

UCR

THE MAGAZINE OF UC RIVERSIDE

A Year in the Life
of Three Learning
Community Students

Page 10



FALL 2015 VOL. 10 NO. 4

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COVER STORY



10 Three Students, One Year

Our writer follows undergraduates going through learning communities at UCR

FEATURES



20

Widening the Conversation About Judaism

Professor Michael Alexander wants to shepherd the next Ralph Bunche



22

The Gift of a World Class Education

Display your Highlander spirit with our gift to you: a UCR poster!



24

Busting the Myths About E-Cigarettes

UCR research indicates they're not as safe as people think



28

Going Viral with Reza Aslan

His religious research and pop-culture savvy are taking TV by storm



32

Juan Felipe Herrera in a Word Embrace

Everyone has something good to say about new U.S. poet laureate

DEPARTMENTS

03 | **R View**

A message from Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox

04 | **R Space**

Catch up on the latest news at UC Riverside

34 | **Page Turners**

36 | **Alumni Connection**

37 | **Class Acts**

42 | **Living the Promise**

Ilhem Messaoudi and Huinan Liu on research at UCR

44 | **C Scape**

Troy Percival brings his passion for baseball to UCR

ON THE WEB

What's New? MAGAZINE.UCR.EDU

Watch videos, read online extras and more at magazine.ucr.edu.



Watch videos about UCR's learning communities & the University Innovation Alliance



Watch PBS NewsHour's profile on Juan Felipe Herrera



Watch Reza Aslan school critics on CNN and Fox News



Learn about Troy Percival's storied past in baseball



Visit homecoming.ucr.edu for all things Homecoming



Watch new Athletic Director Tamica Smith Jones at her welcome reception



Artsblock.ucr.edu
"I Know Women"
 10.23; 10.24

"I Know Women: Soliloquies of Feminine Comprehension" is a prose, poetry and monologue collection of historical and laywomen's innermost contemplations on success and struggle. This multimedia theatrical work intertwines technology, song, dance and audience participation as well as personal narratives from residents of the San Bernardino and Riverside communities.



gardens.ucr.edu
**Friends of Botanic
 Gardens Fall Plant Sale**
 10.24; 10.25

This event will include nearly 10,000 plants and more than 500 varieties of trees, shrubs, vines, herbaceous plants, shade plants and house and patio plants. This is the Inland Empire's largest plant sale event.



alumni.ucr.edu
**Regional Reception with
 Chancellor Wilcox**
 10.26

Alumni and friends are invited to an evening reception in San Diego with a special guest: UCR Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox. This is an opportunity to connect with San Diego-area alumni, UCR parents and friends, and to hear about the new developments at UCR.



cnas.ucr.edu
GMOs: All Facts, No Fiction
 11.4

Faculty from UCR's College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and UC Davis will be part of a discussion about GMOs at the UCR Extension Center. Moderating the discussion will be Greg Jaffe, director of biotechnology at the Center for Science in the Public Interest in Washington, D.C. The event is free, open to the public and hosted by the Global Food Initiative at UCR.



artsblock.ucr.edu
Aron Kallay Concert
 11.4

Grammy nominated pianist Aron Kallay performs as part of the Culver Center of the Arts' Outpost Concert Series. Kallay's performances often integrate technology, video and alternate tunings. He has performed throughout the United States and abroad and is a fixture on the Los Angeles new-music scene.



wellness.ucr.edu
Walk and Talk with Leadership
 11.5

A monthly 30-minute "walk and talk" opportunity with a member of the UCR leadership team, this is a healthy opportunity for faculty, staff and students to get moving while getting to know the campus.



homecoming.ucr.edu
Scot Fest
 11.14

A celebration of all things UCR! The Eighth Annual Highlander Scot Fest will have student performances, games for the whole family, interactive college booths, music from KUCR and more. Scot Fest will lead up to the UCR men's basketball Homecoming game. For times, cost, parking information and more, go to Homecoming.ucr.edu.



out.ucr.edu
Trans Remembrance Display
 11.16-11.20

The LGBTRC honors the 17th annual National Transgender Day of Remembrance (Nov. 20) with a display outside the Highlander Union Building commemorating the hundreds of known victims of transgender-related violence. Transgender Day of Remembrance pays tribute to those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice.

A National Model for Student Success



As we put this issue of UCR Magazine into production, we were reminded that UC Riverside has become a national model for student success:

For the third consecutive year, Washington Monthly magazine has ranked UCR second among national universities in its 11th annual College Ranking Survey.

It is the fifth consecutive year that UC Riverside has been ranked among the top 10 schools in the survey of universities, which considers civic engagement, research and social mobility. Prior to the No. 2 ranking in 2014 and 2013, UCR was fifth in 2011 and ninth in 2012.

In unveiling the current ranking, Washington Monthly's editors said that ranking four-year colleges on

“Our continued ranking by Washington Monthly as one of the nation’s top 10 universities is confirmation that we are making an impact not just in Riverside and in Southern California, but across the country.”

measures of upward mobility, research and service “would make the whole system (of higher education) better, if only schools would compete on them,” instead of “the U.S. News-validated idea that the ‘best’ schools are the ones that spend the most money, exclude the most students, and impress a small circle of elites.”

How did we arrive at this impressive achievement? By focusing on student success and outcomes – all within the exceptional environment of a major research university. The cover story in this issue reflects the transformative education we offer our undergraduate students and shows how the learning communities we created to support

them have improved the lives of young scholars from all backgrounds.

Our continued ranking by Washington Monthly as one of the nation’s top 10 universities is confirmation that we are making an impact not just in Riverside and in Southern California, but across the country. Across the country, UCR has demonstrated the importance of the public university in fueling economic growth and scientific discovery while providing a quality educational experience to a diverse population of students.

Last year, as the students you’ll meet in this edition arrived on campus, UCR became a founding member of the University Innovation Alliance, a coalition of 11 major public research universities and six national foundations that was created to identify and share best-practices in degree attainment programs for low-income and minority students. UCR is the only California-based institution included in the Alliance. Through the Alliance, we seek to help share our successes across the nation with other major public research campuses.

In an era in which access to great universities is increasingly beyond the reach of many families, UCR is providing a world-class education to students from the most modest backgrounds. We are proud of the role UCR plays in transforming the lives of its students, and of the role they are playing in transforming our communities.

Fiat lux,

Handwritten signature of Kim A. Wilcox in black ink.

Kim A. Wilcox
Chancellor



Flowers Can Endanger Bees

Despite their beauty, flowers can pose a grave danger to bees by providing a platform for parasites, according to Peter Graystock, postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Entomology, and his research team.

Their study, published online in the Proceedings of the Royal Society B, is the first to show that not only can bees disperse parasites around the environment but also that flowers are platforms for a host of pollinator parasites subsequently dispersed onto visiting bees.

The researchers found four common honeybee and bumblebee parasites dispersed via flowers: *Nosema apis* (causes a honeybee disease), *Nosema ceranae* (causes an emergent disease in honeybees and bumblebees), *Crithidia bombi* (causes a bumblebee disease) and *Apicystis bombi* (mostly found in bumblebees). These parasites are known to cause lethargy, dysentery, colony collapse and queen death in heavily infected bees.

UC Riverside's Medical School Achieves Second Step in Accreditation Process

The School of Medicine has been granted provisional accreditation by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), the accrediting body for educational programs leading to the M.D. degree in the U.S. and Canada.

Provisional accreditation is the second of three steps that all new M.D.-granting medical schools must complete before receiving full accreditation.

The UCR medical school was granted preliminary accreditation by the LCME in October 2012, which permitted it to recruit and enroll its first class of 50 students in August 2013. The school enrolled its third class of medical students this past August, at its annual White Coat Ceremony.



UCR Hosts Special Olympics USA

It was only the second time the Special Olympics World Summer Games was held in Los Angeles since the event was founded in 1968, but it was a first for UCR. Before the Games' kickoff on July 25, the UCR campus became a sort of training camp for

the entire Special Olympics USA team. From basketball to volleyball, bocce to baseball, nearly 500 athletes, coaches and management staff resided and practiced on campus as part of their pre-Games camp activities from July 22 to July 24.



UC to Implement \$15 per Hour Minimum Wage

The minimum wage for UCR workers — both direct and service contract employees — will be raised to \$15 an hour over the next two years.

President Janet Napolitano announced the systemwide directive in July. She also directed all contractors doing business with the University of California to comply with government and university workplace laws and policies.

The Fair Wage/Fair Work Plan, unveiled at a Board of Regents

meeting, requires that all UC employees hired to work at least 20 hours a week be paid at least \$15 per hour over the course of the next two years.

The mandated minimum increased to \$13 an hour on Oct. 1, and will jump to \$14 an hour on Oct. 1, 2016, and \$15 an hour on Oct. 1, 2017. The California state minimum wage currently stands at \$9 an hour, and is set to increase to \$10 an hour on Jan. 1, 2016.

UCR Once Again Is Ranked No. 2 Nationally by Washington Monthly

For the third year in a row, UC Riverside is ranked second among national universities in Washington Monthly's 11th annual College Ranking Survey.

Washington Monthly's rankings are significant because they measure both the academic quality and social contribution of colleges, said Steven Brint, vice provost for undergraduate education at UCR. The measurements reflect UCR's mission to unite academic excellence, broad access for motivated students and community engagement.

"People around the country used to ask, 'How does UCR do it?'" Brint said. "Now they are finding out that it is because of our inclusive campus climate, our outstanding student support services and our commitment to student success."

Learn more at washingtonmonthly.com/college_guide.



Insect Mating Behavior Has Lessons for Drones

Using computer simulations, Ring Cardé, UCR distinguished professor of entomology, and Josep Bau of the University of Vic, Spain, have shown that moth mating behavior has implications for airborne robots (drones) that ply the sky searching for signature odors.

Male moths locate females by navigating along the latter's pheromone (odor) plume, often flying hundreds of meters to do so. Two strategies are involved to accomplish this: Males must

find the outer envelope of the pheromone plume and then head upwind. Cardé and Bau studied the plume dispersal and flight strategies of insects.

Their computer simulations suggest that optimal strategies for robotic vehicles programmed to contact an odor plume need not involve the detection of wind flow in setting a foraging path.

The study results appeared online in *Integrative and Comparative Biology*.



UCR Joins Consortium to Tackle Water Problems Worldwide

UC Riverside is teaming up with 13 other academic institutions to address challenges threatening urban water systems in the United States and around the world.

The new Urban Water Innovation Network (UWIN), led by Colorado State University, has received \$12 million from the National Science Foundation to help communities increase the resilience of their water systems and enhance preparedness for responding to water crises.

"UWIN builds on longstanding programs at UC Riverside for research and training, and trusted leadership in all facets of water resources," said Darrel Jenerette, an associate professor of botany and plant sciences at UCR, who serves as a senior personnel with UWIN. "These programs include urban water conservation, sustainable urban drainage systems and flood control, drought management, pollution control, water resources planning and management,

ecological engineering, climate sciences and urban biodiversity."

Other UWIN consortium members include Arizona State University, Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Florida International University, Howard University, Oregon State University, Princeton University, University of Arizona, University of California, Berkeley, University of Maryland Baltimore County, University of Miami, University of Oregon and University of Pennsylvania.



Darrel Jenerette



UC Enacts Measures to Make Campuses Inclusive for LGBT Students, Faculty and Staff

This fall, the UC system will provide students with the option to voluntarily self-identify their sexual orientation and gender identity on the undergraduate admission application. As part of the university's ongoing commitment to ensure campuses are welcoming and inclusive for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students, faculty and staff, this move will help the university meet the diverse needs of its students. The data will be used to help guide decisions such as allocating resources and developing programs.

On July 1, UC also required new buildings and facilities undergoing

major renovation to include gender-neutral facilities, including restrooms and changing rooms.

In addition, the university is initiating a two-year project to coordinate and promote interdisciplinary study of genders and sexualities across the UC system, something already in place at UCR.

"UC is working hard to ensure our campuses model inclusiveness and understanding," said UC President Janet Napolitano. "I'm proud of the work we've done so far, but it doesn't stop there — we must continue to look at where we can improve so everyone at UC feels respected and supported."



Green is the New Black

Glen Mor, the latest housing addition on the UCR campus, celebrated its LEED Gold Certification. It's the first residential and dining facility with the LEED certification — making UCR the largest LEED Gold group property among all the other UC campuses.

LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, and is a certification program focused on sustainable buildings where facilities receive points based on meeting environmentally friendly criteria.

Some of Glen Mor 2's sustainable features include solar panels, rock

landscaping to minimize water use, furniture made from sustainably harvested wood and Energy Star rated appliances.



Tamica Smith Jones

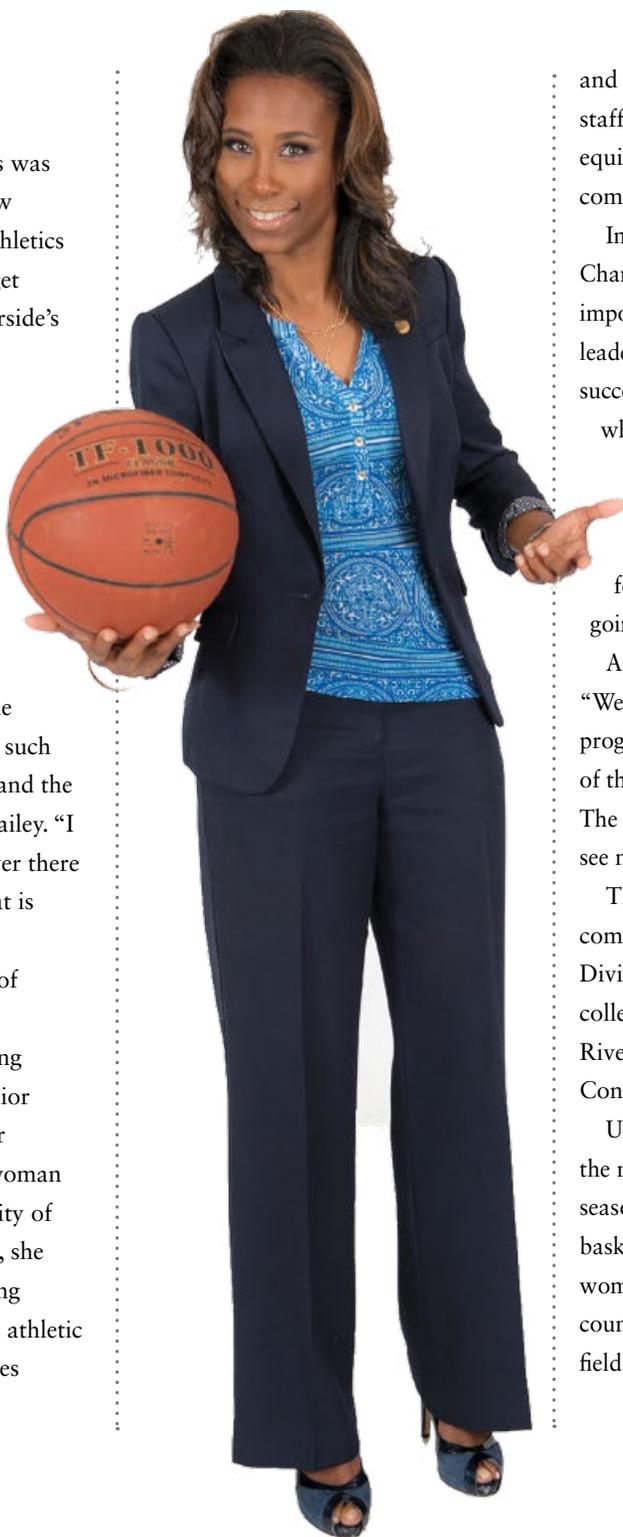
UCR's New Director of Intercollegiate Athletics

BY KRIS LOVEKIN

When Tamica Smith Jones was welcomed to UCR as the new director of Intercollegiate Athletics on July 1, she was eager to get started on building UC Riverside's athletic program.

"There are a hundred-plus people here. I need you to get another hundred-plus more," she told the audience at her welcome reception at the UCR Student Recreation Center. Smith Jones was welcomed by people from the community and the campus, such as coaches, athletes, donors and the mayor of Riverside, Rusty Bailey. "I need you to meet me wherever there are Highlanders, because that is where I will be," she added.

Smith Jones has 15 years of experience working in collegiate athletics. Prior to coming to Riverside, she was the senior associate athletic director for Internal Affairs and senior woman administrator at the University of Texas at San Antonio. There, she was responsible for overseeing day-to-day operations of the athletic department, including coaches



and student-athlete affairs, support staff, health & safety, Title IX/gender equity, diversity/inclusion, life skills and community engagement.

In recruiting for the position, Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox stressed the importance of finding an accomplished leader who was focused on student success, an effective recruiter and someone who will build and maintain strong community ties. He added that Smith Jones was chosen to move the Division I Athletics program forward because of her energy: "She is going to be a go-getter."

And Smith Jones is up to the challenge: "We are going to elevate this athletic program," she said. "It is going to be part of the fabric of the academic community. The community will be engaged. You will see me all over the place."

The UC Riverside Highlanders compete in 17 sports at the NCAA Division I level, the highest level of collegiate competition in the country. UC Riverside is a member of the Big West Conference.

UC Riverside has made a splash on the national scene with NCAA post-season appearances in baseball, women's basketball, women's soccer, men's and women's golf, men's and women's cross country and men's and women's track and field.

UCR NUMBERS

BY THE



100,000

The number of living UCR alumni. The graduating class of 2015 brought UCR to this milestone.

The anniversary that the Bourns College of Engineering (BCOE) celebrated this year. In those 25 years, the college has distinguished itself through faculty leadership in research and teaching, partnerships with industry and government, engagement with local and global communities, remarkable growth and top-tier rankings.



1,200

The number of acres of the entire UCR campus.



The number of bird species that have been officially observed at the UCR Botanic Gardens. The garden's wealth of vegetation creates a hospitable sanctuary for wildlife.

200

101

The number of bachelor's degree programs that UCR offers. UCR also has 52 master's degree programs, 42 Ph.D. programs and 13 California teaching credential programs.

The amount of newly installed LED lamps along Big Springs Drive, where UCR students walk back and forth to the residence halls. The LED lamps are brighter, more efficient and rated to last 100,000 hours.

16



7

The percentage from a survey of 1,895 UCR students, staff and faculty who said they experienced secondhand smoke since UCR became a smoke-and-tobacco-free university in 2014. Before the implementation of the tobacco and smoke-free policies, 32 percent of the respondents said they experienced secondhand smoke.



The parking lot where Pedals Shop is located. It's a service that provides students with bike repairs at discounted prices, advice on how to do self-repairs, and bike, scooter or skateboard parts and accessories. UCR prides itself as a bike-friendly campus!

19

127

The number of students from the very first day of class at UCR on February 15, 1954. Today, UCR's enrollment is more than 21,000 students, with a goal of 25,000 students by 2020.

A Year in the Life

BY SEAN NEALON

**OF THREE
LEARNING
COMMUNITY
STUDENTS**



When UC Riverside doubled in population about a decade ago, the campus decided to heavily invest in student success to improve its retention and graduation rates, in part by creating learning communities and supplemental instruction. As a result, UCR is now nationally recognized (even by the White House) for its student graduation rates and has nearly equal graduation rates across all racial and ethnic groups — a rarity among colleges and universities.

On campus, these learning communities take many shapes, bringing together small groups of first-year students, placing them in many of the same classes and providing extra academic support.

Throughout the 2014-15 school year, writer Sean Nealon met with students enrolled in learning communities for three of UCR's undergraduate colleges: the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and the Bourns College of Engineering.

Genesis Montealegre, Henry Pham and Mojan Deriss tell us their stories. ▶



GENESIS MONTEALEGRE is the daughter of a single mom who works as a dental assistant. Genesis grew up in Montebello, just outside Los Angeles, and graduated from high school in 2012 with a strong GPA.

MAJOR: Psychology

COLLEGE: College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS). Her learning community's goals are exposure to diversity and community; intellectual curiosity and life possibilities. The college has learning communities open to students in all majors, as well as communities designed for pre-business, psychology and economics majors.



HENRY PHAM is a Temecula resident. His parents and two older sisters were born in Vietnam. Quiet as a kid, he was caught between the Vietnamese spoken at home and the English spoken in school and nearly failed the second and third grades. He worked hard in high school, taking AP and honors classes so that he graduated with a strong GPA.

MAJOR: Chemical engineering

COLLEGE: The Bourns College of Engineering (BCOE). His learning community is part of a broader first-year experience program that includes a residence hall specifically for learning community students and an opportunity to take part in a wind turbine-building contest. Goals of the program are to increase engagement, retention and academic success.



MOJAN DERISS grew up in Yorba Linda to Iranian parents. Her brother graduated from UCR in June 2015, making the college transition a bit easier for her. Mojan's dad works as an auto mechanic and her mom is a vascular sonographer at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange. Her mother's job, which involves working with physicians to help treat blood diseases, exposed Mojan to careers in medicine.

MAJOR: Biology

COLLEGE: The College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (CNAS). Her learning community includes a fall seminar with a faculty member, one hour per week with an academic adviser and an opportunity to take a class that provides hands-on research experience in a laboratory.

In The Beginning...

GENESIS did well at Montebello High School, just outside Los Angeles. She took college prep courses and graduated in 2012. When it came time to think about college, however, she didn't have much guidance, especially about how to choose a school and pay for it.

She was admitted to several public universities in California, but picked Biola University, a private Christian school, in nearby La Mirada. She soon felt out of place. She held an off-campus job; most Biola students didn't. She was used to a majority Latino community; the university had relatively few Latinos. But the \$40,000 annual price tag for tuition and housing was the deal breaker, even with financial aid. She dropped out after a year.

Genesis arrived at UCR in fall 2014 and quickly felt at home. Instead of staying mainly in her dorm room, as she had at Biola, she found herself socializing with a diverse mix of students, even striking up conversations with people she didn't know. Friendships quickly developed.

A key reason, she said, was her learning community, a program that brings together clusters of about 20 first-year students, places them in the same classes and provides extra instruction and advising support.

By November, just a couple months after starting at UC Riverside, Genesis was confident she had made the right decisions by enrolling at the university and opting into the learning community.

"The school is so big, but I feel like I am already a big part of it," she said.

Studies have shown that learning communities, which are increasingly common at colleges and universities across the United States, improve student performance, increase retention and help students graduate more quickly. They are designed to make the university seem more intimate, and build bonds among first-year students.

“AT UCR, ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF INCOMING FRESHMEN PARTICIPATE IN LEARNING COMMUNITIES.”

AT UC RIVERSIDE, THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES STARTED THE UNIVERSITY'S FIRST LEARNING COMMUNITY IN

2002. Research has shown that the CHASS learning community, which enrolled about 900 of the 2,300 first-year students during the 2014-15 school year, led to a 7 percent increase in students returning for their junior year. The learning community also increased student engagement and satisfaction.

Geoff Cohen, who taught one of the first classes and now runs the program, called his initial encounter with the program a life-changing experience.

"I was walking into the classroom and I heard this white noise humming sound," Cohen said. "I thought it was construction, but it was the students talking. They all knew each other. It was the first time in my life I really felt like an outsider in a classroom. They challenged me. It was exhilarating."

That model appealed to UC Riverside leaders after the student population became much more diverse and almost doubled, from about 9,000 in the mid-1990s to about 17,000 students in the mid-2000s. The university struggled with how best to educate the new students, many of whom were the first in their families to attend college, came from homes where English was not spoken, or were graduates of poorly performing high schools.

About 10 years ago, the university made a decision to invest in the success of these new students and launched several initiatives, including an expansion of learning communities, to improve their retention and graduation rates. Today, the evidence is clear that the decision worked. UCR has nearly equal graduation rates across all racial and ethnic groups — a rarity among colleges and universities.

Steven Brint, UC Riverside's vice provost for undergraduate education, called that success the result of Riverside's "secret recipe" for helping its students.

"I think the three critical pieces for us are creating block scheduling for small groups of students, providing intensive advising and requiring supplemental instruction classes taught by fellow students," he said. ▶

Fall Quarter

OCTOBER 2014 – DECEMBER 2014

As the school year started, **GENESIS** worried that she was already behind. Her credits from Biola didn't transfer. She hadn't declared a major.

That changed the second week of classes. She took a career assessment test as part of a learning community class focused on adjusting to college. The test suggested her personality matched with occupations that focused on helping people and counseling. That led her to think about majoring in psychology, which she did later in the year.

"That test really helped clear my mind," she said. "It really helped me see [career] options beyond just being a psychologist."

HENRY came to UC Riverside wanting to major in geology. He ended up majoring in chemical engineering, in part because his parents felt it offered better job prospects.

As a resident of Temecula, about 40 miles south of Riverside, he had to commute to campus, usually by bus. With classes and his commute he was spending about 12 hours a day away from home.

"I don't know what day looks like at my house, at least on weekdays," Henry said in November.

Initially, Henry said he "hated" the learning community.

"I felt it restricted my freedom of taking classes and it added extra classes," he said.

As the quarter went on, though, Henry began to change his mind. The learning community helped him make some good friends. He liked that it ensured he was registered for the core classes he needed. He felt the extra study sections allowed him to concentrate on a subject. Still, he worried: "I may have to opt out of the learning community if my classes don't work with the bus schedule."

MOJAN entered UC Riverside in fall 2014 as a biology major with an interest in medical school.

She signed up for the learning community in summer 2014 on the recommendation of her orientation leader. She liked that students in the learning community received better grades on average and had spaces reserved in sometimes-hard-to-get classes.

By November she knew she made the right decision, which she largely credited to the supplemental instruction component of learning communities.

Supplemental instruction classes are meant to reinforce material taught in lectures. They are smaller, usually with about 20 students, as opposed to hundreds that can be in large lecture classes, and are taught by undergraduate students who have previously taken the class. They are typically offered in conjunction with classes such as chemistry and physics, which students are more apt to struggle with.

Mojan wasn't a huge fan of the learning community advising seminar, saying it covered a lot of common sense topics, such as how to prioritize tasks and memorize information.

In December, as part of the seminar, the students were asked to give a 30-second talk on a topic as a way to expose them to public speaking. Topics ranged from orange juice vs. apple juice to how to make a paper airplane.

With her classmate Cathy Pham, Mojan stood in front of the class. Wearing sunglasses, the duo launched into a rap:

Whaddup to my homies from the East and West coast!

Have you had your breakfast; 'cus this is y'all's French toast.

This is the Moj-Cath coming right atcha, atcha?

Achoo! Sneezed on the beat and the beat got sicka! ▶

FIRST-YEAR RETENTION RATES IMPROVED BY 6 TO 8 PERCENT DUE TO LEARNING COMMUNITIES.

Those who benefited most include women, Hispanic, Asian-American, first-generation and low income students. At UCR, approximately two-thirds of incoming freshmen participate in learning communities.





RUSSEL HASH, who went through the learning community during the 2014-15 school year, is a political science major who wants to be a lawyer and then run for Congress.

He says learning communities opened his eyes to everything UCR had to offer. “It is nice to have someone practically hold your hand when choosing classes or learning about the campus.”

Winter Quarter

JANUARY 2015 – MARCH 2015

Mojan, Henry and Genesis started the winter quarter in January pleased with their academic standing; they all finished with nearly perfect GPAs.

Over the first few months at UCR, **HENRY** developed a system that got him through the day. He always had a scooter to travel between the bus stop and campus. He carried a backpack with his lab coat, Rubik’s cube (he can solve it in 20 seconds) and food, usually Vietnamese, Thai or Chinese made by his mom.

On Fridays he treated himself to Subway. He added every topping and sauce they offered because that gave him the most bang for his buck. He skipped the avocado because it cost extra.

Still, the winter quarter was slightly more challenging for Henry because he was taking physics. Many of his friends took AP physics in high school. Henry didn’t.

THE COLLEGE OF NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES (CNAS) started its learning community program in 2007. In recent years, the college has secured a total of \$4.4 million in grants from the National Science Foundation and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to support the program.

The college received the grants mostly because it showed that students enrolled in the learning community graduated at higher rates and received better grades than those not in the learning community.

Prior to the establishment of the learning communities, overall graduation rates in CNAS were 28 percent after four years and 36 percent after six years. Since the learning communities were created, graduation rates have increased to nearly 50 percent after four years and 65 percent after six years for those students who complete the learning communities. The increased rates hold equally true for minority students.

At CNAS, first-term GPAs for learning community students have averaged about a third of a letter grade higher in recent years compared with non-learning community students.

In September, UCR was recognized by The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, and included in the “Bright Spots in Hispanic Education National Online Catalog” for its student success efforts with the CNAS freshman learning communities, as well as for its ethnic parity in campus graduation rates.

Michael McKibben, the CNAS divisional dean of student academic affairs, is also looking for grant funding that would allow the learning communities to be expanded to include sophomores. He said students who complete the first two years of their Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) programs are more likely to survive and graduate.

He struggled with the college physics class in part because he didn't like to ask questions and was trying to understand the subject matter by himself.

The supplemental instruction in physics helped because he was more comfortable asking questions in a smaller setting. It also helped because his bus commute – he was up by 4:30 or 5:30 a.m. and not home until about 7:30 p.m. – made it hard to get to office hours offered by the professor.

While he liked the supplemental instruction, he didn't like the ENSURE (ENgineering SUccess and REtention) program. This required learning community students to attend weekly sessions led by academic advisers or upper-class students about the college-going experience.

"The goal seemed to be to make us connect with others in the group," Henry said. "That didn't happen with us; we just didn't connect. It felt fake and not real."

MOJAN continued to be a big proponent of supplemental instruction. She said it was the reason she got an A in chemistry during the fall quarter.

Meanwhile, her learning community group was getting closer. A smaller group got a study room in the library during finals week in the fall. They walked to class together and often got food or boba tea together. They created a Facebook group page just for their learning community.

In CHASS, students in the learning community take a class each quarter that revolves around a theme. **GENESIS'** theme was insurgency, and her class fell under the women's studies department. It was taught by Sherine Hafez, an associate professor of gender and sexuality studies.

Genesis expected to learn about how women developed in society and how women were suppressed, but on the first day, Hafez said the class would focus on the Arab Spring. Genesis thought Hafez was in the wrong classroom.

Despite her initial confusion, Genesis liked the class. It was particularly interesting because one of her roommates was from Syria and the other was Romanian and Armenian.

"My roommates viewed everything different from the perspective of the book," Genesis said in January. "I was able to ask questions to the professor based on what my roommates said."

Students in the CHASS learning community are also required to attend workshops, which are taught by students — peer mentors — who previously went through the learning community.

Fall quarter workshops focused on topics including etiquette, academic integrity and stress management. The winter workshops focused on public speaking.

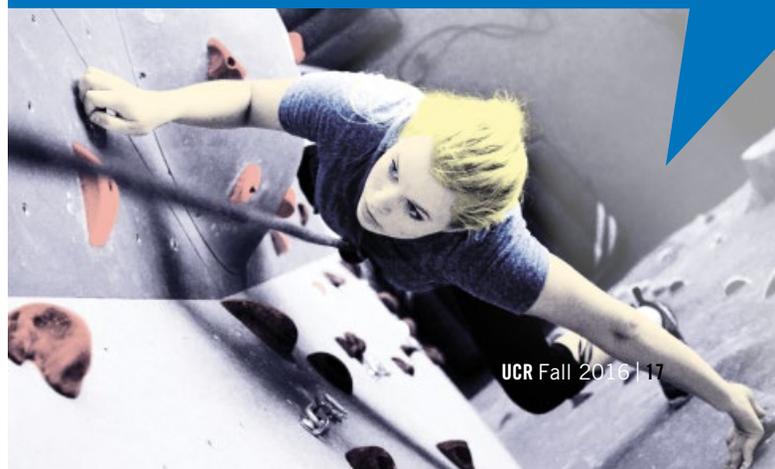
Unlike Mojan and Henry, both of whom didn't like these non-academic workshops, Genesis did. In fact, when her peer mentors mentioned they were searching for mentors for the following school year, Genesis started to think she might apply.

"I'd like to provide what they provided to me to other students," Genesis said in January. "Plus, it ties into what I want to do, counseling, and I would get paid." ▶

THE BOURNS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING LEARNING COMMUNITY and broader first-year experience program started in 2006. This past school year, about 330 of the 500 freshmen took part. A big part of the program is to create a sense of identity and community for the students around the engineering college.

Tara Brown, who coordinates retention and student success programs, says, "Engineering is one of the most rigorous programs and it takes a special person to make the sacrifices to do well in the program. We find that the learning communities help students persist because they want to be with their friends. They persist because they know they are not the only ones struggling."

OLIVIA GLADKOWSKI, who went through the BCOE learning community during the 2014-15 year, agreed. "The learning community really helps keep people with the same major together," she said. "You build bonds with people you might otherwise not even know."



Spring Quarter

APRIL 2015 – JUNE 2015

MOJAN started the spring quarter taking classes in chemistry, biology, math and computer science. She dropped math a few days later because she had a heavy workload and she felt that the professor's teaching style didn't match her learning style.

"I was worried about getting a B," she said in April. "That would go into my science GPA, and med schools look at that."

She joined Phi Delta Epsilon, a medical fraternity. She was also accepted to work as an orientation leader for incoming freshmen during summer 2015.

HENRY entered the spring quarter still contemplating switching majors. Chemical engineering seemed more physics-based, and he still didn't think he was strong in physics. He considered geology or possibly chemistry or biochemistry as other options.

Meanwhile, because his class schedule changed, he needed to drive his car two days a week. Because of the cost of the gas, he cut out his Friday trip to Subway to save money.

GENESIS decided she wanted to be a peer mentor for students entering the learning community in fall 2015. That meant she had to take a how-to-be-a-peer-mentor class in the spring quarter.

The class is led by Geoff Cohen, who runs the CHASS learning community program and tutors several peer mentors. During each class, teams of students give presentations followed by immediate feedback from their classmates and instructor.

In April, Genesis and her friend Laura Lopez focused their presentation on setting goals. They gave quick outlines of their career goals, then had others in the class share their own goals.

They then split the class into four groups. Each group was given a topic – graduate on time, getting to a career, maintaining a good GPA and extracurriculars – and asked



STUDENT SUCCESS: THE UNIVERSITY INNOVATION ALLIANCE

UNIVERSITY
INNOVATION
ALLIANCE 

In 2014, UC Riverside became a founding member of the University Innovation Alliance, a consortium of 11 large public research universities committed to making college degrees attainable to a diverse body of students.

Created to identify and share best-practices in degree-attainment programs for low-income and minority students, the alliance also includes Arizona State University, Georgia State University, Iowa State University, Michigan State University, Oregon State University, Purdue University, Ohio State University, University of Central Florida, University of Kansas and the University of Texas at Austin.

The UIA group is today modeling the most successful degree-attainment measures within its membership, with the goal of improving higher education outcomes.

UCR is currently working with the University Innovation Alliance to share what we have learned as a campus about student success with Alliance members — whose enrollment represents almost 500,000 students.

Positive student outcomes in higher education are of vital importance to the nation's future workforce, said UCR chancellor Kim A. Wilcox.

“In 1990, our nation was first in the world in baccalaureate attainment, and now we are 12th. As the world increasingly moves toward knowledge-based industries, and more college graduates are needed, we have to turn that around.”

THEUIA.ORG



BRANDON HOANG, who went through the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences learning community, says for him, the experience was really about finding a group of friends to bond with.

“There is a real communal feeling that we are all in this together,” he said, “because we understand what each of us is going through.”

to compile a list of steps to achieve these goals. When the groups were done, Genesis and Laura called on each one and led a discussion on topics they listed.

After the presentation, Cohen commended Genesis and Laura for creating a very positive, friendly environment. He also applauded them for using the names of students when calling on them.

“One of the strongest things you can do as a teacher is know names,” he said. “The sooner you know a name, the sooner you’re going to get control of a class.”

At the end of the quarter, Genesis learned she got an A in the peer mentor class. “I felt like I was in my element in that class,” she said. “I was really comfortable.”

She finished her first year at UCR with a nearly perfect GPA, more than a letter grade higher than the GPA she had during her year at Biola University.

Genesis will spend the 2015-2016 fall quarter as a peer mentor in the learning community. Her goal? To make the next group of first-year students feel as comfortable and successful at the “big university” as she felt at the end of her freshman year. ◀

PHOTOGRAPH BY CARRIE ROSEMA



WIDENING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT JUDAISM

Newly endowed chair Michael Alexander is committed to linking UCR to a transnational Jewish community

BY LILLEDESHAN BOSE

As a student, Michael S. Alexander dutifully followed his father's advice to take accounting, but he found his passion in the study of Judaism, modern Jewish history and American religion. Alexander, an associate professor in the Department of Religious Studies, became the first recipient of UCR's Maimonides Chair in Jewish Studies in June. The endowment was a Riverside community effort to not only highlight Jewish history, culture and traditions, but address pressing topics in the world today, said former UCR Foundation Chair Pam Rubin, one of a committed group of donors to the chair.



Alexander, who holds a Ph.D. in religious studies from Yale University and a B.A. in Oriental studies from the University of Pennsylvania, received a National Jewish Book Award for his first book, “Jazz Age Jews” (Princeton University Press, 2001).

Currently at work on a new book, “Paths of Joy: Adventures in Religion and Therapy,” Alexander talks to UCR Magazine about campus life and what he wants to leave as his legacy.

How did you end up studying Judaism as a career?

The only requirement my father had for my college education was to take accounting — which I took and enjoyed — but I didn’t have a real aptitude for it. After that, I looked through the catalog for interesting classes and found one about the book of Genesis. That really knocked me out. One class followed another, and before I knew it I was the teacher.

So there wasn’t a childhood epiphany that led you to the study of Judaism?

Not really. The classroom to me is just an extension of the sandbox. It’s fun to learn. And it’s edifying, too; it doesn’t feel empty once the learning is done.

Was there a specific life experience that shaped your life as a professor?

It’s definitely been my interaction with books and Scriptures. From a very early age I started to read these as though the author was trying to say something directly to me. Each thing I read is like a bottle swept up on shore from hundreds or even thousands of years ago, with a message so important that somehow it has made its way through time and space just to get to me.

How will the Maimonides Chair in Jewish Studies help your scholarship?

In a very concrete sense, the purpose of a university is simply to create opportunities for diverse and knowledgeable people to get to know one another. In that regard, the establishment of this chair is a really great

“EVERY TIME I WALK INTO THE CLASSROOM I IMAGINE THAT THE NEXT RALPH BUNCHE MIGHT BE SEATED OUT THERE. HE WON THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR MEDIATING THE 1949 ARMISTICE BETWEEN EGYPT, LEBANON, JORDAN, SYRIA AND ISRAEL.”

thing. It means that UCR has made a long-term commitment to include Jewry and Judaism as part of the conversation.

My own academic expertise has been American Jewry, and the roads between Los Angeles and Las Vegas have held an awful lot of that story, including right here in the Inland Empire and desert area. I’m anxious to get into the community to learn more about that history, and also to invite those folks onto our campus for them to see firsthand in our students what the future of California looks like.

I want to help link our campus with the community, and vice versa, so that the learning and conversations can move in both directions. I hope to offer public lectures and student research scholarships, do oral histories ... anything to get the conversations going. And insofar as Jewry is transnational, I intend to widen the conversation considerably beyond our own immediate region by bringing international scholars here and sending our students out into the world.

What do you like best about working at UCR?

I have a very high regard for the students. Every year my Holocaust class and my class on the State of Israel fill up completely. These don’t fulfill any kind of requirement; the students are simply interested. I have some students with family connections to these topics but most are just there to learn something completely new to them.

Every time I walk into the classroom I imagine that the next Ralph Bunche might be seated out there. He was a UCLA graduate who won the Nobel Peace Prize for mediating the 1949 Armistice between Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Israel. He was the first person of color to be awarded the prize. So when I see the students file in on the first day of class, I think maybe the next Ralph Bunche is out there.

What do you hope to leave as your legacy?

To have helped along the next Ralph Bunche, of course!

About the Chair

Moses Maimonides, b. 1135, was a rabbi, scholar, philosopher, astronomer and physician in Spain and Egypt. Donors to the chair included Mark and Pam Rubin, Robert and Cheryl Fey, Andrea and Moshe Silagi, The Jewish Federation of the Desert and the Saul Brandman Foundation.

What is an Endowed Chair and Why is it Important?

An endowed chair is one of the most important gifts to higher education; it’s an honor that fosters academic excellence and recognizes superior faculty. Established with sizeable donor gifts to an academic area, the endowed chair provides invaluable financial support above and beyond the salary that the professor uses in research, teaching or service activities.

UC RIVERSIDE: RECEIVING THE GIFT OF A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION

Admissions 101

This year, more than 47,000 high-achieving students in California and beyond applied for admission to UC Riverside.

Fall 2015 applications for freshman admissions totaled 38,490, while applications for transfer admissions reached 9,147.

UCR is a campus of choice, and the students you see reflected in the poster accompanying this article are receiving the gift of a world-class education.

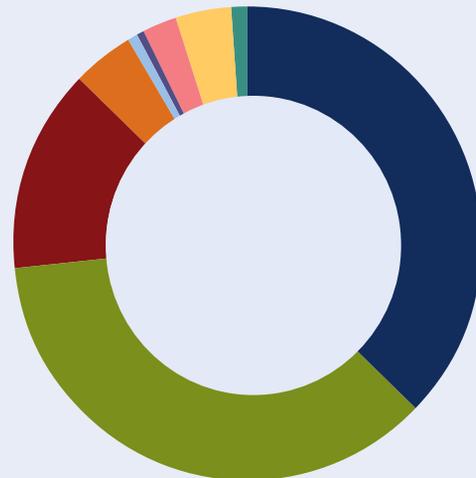
Enrollment Growth – 1985 - 2015

Enrollment 1985:	5,000
Enrollment 1995:	9,000
Enrollment 2005:	16,600
Enrollment 2015:	22,000

Class of 2018

Students who entered UCR last fall reflected incredible diversity.

2014 Undergraduate Enrollment by Ethnicity



Hispanic or Latino:	37.3%
Asian:	36.3%
White:	13.8%
Black or African-American:	4.5%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:	0.4%
Native American or Alaskan Native:	0.2%
International non-resident:	2.5%
Two or More Races:	3.9%
Unknown:	1.1%

California Resident:	97.0%
Domestic Out of State:	0.5%
International / Non-resident:	2.5%

First-Generation College-going:	56.7%
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Growing Highlander Network

As the campus has grown in recent decades, there has been significant growth to the Highlander Alumni Network. Today, there are more than 100,000 living alumni residing in every U.S. state as well as in 95 countries.

Our esteemed alumni include:

- Nobel Laureate Richard R. Schrock '67 (Chemistry)
- Two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Steve Breen '92 (Political Science)
- United States Poet Laureate Billy Collins M.A. '65 (English), Ph.D. '71 (English)
- Hon. Virginia Phillips '79 (History), who ruled that the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy was unconstitutional

Campus Growth and Change

For those UCR Alumni who haven’t been back to campus for years, please do visit – you’ll be amazed at our many new facilities. (Gentle hint: Homecoming is Nov. 13-14!)

Images of newest buildings:

- Highlander Union Building



- Glen Mor



- Student Recreation Center



- School of Medicine Research Building



- Genomics



- Orbach Science Library





SEVEN MYTHS ABOUT E-CIGARETTES BUSTED

Prue Talbot, a professor of cell biology at UCR, clears the air regarding the latest take on an old vice.

BY VICKIE CHANG

People have been puffing tobacco for a long time — about 2,000 years, to be exact — but only recently did the world truly learn about its adverse effects: lung cancer, secondhand smoke, addiction, environmental impacts and more.

“If you look at the usage of tobacco cigarettes in the United States, the curve starts to go up around 1900 and it escalates,” said Prue Talbot, a professor of cell biology in the Department of Cell Biology & Neuroscience and the director of the UCR Stem Cell Center and Core. “If you look at the incidence of lung cancer, that curve follows tobacco cigarette usage by about 20 years.”

In fact, Talbot said, there was very little lung cancer before people began smoking tobacco cigarettes. As their popularity grew, so did the disease.

“One doesn’t smoke a cigarette and get cancer the next week,” Talbot says. “Because it takes about 20 years for the cancer to develop, it took a while to get good data showing the correlation between smoking and lung cancer.”

In the same way, electronic cigarettes are creating their own uncharted territory, she said.

“We have to be very careful with electronic cigarettes and track them to see if anything develops that we are not anticipating right now.”

Invented in 2003 by a Chinese pharmacist, e-cigarettes were patented internationally in 2007. They go by a few names: e-cig, personal vaporizer (or PV), vape or electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS), but the term itself — electronic cigarettes — is actually a general term.

They come in many types and shapes and have evolved greatly over the last decade, from the original “ciga-lites,” which mimicked the look of traditional tobacco cigarettes, to the cartomizer cigarette, containing both a battery and a cartomizer. The cartomizer holds the fluid and the atomizing unit, which heats the fluid to create vapor. Today’s larger tank models don’t necessarily resemble cigarettes. They contain a larger battery with a tank that holds more fluid, reducing the refill rate.

These liquids normally contain propylene glycol, glycerin, water, nicotine and “e-juices” — flavorings such as gummy bear, strawberry shortcake and doughnut. It’s these sweet flavors that are attracting some

negative attention to the e-cigarette industry, with critics arguing that these juices are designed to attract underage users.

Talbot, who has worked at UCR for more than 30 years, started researching issues surrounding e-cigarettes when they were introduced in the Riverside area around 2009.

“My lab has been working on tobacco-related diseases for over 20 years ... but when e-cigarettes came out, we were immediately interested in them,” she said. “They looked like a very intriguing new product that may have a lot of impact in the tobacco world ... and there was virtually no information in the literature on them at that time.”



Professor Prue Talbot with some of her graduate students

Safer? Maybe not

Here are seven e-cigarette myths that Talbot and her lab are investigating

1 All e-cigarette liquid refill flavors, sometimes called “e-juice,” are created equal.

Not necessarily. Talbot screened the cytotoxicity (the quality of being toxic to cells) of refill fluids and found that some were highly toxic.

“The one that was the most cytotoxic — we tested three different cell types and it killed all three — was a flavor called Cinnamon Ceylon. We hypothesized that there was something more toxic about cinnamon flavors than others.”

After purchasing various cinnamon flavors from different vendors, Talbot concluded that while the levels ranged, cinnamon flavors in general had some toxicity to them. All of them contained a

chemical called cinnamaldehyde, which gives cinnamon its flavor.

“The amounts vary depending on the product, but the higher the concentration of cinnamaldehyde, the more toxic the product was,” Talbot said. “We felt that some vendors were probably putting way too much of this chemical, cinnamaldehyde, into their products and it was making them dangerous.”

As it turns out, users on e-cigarette discussion boards were also discussing cinnamon flavors and discouraging their use, because of side effects such as sore throats and coughing.

2 E-cigarette manufacturing is regulated by the federal government.

Sorry — not yet.

In fact, one particular study by Monique Williams, a graduate student working under Talbot, came after she noticed large, visible pellets of tin in the fluid extracted from certain e-cigarettes.

It turns out, one particular brand of e-cigarettes was producing large pellets of tin from poor-quality soldered joints holding the wires together.

“And apparently, in the pretesting that was done before sale, there were cycles of heating and cooling (where) the tin-soldered joints had melted or fallen apart. That contributed to loose tin particles in the fluid, which could get into the aerosol. So we started looking more carefully at what

elements might be in the aerosol,” Talbot said.

This project is currently ongoing in Talbot’s lab. “There is no information on what the long-term health effects of inhaling tin this way would be,” Talbot said, “but we do know from other studies on tin dust that it can cause lung problems.”

It’s important to note that not all e-cigarettes produce large amounts of tin in their aerosol. “But, of course, the user would not know if they were using a cigarette that was producing tin or not,” Talbot said. “Most e-cigarettes are made in China and the companies that make them range from very small, family-owned shops to larger companies. There is no regulation on how they’re manufactured.”

3 E-cigarettes simply produce water vapor and not any dangerous chemicals.

False! This particular myth seems to be disappearing, but e-cigarettes actually do emit chemicals.

“When people smoke real tobacco cigarettes, they’re burning tobacco, which generates

thousands of chemicals (and) many of those chemicals are known to be dangerous,” Talbot said.

“E-cigarettes produce an aerosol that contains a number of chemicals, but not as many as tobacco-burning cigarettes.”

However, as Talbot points out, it would only take a single bad chemical to make e-cigarettes more harmful than tobacco cigarettes.





4 E-cigarettes don't cause the same environmental concerns as traditional cigarettes.

False! The negative effects of cigarette butt waste are well known (countries like Australia have even established fines for improper disposal) but there isn't that much information yet on the consequences of e-cigarette waste,

and Talbot feels the risk could be considerable.

"A lot of these [e-cigarette] products are now disposable; the user uses them once and then throws them out," Talbot said. "The discarded e-cigarettes include both a battery and residual fluid containing nicotine ... so this is something that really needs to be addressed."

5 People use e-cigarettes the same way they use traditional cigarettes.

False! Electronic-cigarette users tend to take longer puffs than tobacco smokers, according to research in Talbot's lab.

The study was first conducted using videos found on YouTube of people smoking

e-cigarettes.

"We found that electronic cigarette users had a bit longer puff duration than the 2-second puff typical of tobacco cigarette smokers. When we did the YouTube study, most e-cigarette users were taking puffs 4 seconds in duration," Talbot said.

Her lab then took the study further, enlisting the help of 20 electronic-cigarette users and studying their individual puff patterns.

The users had their own unique style for puffing e-cigarettes, "as we expected," Talbot said, "but they did take a puff every 18 seconds, which is more frequent than what we would usually see with a traditional cigarette smoker. When they puffed an e-cigarette for 10 minutes, the total puff volume was actually a lot larger than it would be for a regular cigarette."

6 We don't have to worry about secondhand smoke when it comes to e-cigarettes.

First, e-cigarettes don't actually produce what we know as secondhand smoke, Talbot said.

The burning end of tobacco cigarettes is constantly releasing something called side-stream smoke. The person who is actually smoking the cigarette is exhaling. Secondhand smoke is a combination of the exhale and what's burning off the cigarette.

Secondhand tobacco smoke has been shown to cause health problems to those constantly exposed to it. But there hasn't been much research about the effects of exhales from e-cigarettes, Talbot said.

"The electronic cigarette does not have anything burning off the end of it, so that side-stream smoke is not emitted from an e-cigarette — which would probably make it considerably safer," she said.



"But the individual who is using the e-cigarette is still exhaling aerosol. We have been working with several people who have contacted us because they were being passively exposed to e-cigarette exhaled residue and they felt that passive exposure was making them ill."

Talbot says more work needs to be done on the topic. Her lab is working on research that shows exhaled aerosol from a vape shop can travel through the air vents in a building to other shops where people could potentially be exposed.

7 E-cigarettes are simply less harmful than tobacco-burning cigarettes.

The short answer? We just don't know yet.

"There isn't enough information to know," Talbot said. "People just haven't used e-cigarettes long enough."



“I THINK OF MYSELF
FIRST AND FOREMOST
AS A **STORYTELLER.**”

– REZA ASLAN

The Life & Times Reza Aslan of

BY VANESSA HUA '09

With numerous media appearances, two best-selling books and two major network shows in the works, the UCR creative writing professor says first and foremost, he is a storyteller. But he's also become a social media darling and a pop culture spokesman for Islam.

REZA ASLAN has gone viral.

In 2013, the professor of creative writing and religious scholar stood his ground on Fox News when correspondent Lauren Green repeatedly asked how a Muslim could write *“Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth.”*

Calmly yet politely, Aslan stated his academic credentials, his fluency in biblical Greek, and his two-decade-long study of the origins of Christianity. “Ma’am, may I just finish my sentence for a moment please? I think the fundamental problem here is that you’re assuming I have a faith-based bias.”

When she accused him of masking his Islamic faith, he noted, “The second page of my book says I’m a Muslim. Every single interview I have ever done on television or print says I’m a Muslim.”

Quickly, the 10-minute interview zipped around the Internet; and *“Zealot,”* which had debuted at No. 4 on the New York Times and No. 2 on Amazon’s best-seller list, rocketed to the top, unseating J.K. Rowling’s crime fiction novel. (*“Zealot”* has since been translated into almost 30 languages.)

“There’s no question that interview shot it into the stratosphere and allowed it to become a global phenomenon,” said Aslan, 43, who says he uses popular media as a platform to educate and shape perception. “When you look at the major trends and the major societal shifts that have occurred in the United States, none of them have come as a result of laws being passed. On the contrary, those laws are always far behind the changing of popular sentiment. What changes popular sentiment? TV does.”

The clip sparked important conversations in the media, online and in public, Aslan said, the kind of “conversations that I and my colleagues have all the time in our dusty library. Yet there it was, out in the open. That was an enormously satisfying thing.”

| TAKING TV BY STORM

Next spring, Aslan will unveil two new shows, a documentary series and a biblical drama. On CNN’s *“Believer,”* he’ll travel the world and immerse himself in religious rituals and practices as a means of opening a window to other world views and cultures.



Aslan is an executive producer of the upcoming ABC series “Of Kings and Prophets,” scheduled to premier in March 2016.

“The easiest way to describe it is to imagine Anthony Bourdain, but with faith instead of food,” said Aslan, referring to the celebrity chef with the adventurous appetite. “I’m not there to investigate. I’m there to experience. I myself am a believer and I value their beliefs.”

He’s planning to visit Pakistan and take part in Muharram, ritual mourning of the martyr Husayn ibn Ali who was killed at the Battle of Karbala. The rituals include self-flagellation, feats of strength and passion plays.

He is also an executive producer on the ABC series “Of Kings and Prophets,” a one-hour drama that retells the story of King David’s rise and fall. The series began filming this fall in South Africa, with its varied landscape reflecting the Holy Land as it existed thousands of years ago, verdant and flowing with milk and honey, not the deserts of the present-day.

Initially, the show was a hard sell. “The King David story is full of sex, violence and intrigue, perfect for a television drama,” Aslan said. “When we would go pitch, they would say, ‘This is too much. We can’t show this. People will be offended.’ We would have to remind them that it was literally word for word from the Bible.”

Aslan developed the series with Mahyad Tousi, his partner at BoomGen Studios, and Robin Russin, a professor of screenwriting and playwriting at UCR who showed Aslan a script he’d been working on since 2004.

COLLABORATING AT UCR

Russin and Aslan taught together in UCR’s creative writing department, whose interdisciplinary nature brings together faculty and students alike: poets,

screenwriters, fiction and narrative nonfiction writers and playwrights.

“Departments tend to segregate and have little interaction, unless faculty members are forced to be on academic committees together,” Russin said. “One of the great pleasures of teaching at UCR are the opportunities to teach classes together, to go to each other’s readings. We are aware of each other’s successes and agonies. It’s a community that UCR has fostered that I think is rather rare and precious.”

He called Aslan a “remarkable and unique presence on campus and in the media, a wonderful combination of a telegenic personality and a generous, honest and fearless spirit that comes through in his writing and how he approaches the combat of media.”

Carly Kimmel, a lecturer in creative writing at UCR, was also once his student, too. “He scared the hell out of us,” she said, recalling his nonfiction workshop. “People regularly cried in his class, but it was also the first time I actually bought a grammar book and made sure every word I wrote was perfect before I submitted. Reza demands that of you and his students are better for it,” she said. “I’m not sure all of his students even realize how famous he is. That’s sort of the beauty of Riverside. We are a bit protected from Hollywood here. Perhaps Reza likes that, too. He can just be ‘a great professor’ when he’s here and he doesn’t have to be a celebrity.”

A TYPICAL GRAD STUDENT

Born in Iran, Aslan immigrated to the United States when he was 7, raised in a “motley family of lukewarm Muslims and exuberant atheists,” he writes in “Zealot.” “[I]n the America of the 1980s, being Muslim was like being from Mars. My faith ... was the most obvious symbol of my otherness; it needed to be concealed.”

As a teenager, after attending an evangelical youth camp, he converted to Christianity. In college, when he began to study the Jesus of the Gospels and the Jesus of history, his doubts grew and he began to rethink the faith and culture of his forefathers.

Mark Juergensmeyer, Aslan’s thesis adviser at UC Santa Barbara, remembers him as a typical grad student in blue jeans and a sweatshirt, a lively but not pushy presence in seminar. “Reza in person is just like the guy you see on television — likable, articulate, with an easy self-confidence that earns him instant respect. He’s perfect for the new CNN series since he has a great store of knowledge about comparative religion and a sociologist’s keen eye for the significance of religious beliefs and acts.”

Aslan has three young sons with his wife, Jessica Jackley, who co-founded Kiva, which crowd-sources loans to people around the world. Her first book, *“Clay Water Brick: Finding Inspiration from Entrepreneurs Who Do the Most with the Least,”* was published in June. Though they’ve discussed working on projects together, for now they’re focused on their children and their individual careers, Aslan said.

People are always amazed that he works in many different realms, fiction and nonfiction, television, movies and academia. “The truth is that I don’t do so many different things.” Aslan said. “I think of myself first and foremost as a storyteller. Everything else are various platforms through which stories are told. I truly believe that stories have the power to change people’s perception of the world, of other people, of themselves.”

— *Writer Vanessa Hua '09 is a former student and teaching assistant for Reza Aslan.*



THE ‘COMBAT OF MEDIA,’ REZA ASLAN’S WAY

Robin Russin, a professor of screenwriting and playwriting at UCR, has lauded Aslan’s fearless spirit that comes through in his writing, his teaching, and in “how he approaches the combat of media.” Here are four strategies Aslan is using to educate and shape perceptions.

PLAN YOUR CAMPAIGN: Aslan co-founded BoomGen Studios to harness the power of popular and pop culture media to transform perceptions of the Middle East and reveal the region’s complexity.

“We think of ourselves as explorers of a sort, except that we’re not going to the Middle East to extract oil from the ground. We’re there to extract stories from the ground,” he says. His examples include the folk tales of 1001 Nights, which appear in a film and graphic novels; a television drama set in the contemporary Middle East which deals with “the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Israel and Palestine” and the ancient epic poem “The Book of Kings,” by Ferdowsi, a legendary Persian poet.



POSITION YOURSELF: Aslan also runs “Rough Draft,” a speaker series in which he interviews screenwriters, novelists and journalists about what inspires their work and craft.

KEEP ENEMIES CLOSE: After Fox News religion correspondent Lauren Green interviewed Aslan, critics called her line of questioning cringe-inducing and embarrassing. In it, Green repeatedly asks why a Muslim would write about the founder of Christianity and Aslan repeatedly explains he’s a religious scholar and lists his academic credentials.

ENGAGE THE FORCE: On CNN, Aslan clarifies Bill Maher’s sweeping generalizations about Islam and answers questions about Islam’s supposed propensity toward violence.

To see more about Reza Aslan’s work, go to magazine.ucr.edu.

“My Voice is Made by Everyone’s Voices”

“Juan Felipe Herrera did the University of California proud as a student and professor, he did California proud as the state’s poet laureate, and he’ll do the nation proud as America’s poet laureate.”

— Janet Napolitano, University of California president

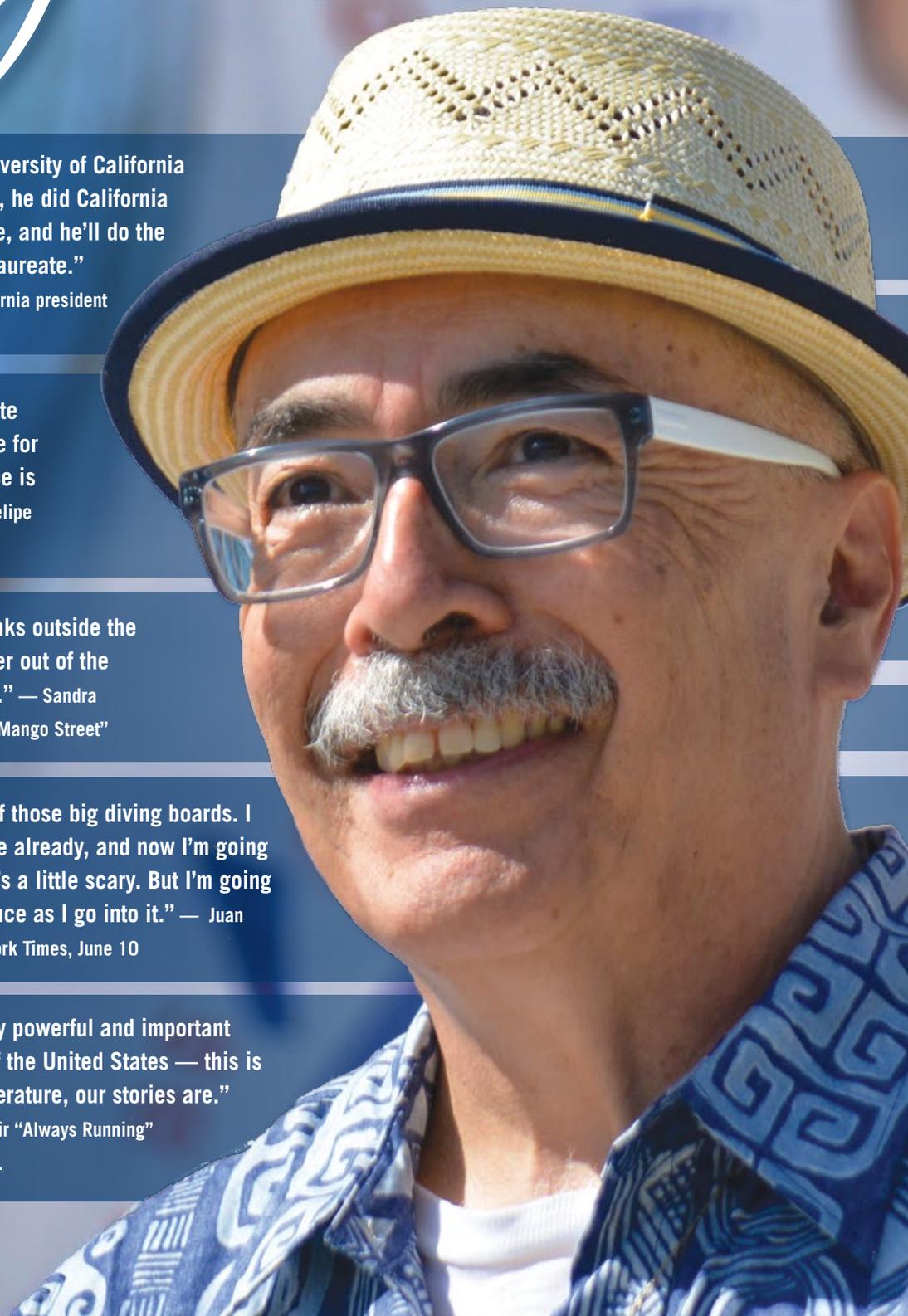
“Yes, I am the first Latino poet laureate in the United States. But I’m also here for everyone and from everyone. My voice is made by everyone’s voices.” — Juan Felipe Herrera in *The Associated Press*, June 10

“We need somebody that thinks outside the box, and nobody thinks further out of the box than Juan Felipe Herrera.” — Sandra Cisneros, author of *“The House on Mango Street”*

“I feel like I’m on one of those big diving boards. I was on a really high one already, and now I’m going to the highest one. ... It’s a little scary. But I’m going to do a backflip and dance as I go into it.” — Juan Felipe Herrera in *The New York Times*, June 10

“We’re being recognized in a very powerful and important way. Juan Felipe, poet laureate of the United States — this is symbolic of how important our literature, our stories are.”

— Luis J. Rodriguez, author of the memoir *“Always Running”* and current poet laureate of Los Angeles.



The appointment of Juan Felipe Herrera as the United States' 21st poet laureate created quite a buzz this summer. Here are our favorite quotes about the new job for UCR's professor emeritus of creative writing — from various colleagues and Herrera himself.

“His poems engage in a serious sense of play — in language and in image — that I feel gives them enduring power. I see how they champion voices, traditions and histories, as well as a cultural perspective, which is a vital part of our larger American identity.” — James H. Billington, librarian of Congress

“I want to assist with closing the gap of knowing about and hearing about our Latino communities in terms of literature, in terms of writing. I want our young Latinos and Latinas to write their hearts out and express their hearts out and let us all listen to each other.” — Juan Felipe Herrera in The Associated Press, June 10

“I believe Juan Felipe Herrera's appointment is a timely one, particularly as we enter an election year that's fraught with the usual anxiety and misinformation about immigration issues.” — Rigoberto González, poet

“Such an inspiring man!” — Alexis Bran, UCR Class of 2015 @ucriversideofficial Instagram

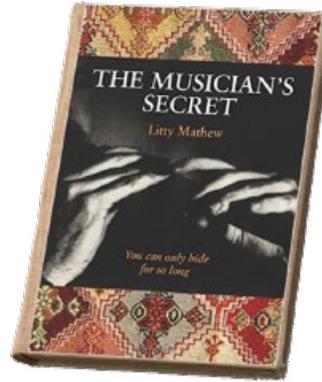
“One of my favorite professors!!” — Cheyanne Ramón, UCR Class of 2015 @University of California, Riverside Facebook

“People are waiting for you. The new you. People are waiting for you to say the words that will inspire them. I say that because that's what has been told to me as the new laureate of the United States. And you are the new laureates of your life. The new you. People are waiting for your heart and your mind and your hard-earned abilities to come together to speak out for them. I look around and I travel around the United States and people are waiting. They look at me and they tell me they have been waiting. And so I say that to you.” — Juan Felipe Herrera's June 14 commencement speech at UCR

“This is not hyperbole: JFH is going to change how the poet laureate serves the nation and all its people. I'm thrilled that this position will widen his audience. He's a genius in heart, soul and mind. His ear and his lexicon are beautiful and complex: un verdadero Americano.” — Carmen Giménez Smith, poet

Changing kids' lives through words, SoCal Armenian fiction, a companion to LGBT studies and other Page Turners

These books are available for purchase at the UCR Campus Store and online at www.ucrcampusstore.ucr.edu. They have been discounted up to 30 percent

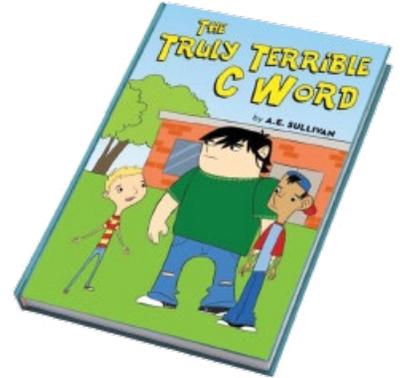


The Musician's Secret

By Litty Mathew '91
Third Floor Press
February 2015, 260 pages

Rupen Najarian, an 83-year-old musician living in Glendale, California, has built his whole existence on a lie. The day his village in Turkey was torched by soldiers, 7-year-old Rupen became the last survivor of his family. Bearing a terrible secret, he joined the Armenian "Trail of Tears" into the Syrian desert. Now, in 1992, Maestro Rupen is rich and famous, with all the trappings of high-class Armenian living, thanks to his talent on the duduk, an ancient shepherd's flute. As he performs at his birthday tribute, an earthquake — literal and figurative — rattles his world. Haik, a 20-year-old Armenian immigrant, becomes Rupen's stalker, blackmailer and personal Lucifer. But even as this young man gains control of the Maestro's life, he soon realizes he's in over his head, for Rupen is more than just the master of the duduk. "The Musician's Secret" is a compelling tale of hidden identities, intricate mysteries and the tantalizing possibility of redemption.

Mathew is a freelance writer.



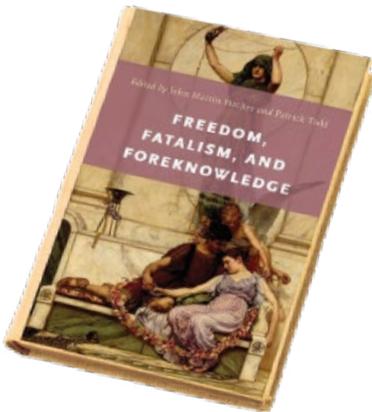
The Truly Terrible C Word

By A.E. Sullivan '96
Tate Publishing
March 2012, 24 pages

After having children, Ami Sullivan started paying much closer attention to the words we commonly use as society — can't, impossible, hate, stupid — and felt troubled by the concepts people almost unconsciously inundate their children with. The first book in a series, it's a fun, over-the-top way to raise awareness of potentially damaging language.

In "The Truly Terrible C Word," readers join one elementary school student as he attempts to save other students from turning green by saying "The Truly Terrible C Word." This word can stop you from doing anything and it must be stopped! It will definitely stunt your growth!

Sullivan is a management consultant for nonprofit organizations that support people with developmental disabilities.



Freedom, Fatalism, and Foreknowledge

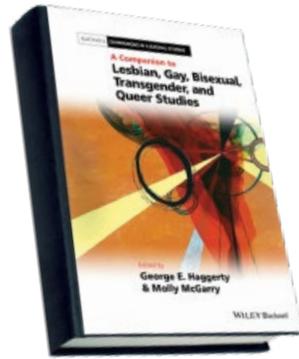
By John Martin Fischer (editor) and Patrick Todd (editor)
Oxford University Press
June 2015, 416 pages

We like to think we have free will, but how can we, if for anything we do, it was already true in the distant past that we would do that thing? Or, how can we have free will if God already knows in advance all the details of our lives?

Such questions raise the specter of fatalism. This book collects 16 previously published articles on fatalism, truths about the future and the relationship between divine foreknowledge and human freedom, and includes a substantial introductory essay and bibliography.

Many of the pieces collected here build bridges between discussions of human freedom and recent developments in other areas of metaphysics, such as philosophy of time. Ideal for courses in free will, metaphysics and philosophy of religion, "Freedom, Fatalism, and Foreknowledge" will encourage important new directions in thinking about free will, time and truth.

Fischer is a professor of philosophy at UCR. Todd is a doctoral candidate in philosophy at UCR.



A Companion to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Studies

By George Haggerty (editor) and Molly McGarry (editor)
Wiley-Blackwell
June 2015, 496 pages

This book is the first single volume survey of current discussions taking place in this rapidly developing area of study. Recognizing the multidisciplinary nature of the field, the editors gathered new essays by an international team of established and emerging scholars that address the politics, economics, history and cultural impact of sexuality.

"A Companion to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Studies" engages the future of queer studies by asking what sexuality stands for, what work it does and how it continues to structure discussions in various academic disciplines as well as contemporary politics.

Haggerty is a distinguished professor of English at UCR. McGarry is an associate professor of history at UCR.



Vital Minimum: Need, Science, and Politics in Modern France

By Dana Simmons
University of Chicago Press
July 2015, 240 pages

What constitutes a need? Who gets to decide what people do or do not need? In modern France, scientists, both amateur and professional, were engaged in defining and measuring human needs. These scientists did not trust in a providential economy to distribute the fruits of labor and uphold the social order. Rather, they believed that social organization should be actively directed according to scientific principles. They grounded their study of human needs on quantifiable foundations: agricultural and physiological experiments, demographic studies and statistics.

The result was the concept of the "vital minimum" — the living wage — a measure of physical and social needs. This book traces the history of this concept, revealing the intersections between technologies of measurement, such as calorimeters and social surveys, and technologies of wages and welfare, such as minimum wages, poor aid and welfare programs, raising profound questions about the authority of nature and the nature of inequality.

Simmons is associate professor of history at UCR.



Governance in Developing Asia: Public Service Delivery and Empowerment (In Association with the Asian Development Bank)

by Anil B. Deolalikar (author, editor), Shikha Jha (author, editor), Pilipinas F. Quising (author, editor)
Edward Elgar Publishing
June 2015, 368 pages

"Governance in Developing Asia" is one of the first books of its kind to provide an overview of the role that better governance and citizen empowerment can play in improving public service delivery in developing Asia. The World Development Report (WDR) 2004 set a framework for public service delivery in terms of the short and long roads to accountability of service providers to citizens. More than a decade on, this book revisits the WDR framework, highlighting its shortcomings and offering alternative solutions.

The contributors present fresh evidence on the relationship between governance and development outcomes. They argue that the Asia-Pacific region must do better in delivering essential public services if it wishes to continue improving the quality of life for millions of its people. They show how the quantity and quality of public services in a country can be improved if the government actively solicits citizen involvement in service delivery.

Deolalikar is a professor of economics at UCR and the founding dean of UCR's School of Public Policy.

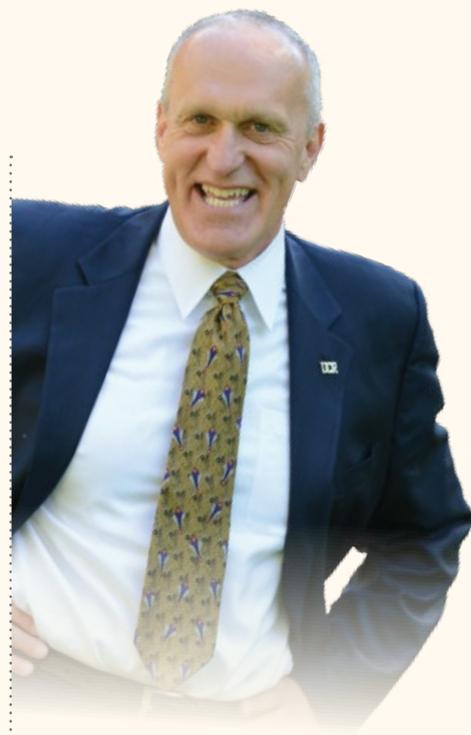
Join Us on Meetup!

Are you a member of
Meetup.com?

Join the new group for exclusive access to events and activities sponsored by the Alumni Association! We will be hosting special events for Highlanders, only through Meetup.com.

Interested in becoming an organizer for your area? Contact the Alumni Association for more information.

www.alumni.ucr.edu



HOMECOMING = REUNION TIME AT UCR

Be sure to save the dates for Homecoming on Nov. 13-14!

Pioneer Classes Reunion 1955-1962

Alumni, faculty and friends are invited to a special reunion for the first graduates of UCR! Reunite with old friends and see how the campus has changed and grown. Activities include a reunion dinner on Friday, Nov. 13, and activities on Saturday, Nov. 14.

Chicano Latino Alumni Dinner

Alumni and friends are invited to the Chicano Latino Alumni Homecoming reunion dinner. Meet old friends and create new relationships at this special gathering.

College of Natural & Agricultural Sciences Alumni Reunion

Alumni and friends of the College of Natural & Agricultural Sciences are invited to a special reunion featuring a presentation by alumnus Charles Gay '68, Ph.D '79, a reception with great food and wine, and a research poster display by CNAS undergraduate students.

Graduate School of Education Alumni Reception

Reconnect with fellow Graduate School of Education alumni, faculty and friends at this special reception at the UCR Culver Center of the Arts.

School of Business Administration Alumni Reception

Don't miss this annual School of Business Administration alumni gathering that will feature music, games and great food and drink from local breweries and wineries.

Register for reunions at
homecoming.ucr.edu



Regional Receptions with Chancellor Wilcox

Join fellow alumni and friends of UCR at one of our receptions featuring UCR Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox. Learn about the exciting developments at UCR and reconnect with your fellow Highlanders. Receptions are planned in the following locations:

San Diego: Oct. 26, 6 p.m.

Portland, Ore.: Feb. 24, 6 p.m.

Seattle, Wash.: Feb. 25, 6 p.m.

San Francisco: March 2, 6 p.m.

RSVP on the Alumni Association website at www.alumni.ucr.edu

**It's easy to connect with
the UCR Alumni Association:
Website: alumni.ucr.edu
E-mail: ucralum@ucr.edu
Phone: (951) UCR-ALUM or
(800) 426-ALUM (2586)**

Call for Applications

The UCR Alumni Association is accepting applications to serve on the board of directors. Help promote the vision, mission and goals of the association and UCR. The deadline to apply is Jan. 22, 2016, for a term start date of July 2016.

<http://www.alumni.ucr.edu/bod/apply>

60s

Bruce Shepard '69, M.A. '70, Ph.D. '72 announced that he will retire as president of Western Washington University at the close of the 2015-2016 academic year. Prior to becoming Western's 13th president in 2008, Shepard served as chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay from 2001 to 2008. From 1995-2001, Shepard served as provost at Eastern Oregon University (EOU), where he was also a professor of political science. Prior to joining EOU, Shepard spent 23 years at Oregon State University, earning tenure as a faculty member in the Department of Political Science before moving into university administration.

70s

Philip Brady '71 earned his masters in English from the University of Washington and his Ph.D. in education from the University of Oregon. In 1990 he received the Air Force Commendation Medal. The award goes to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who, while serving in any capacity with the Air Force after March 24, 1958, distinguished themselves by meritorious achievement and service.



Kerry E. Sieh '72 studies the geological record to understand the geometries of active

TAKE FIVE



Aaron Carew '11



Aaron Carew describes his role as a TV staff writer as someone who “builds worlds by supporting the vision of the creator” and who collaborates with fellow writers to come up with “stories inspired by the imagination or pulled from zeitgeist issues and turn them into a show.” Carew, who graduated with a degree in theater with an emphasis in writing for the performing arts, has worked on Fox Television’s “Gang Related,” Universal/Legendary’s “Blackhat” and is currently developing a TV drama about a Miami paparazzo and a feature film about a Marine-turned-people-smuggler who battles a Mexican cartel.



1 If you could repeat a class at UCR, what would it be?

That would be the “Filmmaker’s Life” taught by Stu Krieger in the Theatre, Film and Digital Production Department. The class gives you a preview into filmmaking and the realities of what it takes to be a filmmaker. It really gives you a full 360 view of what it is like to go from the very beginning stages of a TV show or feature film all the way to the end. Actual working professionals from Hollywood [would also come in and talk] to us about the business and give us a real insider’s view.

2 Who or what is your biggest inspiration for your writing?

First, my family. Second are the movies that I grew up on — Jerry Bruckheimer movies, '90s blockbusters — you know, the big, blow-up action films. Working for good people is also motivating and inspiring. I had the privilege of working for Chris Morgan as a writers’ production assistant on Fox’s “Gang Related.” Chris, who coincidentally is a UCR alumnus, is also the writer of the “Fast and Furious” films; his movies are the popcorn action movies that people love to go see and talk about. So working for and with the people who tell the types of stories I want to tell is also very inspiring.

3 Tell us about the Fox Intensive Writers Program that you participated in.

It’s a very competitive program, and annually they select 10 writers out of 400-plus applicants. It’s a five-month program that really teaches you how to tell stories for Fox TV and sets you up to be part of the Fox Television family. It’s my biggest accomplishment thus far. It’s a huge honor to be a part of the network that brought big television shows such as “The X-Files” and “24” to life!

4 From your experience, what would you say is the biggest struggle in being a TV writer?

The biggest struggle that I’ve had [to deal with] is to not get discouraged. That’s because on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, TV writing is a collaborative media. But at the same time, you’re always trying to get hired as a writer. And there’s only so many shows on TV at the same time, so the biggest thing for me is to continue to say to myself that it’s not a matter of “if,” it’s a matter of “when.” When will I get staffed? When will I get on another show?

5 Do you have any movies or TV show recommendations for us?

“Breaking Bad,” definitely. As far as movies go, I suggest everything from “Boyhood” to “Guardians of the Galaxy.”

faults, the earthquakes they generate and the crustal deformation their movements produce. His early work — studying geological layers and landforms along the San Andreas fault — led to the discovery of how often and how regularly it produces large earthquakes in Southern California. A few years ago, he investigated Taiwan's multitude of active faults and figured out how their earthquakes are continuously creating that mountainous island. Currently, he and his colleagues are studying the active faults of Myanmar and the surrounding region. Sieh's longstanding research in paleoseismic work has led to an understanding of the repeating nature of such earthquakes. He also instigated the creation of the Sumatran GPS Array, a network of continuously recording GPS stations, to record deformations during and in between large earthquakes.

Bernard Michael Hovanec '75 was promoted from senior research chemist to quality control lab manager at Ortec Inc. Bernard earned his doctor of science degree with honors in analytical chemistry.

Steven Laitz '77, M.A. '79 has been teaching and administrating half time at Juilliard for the past year or so while serving as chair of the Theory Department at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. He will begin on a full-time basis at Juilliard this coming fall.

Anne Marie Reynolds '79 has been teaching full time at the State University of New York, Geneseo, for more than 20 years. She will move to Juilliard as faculty this fall.

Lawrence (Larry) K. Grill, Ph.D. '79 is the dean of research as well as the director of the Vaccine Research Center of the Keck Graduate Institute (KGI) and Pitzer College. He presented a lecture titled "Feeding Botswana: From Field to Lab to Vaccine" on April 9 at UC Riverside.

80s 90s



Jack B. Clarke Jr. '80 has been honored with the 2015 Frank Miller Civic Achievement Award

by the Mission Inn Foundation. The award is presented annually to an individual or group that has provided outstanding civic leadership, service and support to the community in the tradition of Frank A. Miller, founder of the Mission Inn. Jack has devoted many years of his life to support the city of Riverside and its citizens.



Arthur Appel M.S. '83, Ph.D. '85, an Auburn University professor, researcher, former department

chair, interim associate dean for research and interim assistant director of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station (AAES) has been named interim dean for the College of Agriculture and interim director of AAES at Auburn University.



Darin P. Anderson '89, M.B.A. '91, chairman and CEO at Salas O'Brien LLC,

was a semifinalist for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year in Orange County. The awards program recognizes entrepreneurs who demonstrate excellence and extraordinary success in such areas as innovation, financial performance and personal commitment to their businesses and communities.

Janice L. Rutherford

'90, San Bernardino county supervisor, has been honored by the American Society for Public Administration Inland Empire Chapter with the 2015 Outstanding Elected Official award. Rutherford served as a Fontana city councilwoman for 10 years before being elected county supervisor in November 2010. She was re-elected in November 2014 and represents the county's 2nd Supervisorial District that encompasses the cities of Rancho Cucamonga, Upland, Fontana and the mountain communities of Crestline, Lytle Creek, Mt. Baldy and Lake Arrowhead, among others.

Edward Bush '95,

a Riverside County community college faculty member and administrator of nearly 17 years, has been named president of Cosumnes River College in Sacramento. The board of the Los Rios Community College District



named Edward, 42, to the job; he began July 1. Edward was vice president of student services at Riverside City College. He served as president of the college's Management Leadership Association, administrative co-chair of the Student Success Committee and the Strategic Planning Executive Council and the Emergency Preparedness Committee. Before coming to Riverside City College in 2007, Bush served as student services dean at Norco College and as assistant professor and coordinator of student activities at Moreno Valley College — both part of the Riverside Community College District. He has a doctorate in urban educational leadership from Claremont Graduate University, a master's degree in public administration from California State University, San Bernardino, and a bachelor's degree in political science from UC Riverside. Cosumnes River College serves nearly 15,000 students and has nearly 600 faculty and staff.

Mark McNeill '95 was promoted to assistant vice president of investments for the corporate division at Pacific Life. Mark joined Pacific Life in 2007 as an investment consultant with Pacific Life Fund Advisors (PLFA) and was promoted to director of investments in 2010. In this role, Mark is responsible for leading the investment manager oversight function for the Pacific Select Fund and Pacific Funds. His responsibilities include generating key investment decisions for the PLFA-managed strategies and providing investment expertise to drive companywide initiatives. As

assistant vice president of investments, Mark will continue to provide investment management expertise for the Pacific Select Fund and Pacific Funds, as well as develop investment strategies and fund manager recommendations for these portfolios.



Chad W. Firetag '98 was appointed to the Riverside County Superior Court on July 16 by Gov.

Brown. Chad, 38, of Riverside, has served as the assistant public defender at the Riverside County Public Defender's Office since 2013. He was a partner at the Law Offices of Grech and Firetag from 2002 to 2013 and an associate at Rutan and Tucker LLP from 2001 to 2002. Firetag earned a Juris Doctor degree from the UC Davis School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts degree from UCR. Firetag, a Republican, fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Sherrill A. Ellsworth.

00s



Vanessa Bryan '09 recently began a new position as an account executive at IMG Consulting

working on the Anheuser-Busch InBev account. She will be working with a team managing NFL and other sports partnerships.

Rita Medina '09 now serves as principal legislative analyst with Riverside Public Utilities.

TAKE FIVE



Vanessa Wilkie

M.A. '03, Ph.D. '09



Vanessa Wilkie is the William A. Moffett curator of medieval and British historical manuscripts at the Huntington Library in Pasadena, where she is responsible for acquiring new materials for the library and growing the library's general collections in the field of British and medieval history.



1 Why did you choose to go to UCR for graduate studies?

At the time, UCR was one of the only schools in the country that offered a master's degree in archival management. When I got into graduate school, I fell in love with English history and the academic side of the humanities. So I decided to stay at UCR because it has a really strong program in British history.

2 How did UCR prepare you for your career now?

A lot of the preparation just came from the geography of UCR. It's such a diverse campus that encourages people to work in a really interdisciplinary way. In graduate school, people tend to get into little niches for what they want to study, but at UCR, we were really encouraged as history students to take classes in women's studies, political science, English literature. ... Working on campus with so many different kinds of graduate students and professors was really helpful.

3 What accomplishment are you most proud of in your career so far?

When I was offered a position at the Huntington Library, that was a moment that I was really proud of because it is a rather unconventional job and it allowed me to blend my master's and Ph.D. in a way that I didn't think was possible.

4 What are your favorite UCR memories?

The classes that I took as a grad student. Graduate school is such a unique period in your life because you're so focused on what you want to study, but in classes you get to talk and work with people who are also in your field. I really liked the depth of conversations that happened in my graduate classes because although I was an English historian, I was taking classes with Latin American historians, American historians and the public historians.

5 If you could meet anyone from history, who would it be and why?

That answer changes on a daily basis! At the moment [it would be] Alice Spencer Stanley Egerton. She was the countess of Derby. I wrote my dissertation about her and my current book project is about her. So my job would be a whole lot easier if I could just sit down and talk with her. She was a pretty fierce person who had very strong opinions on how things should be, but she was also very shrewd and very smart. I was intrigued by how complex she seemed! I'm terrified of her, but also fascinated by her.



WILL YOU ANSWER THE CALL?



Private philanthropic support from alumni and friends enables UC Riverside to continue to provide the quality education it is known for.

That's why we're calling on you to help.

You'll be receiving a call from a UCR student soon so you can hear just how much of an impact your gift has on student scholarships, research opportunities and academic program development across campus.

When your phone rings this fall, please answer the call!



10s

Robert Cate '10 After graduating from UCR, Robert used his skills to begin his career as an entrepreneur. After conceiving the initial concept, he raised seed money and started a software company called Trommelo. The software uses special web-socket technology to provide a platform where recruiters can mass-screen candidates who are authenticated through LinkedIn all at once, in real-time. This lets companies identify top candidates to interview from a large stack of applicants.

Trommelo formed a partnership with SXSW in Austin, Texas, as part of the interactive portion of the conference. SXSW is using Trommelo's software to create an interactive experience for both candidates and recruiters.



Aaron Pomerantz '12

An entomologist, Pomerantz was surprised to encounter a bizarre caterpillar in the Peruvian Amazon. It had long black tentacles that extended and vibrated whenever he made a noise. Pomerantz spent hours hollering at the insect and filming its reactions. He later discovered that the caterpillar is a larval geometrid moth, in the family Geometridae, commonly known as inchworms. He further discovered the caterpillar belonged to the

genus *Nematocampa*. Pomerantz spotted the caterpillar in southeastern Peru, near the Tambopata Research Center.

Amelia Ek '13 joined forces with UC Irvine's Jada Patipaksiri to make up one of eight teams competing in the new Golf Channel TV reality series "Altered Course." The series features two-person teams competing on hole layouts exceeding 700 yards, while racing against time. Ek and Patipaksiri have squared off against one another for the better part of a decade as high school teammates, and later as Big West rivals.

Kimberley A. Hutter '13 has accepted a new role with InterVarsity at UCR as a full-time campus staffer where she will work closely with students for personal, spiritual and leadership development. Her main focus will be community engagement. She will get students to interact with the city, be aware of life outside of the university, get involved in student mentorship and provide training for students to become mentors/coaches.

Jennifer Lauren Rivera '14 has a new position working as a program support specialist with NPHS Inc., a nonprofit organization in Rancho Cucamonga, California.

Steven J. Nimocks '69. December 2014.

Shelly Renee Cauffiel '70, M.A. '73. July 2015.

Camille Guerin-Gonzales '78, M.A. '80, Ph.D. '85. February 2015.

Dorothy J. Hunter, M.A. '82. 2014.

Stacie Frances Dotson '82. June 2014.

Joel Enas, Ph.D. '90. May 2015.

Melina Chase Thornhill '93. July 2015.

John Joseph Finazzo '86, M.D. March 2015.



John Joseph Finazzo, born on Sept. 25, 1964, in Fontana, California, passed away March 7 in

Palm Springs. He was 50. Finazzo graduated with a Bachelor of Sciences degree in biomedical sciences from UCR in 1986, Phi Beta Kappa with High Honors. He was an alumni scholar and active in Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity and health careers club. Through the biomedical sciences program, he earned his M.D. from UCLA School of Medicine in 1989. After a general surgery internship at UCLA, he completed a residency in otolaryngology – head and neck surgery – from SUNY Health Science Center, Brooklyn.

Finazzo had been in private practice in Otolaryngology in the Palm Springs area since 1995. He served as chief of ENT at Eisenhower Memorial Medical Center, was an officer of the Palm Springs Academy of Medicine and sat on the Board of Directors of Hope Square Surgery Center. Finazzo was awarded “Top Doctor” in his specialty by Palm Springs Life magazine for eight consecutive years and was honoree of the year by the Palm Springs Chapter of the Sons of Italy in 2010.

He actively supported UCR students by serving as a mentor, offering opportunities to have students shadow him at his practice and speaking annually at the Student Alumni Association’s Medical Career Conference. He served on the UCR Alumni Association (UCRAA) Board of Directors, as a member of the UCRAA Executive Committee, and as chair of the UCRAA scholarship program. He is survived by his wife, Lorna Marie Walek ('86, T.C. '87) and their three children.

The family has established the John J. Finazzo, M.D. Memorial Scholarship Fund. All wishing to contribute to honor Finazzo may do so by sending a check payable to the UCR Foundation to:

UC Riverside Foundation
900 University Ave.
Riverside, CA 92521

Please indicate Dr. Finazzo Memorial Scholarship in the memo line.

Faculty

George K. Helmkamp, the second person hired in chemistry in 1953, died on March 28 at the age of 94. Helmkamp received his B.A. from Wartburg College in Iowa, an M.S. from the Claremont Graduate School, and his Ph.D. from Cal Tech. After a year as a chemistry instructor at Pomona College, he was invited to join the faculty at UCR. When he arrived in 1953, the buildings for the new College of Letters and Science had not been completed, so the first six months of work were spent in temporary quarters.

Helmkamp taught the first classes in organic chemistry and was involved in planning and teaching organic chemistry. His research evolved from acetylenes to optically active deuterium compounds, DNA conformation studies and small-ring sulfur and nitrogen heterocycles. He served as assistant dean of the College of Letters and Science from 1963-66, as divisional dean of natural sciences from 1966-70, acting chair of the Department of Chemistry in 1961 and 1970, as chair from 1970-74 and as associate dean for instruction in 1974. For his teaching he was awarded the Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Award and the first Graduate Student Association

Teaching Award. He served on and chaired virtually every committee on campus during his tenure at UCR. He retired in 1981 and was granted emeritus status in 1982.

In retirement he became heavily involved with The Nature Conservancy and played a key role in the establishment of its reserve in Big Morongo Canyon. He also continued to collect, identify, press and send plants to the UCR Herbarium until a few months before he died. Curator and Museum Scientist of the Herbarium Andrew Sanders, who knew Helmkamp for more than 40 years, said, “George began collecting in the 1970s and was our biggest contributor for a long time. In fact, he was one of the most important collectors in the history of California,” according to a study by UC Berkeley.

Helmkamp is survived by daughters Amy and Ann and was preceded in death by his wife, Elizabeth, son John and daughter Alice. Additional information about George K. Helmkamp can be found on the UCR oral history website here: <http://www.ucrhistory.ucr.edu/helmkamp.htm>



UNDERSTANDING AN AGING IMMUNE SYSTEM

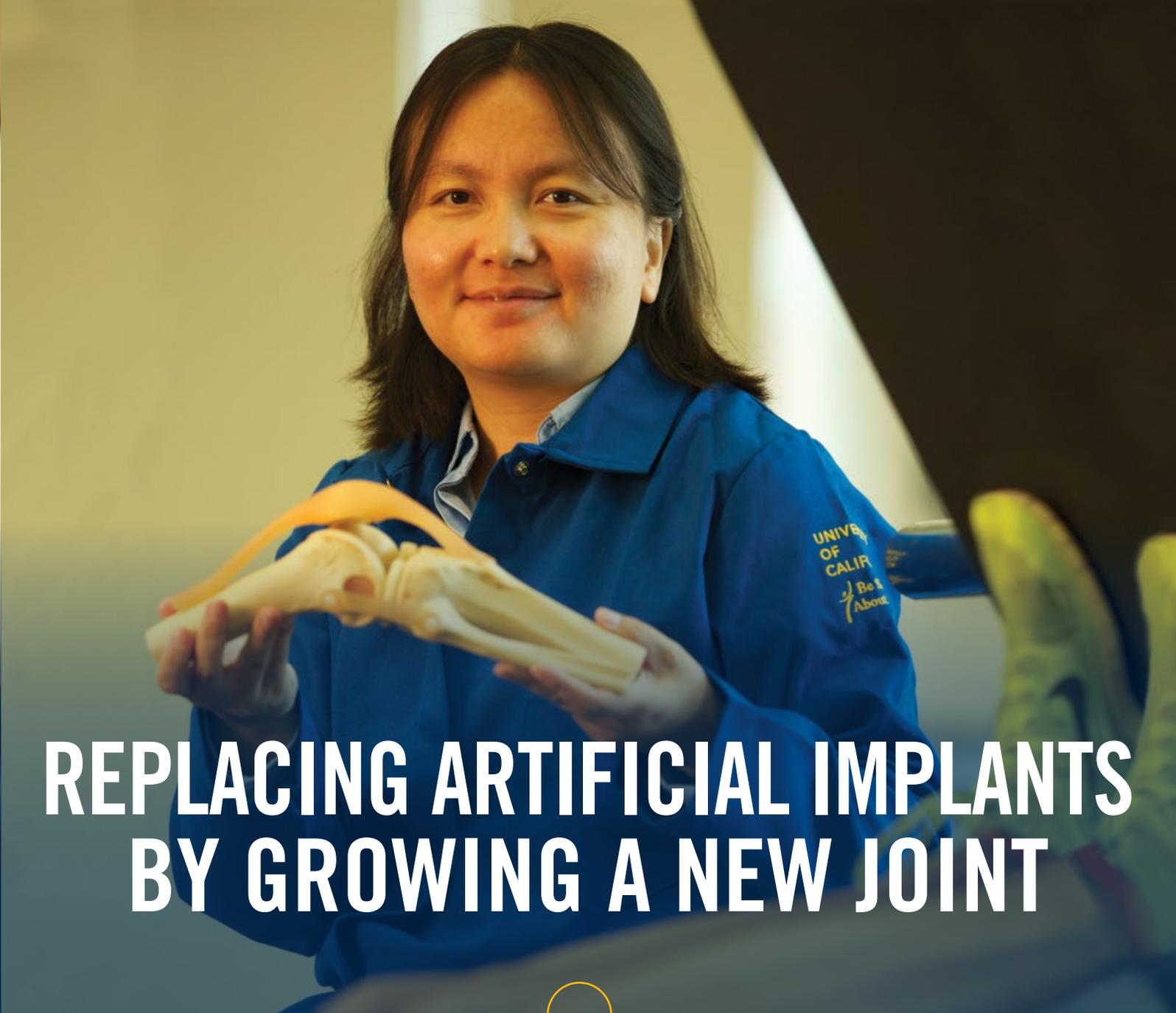
ILHEM MESSAOUDI

Associate Professor, Biomedical Sciences, School of Medicine

Common viruses such as influenza and herpes zoster, more commonly known as shingles, afflict thousands of older individuals, significantly decreasing their mobility, quality of life and, in some cases, lifespan. Currently available vaccines are not always effective when administered to this fast-growing population, and the mechanisms by which the immune systems of elderly patients respond to both the viruses and the medications used to treat them are poorly understood.

LIVING THE PROMISE

By closely studying how the response mechanisms of the immune system change as we age, biomedical sciences expert Ilhem Messaoudi and her team are developing and testing a new generation of safer, more effective drugs designed specifically for use with older adults. Such research has the potential to reshape the experience of aging for both individuals and our society as a whole.



REPLACING ARTIFICIAL IMPLANTS BY GROWING A NEW JOINT

HUINAN LIU

Assistant Professor, Bioengineering, Bourns College of Engineering

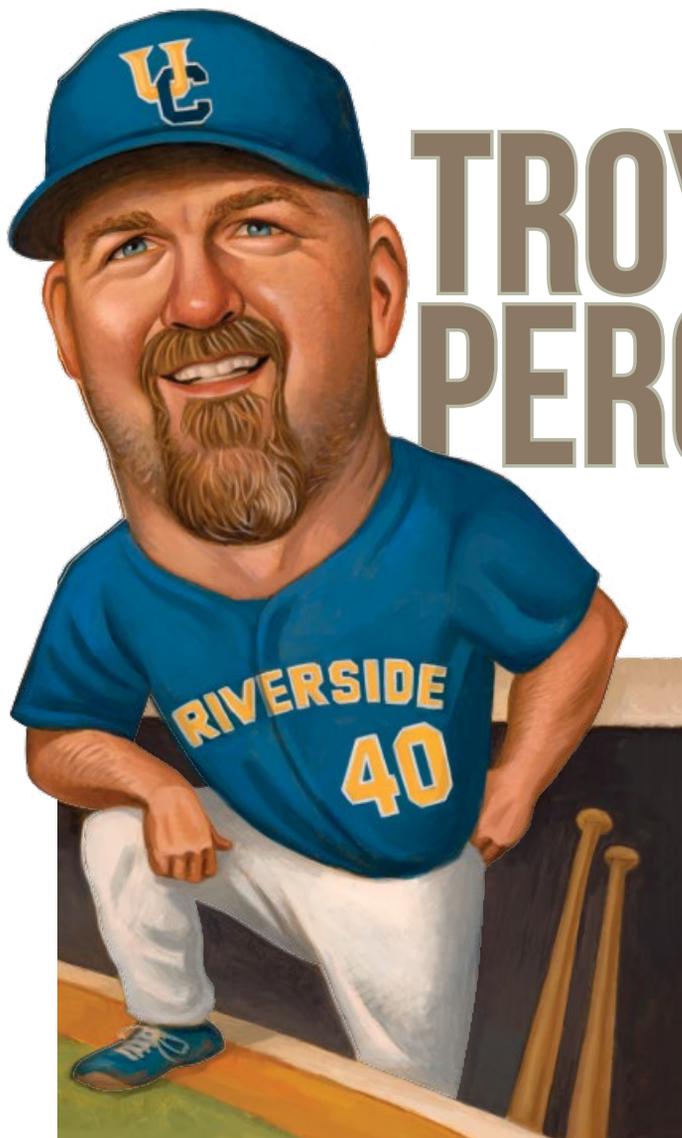
Today's medical devices are used for everything from coronary stents to spine screws to hip implants. Many of the materials used to make them, such as titanium alloys or stainless steel, are non-degradable. Once a clinician has implanted one of these devices in the body, it remains there permanently unless the patient undergoes a secondary surgery to remove it.

Unfortunately, many patients experience pain and complications when the devices eventually break down or become infected. They must also carry the burden of additional health care costs to remove or replace them.

LIVING THE PROMISE

With funding from the National Science Foundation, UCR bioengineer Huinan Liu is inventing an exciting new class of vitamin-based, bioresorbable materials that can be left in place after an initial surgery, then disappear after serving their functions. In addition to breaking down naturally in the body over time, such new materials can provide helpful nutrients to the body as they degrade, repairing damaged or injured tissues and facilitating in the healing process. There is a long list of potential applications for bioresorbable materials, including orthopedic implants, spinal implants and cardiovascular devices.





TROY | THE BASEBALL COACH PERCIVAL

Most remember him as the Angels' closer, a pitcher with a 100-mph fastball, four All-Star appearances, and 358 career saves. But Troy Percival is also a father, son, husband and — as it turns out — one heck of a coach, who continues to play and teach the game he ardently loves.

“Baseball chose me,” says Percival, now head baseball coach for the UC Riverside Highlanders, his college team before being drafted in 1990 by the Angels. “It’s not that I was superior to everyone else growing up, but I was always one of the better players. I wrestled, played football and basketball, but nothing stimulated my mind and my body like baseball.”

Percival began playing ball when he was 6 on a Riverside Little League team coached by his dad, Richard. His father instilled a desire to excel and gave sage advice — “Hold nothing back and go full throttle till the game’s over” — that Percival carried into his professional career.

BY KOREN WETMORE

“I WRESTLED, PLAYED FOOTBALL AND BASKETBALL, BUT NOTHING STIMULATED MY MIND AND MY BODY LIKE BASEBALL.”

Since then, he’s been coached by the best, including Mike Scioscia, Tony LaRussa, Jim Leyland, and UCR’s Doug Smith, who retired last year yet continues to offer guidance and support.

Percival has taken up Smith’s mantle with a mix of humility and confidence

— and rightly so, as his resume touches every level of the game. He coached his son’s youth travel ball team, which ranked ninth in the nation. He helped Cal Poly High School’s players improve their pitching skills and led Moreno Valley High School’s baseball team to the playoffs, a feat they hadn’t accomplished in 30 years. He also served as a pitching coach for the Angels, not to mention the 20 years he spent playing professional ball.

Still, he knows many more lessons lie ahead.

“The college game on the West Coast has become very bunt happy and always tries to do some kind of trick play. I want us to show that you can play traditional baseball in the Big West and

win,” he says. “That’s not to say we’re going to win the championship right out of the chute, but I’m expecting big things from us.”

Because no matter at which level he may play or coach, the game is still baseball — the sport that chose him.

LIVING THE PROMISE



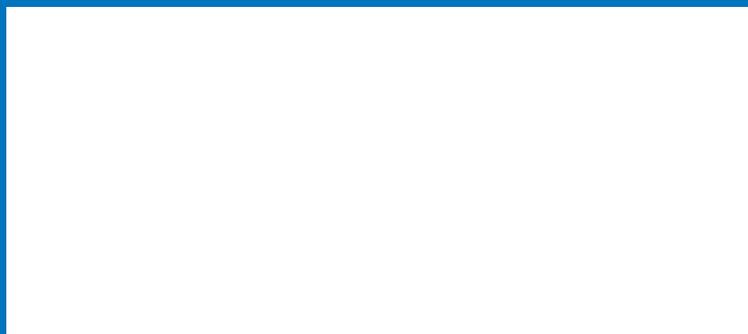
Real World Solutions

By applying fluid mechanics to predict how wildfires move and behave, UCR mechanical engineer Marko Princevac equips fire service and forest safety professionals with new techniques to protect lives and property.

Explore more policy impacts
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UCR

Parent & Family Day

Homecoming

TWENTY-FIFTEEN

Saturday, November 14

FOOD TRUCKS | GAMES | LIVE MUSIC | TOURS | BASKETBALL GAME
FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

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#UCRHomecoming