Testimonials

**What does “Living the Promise” mean to you?**

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zptMeiTEeU4&feature=youtu.be>

“I choose to donate to UCR as a way to give back to the university that helped shape my future. Working behind the scenes, I see how support from alumni can make a difference and I’m proud to be a first-generation graduate contributing to the success of UCR’s future.”

-Vanessa Torrez ’11, alumna and staff member

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“As a fellow UCR alumnus and proud Highlander, I’ve been thinking about the profound impact UCR has in the lives of students. Thanks to UCR, I’ve created lifelong friendships. I continue to support UCR because I am a strong believer in the value of a good education and I want to invest in the future generation of leaders.”   
-Avi Pai, alumnus

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“To me, the University of California is committed to providing a first-class public university education to the thousands of students it enrolls. Providing students with access to cutting edge research is a critical component of achieving this objective. Clark Kerr (former chancellor of UC Berkeley) once stated that the goal for higher education in California was to balance the ‘competing demands of fostering excellence and guaranteeing educational access for all.’ I believe we are living the promise by fulfilling this vision. UCR provides the access, and is responsible for ensuring the excellence of the education we provide.”

-Michael Pirrung, distinguished professor of chemistry

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“To me, living the promise means striving to fulfill one’s potential. Being a professor is a position of privilege and responsibility. I have the privilege to choose the problems that I want to solve and pursue research in my own way. However, along with this comes the responsibility to make sure that this research is of benefit to society. Living the promise is ensuring that my work at UCR has the greatest positive impact that I can achieve.”

-Aaron Seitz, professor of psychology

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“Living the Promise at UC Riverside is a promise for better research so that our community can benefit from better living and better health. This kind of research cannot be done in the private sector because private companies must report to shareholders in short-term, profit-driven periods, while the issues that we’re tackling are long-term, tough research problems. My team and I have spent more than a decade pursuing the contributions of immune cells and microglia to brain function, which will have tremendous impacts in the health of our community and the world.”

-Monica Carson, professor and chair of biomedical sciences

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“This is a great place to flourish. Even though UCR is now 4 times the size in terms of student body, compared with when I came here, it is still a place where each person matters and can make a difference. It is a university that has world class research and passionate teachers, and challenges you to be both.”

-Ameae Walker, professor emeritus of biomedical sciences

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“A university promises that its activities are relevant to society, and that a student who becomes part of the university will, through their coursework and other experiences, become more aware of the world and more able to find purpose and contribute to society. I am a professor in the Department of Botany and Plant Sciences and a geneticist in the Agricultural Experiment Station. I joined the faculty at UCR in 1990. I feel very lucky to have been at UCR during a revolutionary time for plant genetic research. I am lucky to have been among the shepherds of the genome era for several major food plants during the past decade, none more significantly than cowpea, which is so vital to world food security. As a youngster growing up in a suburban blue-collar family, and then a first-generation college student, I never imagined that my career could follow the path that it has. When I see many of today’s UCR students, I see myself 40 years ago, and I see my own two kids searching for their purpose, and I find motivation in that feeling of familiarity. I attempt to convey excitement and sense of duty and opportunity in my research, public service and teaching. This is my perspective on “Living the Promise”—a perspective shaped by my identity as a former university student, as a university faculty member for 24+ years, and as a parent.”

-Timothy Close, professor of genetics and geneticist

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“To me, it’s a commitment from both the faculty and the students to come together and give their very best, whether it be in the research lab, the classroom, or the community.”

-Philip Roberts, professor and chair of nematology

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“One of the promises of university education is upward mobility. Riverside is a place where this is happening in a way that exceeds almost every other university and we’ve got one of the most diverse student bodies. UCR is affordable and at the same time, we’re a first-class research university, located in a place where we can cater to a diverse community of students. UCR is a doorway to upward mobility, the promise of a better future.”

-David Reznik, distinguished professor of biology

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“It means trying to accomplish a number of important things. One is, for example, to develop technology that has a strong, positive impact on the future such as providing sustainable transportation fuels and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Another is providing opportunities for students to learn about these technologies and be directly involved in moving them forward, addressing real world issues.”

-Charles Wyman, Ford Motor Company Chair in Environmental Engineering

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“To me, Living the Promise means conducting research that benefits consumers and the citrus industry in California, and also training students and others that come to work with me, providing guidance and inspiration so they can reach their own goals.”

-Mikeal Roose, chair and professor of genetics and geneticist

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“To me, Living the Promise means to be able to work on what I believe is important.”

-Hideaki Tsutsui, assistant professor of mechanical engineering

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“UCR is by far one of the most ethnically diverse campuses in the UC system. My goal of building cultural and societal bridges is very much in tune with the overall cultural, racial, and ethnic landscape of UCR. I am happy to be at a place where I can promote these ideas in the kind of landscape that fosters it.”

-Reza Aslan, professor of creative writing

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“In my mind, living the promise refers to the promise and commitment of the University of California to teaching, research and service that will benefit the people of California. And I think that we’re doing that. We’re working to teach young men and women in a diverse array of fields, we’re doing research to address problems and concerns for society, and we’re serving on various regulatory and expert panels to advise governmental agencies.”

-David Eastmond, chair and professor of cell biology

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“To me, Living the Promise is having the privilege of working on the research I love to do and communicating the significance of the research I do to the community.”

-Mary Droser, professor of geology

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“To me, Living the Promise is about change and growth. College is such a life-changing process, and I’ve had the wonderful privilege of seeing some great kids grow up. They often come in as 17-year-olds fresh out of high school and I’ve seen them graduate, in some cases go on to law school or graduate school, get married and start families. Living the Promise at UC Riverside is about great people and the relationships I wouldn’t have if I wasn’t a professor here.”

-Steven Clark, professor of psychology

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“To me, it’s trying to make sure the kind of work we do here is well-known outside the confines of the university, especially when it comes to matters of public policy. We can’t be successful in the research we do unless people know about it. Conversely, the kinds of research we do here must be informed by real-world problems. It’s both — letting the world know what UCR does and also being informed by the outside world.”

-Karthick Ramakrishnan, professor of public policy and political science

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“It means, that we as faculty, have a moral and educational obligation to provide transformative experiences for our students, by teaching them the best way we know how, and by imparting our own skills in our respective fields.”  
-Jan Blacher, distinguished professor of education and UC Presidential Chair

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“Living the Promise, to me, means combining the technological advancements produced in a university with direct applications in California. Here you can see many environmental problems and how the university and research can be a solution to those problems. The promise of UCR is the promise that new knowledge can solve problems that seem insurmountable.”

-Christopher Bardeen, professor of chemistry

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“For me, living the promise is an opportunity to communicate the work my group and I do to a broad audience, particularly to an increasingly large community of students and researchers who are paying attention to UCR.”

-Guillermo Aguilar, chair and professor of mechanical engineering

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“I greatly enjoy research, teaching, and mentoring students. These activities carry a large responsibility to our community so to me, Living the Promise means having the opportunity to be here at UC Riverside to pursue dreams of mine.”

-James Dieterich, distinguished professor of geophysics, emeritus

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“For me, Living the Promise means the opportunity to work and engage with an amazing assortment of young scientists. I'm continually amazed and inspired by the students we have here at UC Riverside, many of whom are the first in their families to go to college.”

-David Oglesby, chair and professor of geophysics

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“Living the Promise means working on solutions to problems that will have a positive impact on society. The knowledge learned in the pursuit of this research is transferred to the next generation so that the promise really lives on.”

-Amit K. Roy-Chowdhury, professor of electrical engineering

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“To any scientist, Living the Promise means having some ideas on which one has worked very hard and which have been proven to be true for the long haul, the sort of ideas which will go into textbooks and be taught to undergraduates. To achieve this is to contribute to the store of human knowledge in a way that will be remembered and that’s very satisfying.”

-Chandra Varma, distinguished professor of physics

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“1. Bringing the best scientific training to our undergraduates.  
2. Making sure that they take advantage of the wonderful opportunities they have been given to improve the quality of their lives, in addition to seeing that they are on track for exciting career opportunities.

3. I want to see the richness of minorities among our undergraduates reflected in the graduate school population(s).

4. It also means elevating UCR to the top ring of the UCs, both in research and science education.”

-Susan Wessler, Neil A and Rochelle A Campbell Presidential Chair for Innovation in Science Education and distinguished professor of genetics

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