COMMITTEE ON DISTINGUISHED CAMPUS SERVICE
NOMINATION FOR THE 2020-2021 DISTINGUISHED CAMPUS SERVICE AWARD

Professors Isgouhi Kaloshian and Katherine Borkovich

The Committee is pleased to nominate Professors Isgouhi Kaloshian, Chair of the Department of Nematology and Katherine Borkovich, Chair of the Department of Microbiology and Plant Pathology for the Campus Distinguished Service Award for the academic year 2020-2021. Accomplished scientists in their fields, both are elected Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and Professor Borkovich is a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology. In addition to their current chairships, both professors have long and distinguished service records at UCR. Academic Senate committees on which Professor Kaloshian has served include the Committee on Education Policy, the Committee on Committees and the Committee on University Extension while those on which Professor Borkovich has served include the Committee on Faculty Welfare, the Committee on Charges and the Committee on Distinguished Teaching. Professor Kaloshian has been the UCR faculty representative on the UC Systemwide Advisory Committee on the Status of Women for the last 5 years and serves on the Executive Committee of California Agriculture and Food Enterprise and on the Executive Committee of the Center for Infectious Disease Vector Research. Professor Borkovich has served on several executive search committees at UCR, helped start the undergraduate Microbiology major, served as director of the Graduate Program in Genetics, Genomics and Bioinformatics and has been involved in several building projects on campus, most recently co-chairing the Plant Growth Environments Research Facility Committee.

Yet the impetus behind the current recommendation for the Campus Distinguished Service Award is their leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2020, Professors Kaloshian and Borkovich were appointed to the University of California Office of the President’s Testing and Tracing Task Force, a systemwide group convened to examine the challenges involved in testing and contact tracing for COVID-19 as well as to provide direction to the UC campuses. Also in May 2020, while continuing to chair their respective departments, teaching and supervising graduate students, Professors Kaloshian and Borkovich began to develop a COVID testing facility on the UCR campus. They held countless zoom meetings with the systemwide COVID testing task force and with UC health leadership, UCR Student Health Services, and both California and Riverside County Departments of Public Health. Having located a site for the lab, they worked with their team to transform two rooms in the Multidisciplinary Research Building into a fully functional testing lab, secured the necessary equipment and supplies, trained two technicians for sample collection and processing, and set up protocols for the COVID testing. In June 2020 the UCR COVID Testing Extension Laboratory was granted a license to operate and officially opened in August, ahead of any other UC campus. The lab’s testing capacity offered quick turn-around times, letting parts of the campus resume their operations, allowing for testing for student-athletes and making it possible for some students, including those without housing that provided an adequate environment for learning or housing at all, to live on campus.

Without the leadership, commitment and good sense of Professors Borkovich and Kaloshian, the UCR COVID Testing Extension Laboratory could not have gotten up and running as quickly and efficaciously as it did; indeed, it may not have gotten up and running at all. In October 2020, when President Drake formed the UC Testing Capacity Task Force, he appointed Professors Kaloshian
and Borkovich to its Technology Subcommittee, the mandate of which is to design a UC system that can withstand future pandemics.