



SPOTLIGHT ON...

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Hometown: Palm Springs, CA

Alma Mater: California State University, Stanislaus

How long have you worked at UC Merced: 10 Years

Where in the world have you traveled: Italy, Germany, Aruba, Mexico, Canada and about 20 different states

Bucket list travel locations: Too many to list, but Maldives and Greece are at the top

Share a special moment from your travels: All of my travels have special moments especially travel to other countries, but I have to talk about my most recent visit to Death Valley National Park. Who would've thought Death Valley is a cool destination but it is especially if you enjoy national parks, hiking and scenic views. I bought a jeep so I was able to take some dirt roads I otherwise would not have been able to so this was an amazing trip. I don't suggest going during the summer as it was already 95 at the end of March.

How do you spend your time outside of work: I travel as much as I can even if it is just a day trip. My favorite is the coast and Highway 1. I joined a hiking group so I have been hiking a lot this past year. There are so many places to see in California!

Favorite local spot: Yosemite. If you've never heard of Firefalls in Yosemite, you should look it up. I was fortunate enough to see it in February 2021.

Where is a must-visit California location: Half Moon Bay. They have the best little farmers market that starts again this month. Newport or Balboa Beach in southern California are also musts.

Final thoughts: Your degree or research program is your priority, but you have to take care of your emotional well-being to successfully reach your goals. Don't let life get boring. Get outside and see this beautiful state. It is amazing what the sound of waves or a good hike in the mountains can do for your soul!

