

Founded in 2011, CUREs is housed in Seaver College, reports to Academic Affairs through the Provost, and offers unique opportunities to members of the broader LMU community. With a staff of eight, plus fellows and postdocs, CUREs serves LMU faculty, staff, and students by; developing undergraduate and graduate courses, supporting faculty research and scholarly activity, publishing an international journal and conducting cutting-edge urban ecology research. We collaborate with faculty through fellowships, joint grant making, original research, and outreach programming. We also partner with the Green LMU Initiative, the Campus Sustainability Officer; the School of Education; Loyola Law School; Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts, the School of Film and Television, the Academy of Catholic Thought and Imagination, and others to enhance the ongoing efforts of those programs and to help initiate novel projects that meet the goals of The LMU Strategic Plan.

### Wolf Hybrid Research in Frazier Park

From May 17-20<sup>th</sup>, CUREs staff and students traveled to the Lockwood Animal Rescue Center (LARC) in Frazier Park, CA to study stimulus responses of wolf hybrids to test for a possible genetic link between these animals and humans with autism. This work is in collaboration with Dr. Elinor Karlsson and Dr. Kathryn Lord (University of Massachusetts Medical School at the Broad Institute).



Dr. Lord and Dr. Auger (CUREs Senior Scientist) setting up the experimental design for the hunting tests.

The focal experiment of the weekend was to test hunting responses of the hybrids to better understand the animals' curiosity and instincts. Originally, the research team planned to achieve this by dropping deer skin samples into the enclosures using a drone. The samples were attached to a rope, allowing them to be removed from the enclosures if needed. However, due to technological difficulties, the procedure had to be modified; instead of using the drone, the deer skins were dropped into the enclosures using a ladder and a telescoping pole. This allowed for the successful testing of 24 animals over the course of the weekend.

Additional data collection was simultaneously conducted including morphological information on the animals and fur collection to better understand the genetic composition of the hybrids. This, in addition to other tests implemented by the Broad

Institute team, will create a more holistic awareness of each animal's attributes. For example, the team previously completed novelty experiments to test the animals' response to foreign objects, and stranger tests to better understand how the hybrids react to unknown humans.

The CUREs team is excited to continue working on this project and look forward to future collaborations!



## Summer Research Students

Summer research is underway at CUREs! Three students are participating through LMU's Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP), which runs for six weeks and requires 120 hours of work. Two recent graduates (LMU '18) are working until the end of June, as well, on projects they helped implement as students. Finally, one student is volunteering his time with CUREs and plans on working throughout the summer.

Calvin Foss (LMU '21) - During my time working with CUREs toward the end of the semester and now halfway through SURP, I have learned that the process of conducting my own research is time consuming and difficult, but also extremely fun and rewarding. I wanted to contribute to the CUREs team to get my first experience with independent research, and I am truly immersed in that field. My work is very hands-on, and I am constantly out on the water in the Ballona Freshwater Marsh collecting data. Then I come back to the lab and analyze all the data I collect and save it in useful representations. In summary, I am working a lot and having a good time while doing it!

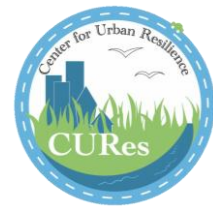
Alex Isaev (LMU '18) - I have enjoyed working with CUREs for over 3 years now. In fact I have loved it so much that I am working for them over the summer as a graduate! The past year or so I have been focused on studying the Coyotes of Long Beach CA, and have been working on a project analyzing diet composition of the Coyotes through Prey DNA analysis, which has taken a lot of work to improve methodologies, but will soon hopefully be able to implement large scale.

Arturo Jacobo (LMU '20) - Doing research with CUREs this summer has exposed me to the many opportunities available within the Urban Studies field. I am so grateful to be able to work alongside experienced professors and gain further insight on city planning and community development. I'm excited to see the progress of my research!

## Upcoming High School Course at LMU

From June 26<sup>th</sup> – July 7<sup>th</sup>, CUREs faculty and staff will teach a two-week course for current high school students through LMU's Summer Programs titled "[Environmental Science at LMU, The Living City](#)." Through the program, students immerse themselves in urban ecology topics with field work, site visits, data analysis, and lectures. Some of the research topics include wildlife management, social networking mapping, tree growth and assessment, water quality, and hummingbird behavior. This is the fourth summer CUREs is leading this program.





### Silver Lake Reservoir Survey

CUREs was recently awarded a contract by the Silver Lake Neighborhood Counsel to conduct a survey of resident opinions on the local reservoir. This will assist with neighborhood planning as community groups question the possible reservoir uses and development.

Located in East Los Angeles, Silver Lake has a population of approximately [33,000 people](#). According to the US Census, the [neighborhood](#) is 85.4% White, 6.9% Black or African American, and 3.3% Asian; 19.9% identify as Latinx. Beginning in the 1990s and continuing through today, Silver Lake has seen waves of gentrification that are altering the neighborhood's composition.

The Silver Lake Reservoir was created in the early 1990s and is operated by the LA Department of Water and Power. While there are several recreational areas surrounding the site, including a walking path and recreation center, some areas are closed due to possible safety concerns. [Residents at community meetings](#) expressed the desire to have more of the area open to the public; CUREs' social survey will help determine the understanding residents have for the reservoir including its current uses, possible safety issues, and future potential uses.

### StudyLA Partnership

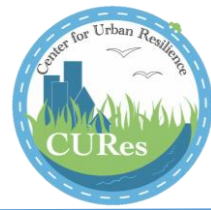
The [Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles](#) at LMU conducts research and analysis on LA public opinion surveys, exit polls, and leadership and community studies. CUREs often partners with StudyLA, including two recently completed social surveys on nonprofits; one in the Southeast section of Los Angeles, and the second near Pico-Union.

Dr. Michele Romolini (CUREs Director of Research) led the survey efforts, assisted by Arturo Jacobo (LMU '20) to compile a list of the areas' nonprofits, along with contact information. Once the groups were finalized, each were sent a survey asking them about their stewardship activities, constituent groups, means of getting information, and who they share information with. StudyLA is doing this work to better understand the nonprofit landscape of Los Angeles, particularly in underserved areas. CUREs looks forward to future partnerships and social science initiatives.

### Google Map of Survey Locations







## Ballona Freshwater Marsh Research Update

CUREs has been working with the Ballona Wetlands Conservancy to develop and execute scientific monitoring projects to assess the health of the Ballona Freshwater Marsh. So far, the team has been focusing on three key areas.

1. **Mosquito Larvae Sampling:** Sarah Bruce-Eisen (LMU '17) began collecting mosquito larvae samples in January 2018. She goes to the Marsh weekly to get samples from locations she believes are likely to have larvae. This may help the Conservancy better understand vector control efforts. Data collection will continue throughout 2018 to assess how the population changes throughout a year.
2. **Water Current Patterns:** Calvin Foss (LMU '21) started working with CUREs in March 2018 to create floating geo-tracking devices he can launch in the Marsh to create a map of water movement patterns. This will complement Bruce-Eisen's work, as areas with slow moving or still water can be identified; these are potential breeding areas for mosquitoes. Foss is working with Dr. John Dorsey (LMU Environmental Science) on this work.
3. **Water Quality Sampling:** CUREs will conduct its first water sampling in July, led by Dr. Dorsey. This will aid the Conservancy to assess the overall health of the Freshwater Marsh system. Dr. Dorsey aims to conduct these samplings quarterly.



Bruce-Eisen collecting mosquito larvae data



Foss deploying GPS trackers

The CUREs team is excited to continue this research throughout 2018 and to work in partnership with the Conservancy.



### Film Festival Announcement

Now in its sixth year, the GNG Green Earth Film Festival is a celebration of eco-conscious films from film makers of all levels. The Festival will return to LMU from October 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, now being housed in the new Playa Vista Campus. The three themes for this year's Festival are The Human Animal Bond, Biodiversity, and The Living City.

Films may be submitted to the Festival until July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - submission details can be found [here](#). Also, make sure to follow the Festival on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) (@GNGFilmFest), and Instagram (@GNGGreenEarthFilmFest).

The Festival was founded by Dan and Susan Gottlieb. CUREs is excited to continue to partner with such an exciting community program. Stay tuned for updates!

### Restorative Justice Updates

**May 10:** LMU CUREs RJ Project's Schoene Mahmood presented with Riverside Unified School District (RUSD)'s Dr. Gary McGuire, Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) director and Lanna Goffman, CWA manager at the **CA Association of Supervisors of Child Welfare Conference in Fresno, CA.**



Mahmood (left) with McGuire (center) and Goffman (right) from RUSD

**June 19,** LMU Cures RJ Project to present with Public Counsel at the **Trauma Informed Schools Conference in St. Charles, MO** on Transforming School Culture Through Restorative Alternatives. Participants in this workshop will learn about prevention-focused, non-punitive school climate strategies that – when implemented with fidelity – reduce and eliminate racial disproportionality in school discipline, engage all students, and improve life outcomes. After highlighting systemic discipline issues that plague many schools, the presenters will show case studies from schools and districts across California and engage participants around their roles in implementing school climate frameworks successfully.

### Additional Upcoming Community Events

- [Celebration of the El Segundo Blues](#) – June 30th, 11am
- [Restorative Justice and Catholic Social Thought](#) - ASACCU Visioning Social Change for Catholic Education Conference – July 17th
- [GNG Green Earth Film Festival](#) – October 19-21<sup>st</sup>

### Never Miss an Update!

Sign up for our weekly blog post announcements by emailing [CUREs@lmu.edu](mailto:CUREs@lmu.edu) for more information and to get on our list!

Follow CUREs on social media!

