



International Scholars Newsletter

Each quarter, our team will share immigration updates, tips, and event information for the international scholar community.

International Scholar Spotlight



Dr. Marine Megemont, *Postdoctoral Scholar in the Department of Molecular, Cell, and Systems Biology*

I am originally from the French countryside where I hold a PhD working on the physiopathology of migraine at the University of Clermont-Auvergne. Seeking to experience living abroad and learn state-of-the-art techniques, I decided to move abroad to the US in March 2020 and join Dr Hongdian Yang's lab. When I am not in the lab recording mice's brains, you can find me at the dance studio or at the beach, enjoying everything California has to offer.

Tell us a little bit about your background (before coming to UCR).

I grew up in the French countryside, in a family where nobody was working or interested in science but more in business. But ever since I can remember, my heart was set on biology, I was so interested to understand how the human body works. But I never thought I'd push it that far and end up as a researcher! I kickstarted my journey by earning a Bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Clermont Ferrand (UCA), the biggest city around where I grew up. After that, I specialized in Pharmacology and got my Master's degree from the same university. During the internship for my master degree I started getting really interested in neuroscience as I was working with the Pr. Philippe Luccarini. Finally, after graduating my master I decided that I would specialize

in Neuroscience, pursuing a Ph.D. at the Neuro-Dol lab under Pr. Philippe Luccarini's guidance. My research was focused on unraveling the mechanisms underlying migraine, and how glial cell/neuron interactions would play a role in the physiopathology of this neurological disorder.

Why did you choose UCR to conduct your research and how has your experience been?

After completing my Ph.D., I really wanted to live abroad for a while and experience doing research in the US. I was set on learning advanced techniques such as in-vivo patch clamp and optogenetics. I started looking for a postdoc opportunity and Dr. Yang's job offer at UCR seemed to be a really good fit for me. Our first interactions left me with a very good impression of him and his lab. Plus, the idea of settling in Riverside felt more doable than moving to a big city like LA. I started at UCR on March 10, 2020, right when the pandemic hit! Despite the timing, my experience has been amazing. The International Student Services (ISS), especially Makbule Koksul, were incredibly helpful whenever I needed support. The work environment has been really good, allowing me to publish a first author paper quickly and advance my career.

What are some of your favorite memories at UCR/Riverside?

I think that since the in-person events started again I didn't miss a single coffee hour from the ISS and I'm looking forward to it each time! Having a feeling that I am part of such a great community is something I've never experienced before and I cherish this a lot. I met amazing people through the international community and some of them became very close friends, and together we created a lot of great memories, such as beach days or hiking in some amazing places in California. I also never lived so close to the ocean, so I really enjoyed spending time on the coast and even started to learn how to surf!

What have been some challenges that you have faced since coming to UCR?

I am very close to my family so moving alone in the US was a big challenge, as I think it's the case for most international scholars. For the first year and a half, because of the pandemic, I couldn't travel back or have any family visits, and spending Christmas alone was a bummer. But moving abroad was a huge step outside my comfort zone that helped me grow so much. Additionally, the cultural shock I initially encountered posed its own set of challenges. Adjusting to different social norms and communication styles in the US compared to those in France required a period of adaptation! But overall American people are very welcoming and caring, always curious to hear about my experience here as a French person.

Thank You to our Spring Meet and Greet Speakers!



Dr. Brice Bantegnie, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Global Postdoctoral Fellow in the UCR Department of Philosophy

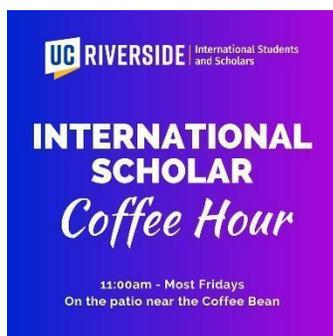


Dr. Ablimit Ablez, Postdoctoral researcher at Mechanical Engineering, UCR

We would like to extend a special thank you to Dr. Brice Bantegnie and Dr. Ablimit Ablez. Thank you for taking the time to share your experience and research! If you would like to share your research in an upcoming Meet & Greet, please email us at internationalscholars@ucr.edu.

Upcoming ISS Events

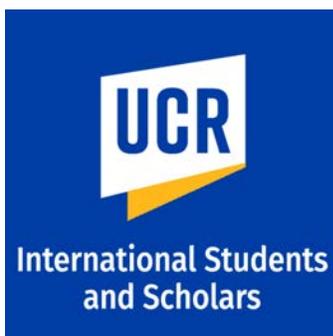
Scholar Coffee Hour



The Scholar Coffee Hour is a chance for you to socialize and meet scholars from across the university. Bring your own beverage and make new friends! You can also purchase beverages from the Coffee Bean. Cookies will be provided by the ISS team.

- **Date: Most Fridays**
- **Time: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**
- **Location: Outside of Coffee Bean**

Monthly Meet and Greet



Join us at our August Meet & Greet with special guest speaker Dr. Marine Megemont, Postdoctoral Scholar in the Molecular, Cell, and Systems Biology Department. Lunch will be provided.

- **Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2023**
- **Time: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.**
- **Location: HUB - Room 260**

ISS August Language Circles



UCR's International Students and Scholars office is hosting a Language Circle program this August. The program is open to everyone with all levels of proficiency. Join us to practice your language-speaking skills and make new friends!

August 2023 Meeting Schedule

- **Spanish:** Every Monday, 11am-12pm 8/7 & 8/21 - Skye Hall 334
8/14 & 8/28 - Zoom (ID 989 4982 0968)
- **English:** Every Tuesday, 2:30-3:30pm 8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, & 8/29
Zoom (ID 978 8478 5387)
- **Mandarin:** Every Wednesday, 1-2pm 8/2, 8/9, 8/16, 8/23, & 8/30
Zoom (ID 960 3652 3571)
- **Japanese:** Every Friday, 12-1pm 8/4, 8/11, 8/18, & 8/25
Skye Hall 334

If you are interested in becoming a moderator for one of our currently offered language or for a new language, please complete the [Moderator Interest Form](#) and email Jacqueline Hernandez at jacqueline.hernandez@ucr.edu for next steps.

Upcoming Holidays

Labor Day - Monday, September 4 (UCR Closed)

Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country.

Things To Do

Summer Ice Cream Cool Down



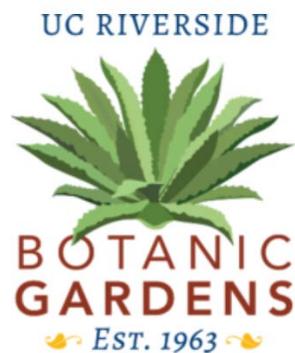
Take a break from the summer heat and enjoy ice cream, frozen treats, and good conversation. All students, staff, faculty and friends invited. This event is supported by the Highlander Empowerment Referendum.

When: Wednesday, August 9 from 12:00 to 1:30 PM

Location: UCR, Costo Hall, 245 Costo Hall

Free! [Learn more here.](#)

Botanic Gardens Twilight Tour



This summer, garden staff and docents will lead after-hours Twilight Tours of the Botanic Gardens. This is the perfect time to enjoy the Gardens in the cool of early evening as the sun is setting and wildlife is beginning to stir. Light refreshments are served following the tour to add to your enjoyment. Please wear appropriate footwear.

When: Saturday, August 19, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Location: UCR Botanic Gardens, 1 Botanic Gardens Drive

Cost: \$10/members, \$15/non-members. [Learn more here.](#)

Summer Music Series



What better way to enjoy the summer than with live music! Riverside Plaza invites the community to attend its summer music series featuring talented local musicians. Performances will be every Saturday from August 5 through August 26 from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in the Regal Riverside Plaza Stadium 16 Courtyard.

When: Saturdays, August 5, 12, 19, & 26 from 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Location: Riverside Plaza, 3535 Riverside Plaza Dr, Riverside, CA

Free! [Learn more here.](#)

Riverside Artswalk



The Riverside Artswalk is a monthly community event that celebrates the diversity of arts and culture in Riverside and the Inland Empire. Visit over 22 downtown locations, including museums, galleries and studios, presenting an eclectic mix of visual and performing arts.

When: 1st Thursday of month, (August 3), 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Location: Artists On Main, On Main St. located between 5th and 10th streets, Downtown Riverside

Free! [Learn more here.](#)

California Citrus State Historic Park



Greeted by an old-fashioned roadside fruit stand, the “big orange,” the [California Citrus State Historic Park](#) dedicates over half of 250 acres to what was once the universal symbol of California’s role in agriculture – the citrus grove. The park recaptures the complexities of the time when "Citrus was King," exploring the significance of the citrus industry in Southern California.

Park Hours: April through September, the park is open Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Location: 9400 Dufferin Avenue Riverside, CA 92504

Cost: \$7 Parking fees are required (bring exact change); [Learn more here](#) or call (951)780-6223

MetroLink \$10 All-day Weekends



Plan a day of exploration on any Saturday or Sunday and pay only \$10 for your all-day transportation on [Metrolink](#). Your MetroLink pass also offers [free connections](#) to many destinations, including in Los Angeles. New to Metrolink? [Learn how to ride here!](#)

ScotSurplus Sale



[ScotSurplus](#) is home to an eclectic assortment of used (but still useable) furniture, electronics, office supplies, clothing, books, bikes, lab supplies, and much more — collected from departments from every corner of the university.

When: June 6 & 20, July 18, August 1 & 15, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location: Corporation Yard, 3401 Watkins Dr., Riverside CA 92507, Located directly behind Lot 23.

Take a tour of the famous Mission Inn



Did you know the city of Riverside was named for its proximity to the Santa Ana River? Learn more about Riverside’s history and the landmark Mission Inn in downtown Riverside. [The Mission Inn Foundation](#) offers daily walking tours led by trained docents on the art, artifacts, architecture, and history of the Mission Inn. Experience over 120 years of history within the grand rooms of the Mission Inn.

When: Weekdays - 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m.; Weekends - 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 4:00 p.m.

Location: The Mission Inn Museum and Museum Store (3696 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92501)

Tickets are \$15-\$20. [Purchase tickets here.](#)

International Scholar Event Highlights





Thank you for connecting with us this summer! ❤️

It has been a joy to meet with you at various events this summer. Thank you for joining us at the weekly Coffee Hour and the Scholar Meet and Greet. We look forward to seeing you at our next events.

FAQs for International Scholars

I need to leave the U.S. and ISS has not signed my DS-2019 document! Is that OK?

Please know that you do not need a travel signature on your DS-2019 document to either remain in or to depart the U.S. You do need a valid travel signature to return to the U.S. in J-1 status. A valid travel signature must be no more than twelve months old on the date that you return to the U.S.

If you are departing the U.S. soon and know that your travel signature will expire by the time you expect to return to the U.S., please contact an international scholar advisor at internationalscholars@ucr.edu. If your DS-2019 is going to expire soon, please consult with your department to extend your stay and then contact our scholar advisor.

What will happen if I end my UCR appointment early and/or I depart the United States and do not intend to return to the U.S. for my J program?

If you are a scholar and you depart the U.S. early (more than 15 days before your DS-2019 end date) and you do not intend to return to the U.S. for the remainder of your J program, please discuss this with your faculty sponsor. Please also email our advisor so that she can advise you on the steps and the visa implications of ending your program early.

Follow International Students and Scholars on [Instagram](#) to stay updated with our office and campus resources and events. You can keep up with International Affairs on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

Contact Our Staff

Thank you for being a part of the UCR International Scholar community. The best way to contact our staff is by email.

General email: internationalscholars@ucr.edu

Makbule Koksal - International Scholar Advisor:

makbule.koksal@ucr.edu

Amparo Rios - International Scholar Advisor:

amparo.rios@ucr.edu

Michael Schmelzle - Director: michael.schmelzle@ucr.edu



International Students
and Scholars

You can also call the general ISS phone number, (951) 827 - 4113. Our office is open Monday - Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.