft-building ants exhibit memory and repeatedly occupy the same position when forming their rafts*

**CBS NEWS**

“If you think about an evolutionary battle between a plant and bacteria, bacteria are going to win every time.”

*Joel Sachs, associate professor of biology, on agricultural microbials and their potential to boost plant growth, increase resistance to drought and reduce farmers’ reliance on pesticides*

**THE LOS ANGELES TIMES**

---

**Research and Scholarship**

**Historian Awarded Fellowship to Study the Evolution of Seattle’s Landscape**

UC Riverside Historian, Megan Asaka, has been awarded a Dumbarton Oaks Mellon Fellowship in Urban Landscape Studies by Harvard University to study the historical presence of migrant workers in the physical landscape of early Seattle.

Asaka, who joined the UCR Department of History in 2014, will spend fall 2016 at Harvard’s Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection to complete research for her book manuscript, “The Unsettled City: Migration, Race, and the Making of Seattle’s Urban Landscape.” The fellowship, approximately $30,000, will allow Asaka to conduct research at Dumbarton Oaks and in Seattle.

**Black-Owned Businesses Growing at a Fast Rate**

An analysis released on June 1 by the UC Riverside School of Business Administration Center for Economic Forecasting and Development, examined data from the U.S Census Bureau’s newest Survey of Business Owners, and found that ownership, revenues, and hiring are growing significantly faster among businesses owned by blacks than they are among ‘total’ businesses in the United States, California, and the Inland Southern California region.

The analysis finds that from 2007 to 2012, the number of Black-owned businesses grew 40.4 percent in the U.S., 32.3 percent in California, and 24.3 percent in Inland Southern California. This compares to 3.4 percent, 5.0 percent, and 8.0 percent growth among total businesses in the three geographies, respectively.

**Inspiration for a Tough Future: Mantis Shrimp**
Researchers at UC Riverside and Purdue University are one step closer to developing super strong composite materials, thanks to the mantis shrimp, a small, multicolored marine crustacean that crushes the shells of its prey using a fist-like appendage called a dactyl club.

Their latest research, to be published in the journal “Advanced Materials”, describes for the first time a unique herringbone structure, not previously reported in nature, within the appendage’s outer layer. It is this tough herringbone structure that not only protects the club during impact, but also enables the mantis shrimp to inflict incredible damage to its prey.

Mantis shrimp, also called stomatopods, come in two varieties: ‘smashers’ and ‘spearers.’ While spearers kill prey by driving a spear into soft-bodied sea creatures, smashers kill hard-shelled prey such as crabs and snails by pulverizing them with incredible speed and force. The dactyl club can reach an acceleration of 10,000g, unleashing a barrage of impacts with the speed of a .22 caliber bullet.

For the past eight years, David Kisailus, the Winston Chung Endowed Professor in Energy Innovation in UCR’s Bourns College of Engineering, and his team have been studying smashers’ dactyl clubs and using them as inspiration in their development of next generation composite materials. Their research is already being translated into real-world products by Nature Inspired Industries, a recent startup led by Kisailus that spun out from UC Riverside’s Office of Research and Economic Development.

Grant to Help Research Reading, Writing and Language Development in Children with Disabilities

Rollanda O’Connor, a professor at UCR’s Graduate School of Education, was recently awarded a $1.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to continue her research on reading, writing and language development in middle school children with learning disabilities.

The focus of the current project is on the acquisition and understanding of academic language, which is becoming increasingly important for students as they advance through the K-12 school system. O’Connor, who is the Eady/Hendrick Chair in Learning Disabilities at UCR, said children who receive special education need extra help with vocabulary development because they don’t read as much as their mainstream peers.

“Much of vocabulary learning occurs incidentally as students engage in wide reading, but poor readers don’t read much, so their vocabulary grows much more slowly than their peers. My aim with this project is to help teachers close the gap in academic language learning before it interferes with students’ success in all subjects,” O’Connor said.

Awards and Honors

Award for research on beetle that damages avocado, landscape trees

Akif Eskalen, an extension plant pathologist at UC Riverside, received the Award of Arboricultural Research at the Western Chapter International Society of Arboricultural Research at the Western Chapter International Society of Arboriculture conference on May 4 in Anaheim. The award was for his research focused on a beetle that is causing severe damage to avocado and landscape trees in Southern California.

The beetle, the polyphagous shot hole borer, has a symbiotic relationship with a fungus. To infect the trees with the fungus, the polyphagous shot hole borer burrows deep inside the tree, crippling the water-transporting mechanism and blocking the transport of water and nutrients from the roots to the rest of the tree.

Alumnus is finalist for Ernst & Young 2016 Entrepreneur of the Year
UC Riverside alumnus Darin Anderson is an Ernst & Young 2016 Entrepreneur of the Year Award finalist. Anderson is chairman and CEO of Salas O’Brien, the leading specialty facilities planning, engineering, design, commissioning, and construction management firm with a maniacal focus on quality delivery.

Anderson earned a bachelor’s in business administration from UC Riverside in 1989 as well as an MBA at the university’s A. Gary Anderson Graduate School of Management. He has stayed highly involved with the School of Business, where he currently serves as the chairman of the Dean’s Advisory Council. He is also on the Board of the UCR Alumni Association and in July will chair the Foundation Board of Trustees.

The EY Entrepreneur of the Year Award is the world’s most prestigious business award for entrepreneurs. Winners of the Ernst & Young Award will be announced at a special gala event on June 17th at the St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort in Dana Point.

UCR Anthropologist and Art Historian Awarded Fulbright Fellowships

A UCR anthropologist known internationally for her work on diversity and cultural competence in higher education and an art historian whose research on visual culture spans the Americas have been awarded Fulbright fellowships for 2016-17.

Yolanda Moses, professor of anthropology, will engage with scholars at the University of Sydney in Australia, which is developing strategies that place the well-being and success of Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander students, staff and faculty at the center of institutional life.

Jason Weems, associate professor of art history, will pursue research at the Instituto Franklin of the Universidad de Alcala in Madrid, Spain, to develop an intellectual and historical framework for understanding American art through the lens of the Americas.

The Fulbright Program is the leading international education exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries, according to the program’s website. The program, which awards approximately 8,000 new grants annually, was established in 1946 under legislation by Arkansas Sen. J. William Fulbright and is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. It operates in more than 150 countries.

Reza Aslan to Receive James Joyce Award

Reza Aslan, professor of creative writing at the University of California, Riverside and best-selling author, has been named the recipient of the James Joyce Award and an Honorary Fellowship of the Literary & Historical Society, Europe’s largest university society.

The James Joyce Award is given to those who have excelled in a field of human endeavor and have made a profound impact on the world around them. Recipients in recent years have included Salman Rushdie, Alan Rickman, Desmond Tutu and Noam Chomsky. The award will be presented in the 2016-17 academic year.

Aslan is an internationally renowned author and scholar of religions. His books include the New York Times Bestseller “Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth,” and international bestseller “No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam.” His writing has been published in The New York Times, The Christian Science Monitor and The Washington Post, and he appears frequently on TV and radio shows as a religion and political analyst. He also is the host and executive producer of Ovation’s “Rough Draft with Reza Aslan,” and CNN’s upcoming documentary series, “Believer.”