The 2023-2024 Advancing Inclusive Excellence awards

Awardees will receive support to implement a range of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at the UCI School of Physical Sciences.

Thursday, February 01, 2024

UCI Physical Sciences Communications



According to a recent study, the UCI School of Physical Sciences is a trailblazer when it comes to the realization of diversity, equity and inclusion principles in higher education.

Picture Credit:
Tiffany Kuo / UCI

The UC Irvine School of Physical Sciences Office of Access, Outreach and Inclusion is pleased to announce the recipients of its Advancing Inclusive Excellence awards. The awardees receive up to $500 to execute projects that aim to foster the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion at UCI Physical Sciences. “I hope these awards will be both a catalyst for meaningful change within the school and also highlight the important work that students and faculty are already doing to make this campus a more equitable and inclusive environment,” said Ash Hormaza, program coordinator for the Office of Access, Outreach and Inclusion at Physical Sciences. Mu-Chun Chen, the Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Physical Sciences, said that “it’s wonderful to see that the number of projects submitted in this cycle almost doubled compared to previous years, and to see the broad range of projects our students and faculty are undertaking.”

Hui Wang and Professor Jun Yu – Department of Earth System Science

Proposal title: “NextGen Connect: Nurturing Futures”

Graduate students Hui Wang and Jun Yu will run a social mixer event aimed at bringing together undergraduates, graduate students and postdocs in the UCI Department of Earth System Science (ESS). The focus of the mixer will be on information sharing, network-building and fostering mentorship opportunities.

Professor Elizabeth Crook – Department of Earth System Science

Proposal title: “Increasing the Support Network and Sense of Community for Transfer Students in Earth System Science”

Professor Elizabeth Crook will work to foster a sense of academic and community support for transfer students in ESS by running a series of transfer student breakfasts. Crook hopes to increase the number of transfer students in the department by establishing a “community college connections committee” using the knowledge and guidance of current transfer students.

Professor Julie Ferguson – UCI Department of Earth System Science

Proposal title: “Building connections between Earth System Science and Santa Ana School District”

Professor Julie Ferguson will partner with Lowell Elementary School in Santa Ana so the UCI Department of Earth System Science can host 50 family members of Lowell students at UCI for a half-day visit. During the visit, around 20 UCI student volunteers will take the families on a tour of campus, including to the Latinx Resource Center, and then form a panel where they will share their educational journeys and college experiences with visitors. The program aims to highlight the experiences of Hispanic/Latinx students in ESS while ensuring Santa Ana families are aware that college and a career in environmental science are viable options for their children.

Samantha Frucht, Jaz Romero, Haley Staudmyer, Milena Raeber – UCI Department of Earth System Science

Proposal title: “ESS Graduate and Undergraduate Buddies”

This team’s project aims to enhance DEI efforts within the UCI Department of Earth System Science through a series of events and mentorship activities that will connect undergraduate students with graduate students. The aim is to foster a sense of community, provide academic guidance and inspire undergraduates to pursue a graduate education in ESS or related fields.

Emi Cervantes, Ahoora Tamizifar – UCI Department of Mathematics

Proposal title: “Enhancing the Undergraduate Mathematics Community at UCI: Improving the study lounge and organizing events to foster community”

This team’s project aims to serve the mathematics community at UCI by improving the new undergraduate study lounge in the UCI Department of Mathematics. The team will host events at the lounge that provide opportunities for students to collaborate and excel.

Anna Ma, Paul Carter, Connor Mooney, Bob Pelayo, Nicole Vuong – Department of Mathematics

Proposal title: “Coffee/Lunch with a Math Professor”

The Coffee/Lunch with a Math Professor Program will connect students and faculty members outside typical office hours and classroom settings by encouraging faculty to commit time to meet with students over coffee or lunch. Faculty and students are matched in groups of one faculty member and two to four students, based on

interest and availability.

Marissa Corr, Jesse Wolfson – UCI Department of Mathematics

Proposal title: Math Major Undergraduate Achievement Assessment

This team will compile demographic and academic data for undergraduate math majors in order to pinpoint disparities and areas of improvement. The team will then research the practices of other departments and institutions in order to learn how UCI's math department can increase its success rates.

Steven Crisostomo, César Gallegos, Hana Schiff – Department of Physics & Astronomy

Proposal title: “Condensed Chatter”

This team’s project, Condensed Chatter, is a student-led weekly seminar designed for graduate students in the Department of Physics & Astronomy who study condensed matter physics. At each meeting, the leaders will invite participants to discuss their areas of expertise in a relaxed setting designed to encourage fundamental research questions.

Professor Albert Siryaporn – Department of Physics & Astronomy

Proposal title: “Supporting Neurodiversity in the Physical Sciences”

Professor Albert Siryaporn will work to support the activities of the Neurodiversity Support Group (NSG) at UCI. The NSG promotes the success of neurodivergent individuals in the physical sciences by building community and peer support. Planned activities include monthly meetings, peer mentorship and social and networking events.

Hana Schiff and UNITY leadership – Department of Physics & Astronomy

Proposal title: “Magnifying Voices in Physics”

Magnifying Voices in Physics (MVP) is a speaker series hosted by UNITY (Underrepresented Genders in Physics and Astronomy) in response to the longstanding underrepresentation of women and non-binary people of color in the physics and astronomy fields. UNITY will invite an MVP speaker and host a talk that will provide an honorarium as well as gas and meal reimbursement for the speaker.

UNITY welcomes all interested parties to attend, especially those within the UCI Department of Physics & Astronomy.

Professors Pedro Ochoa-Ricoux, Anyes Taffard – Department of Physics & Astronomy

Project title: “Data Collection for Physics & Astronomy Application to SEA Change Program”

Professors Ochoa-Ricoux and Anyes Taffard will spearhead undergraduate student support for data collection in the UCI Department of Physics & Astronomy.

News Briefs
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Physics & Astronomy
Math
Earth System Science
View PDF