

ROSAMARI ORDUNA

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EDUCATION

July 2023 –
Expected
June 2028

University of California, Los Angeles

Ph.D. student in biology, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
Thesis: Evolution of color and color pattern diversity in spiny ray-finned fishes
Graduate Advisor: Dr. Michael Alfaro
GPA: 3.9

May 2023

California State University, Los Angeles

Master of Science in Biology
Thesis: Identifying Genomic Regions in Rockfish Associated with Speciation and Ecological Divergence
Graduate Advisor: Dr. Andres Aguilar
GPA: 3.8

June 2021

University of California, Los Angeles

Bachelor of Science in Biology
Chicanx and Central American Studies Minor
Thesis: Revisiting Morphology of Ocean Sunfish & Phylogenetic Placement
GPA: 3.1

AWARDS AND HONORS

Summer 2025

Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (OIST), "Best Talk in the Summer 2025 Internal Seminar Series"

Spring 2025

UCLA Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, Research Funding
Departmental grant for research supplies, \$1,000

Spring 2025

UCLA Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) Appointment, Michael Alfaro, PI, 50% rate

Winter 2025

UCLA Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, Conference Funding, ~\$800

Fall 2023 –

UCLA Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellow, Doctoral Research Funding

Present

Prestigious fellowship awarded to incoming doctoral students. This fellowship is a four-year support package.

UCLA Department of Graduate Education; Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, \$25,000 x 4

Summer 2023

UCLA Competitive Edge Fellow, Research Funding

Six-week, intensive bridge program for newly admitted doctoral students from underrepresented backgrounds with a strong interest in pursuing a faculty or research position. As a Competitive Edge fellow, I will work on a summer research project under the guidance of my faculty mentor, Dr. Michael Alfaro,

and participate in social and professional development activities to enhance my success as a UCLA doctoral student.

UCLA Division of Graduate Study; Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, \$6,000

- Spring 2023 CSULA Special Recognition in Graduate Studies
Awarded to graduate students who have demonstrated superior scholastic achievement by maintaining a grade point average of 3.8 or higher in 80% or more of their required program and have received special recommendation by their department.
- July 2021 –
July 2023 RISE MS-to-PhD Fellow, Research Funding
Two-year, research-based intensive program that prepares graduate students interested in pursuing a PhD to apply to competitive programs during their second year as masters' students. As a RISE fellow, I will work alongside a faculty member to develop my own research project and master's thesis.
NIH Research Training Fellowship (Grant #R25 GM61331), \$24,000; \$26,000
- January 2020 –
June 2021 McNair Research Scholar, Research Funding
Two-year, research-based intensive program that prepares undergraduate students interested in pursuing a PhD to apply to competitive programs during their senior year. As a McNair scholar, I worked alongside a faculty mentor to develop my own research project and senior thesis.
Ronald E. McNair Research Scholarship, Federal TRIO Program, \$9,800
- Spring 2020 UCLA Dean's Honors List

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- August 2023 –
Present Graduate Research Assistant, *Alfaro Lab at UCLA*
Mentor: Dr. Michael Alfaro
Project: Evolution of color and color pattern diversity in spiny ray-finned fishes
- July 2021 –
July 2023 Graduate Research Assistant, *Aguilar Lab at CSULA*
Mentor: Dr. Andres Aguilar
Project: developing research project on rockfish to identify genomic regions associated with speciation and ecological divergence to develop a deeper understanding of diversification mechanisms of rockfishes.
Relevant Skills: Linux Shell Script, R, PCR, DNA Library Prep.
- June 2022 –
December 2022 Volunteer Research Assistant, *Barber Lab at UCLA*
Mentor: Dr. Eric J. Caldera
Continuing some work with ocean sunfish DNA analysis.
- June 2019 –
June 2021 Undergraduate Research Assistant, *Barber Lab at UCLA*
Mentors: Dr. Eric J. Caldera, Dr. Paul H. Barber
Project: worked alongside doctoral fellow to develop a research project on ocean sunfish; Studied their genetics, morphology, and geographic ranges to recreate phylogenies to better identify the species within the molidae family.
Relevant Skills: DNA extractions, PCR, Gel Electrophoresis, MEGA.

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- July 2025 Internal Seminar, Okinawa Institute of Technology (OIST)
Volunteered to give a 25-minute seminar to a broad audience of researchers with time for questions at the end. The talk featured a brief introduction of myself and an adapted version of my research talk given at IPFC a month prior.
- June 2025 Indo-Pacific Fish Conference (IPFC)
Oral Presentation: Beyond the surface: spectral signatures and pigment microstructures offer insights on color diversity of Okinawa reef fish
- January 2025 The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB) Conference
Oral Presentation: Standardized imaging practices in fixed fish specimens for the analysis of color and color patterns
- May 2023 Master's Thesis Defense
This was a formal presentation on the culmination of the master's thesis titled, "Identifying Genomic Regions in Rockfish Associated with Speciation and Ecological Divergence."
- October 2022 CSUSB Southwest Regional Meeting of Organismal Biologists
This was a research showcase for California State University students to present their research to cross-campus peers, and potential PIs.
- September 2022 POSea Virtual Conference
This conference served as a showcase for the work of BIPOC marine scientists from around the world.
- September 2022 CSULA MORE Programs Retreat & Poster Sessions
During the retreat students were able to showcase progress in their research by doing flash talks and presenting posters to peers, and CSULA faculty.
- August 2022 CSU Summer Symposium and Graduate Fair at UCLA
This was a research showcase for California State University students to present their research to cross-campus peers, and potential PIs.
- April 2022 CSULA MORE Programs Class of 2023 & 2024 Poster Presentations
This was a research showcase for the class of 2023 and 2024, where MORE scholars presented their research findings to the MORE community, as well as peers and mentors.
- May 2021 UCLA McNair Senior Research Presentations
This was a research showcase for all McNair scholars to present their research findings to peers, mentors, friends, and family.
- July 2020 UCLA National McNair Conference
This conference served as an opportunity for McNair Scholars around the country to showcase their individual research projects. I participated in UCLA's annual National McNair Conference by sharing an oral presentation of my research project virtually.
- May 2020 UCLA Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Symposium
I participated in my major department's undergraduate research symposium by sharing a recorded oral presentation of my research project.

May 2020 UCLA Undergraduate Research Week
Undergraduate Research Week is open to all undergraduate students at UCLA and serves as an opportunity to showcase and celebrate research projects of all disciplines. I participated by sharing an oral presentation of my research project virtually.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

November 2024 UCLA Exploring Your Universe
The goal of EYU is to share science to a broader audience through hands-on learning and inspire the next generation of scientists. It is entirely volunteer led. Participated as a volunteer for AMEBA's booth, where graduate student volunteers guided visitors through the process of extracting DNA from fruits.

July 2024 UCLA National McNair Conference
Participated as a conference moderator and general volunteer for the national undergraduate research conference.

April 2023 CSULA Graduate Resource Center and University Library Graduate STEM Student Panel
Participated as one of five graduate STEM student panelists to share our experience as graduate students, why we became interested in graduate school, and any advice we would give undergraduate students interested in obtaining a graduate degree.

April 2022 UCLA Latinx Admit Weekend Alumni Panel
Participated as one of four Latinx alumni panelists to share our experiences thus far as recently graduated underrepresented minorities navigating graduate school, and the workforce. The intended audience for this panel was newly admitted Latinx students who were still deliberating which college to enroll in.

April 2020 UCLA Latinx Admit Weekend Student Panel
Participated as one of four Latinx undergraduate student panelists to share our experiences thus far as underrepresented minorities at an institution of higher education like UCLA. The intended audience for this panel was newly admitted Latinx students who were still deliberating which college to enroll in.

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

November 2025 Western Society of Naturalists Conference (WSN)
Double TreeKalsdjfn, San Diego, CA

June 2025 Indo-Pacific Fish Conference (IPFC)
National Taiwan University & Taipei Zoo, Taipei, Taiwan

January 2025 The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB) Conference
Atlanta Marriott Marquis, Atlanta, GA

June 2024 3rd Joint Congress on Evolutionary Biology
virtual

June 2024 California Ichthyology Congress
Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, CA

October 2022 SACNAS NDiSTEM Conference
San Juan, Puerto Rico

October 2022	Southwest Regional Meeting of Organismal Biologists at CSUSB, <i>San Bernardino, California</i>
September 2022	POSea Conference <i>virtual</i>
August 2022	CSU Summer Symposium and Graduate Fair at UCLA <i>Los Angeles, California</i>
July 2020	UCLA National McNair Conference <i>Los Angeles, California</i>

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

September 2024 – June 2025	<p>BSC Student Representative for EEB, <i>Biological Sciences Council (BSC)</i> Meets once a month with Biological Sciences Council to discuss and vote on UCLA Bio-Sci wide events. Responsible for spending the money allocated to EEB (i.e., coffee hours and camping trips). Provides an opportunity to build relationships and community with students from different departments within Life Science.</p>
August 2024 – Present	<p>Committee Member, <i>EEB Grad Peer Mentorship Program</i> Volunteer to match first year mentees with EEB peer mentors who are further along in their graduate programs. Responsible for budgeting and organizing events for members of the mentorship program to grow community within the EEB department.</p>
August 2022 – May 2023	<p>Student Advisory Committee Member, <i>CSULA MORE Programs</i> Volunteer to put together social activities for student cohort to enrich student community; lead MORE guest seminars; advise office staff; assist with other miscellaneous tasks.</p>
June 2020 – June 2021	<p>Outreach Director, Board of Directors, <i>Latinxs/Chicanxs for Community Medicine (LCCM)</i> Responsible for creating social media content, publicizing LCCM events, as well as managing all social media platforms; Worked with other board directors to outreach to organizations, students, and professionals to collaborate with for events, and/or to recruit new members; Worked with my co-director to plan and host our annual LCCM end of year banquet in Spring 2021 to celebrate all members' volunteer work.</p>
April 2021; January – April 2020	<p>Logistics Committee Member, <i>UCLA Latinx Admit Weekend</i> Volunteered to put together this event that hosts newly admitted Latinx students in hopes to ease their process of choosing a college to attend; Worked with other volunteers to pair over 800 admits, undergraduates, and alumni mentors and volunteered as a host and mentor in past years.</p>
Spring 2019	<p>Student Intern, <i>UCLA California Teach Program</i></p>

This program focuses on enlightening undergraduates on effective teaching methods through observation, interaction, and lesson planning. As an intern my goal was to learn how to enrich student learning and by the culmination of the internship to teach a science lesson to elementary school students.

2018 – 2019

Design and Marketing Director, Immigration Advocate,
USAC General Representative 3 Office

Created visuals for events, as well as social media posts to inform the student body on issues that affect them, such as immigration rights, basic security needs, and mental health.

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

September 2024 –
Present

Teaching Assistant 1,
EEBIOL 109 – Introduction to Marine Science (Fall 2023)
EEBIOL 100 – Introduction to Ecology and Behavior (Winter 2024)
EEB Department, UCLA

Teach discussion sections for undergraduate students, hold office hours, proctor exams, grade assignments, attend lectures, meet with instructor and other TAs.

March 2022 –
June 2023

Graduate Assistant – Thesis Reviewer
Office of Graduate Studies, CSULA

Assist graduate students with their thesis drafts and offer feedback regarding formatting guidelines to ensure a timely submission of the final versions for approval by the university in time for graduation.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

October 2024 –
Present

The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB), *student member*

April 2024 –
Present

Society for the Study of Evolution (SSE), *student member*

October 2023 –
Present

UCLA Association for Multi-Ethnic Bioscientists' Advancement (AMEBA),
general member

June 2022 –
July 2023

SACNAS, *student member*

June 2021–
Present

UCLA Latino Alumni Association

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

October 2024 –
January 2025

Mentor
Synergy Alumni Mentorship Program
Synergy Charter Academies

October 2024 –
June 2025

Mentor
UCLA EEB Grad Peer Mentorship Program

October 2024 –
June 2025

Mentor
Grad 2 Grad (G2G) Peer Mentorship Program,
UCLA Division of Graduate Education

October 2023 – **Mentee**
June 2024 UCLA EEB Grad Peer Mentorship Program

October 2023 – **Mentee**
June 2024 Grad Strive Peer Mentorship Program,
UCLA Division of Graduate Education

Trainings, Courses, Workshops

May 2025 Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM) – sample preparation and microscope operation
January 2025 – CIMER Entering Mentoring Training Program,
March 2025 Graduate Programs in Biosciences, UCLA

September 2024 – Building the Foundation for Mentoring Young Adults,
Mentoring Central

September 2024 – Animal Research (ARC General Certification Test)
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), UCLA

Quantitative and Computational Biosciences Collaboratory Workshops, UCLA

October 2024 W21: Image Processing for Microscopy

October 2024 W9: Intro to Python

May 2024 W16: Library Prep for NGS

May 2024 W13: Genetics Analysis (VCF-Plink)

April 2024 W3: Intro to R and Data Visualization

April 2024 W2: Using NGS Analysis Tools

April 2024 W1a: UNIX Command Line I

Relevant Courses Taken*

UCLA EEBIOL 100

UCLA EEBIOL 100L

UCLA EEBIOL 116

UCLA EEBIOL 120

UCLA EEBIOL 142

UCLA EEBIOL 156

UCLA EEBIOL 162

UCLA EEBIOL 162L

UCLA LIFESCI 7A, B, C

*All courses taken as an undergraduate student at UCLA, 2018-2021.

Teaching Assistantships

Winter 2025 EEBIOL 100

Fall 2024 EEBIOL 109