

Dec 2024

International
Scholars

Monthly Newsletter



Happy December!

Thank you so much for Dr. Jedeliza Ferrater for speaking about their journey at the Meet & Greet on October 30th!

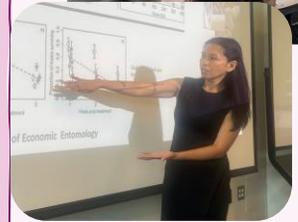
And thank you so much for all who attended.

Before our next Meet & Greet on November 20th, learn about our next speaker, Dr. Mitchell Masterson, on page 2!

Check out the Mission Inn Festival of Lights, happening on November 23 at 5pm.

<https://www.missioninn.com/about/festival-of-lights>

And Black Friday sale, a nationwide sale at many retail stores, is on November 29!



Upcoming ISS Events

Scholar Coffee Hours

What: Meet to chat with other scholars – bring your own beverage and make some friends!

When: Fridays 11:00AM - Noon

Where: Outside of The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

Meet & Greet

Where: HUB 265

When: December 18th, Noon – 1pm

Please come meet our new scholars! As always, we will provide lunch 😊

What is Christmas/Hanukkah?

Aside from having a Christmas feast, many Christian Americans will go to Church to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas. Many churches have special Christmas Carol services and events where the story of Christmas is told. Americans like to decorate the outsides of their houses with lights and sometimes even statues of Santa Claus, Snowmen and Reindeer. Some cookies and glass of milk are often left out as a snack for Santa on Christmas Eve!

In California, Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park, Universal Studios Hollywood in Los Angeles, LEGOLAND California, SeaWorld San Diego, and Sesame Place San Diego all offer holiday festivities.

For many Jewish families in the US, Hanukkah is celebrated instead of Christmas. It goes on for eight days in Christmas, and this year is December 25 – January 2nd. For every day of the Hanukkah, they light the candles (what they call menorah.) Hanukkah is a celebration of the rededication of the second temple in Jerusalem in 164 BCE.

Check this out!

Please fill out the feedback form on the ISS activities:

<https://forms.gle/H2ciS3T4sqbHqrTK6>





This Month's Spotlight

Dr. Mitchell Masterson Postdoctoral Scholar



We asked some questions to Dr. Mitchell Masterson, who will be speaking with his wife at the International Scholars Meet & Greet on November 20th! Follow his story below.

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

I am from England, and my family is from a small village called Gamlingay, close(ish) to Cambridge to pick a city that people will actually know. I studied Biochemistry in undergraduate and completed my PhD at the University of Nottingham in circadian genetics in 2021, working around COVID restrictions, although it was honestly a great time to write a thesis. Very soon after my thesis submission, me and my wife Emily made our way out to Riverside on a flight carrying only people who'd managed to get a Covid-19 dispensation to travel, so it was almost empty!

Please briefly describe your role at UCR.

I am a postdoc in Entomology now, but I am working in mammalian systems investigating genes related to those of interest to my lab in drosophila. I work primarily with human cell lines in cultures.

How did you get into molecular biology?

Biology has always been of interest to me, my undergraduate course of biochemistry was chosen to allow me to keep some use of my chemistry knowledge, but in the end I shifted a bit more biology focus. My undergraduate project was neuronal culture with a focus on miRNA gene expression control which really got me interested in genetics research.

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

Adjusting to American socializing took a little while. I arrived at the tail end of COVID, so things were still half online half in person which was a bit rough as I tried to settle into a new place and make new friends. I've had some health issues (being on crutches for a while and then having surgery) but fortunately I had Emily to help me out a lot, as well as generous people I've met through the international scholars group. And it turns out the postdoc health insurance is pretty good! I actually had no money issues in the process at all.

What are some of your favorite memories at UCR?

We've gone to so many incredible places, sequoia national park is definitely worth checking out along with Yellowstone, the Grand Canyon, ... I'm really fond of the people I've met here so any of the group events for sure, a small group of us went out to Catalina, that'd probably easily be my highlight if I hadn't been on crutches at the time!

Next month, we will be highlighting Dr. Elia Scudiero, an Associate Professional Researcher in the Environmental Sciences Department, for the December Meet & Greet!





Cultural Conversation Class!

If you or your spouse is interested in participating in the Cultural Conversation Class to help improve your English and to meet new friends. Thank you to those who came to our last class and helped us make it successful!

Where: HUB 367

When: Every Tuesday, 9-10 AM

Our instructor is Candace Jorgensen, who has experience living in other cultures, which adds depth to her teaching the Cultural Conversation Class for international scholars and their families. She also holds a master's degree in education with emphasis on teaching English to speakers of other languages.



What to do This Month in Riverside

Snow Day

When: December 7, from 9 AM to noon

Where: Stratton Community / Bordwell Park

Whether you want to build a snowman, enjoy winter games, or simply sip on hot cocoa, there's something for everyone.

<https://riversideca.gov/calendar/event/snow-day-0>



Family Movie: The Muppet Christmas Carol

Join us for a showing of The Muppet Christmas Carol at the Eastside Library.

Where: Eastside Library, 4033-C Chicago Ave., Riverside, CA, 92507

When: December 12 at 3:30pm

<https://www.riversideca.gov/library/hours-locations/spc-jesus-s-duran-eastside-library>



Trivia Night at the Barn Stable

We have cool prizes for our trivia champions! From gift cards to free meals, the rewards are as enticing as the questions.

When: Every Tuesday 5:30-7:30pm

Where: The Stable (at The Barn)

<https://events.ucr.edu/event/trivia-night-at-the-barn-stable>



Information for International Scholars

As the holiday season approaches, it is important to keep in mind that the university will be closed on certain days in November and December.

November: The UCR campus will be closed 11/11/2024, 11/28-29/2024.

December: The UCR campus will be closed 12/23/2024 – 01/01/2025.

Please consider campus holidays and closures when planning to visit or make requests of the ISS office.

Additionally, if you have plans to travel during the holiday season, please remember what is required to reenter the United States and ensure that you have them available before you leave. Should you find yourself without them during the holiday season, it will be difficult for the ISS office to assist you.

You must present the following at the U.S. port-of-entry (airport or land border):

- 1) Current passport valid for at least 6 months after the reentry date
- 2) Valid U.S. visa
- 3) Valid DS-2019 with return authorization signature (travel endorsement).

Meet Koto Katayama, the Student Assistant for the International Scholars Office! She is a current masters student at UCR, from Tokyo, Japan. She likes to write movie scripts and listen to hip-hop and K-pop in her free time!
If you see her around, please come up and say hi 😊

