Welcome to the UCI School of Physical Sciences: Michelle Tran

Undergraduate chemistry major Michelle Tran talks about navigating life as an anteater.

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UCI Physical Sciences Communications



Michelle Tran says it pays off to try new things at UCI, including joining a club or picking up a new hobby, so you can learn more about yourself outside your studies.

Picture Credit:
Michelle Tran

It’s a new academic year at UC Irvine, and we at the UCI School of Physical Sciences couldn’t be more excited to see all the new faces around campus and around our school. Life as a new anteater can be exciting – but it can also be tricky to find your way in these early days. That’s why the UCI Physical Sciences Office of Communications caught up with a few upperclass undergraduates and asked them about their UCI story and some of the lessons they’ve learned along the way.

Lucas Van Wyk Joel: Tell me a bit about yourself.

Michelle Tran: I grew up in Huntington Beach and have lived in Orange County my whole life. I'm a fourth-year chemistry major, and am also in UCI's CalTeach program, which is a teaching credential program for STEM majors.

LVWJ: What's a favorite memory of yours from your time at UCI Physical Sciences?

MT: My favorite memories are all from my job as a Peer Academic Advisor (PAA). I get the awesome opportunity to meet with so many Physical Sciences students, and it's amazing to see how unique and friendly everyone is. I've also been very fortunate to work as a PAA alongside some wonderful Physical Sciences students.

LVWJ: What's one top thing you wish you'd known when you were just starting out?

MT: I wish I had known how to be better-involved at UCI. My entire first year was remote because of the pandemic, so I didn't know where to start when I actually came to UCI for my second year. As a commuter, I generally left campus after class to beat traffic and relax at home. Though in college especially, it's really important to set aside time to meet people and try new things, even if that means staying on campus later than usual for one day to attend a club meeting.

LVWJ: What might you say to a new student who's concerned about finding their way at UCI and at Physical Sciences?

MT: College is not only a time to further our education but to also continue learning more about ourselves. Try new things! Whether that be joining a club, dressing in a new style, working out or trying a sport at the ARC, or picking up a new hobby like photography (the scenery in Aldrich Park is perfect for that!), there's so much to learn during your time at UCI alongside your requirements for your degree.

LVWJ: What's your favorite spot on campus to study?

MT: I occasionally like to study at the round red tables that overlook Aldrich Park or visit the second or fifth floors of the Science Library!

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