

**Student Profile**

**Ricardo Rocha – Drama and Theatre PhD Program**



**Your Time at UCI**

What made you decide to pursue a graduate degree?

*I decided to pursue a Ph.D. in drama and theatre to explore and experiment with binational and multilingual representations in American theatre.*

Why did you choose to come to UCI?

*The extraordinary faculty in my department and because my program allows us to design and teach our own curriculum were two determinant reasons. I also saw opportunities to contribute my experience in many years as an actor, theatre director, and as a teacher throughout different parts of the country.*

If you are conducting research, how would you explain your research and its significance to your grandparent?

*I have explained my research to my grandmother, who turns 101 years old this October. As a single mother of three in Colombia, and then as a Latina immigrant to the United States, she epitomizes perseverance and fortitude against extreme circumstances. I am a product of her strength. I often visit her at her LA Crenshaw District apartment where she has lived for over fifty years. I lived with her for some time as a teenager. I tell her how I continue to uncover narratives, laws and ideologies that surround Latin American and Latina/o American protagonists and historical figures in American Theatre---how their representations were used by the production to manufacture or dismantle cultural and racial stigmas that continue to afflict America today. In response, she always relates her experiences as a binational immigrant in California. How she has survived an often-hostile society is, in my opinion, heroic.*

What are your hobbies/passions outside of research?

*I play soccer and also coach my son's or daughter's soccer team. After completing milestones in my program, my wife and I love taking the kids camping. Yoga practice has also been really important during my UCI experience.*

**Reflections**

What are you most proud of accomplishing (so far) in your graduate program?

*I'm really proud of my successful teaching over the past three years, including two large lecture courses of 240+ students, and the two plays I've directed.*

What is your most memorable moment/experience at UCI to date?

*When our youngest was born in the spring of 2017, I was directing a UCI mainstage show. Our daughter Esmeralda was born, and the show opened during the same week.*

What advice do you have for a new graduate student in your program?

*Practice yoga and have children during the summer break.*

### **Career**

What do you see yourself doing in five or ten years?

*I see myself teaching, researching, and directing at a university in the States.*

How do you hope to make a difference?

*I proposed teaching a UCI course in drama and theatre bilingually---in English and Spanish. It may happen soon, and I hope to make a difference with this type of curriculum that invites students to deploy their rich binational and bilingual heritage.*