


Denise Merino Mitchell

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Education



University of California, Riverside

Master of Science - MS Plant Biology

2019 - 2021



University of California, Riverside

Bachelor of Science - BS Biochemistry

1984 - 1989



California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTCC)

Single Subject Teaching Credential

(Bioscience, Geoscience, Chemistry, Mathematics)

April 2001



Environmental Stewards



University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR)

Certified California Naturalist Instructor

August 2024

Experience



Lecturer

University of California, Riverside

April 2022 - Present

Botany & Plant Sciences Department

BPSC 104: Foundations in Plant Biology

BPSC 021: California Cornucopia Food from Farm to Table

BPSC 011: Plants & Human Affairs



Associate Faculty Science & Kinesiology

Norco College

August 2023 – Present

Science & Kinesiology Department

Bio 4: Human Biology

Bio 21: California Naturalist (UC ANR Environmental Stewards)



Associate Faculty Biological Sciences

Mount San Jacinto College, San Jacinto Campus

August 2023 – December 2023

Biological Sciences Department

Biol 151: General Biology II



Supervisor of Pre-Service Science Teachers

University of California, Irvine

September 1, 2022 – June 2023

School of Education

Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program



Assistant Specialist Academic Researcher

University of California, Riverside

February 2022 – August 2022

Dr. Louis S Santiago/ Plant Ecophysiology



Science Educator

Riverside Unified School District

Jan 1997 – December 2021 (24 years 11 months)

Biology/ Chemistry/ Human Anatomy & Physiology (*College Articulated*)

It has been my privilege to serve as an educator and role model for thousands of Riverside middle and high school students. As a result of over two decades of teaching experience, I am adept at creating a classroom culture where mutual respect allows for engagement, meaningful dialogue, and content mastery.



Mentor Educator

University of California, Riverside

September 2014 - June 2015

I had the honor of mentoring a young lady pursuing her secondary science teaching credential to teach high school Biology.



Scientific Researcher

University of California, Riverside
Sept 2019 - Jun 2021

Master's Thesis

"Coordination of heat and drought tolerance in woody species across ecosystems."

https://ucr.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CDL_RIV_INST/1ikr3qb/cdi_cdl_escholarship_oai_e_scholarship_org_ark_13030_qt35h321kw

Botany & Plant Sciences PLBL Graduate Program

Dr. Louis Santiago, Principal Investigator



Mentor Researcher

University of California, Riverside
Sept 2019 - Jun 2021

I had the honor of mentoring undergraduate student researchers in the field where I supervised their collection of leaf specimens from three field sites, as well as their use of lab equipment to measure both chlorophyll a fluorescence and leaf water potential at turgor loss point.

Publications

Mitchell, D., Schönbeck, L., Shah, S. *et al.* Leaf drought and heat tolerance are integrated across three temperate biome types. *Sci Rep* **15**, 12201 (2025).

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-95623-5>

Schönbeck L, Arteaga M, Mirza H, et al (2023) Plant physiological indicators for optimizing conservation outcomes. *Conservation Physiology* 11: coad073

<https://doi.org/10.1093/conphys/coad073>

"Coordination of heat and drought tolerance in woody species across ecosystems."

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Presenter



California Native Plant Society Riverside/ San Bernardino Chapter

Invited Guest Speaker

April 2025: Riverside, CA

<https://youtu.be/XYLsaM3gOzU>



Ecological Society of America



Contributed Talk / Annual Conference

August 2024: In Person, Long Beach, CA

August 2021: Virtual



Botanical Society of America

Contributed Talk / Annual Conference

July 2021: Virtual

<https://youtu.be/tuKwmqMGcsw>



UC Riverside Seminar Presentation

Master's Thesis Defense

May 2021: Virtual

<https://youtu.be/x0-mhkGdDf0>



AAUW Greater Whittier Area Branch

Guest Speaker

Career Development Grant Recipient

May 2021: Virtual



California Botanical Society

Contributed Talk / Graduate Student Symposium

April 2021: Virtual

https://youtu.be/_rjI-l8yIs



National Resource Defense Council Women's Caucus

Guest Speaker

"Perspectives on Virtual Learning: Student, Teacher & Parent"

February 2021: Virtual



AAUW Benicia-Vallejo Branch

Guest Speaker

“Educating our Youth: Relevant Curriculum amidst a Changing Platform”

January 2021: Virtual



AAUW fund luncheon (1 hour 56 min)

Award Recipient/ Career Development Grant

October 2020 Virtual

<https://youtu.be/f6iCyLpuhZo>

Leader



Department Chair

- Martin Luther King High School, Riverside Sept 2006 - June 2008
- Amelia Earhart Middle School, Riverside Sept 2003 - June 2005

As department chair, my objective was to create a cohesive teaching cohort where both longevity in learning and attention to the “whole child” were the goals.



Student International Travel Tour Leader

- Cultural Immersion: London, Paris, Madrid - March 2015
- Service Learning & Science Expedition: Ecuador, Galapagos Islands - June 2018

Curriculum Developer



- High School Chemistry NGSS (*Next Generation Science Standards*)
Sept 2015 – June 2019
Focus on the transition from previous state standards to full implementation of NGSS
- Seventh Grade Science
Sept 1999 - June 2001
Focus on uniformity in district curricular units & creating common assessments

Innovator



Positive Results in Science & Math (PRISM)

Sept 1998 - June 2000

Riverside Unified School District Pilot program integrating Science & Math instruction



Advisor

Interact/Rotary International

Sept 2007 – December 2021 (14 years 3 mos.)

Interact is the high school chapter of Rotary International, where we focus on service over self. Service events include schoolwide recycling, as well as international service-learning.



Chairperson

LifeStream Blood Bank

Sept 2007 – December 2021 (14 years 3 months)

It is my distinct pleasure to host two community service blood drives per year for high school donors and the surrounding community.

Honors



Career Development Grant

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

April 2020 \$ 12,000.00



Thanksgiving Food Drive Recognition

Fair Housing Council of Riverside County

May 2014

In recognition of the Interact Club's contribution to feeding the needy of our community.



Crystal Apple Award

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

May 2009

Given to teachers who integrate character education in the classroom



Blood Drive Chairperson of the Year Nomination

LifeStream Blood Bank Apr 2019

Skills

• Science Education • Research Scientist • Mentoring • Educational Leadership • Curriculum Development • Student International Travel • Public Speaking • Community Service