



Happy March!

Thank you so much for Dr. Pallavi Agarwal for speaking about their journey at the Meet & Greet on February 25th!

And thank you so much for all who attended.

Ahead of our Meet & Greet on March 25th, learn about our speaker, Dr. Giulia Palermo, on page 2!

Upcoming ISS Events

Scholar Coffee Hours

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

When: Fridays 11AM - Noon

Where: Outside of The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

March Meet & Greet

Where: HUB 265

When: March 25th, Noon – 1pm

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

Check this out!

Please fill out the feedback form on the ISS activities:
<https://forms.gle/H2ciS3T4sqbHqrTK6>

GIULIA PALERMO

PROFESSOR OF BIOENGINEERING

Q&A WITH
MARCH
MEET &
GREET
GUEST
SPEAKER

Learn
about her
story

We asked some questions to Dr. Giuila Palermo who will be speaking at the International Scholars Meet & Greet on March 25th! Follow her story below.

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

I completed my training in computational chemistry and biophysics in Europe, where I earned my Ph.D. working on molecular simulations of biomolecular systems, with a strong focus on understanding structure–dynamics–function relationships at the atomic level. I then moved to the United States for my postdoctoral training, where I was supported by a competitive fellowship. During this period, I expanded my expertise in molecular dynamics simulations, enhanced sampling, and multiscale modeling approaches, and began applying these methods to study genome editing systems. This experience was instrumental in shaping my independent research program, particularly in integrating physics-based simulations with emerging data-driven and machine learning approaches.

2. Please briefly describe your role at UCR.

At UCR, I am a Professor of Bioengineering and Chemistry. I lead a research group focused on elucidating the molecular mechanisms of genome editing systems, including CRISPR-Cas nucleases and CRISPR-associated transposons. My lab combines long-timescale molecular dynamics simulations, free energy calculations, and machine learning methods, such as graph neural networks, to uncover how these systems function and how they can be engineered for improved precision and efficiency. In addition to research, I mentor graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, teach in the areas of computational chemistry and biophysics, and contribute to service within the university and the broader scientific community.

3. How did you get into your field?

My initial training was in chemistry and physics, but I became increasingly interested in how computational approaches could be used to understand complex biological systems. What drew me most strongly to this field was the ability to describe molecular processes that are difficult or impossible to capture experimentally, and to connect fundamental physical principles with biological function. Over time, this interest naturally evolved toward genome editing systems, where understanding molecular mechanisms can directly inform the development of new biotechnologies. More recently, the integration of artificial intelligence with molecular simulations has opened exciting new directions that continue to motivate my work.

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We asked some questions to Dr. Giulia Palermo who will be speaking at the International Scholars Meet & Greet on March 25th! Follow her story below.

4. WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE MEMORIES AT UCR?

One of the most meaningful aspects of my time at UCR has been building my research group and mentoring students and postdoctoral researchers as they grow into independent scientists. Seeing trainees develop their own ideas, publish their work, and move on to the next stages of their careers has been particularly rewarding. I have also greatly appreciated the collaborative and supportive environment at UCR, which has enabled interdisciplinary interactions and impactful research in the area of genome editing.

5. DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR INCOMING INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS?

I would encourage incoming international scholars to be proactive in building both professional and personal networks, and to seek out mentorship early on. Transitioning to a new country and academic system can be challenging, but it is also an opportunity to broaden your perspective and grow both scientifically and personally. Do not hesitate to ask questions or seek support when needed. Most importantly, have confidence in your training and in the unique perspective you bring—diversity of backgrounds and ideas is a key strength in science.

Scholar Photo Request!

Hello, scholars!
Have you traveled anywhere interesting lately?

Have you taken any wonderful photos of Riverside, California, or...
anywhere at all?

The ISS Office is seeking photograph contributions from our active scholars for a new section of the monthly scholar newsletter. It is a work in progress, and we cannot guarantee space for every single contribution, but we would love to vicariously experience the adventures you have during your time at UC Riverside.

Please email photographs you would like us to highlight:
internationalscholars@ucr.edu

Additionally, please include your full name, so the images can be properly attributed.



IMPORTANT UPDATE FROM THE ISS OFFICE

Scholars who are already at UC Riverside are advised to avoid international travel unless absolutely necessary.

H-1B visa holders seeking a new visa are currently subject to increased social media vetting, which may result in significant delays in visa processing.



Happy Nevruz!!!

Hello everybody, I wanted to take some time to highlight the holiday Nowruz. Meaning a new day, its marks the start of the Persian New Year with celebration of themes of renewal, rebirth, and triumph of light over darkness. To everyone celebration Nevruz, we hope you have a fantastic Persian New Year.



Scholar stories

Find out what happens behind the curtain of research with Scholarship Librarian Dr. Jing Han new podcast “The Reference Desk”.

Read more about this here: <https://library.ucr.edu/news/2026/01/28/go-behind-scenes-research-ucr-reference-desk-podcast>

Assistant Professor Yinglun Zhu recently published a paper tackling the concept of AI.

Read more about this here: <https://library.ucr.edu/news/2026/01/28/go-behind-scenes-research-ucr-reference-desk-podcast>

Photos from March



Cultural Conversation Class

If you or your spouse is interested, please participate in the Cultural Conversation Class to help improve your English and to meet new friends. Thank you to the regular attendees for helping us make CCC successful!

Student Services Building 2nd Floor, Conference Room
Every Tuesday, 1-2PM
Instructor Sandra Ingram

Sandra Ingram is a Riverside native whose interests include cross-cultural communication, visiting national parks, and theater arts.

What to do This Month in Riverside

Men's Soccer Alumni Game

Come out to the UCR Soccer Stadium to watch our former players take the field once again!

When: April 4, 2026 6PM
Where: UCR Soccer Stadium



Fireside Chat with Chancellor S. Jack Hu

Join Chancellor S. Jack Hu for a fascinating conversation with William Carter, Ph.D., UC Riverside alumnus and Research Chemist Emeritus, about the importance of philanthropy and legacy giving.

When: April 6, 2026 5:30 PM
Where: UCR Alumni & Visitors Center

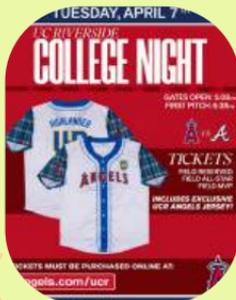


UCR Night at the Angels Game

Celebrate your Highlander Pride on Tuesday, April 7th at Angel Stadium! The Angels take on the Braves starting at 6:38pm; gates open at 5:00pm.

This year's event features a customized UC Riverside Angels Jersey! The ONLY way to receive a UC Riverside jersey is to purchase directly through Angels.com/UCR.

When: April 7, 2026 6:38 PM
Where: Angles Stadium
Pricing: \$31-\$96



Frequently Asked Questions

I need to leave the U.S. and ISS has not signed my D5-2019 document! Is that OK?

Please know that you do not need a travel signature on your D5-2019 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 our international scholar's office at internationalscholars@ucr.edu. If your D5-2019 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 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 D5-2019 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 advisors so that they can advise you on the steps and the visa implications of ending your program early.