Victoria Knapp Pérez awarded the LEAD Graduate Student Excellence Award

The Physics & Astronomy Ph.D. student shined bright at the annual awards ceremony.

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Victoria Knapp Pérez, a third-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Physics & Astronomy, received the Graduate Student Excellence Award for her outstanding

research and positive impact on the Latinx community.

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On April 4, the UC Irvine Office of Inclusive Excellence, alongside the Latinx Resource Center and Graduate Division, hosted the seventh annual Latino Excellence and Achievement Awards Dinner (LEAD). LEAD honors key leaders, graduate students, staff and faculty who support and champion student success and research excellence in the Hispanic/Latinx community at UCI. Among those celebrated was Victoria Knapp Pérez, a third-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Physics & Astronomy. Knapp Pérez received the Graduate Student Excellence Award for her outstanding research and positive impact on the Latinx community.

Knapp Pérez was born and raised in Mexico City and received her bachelor’s degree in physics from The National Autonomous University of Mexico. She joined the UCI Department of Physics & Astronomy in the Fall of 2021 as a Ph.D. student studying neutrino model-building, dark matter and cosmology. Under the mentorship of her advisors, professors Mu-Chun Chen and Michael Ratz, she has published three peer-reviewed papers. For her exemplary scholarship, she received the 2022 Outstanding Graduate Student Award from her department.

Her impact extends well beyond her research. As a mentor in the Physics & Astronomy Community Excellence (PACE) program, Knapp Pérez plays a pivotal role in guiding first-year graduate students through the transition to graduate school, embodying the qualities of leadership and commitment to community that LEAD seeks to recognize.
Fellow graduate students, postdocs and faculty from across the school were invited to the LEAD award ceremony alongside Knapp Pérez to celebrate her incredible research and work in inclusive excellence.



Among those in attendance were Harold Matias in Physics & Astronomy, César Gallegos in Physics & Astronomy, Steven Crisostomo in Physics & Astronomy, Diana Lopez in Chemistry, Elisa Olivas in Chemistry, Jordan Castro in Chemistry, Dr. Harold Polo in Mathematics and Professor Luis Jauregui of UCI Physics & Astronomy.

The School of Physical Sciences is proud to sponsor LEAD for the seventh year in a row and is honored to congratulate our graduate student awardee, Victoria, on her amazing achievements.

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