

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY LONG BEACH**  
• university honors program •

**honor code**  
2014-2015 Year in Review

# table OF CONTENTS

- 03 student successes
- 05 study abroad
- 08 thesis projects
- 09 creative contributions
- 11 alumni
- 12 student innovators
- 13 2014-2015 graduates

Please tell us about your current activities, future plans, and professional and personal accomplishments. You may share this information with us by mailing or emailing us your updates at [honors@csulb.edu](mailto:honors@csulb.edu). Please be sure to include the following information:

Name  
CSULB degree(s) and year(s)  
Address  
Email  
Professional and personal news (please indicate if we can include this information in a future newsletter)

University Honors Program, Library 214  
California State University, Long Beach  
1250 Bellflower Boulevard  
Long Beach, CA 90840-1901  
Phone: (562) 985-2426  
Email: [honors@csulb.edu](mailto:honors@csulb.edu)  
Online: [www.csulb.edu/uhp](http://www.csulb.edu/uhp)

# new PERSPECTIVE

## Studio Apartment

By: Jose Gomez



Alex Villaneda / Honor Code

I was very close with my family. Literally. I lived in a studio apartment with my mom, dad, and two brothers. A studio apartment is an apartment which consists of solely one giant room with a bathroom and a kitchen. My father couldn't afford an apartment with more rooms. He worked very hard to provide my family with the basic essentials such as food, TV, clothes, etc. My mom didn't work, she had to become a stay at home mom when my older brother, Victor, was diagnosed with cancer.

Now when I look back, my childhood wasn't so bad. When I was young I was very insecure about living in such a small home. I never wanted my friends from school to come to our home because I didn't want them to know that I was "pobre." I hated being poor; I would always complain to my mom about it. She would always reply, "no somos pobres," we're not poor. I ignored her words; in my mind, I was the poorest of the poor. This mentality made me daydream everyday about "living the rich life." My life revolved around the thought of getting out of poverty.

In an effort to achieve my dream of getting out of poverty, I tried my best in school. That was the only realistic choice I had. I would be on that "study grind" every day since I was in the 2nd grade. Because I was such a hard worker in my classes, I was labeled as "gifted" by my elementary school. I was surrounded by peers as determined as me. Even though I was ecstatic to be in an environment in which everyone was a hard-worker, I felt very intimidated because I knew that I wasn't the best in class anymore. However, the intimidation I felt in the "gifted" environment motivated me to work even harder.

Here I am now, a student at Long Beach State. My mom was right, I wasn't really poor. Now that I'm on that "college budget" I realize that I did have all a kid needs. I didn't have the newest toy or gadget, but I did have all the essentials like clothes, food, and a loving family. This realization changed my motivation to succeed from earning money to making sure that my parents will be able to retire happily.

# guest SPEAKER

## Dive into the Novel

By: Julia Katz

Not many scientists consider themselves to be creative writers, including Ellen Prager, until she set out and tried her hand at it. Honors students were invited to an exclusive presentation where Prager shared valuable career advice and explained how her career path took an unexpected, but transformational turn. Ellen Prager is originally a marine biologist who has served as the Chief Scientist at Aquarius, the only underwater research station in the world. She has also served as the science advisor to a Celebrity Cruise ship in the Galapagos Islands and has dived throughout the Caribbean, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and the Galapagos.

Ellen Prager's inspiration to transcribe her adventures began when she was earning her Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD). Prager was provided the opportunity to live underwater in the Galapagos Islands. For two weeks, she studied the effect that El Niños have on corals, "When an El Nino occurs, about 95% of the corals die," Prager said. She and a few other scientists lived in a pressurized trailer underwater, "I loved it,

for someone who gets claustrophobic, maybe not so much, but for me it was a great experience and created lots of great stories."

Although the scientists tried to anticipate every obstacle they may have encountered, they overlooked one: sea lions. The sea lions did not appreciate their habitat being overtaken by cameras and Homo sapiens. They would tease the students by obstructing the view of the cameras and blow bubbles in their faces.

Out of the water, Prager writes about her diving adventures and scientific pieces relating undersea life to the lives of above sea people. One of her most popular books is entitled *Sex, Drugs, and Sea Slime*. The book relates wacky sea animal stories to health, biotechnology, food, and the economy.

The primary reason for Prager's presentation at the aquarium was to showcase her newest book, *The Shark Whisperer*. In order to understand what elements adolescent children enjoy, Prager read the popular fiction to decipher necessary components for her novel. She wanted to provide middle school students with a story plot

they would be motivated to read while teaching them marine biology, "When you think about it, this is a really important age[...]If you get them engaged at that age a lot of the time it will either impact their career choice or their ethics throughout their lives, so it's a really important age—plus, reading is so critical." And so *The Shark Whisperer* came to be. It is about a boy named Tristan Hunt who discovers a secret power of his while attending an exclusive ocean-themed summer camp.

While the primary age group is intended for readers ages 8-12 years old, the novel has been noted as, "An underwater Harry Potter sure to inspire readers to want to dive in and experience the ocean for themselves," according to Sylvia A. Earle, an explorer in Residence for National Geographic.

Prager also introduced the sequel called, *The Shark Rider*, which will be released in May. If you are looking for an interesting read to take your mind off of your textbooks, reach for a book by Ellen Prager!

# student SUCCESSSES

## The Road to Miss California

By: Brianna Maloney

Many girls dream of one day becoming Miss USA, but for senior Danielle Sappleton, that dream is becoming a reality. Danielle, a theater major here at CSULB, has performed in many pageants including the Miss California USA Competition that was held in January of this year.

The idea of pageants and modeling bloomed early in Danielle. She was born in Jamaica where pageants are a part of daily life. Because her family was moving constantly, she was able to watch her older sister compete in pageants and learned from her sister's experience that she wanted to do something like that in the future. Danielle took a modeling class at 13 years of age and has been hooked on the idea of competing ever since. Although she has not participated in an immense amount of pageant competitions, Danielle is no stranger to the stage. She says that the process of competing is "really about the confidence and the ability to show your body."



Photos Courtesy of Danielle Sappleton

Miss USA is a national competition featuring contestants from each state. There are three main portions of the competition: bathing suit, evening gown, and question session. Despite all the glitz and glamour that comes with the concept of these beauty pageants, Danielle says that, "Yes it is about [outer] beauty, but I really feel the inner beauty." The day before the competition, each contestant has a five minute interview session with the judges so they can get to know each candidate better.

A unique factor to the Miss USA circuit is that winning the contest places you directly into the modeling industry. Throughout the competition, you are able to meet people and build connections in the industry. For Danielle, this competition is not only about winning, "it's about meeting these girls and going through this amazing experience... it's me being my best self." She says that, "either way for me, my life will change."

## Greetings from the Foxhole

By: Julia Katz

There has been a big change to the first floor of Los Cerritos. In addition to the dorm being renovated with an upgraded common room (given the nickname: "Fox Hole"), a classroom, and room improvements, the 52 freshman residents are the guinea pigs of the Honors Living Learning Community (LLC). The orange patterned upholstered couches and foot rests in the Fox Hole often serve as a study lounge, event venue, and battleground for intense Egyptian War card games. While being surrounded by academically-oriented peers, the students take a specific Honors course together each semester, attend honors events, plan events for the housing and UHP program at large, and engage in community service to fulfill the LLC's requirements.

The Resident Assistant of the floor, Tyler Hernandez, 20, is enjoying his first semester at Long Beach with the Honors LLC students. "I knew I wanted to be an RA for the Honors program. I love being surrounded by Honors people since I've always been a part of it in community college and in high school." Tyler attended Citrus Community College in Lindora, California before coming to Long Beach. He is majoring in Political Science and Japanese. He is adjusting well to the environment in which he has chosen to immerse himself, "To be able to be surrounded by well-spoken



students, that's the greatest thing to be a part of in a community."

A goal of implementing the Living Learning Communities was to surround students with like-minded peers. The Honors LLC is unique in the fact that the students are studying a plethora of subjects. Noah Daniels, 18, who is a Kinesiology major said, "I thought it'd be stiff and I wouldn't be on their [academic] level, but it's made [the LLC] more home-like.

It's opened me up to more people, opportunities and ideas." While the concept of being constantly surrounded with Honors students may seem intimidating, the students enjoy the environment it creates.

Peter Matatics, 23, is a third year at Long Beach, but is currently studying abroad in Japan. He is studying English with an emphasis in Creative Writing and Japanese. Peter believes that the Living

Learning Community is a positive addition to the program. "It's a really great way for people to have shared experiences... For a lot of people, it gives them a bond which makes it easier to connect."

The students have taken advantage of their unique circumstance to gain an optimal dorm experience. Cortney Mitchell, 18, majoring in Psychology with a minor in Human Development reports that, "We all learned how to balance everything really well. We've worked on our time management skills, not just with academics, but with going out and still making time for studying. I really like the people I've met here; we're all very career driven."

Last semester, the students took UHP 100 - Angles of Vision - taught by the former UHP Director, Dr. Nele Hempel-Lamer. The course was taught in the Los Cerritos classroom, just a few steps from the students' dorms. Noah described his experience as something that felt, "like everything I've learned is up on its head." In the class, the students analyzed education systems on personal, local, and international levels.

"Something that surprises me is how easily friendships are made and how quickly a community can form. It's amazing how quickly it has happened and great to see it spread its wings," Tyler noted.

## Life of an Honors Girl

By: Katelyn Campbell



Chelsea Powell's average day consists of language classes, meetings, an after-school job, and homework. Chelsea, 20, is a second year Honors student who is majoring in Spanish and German with a minor in International Studies. She is an active member of the German department, served as the Community Outreach Officer for the UHPSA, a peer mentor for both Honors and President's Scholars, a student assistant, a tutor, and a regular volunteer at a local homeless shelter. Within the UHPSA, Chelsea's job was to round up volunteers for events; research additional opportunities for community engagement; and maintain the relationship between the board, students, the Honors program, and the campus. She also helped with the planning and execution of other miscellaneous events throughout the school year.

Another major part of her time is spent with her "mentees," also known as protégés. She is a first time mentor to both an Honors student and a freshman President's Scholar, and she loves the experience.

Chelsea keeps in contact with her mentees in an effort to increase their awareness and attendance to events and help them with any problems that they may encounter. "I am a link to the goings-on of the university for them."

Chelsea is not only involved in the Honors program. Since the beginning of her first year at CSULB, Chelsea has worked almost every Sunday at the local homeless shelter. Because of her dedication to the shelter, called the Urban Community Outreach Drop-In Center, and the frequency of her visits, she is often put in charge of certain tasks at the shelter. Her main job is working with the directors, Mark and Roberta, and making food for all who come through and need assistance.

Chelsea is also involved in her German major where she is currently working with Dr. Jeffrey High from the German department. On November 14, 2014, Chelsea accompanied Dr. High to a conference where she assisted with the technology and moderated for Dr. High's thesis paper. This was her favorite experience this past year because



Photos Courtesy of Chelsea Powell

of the unique opportunities it has offered her. She has been able to connect with professors and other professionals visiting from abroad, mainly from Germany. She has had the privilege of escorting visiting and foreign professors and international guests. Furthermore, Chelsea is able to create

additional opportunities for intersection between the German department and the Honors program.

Through all of this, Chelsea has, "learned what [she's] capable of and that [she] really [does] like being busy." Although it may be difficult at times for her to remain sane in the midst of all that she does, she enjoys the experience. She says, "I love being able to discover myself in different ways by being in different roles because I get to explore all of my passions."

# study ABROAD



Photos Courtesy of Peter Matatics

## A Major Decision

By: Julia Katz

College is a time for students to immerse themselves in their passions. For Peter Matatics, 23, one of his majors led him to explore the globe. Peter is majoring in both English (with an emphasis in Creative Writing) and Japanese. As a language major, it made sense for Peter to study abroad; therefore, he is spending his academic year in Japan.

Is Peter finding his adventure worthwhile? You betcha! He is thriving in Japan where he can put his language skills to use while learning what it feels like to be a foreigner. “When it comes to really feeling cultural diversity, I think Asia’s the way to go,” said Peter. Although he may not feel like a local yet, he is enjoying his opportunities to interact with the residents. “You will look so different and a lot of people come up to me and love to practice their English.”

Peter is taking a full load of sixteen units while abroad, but he is learning plenty outside

of the classroom as well. Whether it is ordering one of his favorite street vendor foods, Onigiri, or taking public transportation, he is forced to practice Japanese every day. At first, Peter had difficulty understanding the fast paced intercom announcements of the stops on the train. Now, he is proud of being able to understand a majority of it—an important ability for Peter to get to his part-time job at an after school learning program and to his social outings. “You can travel a lot here; they have a really great public transportation system.” Since realizing this, Peter has made ample use of the public transportation to spend his weekends exploring the country.

When Peter is not helping students with homework or sightseeing, Peter is occupied with eight classes. All of them are taught entirely in Japanese, which he describes as exhausting. “My teachers are all ridiculously nice and they all have

ridiculous senses of humor. They encourage us to keep trying.” Luckily, this helps counteract the challenging work load.

Travel is changing Peter for the better. He enjoys practicing Japanese through every outlet. “I love karaoke here! It’s fun to be in a room with your friends and just sing for yourself.” Singing is an interest of Peter’s and he is glad to be able to keep his vocal chords warm while abroad.

The language barrier was a challenge when Peter first arrived. He is adjusting well and has some wonderful advice for anyone concerned about their ability to communicate while abroad, “If you keep throwing yourself in the mix, progress might not show at the moment, but overtime it does.” He is also gaining insightful wisdom, “I have more empathy [and so] understand how hard it is to come to America and [adapt], especially in school. I feel that I’ve become a lot more language conscious now.”

## When in Rome (Or Florence)

By: Brianna Maloney



Photos Courtesy of Victoria Ambruso

## Around the World in One Go

By: Katelyn Campbell

Studying abroad entails so much more than just studying as the name implies. Some of the lucky participants manage to do a lot more with the little time they have in this new unexplored, foreign place. The list of opportunities that have the potential to expand your experience are endless. Yet, many individuals do not take advantage of the amazing opportunities available to them outside of their native countries. Rebecca (Becky) Wyborski is one of those few people who has done amazing things on her travels.

Becky is a third year student at CSULB. She is currently majoring in Chemical Engineering with a minor in Applied Mathematics. She hopes that this study combination will facilitate her integration into “technology of the future” research. She wishes to specifically research green energy and sustainability, and she hopes, “to help invent and be a part of ideas that save the world.” She is already making strides, as she was the first Chemical Engineering major from CSULB to have ever studied abroad.

Becky had the honor of studying in Turku, Finland from January to May in 2014 where she advanced her knowledge of Chemical Engineering. While there, she stayed in an international student village. “I made lifelong friends from around the world,” said Becky. Since Becky went to Finland without knowing Swedish, she had to take a Swedish 101 class for foreigners, especially because her linear mathematics course was instructed entirely in Swedish. She notes, however, that, “I picked up the basics and the math words pretty quickly!” Along with her Swedish and other classes, Becky was also able to take Intercultural Communication and Biomimetics.

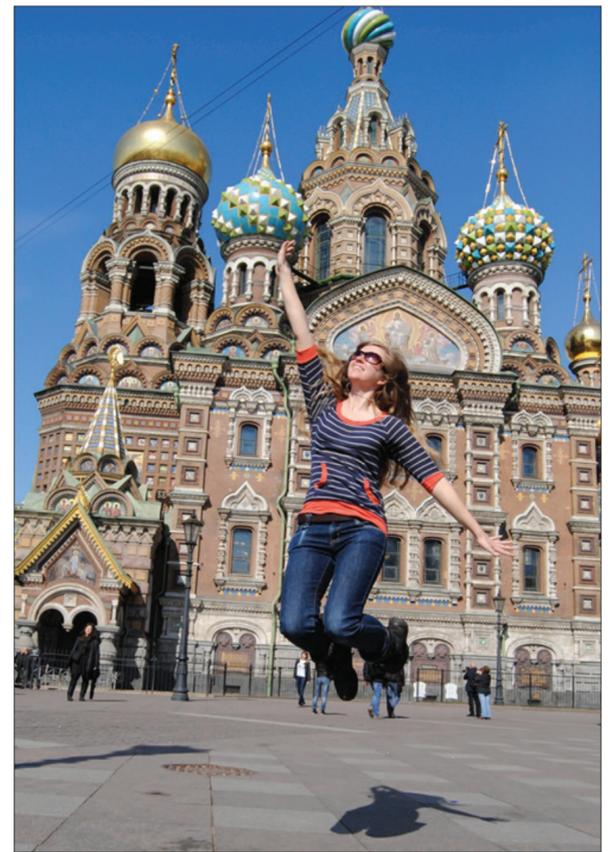
One of the most wonderful aspects of her studies was that while Becky

was in Finland, she states that she was given, “the incredible opportunity to do a research internship with [her] Biomimetics professor.” She and a partner were allowed to carry out their own project involving silkworms as well as work in a lab about thirty hours per week. About her educational experience in Finland, Becky says, “I learned so much about myself and America, questioned things I took for granted, had my mind opened to different ways of life, gained lifelong friends and a global worldview, and came back home changed entirely for the better.”

Not only was she granted this amazing internship opportunity, but she was also able to explore the community outside of her school. Becky took advantage of the location of her school site; its proximity to other countries and the student discounts granted through the university facilitated her travel plans. In the five months she was abroad studying, Becky traveled to the Finnish archipelago, the Arctic Circle, Poland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia. On her way back home, she backpacked through Spain, England, and France. During those travels, her itinerary included a biking trip, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, stargazing, ice swimming, a Husky safari, visiting the official Santa Village, and general exploring with an unrestrained curiosity.

Becky made her study abroad experience memorable and enjoyed herself in all aspects of her education. However, it was not a walk in the park. Becky states, “I experienced extreme culture shock, subzero temperatures, impossible languages, and difficult coursework...but it was so worth it!”

Now that she is back in the United States, she misses her quaint little city of Turku the most and will always remember the, “wonderful, winter wonderland-esq dream” that Turku was to her.



Photos Courtesy of Becky Wyborski

When considering to study abroad, one of the most difficult decisions can be where to study. For Senior, Victoria Ambruso, there was no question. It was not just the beauty of the countryside and the fabulous food that drew Victoria to Italy—her family is Italian, so she wanted to get the opportunity to meet some of her relatives that live there.

Victoria is a Communication Studies major with a minor in Italian. She took five classes while she studied abroad: Intercultural Communication, Intermediate Italian, Italian Cooking, Event Planning and Sport, and Culture and Communication. Every class, with the exception of Italian cooking, counted towards either her major or minor.

Studying abroad is not all work and no play. Victoria was able to travel almost every weekend. One of her greatest experiences abroad was after



cramping an excursion of an entire country into one weekend; upon returning to Italy and, “seeing the grand Duomo, I felt a sigh of relief because I felt

like I was home.”

To anyone interested in studying abroad, Victoria advises that, “if you are considering studying abroad for a year instead of a semester just do it... I thought a semester was long enough but it wasn’t.” Also, Victoria advised to not skip on the opportunity to go to a country just because you don’t speak the language. If you can, try to learn a few common phrases to help you get by, but Victoria, “could get around Prague, Croatia, Spain, and France with limited phrases and English.”

Overall, Victoria says, “it’s really hard to put into words my whole studying abroad experience.” She states it was one of the best experiences of her life. “Being abroad for any amount of time really changes you for the better. You understand how you are in relation to people who are really different from you.”



Photos Courtesy of Sage Overoye

## Kuddling with a Koala

By: Elizabeth Chelling

Did you ever want to hug a Koala Bear? Learn how to surf? Visit the Great Barrier Reef? Sage Overoye did all of that and more when she studied abroad in Australia last semester. Sage is a third year Kinesiology major and was the President of the University Honors Program Student Association for the 2014-2015 school year. When Sage was a freshman at California State University, Long Beach she went to an Honors Program study abroad workshop and decided that she wanted to study overseas. After deciding between Ireland and Australia, Sage took a plane to a new continent. In Australia, she took Cultural Studies, Creative Writing, Sociology, and did well in all of them.

Sage is very close to her family and, therefore, had a rough start after being left at the airport. Given some time, she was able to overcome her homesickness. In fact, she now admits that, "I feel homesick for

Australia. I miss all of my friends!" Her favorite thing about the trip was all of the friendships she made. "I honestly felt like I could sit down at any table and feel comfortable." Sage still stays in contact with the people and considers them her, "best friends." She would even consider going to medical school in Australia. (Although she may need another hug from a Koala before filling out those applications!)

While studying abroad she tried to push herself out of her comfort zone and switch into the mindset of, "this is my chance to try things out." She even went on different adventures completely by herself. Sage visited the rainforest, New Zealand, tried a tiny bit of kangaroo (she is a vegetarian, but tried a little for the experience), and went to Surfcamp (though she told herself "I am not even a great swimmer!") She says she tries to keep that mentality of going outside

her comfort zone. She is back in the States now and encourages anyone who studies abroad to go in with the mindset of, "this is my chance to try new things."

Sage said Australia was really friendly and said one big difference was that the culture in Australia was more blunt and it was common for friends to throw out crude insults as an amiable greeting. People would say things that would be considered rude to say, even in Southern California. She definitely picked up some Aussie slang. Sage says she felt much safer in Australia and it was actually normal practice for, "students [to] see people at the bus stop and just offer to drive them, even if they did not know them." One thing that was pretty different was the drinking age in Australia, which is eighteen. Having University endorsed events with alcohol was a new experience.

Sage grew a lot as a person as a

result of this trip—both from the good and the bad. In her Cultural Studies class, the professor had very negative opinions about Americans (which is pretty ironic for a Cultural Studies teacher). "I went to their office hours all the time. I had the professor walk through my essay with me and tell me what was wrong with it. The professor ended up saying that I was right and gave me more points." Sage ended up with an A in the class.

Sage was able to get a scholarship through her father's work and would recommend talking to the Honors Program for possible scholarships if finances are a concern. She admits that she essentially spent her life savings, but one semester abroad and CSULB tuition is still less expensive than one year at another institution. So, would Sage recommend studying abroad? Absolutely! She says, "Everyone should do it!"



# thesisPROJECTS

## A Mother's Guidance in *Beloved*

By: Katelyn Campbell

As the future looms over the heads of seniors getting ready to walk across the stage at CSU Long Beach's graduation, Cera Smith relishes in the completion of her thesis and the coming end of her undergraduate years. Cera, 22, is finishing her college experience as an honors student with a thesis topic that goes hand-in-hand with her English Literature/Creative Writing major and Psychology minor: the novel *Beloved* by Toni Morrison.

Cera's thesis, "Labor Pains: Motherhood as the Birthplace of Social Awareness and Social Response in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*," touches on what it means to be a mother who is the product of a generation of slaves. It also entails the difficulties of raising children when one has been raised in a prejudiced setting to view and react in ways that are deemed wrong by greater society.

This in depth concept is one that is dear to Cera's heart. Since her introduction to the novel *Beloved*,

Cera has been entranced with the hard-hitting novels of Toni Morrison. Cera says, "I read *Beloved* in high school, and I loved it! It is what got me into English." Coming into college, she had hoped to be able to experience Toni Morrison's writings once again; however, her college courses never touched on Morrison's works.

Choosing her thesis topic proved to be a simple task for Cera as her thoughts jumped straight towards *Beloved*. Much to her surprise, Cera found it difficult to pick out a specific idea within the novel; however, she found the experience to be wonderful. She states, "I picked the material, I researched the topic, and having forty pages worth of material to show for my education is exciting."

The overall experience of researching and writing her thesis also struck a chord with Cera. Cera's take on the novel and on

the mother in the story, Sethe, was different from what had already been written on the book. She recognized that other author's critiqued Sethe's murderous actions of her children in order to protect them, and she could not believe how many people criticized and blamed Sethe. As Cera was writing she realized what a difference she could make in the literary world of *Beloved*. "It was amazing learning and recognizing ownership [of my writing] and realizing my writing could add to discussions since [the majority] were all previously about blame," Cera explains. Because of this new idea applied to Sethe's character, Sarah Lawrence College invited Cera to read and explain her thesis at the 14th annual Women's History Conference in New York. The theme of the conference this year is "Worn Out! Motherwork in the Age of Austerity."

Even though she enjoyed the

process and her topic, Cera is finishing off her year knowing so much more could have been done differently. To make up for what she regrets and now realizes, Cera leaves the rest of us with some advice. Number one is to try and do the spring/fall thesis track. She tells us, "If I hadn't done this, it would have been a nightmare otherwise." Number two is to write during the first semester of your thesis track and then research the second semester, especially if you are an English major. If you don't do this, you may find yourself with too much research and not enough personal opinion. Number three she says is, "don't underestimate schedules and deadlines...they appear out of nowhere." Last, but not least, she says to enjoy it.

Cera encourages everyone to read *Beloved* and to enjoy their remaining time with the Honors Program.

## The Social Network: A New Form of Stress Relief

By: Brianna Maloney

When you are stressed and do not want to work, what do you turn to? Chances are, social media is your escape, and it may not be as bad as you think. Fifth year David Tababa is finishing his clinical psychology degree this spring and wanted to find out how social networking websites could be related to coping with stress. His project is entitled "Factors for Utilizing Social Networking Websites Among Stressed Users."

He felt that because there is more anonymity, "being active on Facebook can relieve [tension] because you're releasing your pent up stress and it isn't in a face to face manner," which is more comfortable for most people. David has always wanted to help people; after switching his major from nursing to health science, he decided to focus on psychology. David pursued his research in clinical psychology because he was more interested in being behind the scenes. "I knew I wanted to do a project related to stress, it's a really broad topic... 80% of people are experiencing stress currently."

David worked with Dr. Christopher Warren to create an online questionnaire consisting of around 60 questions about a person's general personalities and their social media habits—specifically on

Facebook. This questionnaire was based off of other psychological models that are already in place, and had questions on a scale basis, such as, "How likely are you to use

of displayed reassurance seeking behaviors online, the intensity of use (not just the time they spend on Facebook but the emotional connectedness they perceive and



Graphic Courtesy of David Tababa

feeling stressed, and those with lower levels of self-esteem indicate higher tendencies to use SNWs when feeling stressed; all of the groups showed, "generally lower stress perceptions after usage of SNWs." These results backed up his hypothesis that if people turn to social media when they are stressed, it will, generally, lower their levels of stress.

David hopes to one day get his research published in a science journal and plans on continuing school to receive a PhD. He has already competed in many undergraduate and professional research competitions and conferences. He is very excited to be presenting his research at the Western Psychological Association (WPA) conference in Las Vegas in May. He said, "now that I'm done, I'm really content because now I get to present my work to a lot of different people."

David's advice for students starting their thesis projects includes ensuring you enjoy your major, join a research lab that is in your field, and ensure that the lab is involved in your interests. But above all things, David says to, "keep calm; it's a good thing to start early, but don't stress yourself out about it too much, or else you won't enjoy it."

# creative CONTRIBUTIONS

*The UHP students have the opportunity to showcase their creative talents here in the Honor Code Newsletter. Here is what three UHPers are up to...*

## Untitled

Submitted by  
Courtney Conlan

Soft wisps of hair frame her face  
blonde curls dance in the wind  
eyes the color of a warm summer day  
lacy dress swirling around bare ankles  
she stood peacefully on the edge  
waves crashed below her  
angry, they throw themselves onto the rocks  
her heart beats faster  
it matches the rhythm of the ocean  
a yearning to become the waves  
to tumble over jagged rocks  
and disappear in the frothy foam  
to jump would be to die  
but to stay would be to live on in a dead soul's body  
what choice really existed?

## Love Across Seas: Letter to a Loved One

“And ever has it been known  
That love knows not its own  
Depth until the hour of separation”  
- Kahlil Gibran

My love,

I cannot speak of what your heart feels, nor can I speak of what you think. However, I have the will to let you know what my heart feels and what I think. My heart yearns for you. It is an overwhelming feeling at times, but thoughts of you surface and that seems to minimally suppress my yearning. Saying that being away from you is hard is an understatement—it is agonizing. I chose you and this has become our relationship. I am in love with you. I have tried to compose a letter of this nature for a while. And it has not been a simple task. Formulating sentences that I deem fit to truly express what I feel is an arduous task. No words seem powerful enough, but I have come to settle for this one.

A relationship of our kind requires a lot more work, a lot more trust, and a lot more faith. I may be plagued with sheer naivety, but I trust you with my heart. The memories that we have shared together are memories that I will never forget. In such a brief span of time you have provided me with so many good memories. My wish is that we continue to make good memories. Another disadvantage of our relationship is that it is so much easier to get absorbed into our own lives, but know that I am always thinking of you. I think of you when I get a break from studying, I think of you when I am out in the field and you are the last person I think of before I go to sleep. I miss your smile, your scent, your laugh, your hugs; I miss you. Until the next time when I am secure in your arms, your messages, phone calls and memories will have to suffice. My handsome, my heartbeat, my love, I love you.

Your love.

Submitted by  
Nneka Aruoma



Among Arielle's hobbies is *cosplay*—she makes props and costumes based on different characters or ideas. In these photographs she cosplayed a Terran Republic Heavy Assault trooper from the game Planetside 2.



Submitted by  
Arielle Mananquil

# UHP ALUMNI



Photos Courtesy of Jennifer Granillo

## Start Local, Stay Local

By: Julia Katz

CSULB Honors students work hard in academics in order to show the “real world” what they are made of by the time they graduate. Jennifer Granillo, a Health Science major with an emphasis in School Health Education graduated in May of 2014 and is certainly showing the Long Beach community that she is prepared to make a difference. Two days after graduation, she was offered the opportunity of a lifetime, to volunteer with AmeriCorps.

The idea of volunteering was not an entirely new concept to Jennifer. “In high school and then after college, I wanted to spend a year or two in service because even though I was undeclared at the time I knew that I wanted to figure out if that’s what I want to pursue long term.” Her passion for health education landed her a placement at The Children’s Clinic in Long Beach. Jennifer volunteers a total of 1700 hours throughout 11 months in the year. “I also wanted to give back to the community in some way, so I already knew that in the future, a year or two of service would

be there.”

Jennifer’s time is being thoroughly utilized by presenting health education workshops and helping clients with financial assistance, enrollment, and eligibility placements. Part of her commitment is also to contribute to expand the clinic. She has accomplished this task by adding a new patient orientation program. “My whole job is to really help people realize and utilize all of the resources available to them, but you can’t use them if you don’t know what they are.” Her workshops explain the different services available, “They seem to really like it... it’s been fun!”

Despite Jennifer’s loss of not having a summer break for the first time in her life, the wisdom she has gained has been worth every one of her 1700 hours. “It’s hard because people join to try to save the world and have that savior attitude, but that’s not how it can happen. You really have to empower these individuals to take more

care of themselves and be their own advocate.” Witnessing clients leaving the clinic feeling confident with their discoveries about health care options but then not making use of their newly acquired knowledge irked Jennifer, but overtime she realized that she provided them with options, it is up to them to make a choice and carry it through.

Jennifer has not ventured from Long Beach since graduating, but she is glad to have stayed local. As opposed to the PeaceCorps, where the volunteers travel abroad to perform service work, Jennifer prefers being able to give back to the community that has raised her. “Especially after going to Cal State Long Beach, I felt like I could still make such a huge impact in my community. There are still issues here that we need to focus on so that’s what I wanted to work on first before going out on a global scale.”

## From “then” to “now”

By: Jose Gomez

Most people would be scared at the thought of creating a thesis. The process is long and arduous. Allison Gallagher decided to take up this challenge. Allison graduated from Cal State Long Beach in 2014 with a B.A. in Economics and Political Science and is currently the Long Beach and Signal Hill Field Representative for State Assemblymember, Patrick O’ Donnel. Her thesis was about the civic engagement among college students; more specifically, she analyzed the voter turnout among 18-24 year olds between cities that have a college and cities that do not.

For Allison, “writing a thesis was one of the most challenging things [that she has] accomplished

as a student,” but with this great endeavor came fulfilling rewards. In creating her thesis, Allison analyzed what different colleges used to increase student voter turnout; she then compared those data with the voter turnout among 18-24 year olds within cities that did and did not have a college. Allison found that “having a college in a city positively impacts 18-24 year old turnout.” The process was not easy, but Allison explains that “the knowledge and insight [that she] received from it were well worth the long hours and excessive cups of coffee.” Not only did she develop the skills to work well under stressful conditions; but also, she “[learned] how to confidently present [her] material and answer

difficult questions on the spot,” since she presented her material in various conferences.

Why did Allison do this in the first place? Why would she endure long hours in formulating her thesis? When asked this Allison responded, “Writing a thesis isn’t easy but if you find a subject you are passionate about, it is incredibly rewarding. I greatly enjoyed spending hours reading through journal and newspaper articles, talking in depth with my advisors, and ultimately drafting a thesis I could be proud of.” Allison is a perfect example of how doing work you are passionate about can lead to success, because in doing so, it led her to an important position in politics.

# studentINNOVATORS

## Fresh Faces, Helpful Hearts

By: Jenny Dixon

After conquering the stress and anticipation of the application process, many new students are surprised to find that the challenges of starting college are far from over. Whether the difficulties you faced were as small as how to best maneuver around the sneeze guard in the dining hall, or as big as questioning whether you would ever make friends, pass your classes, or survive away from home, chances are, your first few weeks at CSULB were anything but graceful.

As coordinator of the UHP Mentoring program, senior Sophie Jané makes this transition to college life a little less painful. An honors psychology major, Sophie aims to eventually work as a professor and researcher. In addition to completing her thesis and interviewing for several Masters and Doctoral programs in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, she has spent this year developing her ideas for a mentoring initiative into a program that addresses the many challenges first-year honors students experience.

In many ways, new honors students face even greater difficulties than the average freshman. UHPers are seen as high achievers, expected to flourish in every aspect of college life; therefore, when they do struggle in a new situation, they often do not know where to turn. UHPers rarely settle for less than “As,” yet many of them did not develop the study skills necessary to succeed in college, in part because there was never a need for them to study in high school. While the honors program provides a community, it is difficult for

that community to bond when the majority of the students commute home after class, leading to a vicious cycle of declining involvement. “Current UHP students and staff had voiced concerns about the declining attendance in UHP events over recent years. Students who had experienced the benefits of regularly attending UHP events expressed that they wished they had participated sooner, and that they regretted not getting involved earlier on. When asked why event attendance was so low, it transpired that many students did not attend events because they did not feel that they knew anyone else who was going,” said Sophie. In addition to desiring more academic and social support, many new UHP students expressed a desire for advice on how to adjust to college life, make the most of campus resources, and develop vital “soft skills” such as communication, leadership, and time management.

Sophie’s solution, the UHP mentoring program, works by matching UHP freshmen to UHP mentors. “The idea is that the mentor is a stable source of support for the mentee who can help them through some of the hurdles encountered when adjusting to campus life,” said Sophie. Specifically, there are five ways in which mentors aim to assist freshmen: encouraging event attendance, initiating a long-lasting friendship, providing tips for academic success, aiding in the development of soft skills, and fostering an awareness for the vast amount of resources available on campus.

The program was born after Sophie voiced a need

for freshman mentoring during Winter Break in 2014. She gained approval for the program and saw it into its first year of implementation after studying structures of mentoring programs at other universities, conversing with UHP assistant directors Terri Iler and Kashima Samuels, and fostering input from potential mentors. Because she is heading an unprecedented program at the university, Sophie must work to ensure that all glitches and concerns are effectively dealt with. In particular, she has been striving to give mentors an ideal, balanced level of freedom. Too much structure leads to both mentors and mentees feeling stifled and stretched too thin, while too little structure means a lack of focus. “As the program is in its first year, we hope that this will eventually find an equilibrium,” said Sophie.

Overall, the program has already demonstrated many successes in meeting its goals. “Students are coming into the UHP office to study during breaks, and are utilizing the space when normally the office would remain quiet. Freshmen are attending their first research talks and are being exposed to ideas outside of the classroom, and looking for additional opportunities to get involved on campus. From speaking with mentors, I’ve learned that real friendships are being formed and students are going hiking on weekends, hanging out over the break, and staying in touch through text and email when things get hectic. It’s very exciting to see these developments, and we can only hope for more in the coming semester!” said Sophie.

David Gaskins is a graduating senior at CSULB and will be the first Engineering Honors Program (EHP) graduate. Dr. Praveen Shankar was the faculty advisor for Gaskins’s thesis entitled “Suitability of Blender as an Engineering Simulator Technology.”

By: Brianna Maloney

# Q&A

**Q. What is the Engineering Honors Program and how is it different from the regular Honors Program?**

**A.** The main difference that I’ve seen has been the approach to thesis work, namely the way that we go around meeting professors, having honors specific advisors for each College of Engineering department, and the side benefit of funding being available to support these kinds of activities in the form of research projects.

**Q. How do you feel about being the first student to graduate from this program?**

**A.** I’m very excited to be the first graduate of this program. During my time in this program, I’ve had the pleasure of working with students of differing engineering disciplines, including Aerospace, Electrical, and Computer Engineering. As a Computer Science major, I don’t think I would have normally had these opportunities, but they have proved to be very interesting pursuits. Overall, I really feel lucky to have been first, because there has been so much experimentation in interdisciplinary collaboration in the EHP.

**Q. Tell me more about your thesis. What did you do?**

**A.** I am working to build an open source 3D interactive flight simulator, as part of a project sponsored by Northrup Grumman. The project is

being built upon an existing rendering and game engine blender (<https://www.blender.org>). For my thesis, I am taking the lessons learned in building the simulator and coming up with an analysis of the tools from a software engineering perspective in the creation of this simulator. [I’ll be] providing this information to the public in the hope of facilitating better simulators in the future, many of which are not written by software engineers.

I’m partnering with Sinem Ergen, a fellow EHP student, on this project. She will be continuing the project in the fall, and provides many of the Aerospace specific requirements to the project. At the completion of this project, we are hoping for teachers to be able to demonstrate to Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering majors properties of flight dynamics by giving the users of this software the capability of controlling the plane’s motion directly, so that they can observe the physical properties that they are learning in class.

**Q. What are your plans after you graduate? Are you planning to go to graduate school or the working world?**

**A.** After I graduate, I will be going into the industry at IBM, where I’ve been interning at since Fall 2013. I’ll be a Software Engineer as part of their Enterprise Content Management organization, which is located in Costa Mesa. My primary duties will be designing and implementing software for

the purpose of testing IBM Case Manager, a product in their ECM portfolio.

I’m planning on going back to grad school in a couple years, and am looking at the local schools (CSULB, UCI, USC) as the places that I’d like to attend.

**Q. What has your experience been like in the Engineering Honors Program?**

**A.** I can’t say enough about the quality of people in this program. Everyone that I’ve worked with, from faculty to students, has had a passion for success that has been a joy to work with. In this program, there is a ton of effort being put in to helping students to find what they are passionate about and encouraging them to pursue those interests. As for me, I’ve even been able to take a grad course in Artificial Intelligence, which I found both challenging and rewarding.

**Q. Any advice for students coming into the program?**

**A.** Don’t be afraid to push your boundaries. In my time with the EHP I’ve had some challenging times, among them has certainly been learning how to find the correct personal/school/work balance. Asking these kinds of questions are important though, and there’s no better time for learning about yourself than in college.

# UHP 2014-2015 Graduates

**Jasmine Ang**

Dr. James Miles  
Psychology  
*Implied Motion Effects of Symbol Type on Radar Reading Accuracy*

**Bess Michelle Bischoch**

Dr. Jason Schwans  
Bio-Molecular Cell/Physiology  
*Investigating the Catalytic Role of a Conserved Non-active Site Glutamate in Triosephosphate Isomerase*

**Collette Brown**

Michael Parker, Dr. Chi-Ah Chun  
Studio Art  
*Participatory Arts and Aging: Incorporating Conceptual Art into Group Art Therapy for Older Adults*

**Matthew Crump**

Dr. Dina Perrone  
Criminal Justice  
*Restorative Justice Practices*

**Sarah Engelke**

Jennifer Bailly  
Economics  
*Improving Parking Efficiency in The Riviera Village*

**David Gaskins**

Dr. Praveen Shankar  
Computer Science  
*A Stable Flight Stimulator*

**Marianne Gonzalez**

Dr. Sergio Mendez  
Chemical Engineering  
*Solar Thermo-catalytic Production of Hydrogen Gas from Water*

**Jonathan Guzman**

Dr. Jen-Mai Chang  
Applied Math  
*A Principle Decision: The Case of Lending Club*

**Sophie Jane**

Dr. Christopher Warren  
Psychology  
*The Writing's on the Wall: Gender Differences in Online Displays of Counterproductive Work Behavior and Stress*

**Rachael Jordan**

Dr. Laura Henriques  
Physics  
*Online Collaborative Learning Environments*

**Kya-Marina Le**

Dr. Paul Laris  
Environmental Science and Policy  
*National Park Service and the Preservation of Indigenous Cultures*

**Alfred Leone**

Dr. Heather Stephens  
Economics  
*Blockbuster or Bust: Box Office Performance and Release Date*

**Kevin Lotzgesell**

Brewer Ward  
Computer Engineering  
*Autonomous Search and Rescue*

**Eric Malczews**

Stuart Rosen  
Film Electronic Arts - Theory and Practice of Cinema  
*Ideological Influence of Producers and Directors in the Motion Picture Industry*

**Genesis Mercado**

Dr. Jason Schwans  
Biochemistry  
*Exploring Activity of Triosephosphate Isomerase*

**Jennifer Nicholas**

Dr. Vesna Terzic  
Civil Engineering  
*Seismic Mitigation of Structural Responses*

**Britte Nielsen**

Karen Clippinger, Dr. Jim Becker  
Dance Science  
*Effects of a Pilates Conditioning Program on Jump Height and Landing*

**Regina Nufable**

Dr. Allen Teagle-Hernandez  
Mechanical Engineering  
*Acoustic Analysis of the Body of the Violin*

**Emon Perl**

Judy Brusslan  
Communication Studies  
*LiCor 6400XT Photosynthesis Experiments in hac1 Arabidopsis thaliana Mutants*

**Krystal Petrasanta**

Dr. Pei-Fang Hung  
Speech-Language Pathology  
*Nontraditional Treatment Approaches for Aphasia and its Effects on the Quality of Life*

**David Pullido**

Alec Johnson  
Interior Design  
*Sonic Space: Rethinking Public Perceptions of Hip-Hop Culture through the Interior Experience*

**Danielle Sappleton**

Erin Caron  
Theatre Arts Performance  
*Theatre's Role in Integrating American Society Throughout the Civil Rights Movement and Beyond*

**Kathryn Scheyer**

Guido Urizar  
Psychology  
*Altered Stress Patterns and Increased Risk for Postpartum Depression among Low-Income Pregnant Women*

**Amy Smith**

Dr. John Lacey  
Accountancy  
*The Convergence Process of Leases between United States Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and International Financial Reporting Standards*

**Cera Smith**

Dr. Dennis Lopez  
English Creative Writing  
*Labor Pains: Motherhood as the Birthplace of Social Awareness and Social Response in Toni Morrison's Beloved*

**David Tababa**

Dr. Christopher Warren  
Psychology  
*Factors for Utilizing Social Networking Websites Among Stressed Users*

**Ranil Weerackoon**

Dr. Olga Korosteleva  
Math-Statistics  
*Formulating Optimal Betting Strategies through a Statistical Prediction of the Outcome and Margin of Victory of NFL Games*

**Melissa Casas**

Dr. Heather Rae-Espinoza  
International Studies  
*Sex Work in Spain: What is Wrong and What Could Be*

**Sabrina Chao**

Dr. Samar Needham  
Psychology  
*Video Gaming and Movie Watching: Is There a Relationship Between our Perception of Relationships and Prosocial Behavior?*

**Tyler Gilley**

Dr. Peter Ammermann  
Finance  
*Understanding the Role of Liquidity in an Investment Portfolio*

**Jasmine Kim**

Dr. Ray Briggs  
Performance  
*Gospel Music - Its Power to Release Suffering, Transform Lives, and Bring Hope Across Cultures: An Analysis of the Appropriation of African American Gospel by Korean Christians with a focus on African American and Korean History and Culture*

**Nicole Martinez**

Dr. Karen Sirota  
Human Development  
*Culture, Language, and Disability: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Cross-Cultural Groups and Specific Language Impairment*

**Margaret Reyes**

Dr. Huong Wei-Tsai  
Bio-Molecular Cell/Physiology  
*Development of Social Interaction in C57BL/6J Mice: Sex and Age Differences in Sociability and Social Novelty*

**Cynthia Yeung**

Margaret Black  
Art and Graphic Design  
*Typography, Now and Then: A Cultural Exploration of the Origin and Progression of Typefaces*

# meet the STAFF



*Alex Villaneda / Honor Code*

## **From Left to Right:**

Beth Ellis  
Jenny Dixon  
Julia Katz  
Jose Gomez  
Katelyn Campbell  
Brianna Maloney

## **Not pictured:**

Alex Villaneda  
Elizabeth Chelling