

July 2023

**UC RIVERSIDE**  
**CHANCELLOR'S**  
RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP  
**CRF Summer 2023 Newsletter**  
*University of California, Riverside*

Student Engagement - Division of Undergraduate Education

# Welcome 2023-2024 CRFs!



Congratulations to the 2023-2024 CRF Cohort. The CRF is a competitive award that supports undergraduate engagement in faculty-mentored research and creative activity projects. Fellows will develop professionally as they engage in leadership, mentorship and service activities. We look forward to a productive year!

[engage.ucr.edu/research/chancellor\\_fellowship](https://engage.ucr.edu/research/chancellor_fellowship)

# Chancellor's Research Fellows 2023-2024



**Ankita Ahluwalia**

**Project:**

The Effects of the Empower Hour Program on Ramona High School Students' Academic Success and College Readiness

- **4th year** majoring in Computer Science with Business Applications
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Alice Lee, School of Education
- **Hobbies:** Hiking, volleyball, painting
- **Favorite Food:** Thai, Punjabi, & Italian cuisines
- **Favorite Movie:** Hidden Figures
- **Ideal Superpower:** If I have caffeine, I work like a machine (The Caffeine Machine)

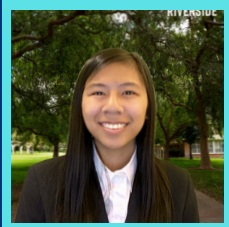


**Rayyan Ayoub**

**Project:**

The Effects of Senescent Cell-Derived Matrix on Naive Fibroblasts

- **4th year** majoring in Bioengineering
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Joshua Morgan, Bioengineering
- **Hobbies:** Basketball and reading
- **Favorite Food:** Pasta shawarma, Mal Al Sham
- **Favorite Movie:** Cars 1
- **Ideal Superpower:** The Flash's super-speed

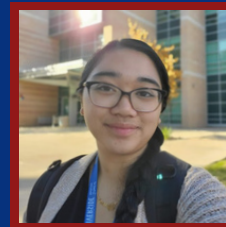


**Emily Bomortino**

**Project:**

Delivery of Neuregulin-1 through an Osmotic Transport Device

- **4th year** majoring in Bioengineering
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Victor Rodgers, Bioengineering
- **Hobbies:** Playing piano, watching anime, crocheting
- **Favorite Food:** Italian cuisines
- **Favorite Movie:** How to Train Your Dragon
- **Ideal Superpower:** Telekinesis



**Alyssa Fundal**

**Project:**

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Social Responsibility-Based Poster Messaging at Demotivating Food Waste Behaviors in UCR Residential Dining Halls

- **4th year** majoring in Environmental Sciences & Psychology
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Ye Li, Management
- **Hobbies:** Playing the piano, painting & drawing landscapes, following Bob Ross tutorials, general arts and crafts
- **Favorite Food:** Any food so long as I'm enjoying the company I'm with!
- **Favorite Movie:** Anything Disney/Pixar
- **Ideal Superpower:** Control Time with replay, pause, and fast forward



**Chloe Georgiou**

**Project:**

Protocols for Multi-party Asset Swaps

- **4th year** majoring in Computer Science and Engineering
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Marek Chrobak, Computer Science and Engineering
- **Hobbies:** Photography, listening to music, watching ballet
- **Favorite Food:** Phở
- **Favorite Movie:** Legally Blonde
- **Ideal Superpower:** Super-speed to outrun and outsmart everyone

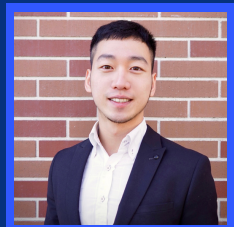


**Aracely Gonzalez**

**Project:**

Hybrid organic polymer-molecular Silicon cluster as anode material for Lithium-ion batteries

- **4th year** majoring in Neuroscience
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Timothy Su, Chemistry
- **Hobbies:** Reading, crocheting, hiking
- **Favorite Food:** Italian cuisines
- **Favorite Movie:** Interstellar
- **Ideal Superpower:** Teleportation



**Hong-Yi Koo**

**Project:**

That's why patience is a virtue: The underlying links between patience and eudaimonic well-being

- **5th year** majoring in Psychology
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Kate Sweeny, Psychology
- **Hobbies:** Swimming, working out, reading, writing blogs, watching movies, exploring great food
- **Favorite Food:** Sushi or chicken wings
- **Favorite Movie:** Interstellar
- **Ideal Superpower:** Mind-reading, mind control, or teleportation



**Melita Kyritsi-Loper**

**Project:**

Greek Iron Age Sword Burials: Conflict, Community, and the City-State

- **4th year** majoring in Anthropology
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Denver Graninger, History
- **Hobbies:** Hiking, camping, travelling
- **Favorite Food:** Greek Food from Greece
- **Favorite Movie:** Edward Scissorhands and the Lord of the Rings trilogy
- **Ideal Superpower:** Time Travel

# Chancellor's Research Fellows 2023-2024



**Angie Lopez**

**Project:**

Three-Dimensional Learning Strategies in Organic Chemistry Courses

- **3rd year** majoring in Chemistry
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Jack Eichler, Chemistry
- **Hobbies:** Recreating Bob Ross paintings, visiting botanical gardens, reading
- **Favorite Food:** Pasta
- **Favorite Movie:** Soul
- **Ideal Superpower:** Telekinesis



**Ibrahim Maaz**

**Project:**

Deciphering the Molecular and Behavioral Effects of Microexons in the Nervous System

- **4th year** majoring in Biochemistry
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Jernej Murn, Biochemistry
- **Senior CRF**
- **Hobbies:** Hiking, reading, soccer
- **Favorite Food:** Chinese food
- **Favorite Movie:** The Truman Show
- **Ideal Superpower:** Ability to rearrange the atoms in an object.



**Dora Nguyen**

**Project:**

Effect of Maternal Overcontrol on Child Irritability and Anxiety in Latina Girls

- **3rd year** majoring in Psychology
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Kalina J. Michalska, Psychology
- **Hobbies:** Going to the beach, shopping, arts and crafts, watching K-dramas
- **Favorite Food:** Any Asian food, hotpot, or Korean BBQ
- **Favorite Movie:** Everything Everywhere All At Once
- **Ideal Superpower:** I want to be Spider-man



**Maria Plascencia Mercado**

**Project:**

The Relation between Immigrants' Life Experiences and Emotional Functioning

- **5th year** majoring in Psychology & Education
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Elizabeth Davis, Psychology
- **Hobbies:** Cycling, watching Netflix
- **Favorite Food:** Korean BBQ or sushi
- **Favorite Movie:** Spider-Man
- **Ideal Superpower:** I would like to fly!



**Marcos Reyes**

**Project:**

Improving Vulnerable Patients' Trust in Healthcare in LatinX and Indigenous Mexican Farm Working Communities in the Eastern Coachella Valley

- **4th year** majoring in Neuroscience
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Ann Cheney, Social Medicine, Population & Public Health
- **Hobbies:** Watching and playing sports
- **Favorite Food:** Mexican food
- **Favorite Movie:** Grown Ups
- **Ideal Superpower:** Time travel



**Melika Rezanejad**

**Project:**

Potential axon protection by SARM1 inhibition in an optic nerve crush model

- **4th year** majoring in Neuroscience
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Seema Tiwai-Woodruff, Biomedical Sciences
- **Hobbies:** Cooking, baking, going to the gym, making jewelry
- **Favorite Food:** Chipotle and sushi
- **Favorite Movie:** Clueless
- **Ideal Superpower:** Teleportation



**Grace Tirado**

**Project:**

Modeling Endothelial Cell Entry Into Senescence

- **4th year** majoring in Bioengineering
- **Faculty Mentor:** Dr. Joshua Morgan, Bioengineering
- **Senior CRF**
- **Hobbies:** Puzzles, hiking, video games, swimming, reading, chess
- **Favorite Food:** Spanish rice or Spaghetti Factory
- **Favorite Movie:** WALL-E
- **Ideal Superpower:** Infinite Wishes



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## CRF Important Dates

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### Summer Events

- **July 26: CRF Orientation**
- **July-August:** Schedule appointment to meet with Gladis - Bring Resume
- **September:** Respond to Availability Doodle for Fall Meetings - Once date and time is confirmed **PUT A HOLD ON YOUR CALENDAR**
- **September:** Peer Mentor Planning Meeting



### Future Events

- **October:** Lunch with Chancellor Wilcox & Diane Del Buono
- **April 9, 2024:** CRF Application Deadline
- **May 2024:** Dinner at Chancellor Wilcox's home
- **June 6, 2024:** Spring CRF Reception



### Quarterly Reports

#### Due the 1st Friday of Each Quarter (except spring)

- 9/29 Summer Report Due
- 1/12 Fall Report Due
- 4/5 Winter Report Due
- 6/7 Spring End of Year Report Due (Last Day of Instruction)

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## Professional Development Opportunities

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### Research Presentation Opportunities

- **Southern California Conference on Undergraduate Research - [sccur.org](http://sccur.org)**
  - Abstract Submission - TBA
  - Conference - 11/18/23 at CSU Fullerton
- **National Conference on Undergraduate Research**
  - Abstract Submission - 12/8/23
  - Conference - 4/8-10, 2024 at CSU Long Beach
- **UCR Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities Symposium**
  - Abstract Submission - March 2024
  - Symposium - 4/15-19, 2024



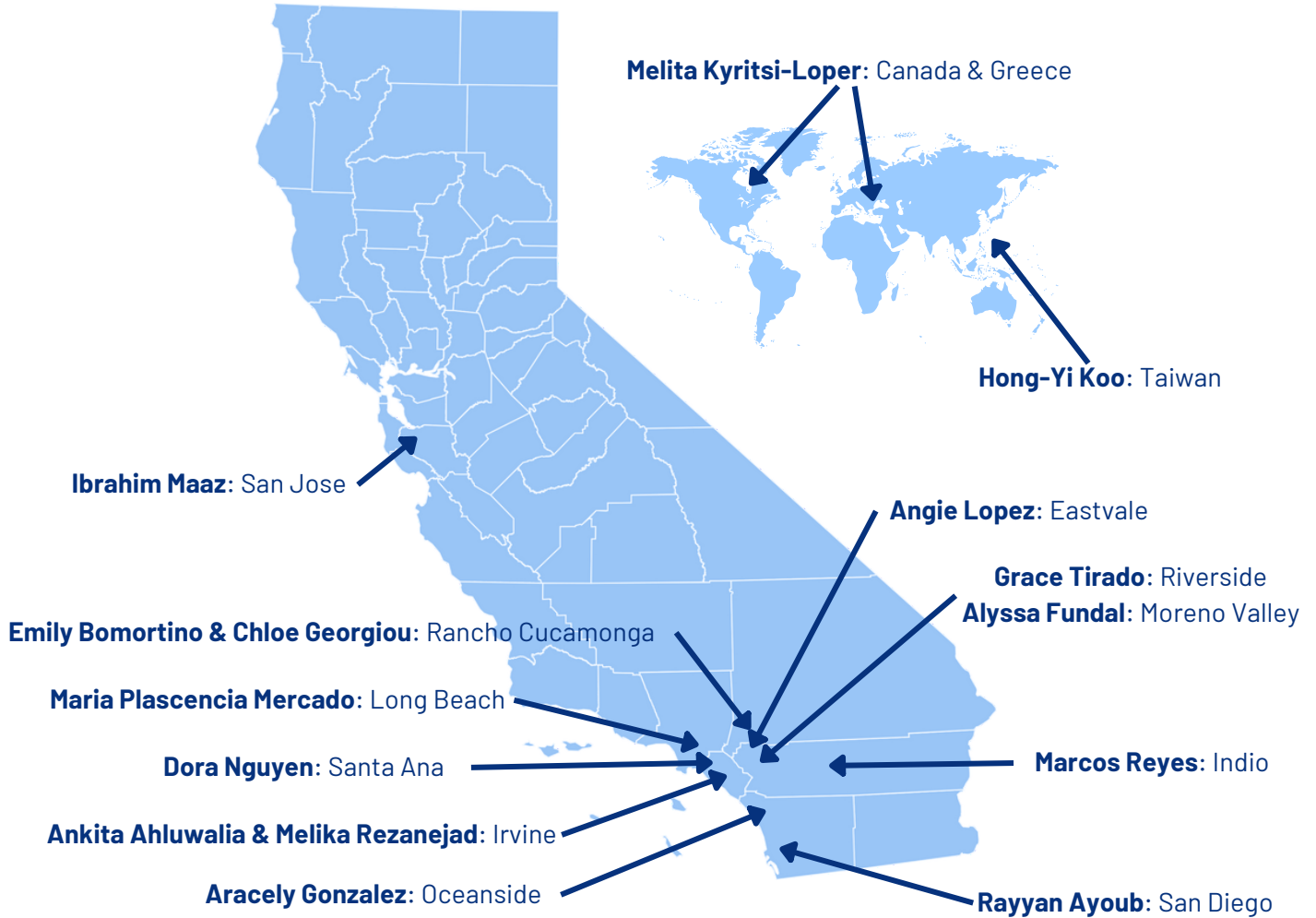
### Prestigious Awards

- **September/October Deadlines:**
  - Fulbright
  - Churchill, Marshall, Rhodes
  - Truman
  - NSF GRFP
- **January Deadlines:**
  - Goldwater
  - CORO
- **February Deadlines:**
  - Capital Fellows
  - Donald Strauss Scholarship

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## CRF Hometowns

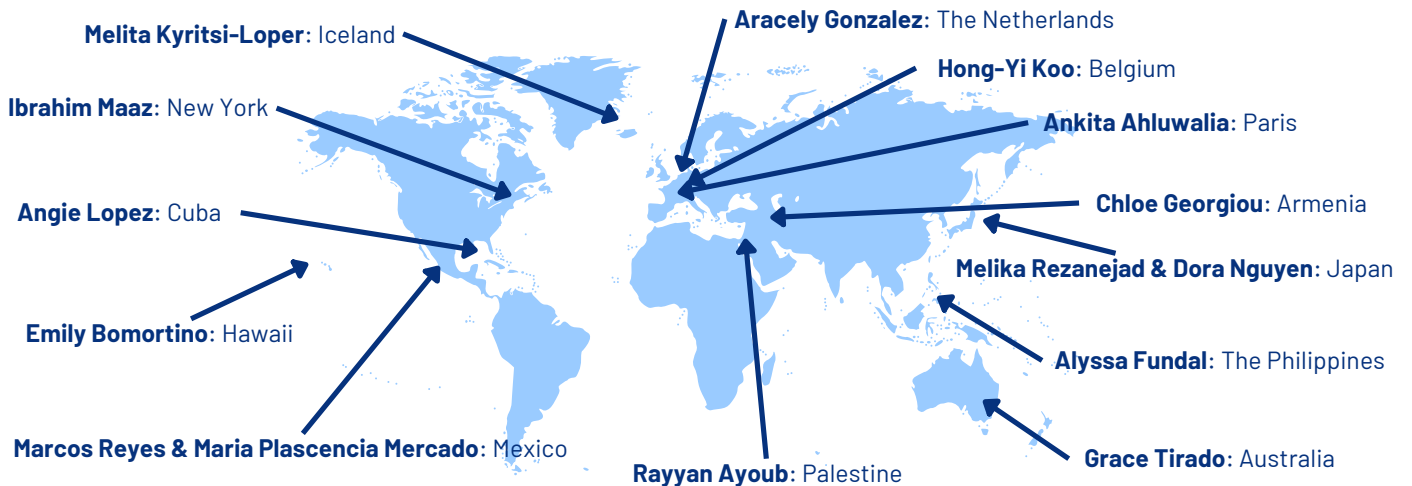
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## Where do CRFs want to travel?

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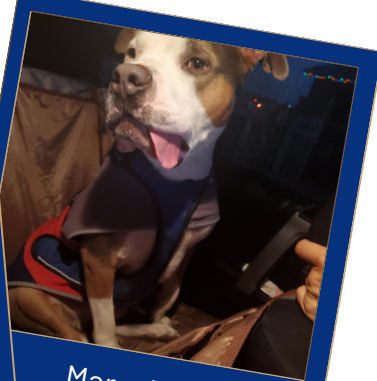




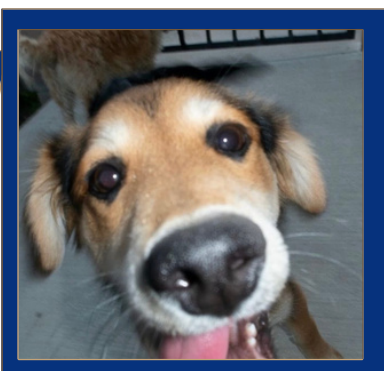
# CRF Pets



Gladis's Dog



Marco's Dog



Angie's Dog



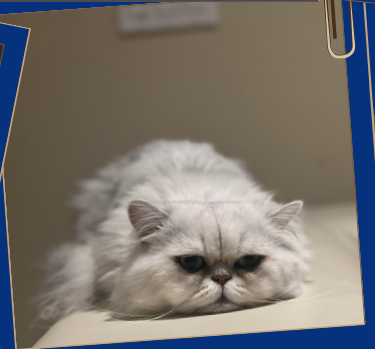
Aracely's Leopard Gecko



Aracely's Guinea Pig



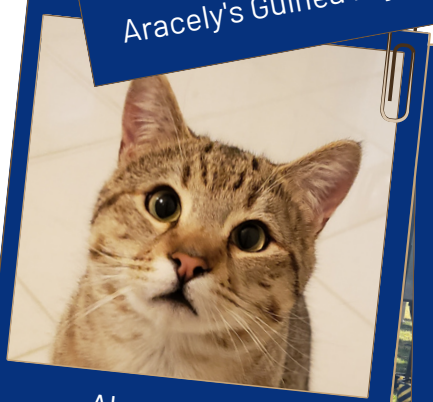
Ankita's Dog



Melika's Cat



Gladis's Cats



Alyssa's Cat



Rayyan's Cat



Ibrahim's Cat



Ibrahim's Dog



Grace's Dogs



Maria's Cat



Gladis's Dogs



Emily's Dog

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## CRF Fun Facts

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- 1) I have played for the SJ Earthquakes (Ibrahim Maaz)
- 2) I practiced Wing Chun Kung Fu for a few years (Melita Kyritsi-Loper)
- 3) I am allergic to coconut (Aracely Gonzalez)
- 4) I have a twin brother who is also a UCR student (Chloe Georgiou)
- 5) I don't like mushrooms (Emily Bomortino)
- 6) I have recreated 15 Bob Ross paintings in the past three years (Angie Lopez)
- 7) I am studying abroad in Korea this fall (Dora Nguyen)
- 8) I once attempted the Guinness World Record for the fastest time to stack 10 rolls of toilet paper with one hand (it was a quarantine edition challenge). I broke the previous fastest time, but by the time I went to officially submit my evidence, someone else already broke it! (Alyssa Fundal)
- 9) I have run 2 marathons (Maria Plascencia Mercado)
- 10) I have been swimming since I was 4 years old (Hong-Yi Koo)
- 11) I am related to an Aztec King (Grace Tirado)
- 12) I enjoy making my own jewelry (Melika Rezanejad)
- 13) I am a book enthusiast (Rayyan Ayoub)
- 14) I have lived outside of the US (Marcos Reyes)
- 15) I strongly dislike ketchup though I surprisingly love BBQ sauce (even though it has ketchup in it) (Ankita Ahluwalia)
- 16) I speak Greek fluently (Melita Kyritsi-Loper)
- 17) I'm left-handed and will always point out another left-handed person in a movie or TV show (Alyssa Fundal)
- 18) I spend 90% of my day contemplating social issues and the philosophy of life (Hong-Yi Koo)
- 19) I can't rollerskate (Grace Tirado)
- 20) I was born and raised in Iran until the age of 9 (Melika Rezanejad)

Congratulations to our 2023-2024 Chancellor's Research Fellows! You will find that there is no limit to what you can accomplish with dedication, hard work, and genuine passion! Your contributions to the program will help mentor the next generation of researchers. Your enthusiasm for research and commitment to excellence embodies the goals and mission of the CRF.

Thank you from the newsletter editing team.