



## Office of Undergraduate Research Services Newsletter - Spring 2021

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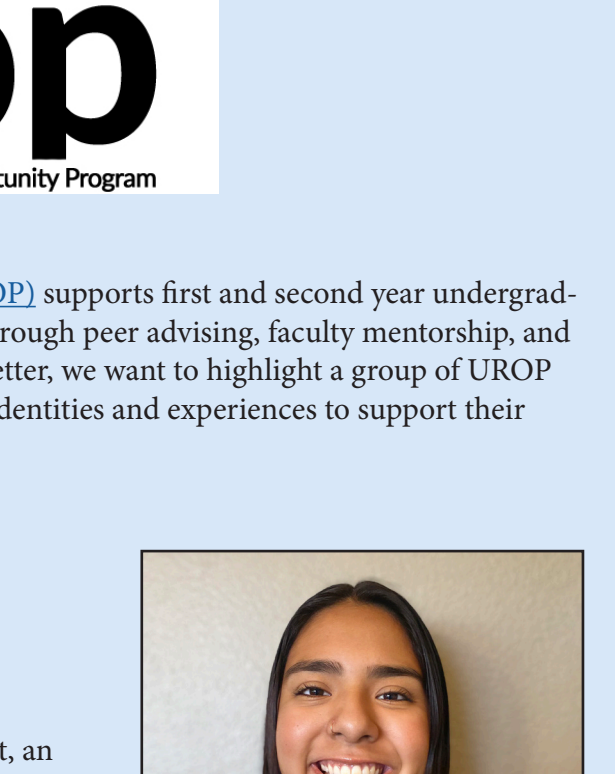
## INTRODUCTION TO THE OURS NEWSLETTER

### What is OURS:

The Office of Undergraduate Research Services (OURS), established in 2016, is charged with expanding undergraduate research opportunities to the California State University, Long Beach student body. OURS works in collaboration with staff and faculty in all CSULB Colleges, Divisions, and units to cultivate strong relationships in support of undergraduate research.



Student Success Center



Student Success Center Suite 120

### End of the Spring 2021 Semester Farewell:

As we near the end of the semester we wanted to take the time to congratulate each one of our students, faculty, and staff that are part of the different undergraduate research programs for your hard work and resiliency this academic year. A big congratulations to the CSULB Class of 2021 and good luck in your future endeavors. A lot has been accomplished this semester and we are excited to share all these updates with you.

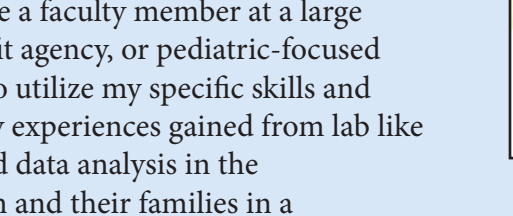
### Contact information:

Phone: (562) 985-7754  
Email: AA-Ours@csulb.edu  
California State University, Long Beach  
Student Success Center, Suite 120

### OURS Virtual Office:

Since March 2020, the OURS team has been working remotely, but continuing our mission of serving students and expanding undergraduate research to disciplines and students across campus. Visit the [OURS website](#) for more information on research programs on campus.

## Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program



Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program

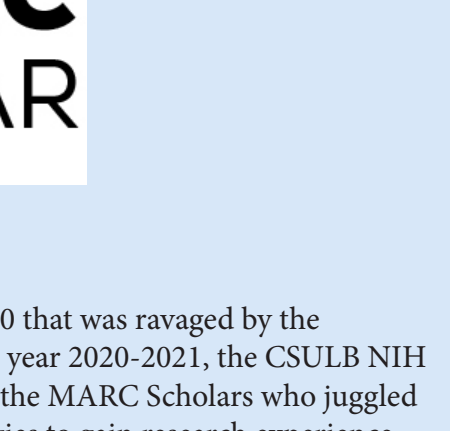
### UROP Student Research Spotlight

The [Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program \(UROP\)](#) supports first and second year undergraduate students in their academic and research endeavors through peer advising, faculty mentorship, and research skill workshops. In this issue of the OURS newsletter, we want to highlight a group of UROP research assistants and congratulate them for using their identities and experiences to support their communities through their research efforts.

#### Anayeli Hernandez

My name is Anayeli Hernandez and I am a second-year student majoring in International Studies, with a global emphasis in Latin America. I am a first-generation student, an educated Latina, and a proud daughter of immigrant parents.

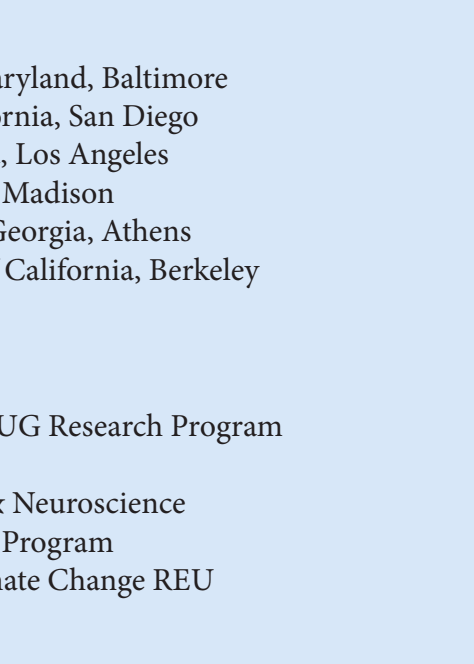
My research interests include investigating the experiences of Latinx immigrant communities in Latin America and here in the U.S. After graduating from CSULB, I plan to pursue my Ph.D. in Sociology and continue advocating for underrepresented groups through research. In my free time, I enjoy spending time with family and friends, helping my community, and exploring new places! I will be continuing my research through the McNair Scholars program.



#### Tanya Nguyen

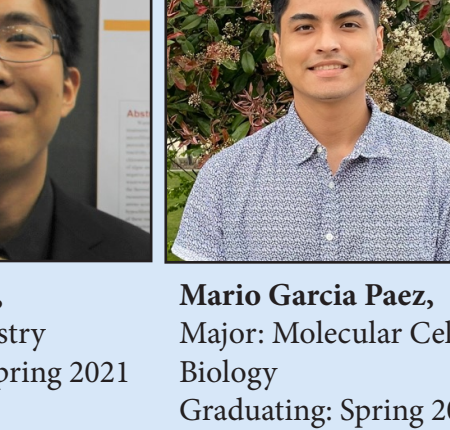
My name is Tanya Nguyen and I am a first-year student majoring in Molecular Cell Biology and minoring in Chemistry. This coming June-July, I will be attending Keck Graduate Institute's SURE (Summer Undergraduate Research Experience) Program. Although it is a virtual experience, I was admitted to the program to study the public health and virology track! Here, I will learn about viruses and previous outbreaks and what can be done to prevent and recover from them. Also, I will work with researchers to design a COVID-19 vaccine and propose a method of producing and scaling the vaccine. I am on the pre-pharmacy track and hope to attend pharmacy school and obtain my PharmD after undergrad.

With this, I have recently earned the title, CPhT (Certified Pharmacy Technician), and have started working at CVS Health for a little over a month now to get some hands-on experience! I am excited for what's to come and I can't wait to see what it has in store for me!



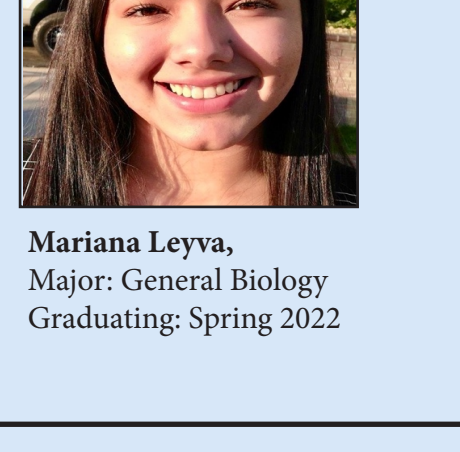
#### Queenia Hoang

My name is Queenia Hoang and I am a second-year student studying Pre-Nursing at the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). My research interests include topics such as child development, STEM education, and public/global health i.e. the social determinants of health inequities in racial, ethnic, and immigrant minority populations. After graduating with a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN), I hope to earn my Master's of Science in Nursing (MSN) to become a pediatric nurse practitioner and become a faculty member at a large research institution, non-profit agency, or pediatric-focused hospital. In doing so, I hope to utilize my specific skills and knowledge as well as share my experiences gained from lab like research, critical thinking, and data analysis in the future to advocate for children and their families in a holistic, patient-centered, and evidence-based manner so that they can live happy and healthy lives. I will continue my research journey with the McNair Scholar Program.



#### Jonna Barcelona

My name is Jonna Barcelona and I am a third-year student majoring in Psychology major in the College of Liberal Arts. Recently, I was offered admission to McNair with my involvement in Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP). With this opportunity, I plan to pursue a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology by enhancing research skills and experiences in furthering my career.



## CSULB MARC Program Update



### Congratulations to the Class of 2021

Without exception, everyone is happy to bid farewell to the year 2020 that was ravaged by the pandemic and rocked by social injustice. At the end of the academic year 2020-2021, the CSULB NIH T34 [MARC program](#) proudly looks back at the accomplishments of the MARC Scholars who juggled the demands of their honors academic program with creative strategies to gain research experience virtually and/or with limited presence in the labs, in an environment faced with mental and physical stress imposed by physical and social distancing, and personal and family issues. Given this backdrop, it is truly remarkable that they persisted with their goals of graduating and moving on to graduate post bac or summer research programs. The year 2020 brought out the grit and resilience in our students.

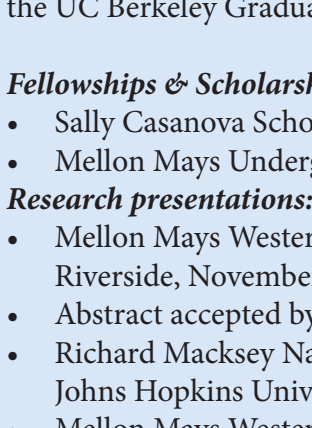
All the MARC scholars presented at the virtual 2020 ABRCCMS and SACNAS meetings, and some in professional meetings in their discipline. About half the cohort will graduate in spring 2021 and move on to graduate or post bac programs. The first year students will be participating in summer research programs off campus. We bid a fond farewell to the graduating students and wish them a safe and healthy future filled with hopes and dreams.

### MARC Scholars Class of 2021

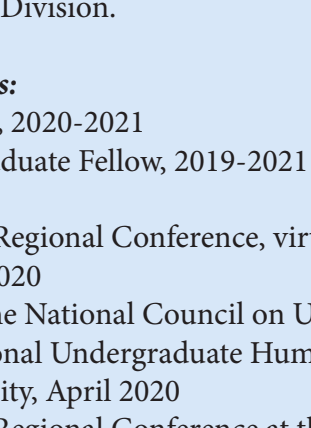
- **Andrew Alvarez**, Biochemistry, STAR-PREP, University of Maryland, Baltimore
- **Jubilee Munozvilla**, Biochemistry, PhD at University of California, San Diego
- **Aaron Chavarria**, Chemistry, PhD at University of California, Los Angeles
- **Robery Mejia**, Biochemistry, PhD at University of Wisconsin, Madison
- **Sergio Platero**, Molecular Cell Biology, PhD at University of Georgia, Athens
- **Jorge Rodriguez**, Molecular Cell Biology, PhD at University of California, Berkeley
- **Richard Tran**, Chemistry, University of California, Davis

### MARC Scholars Class of 2022

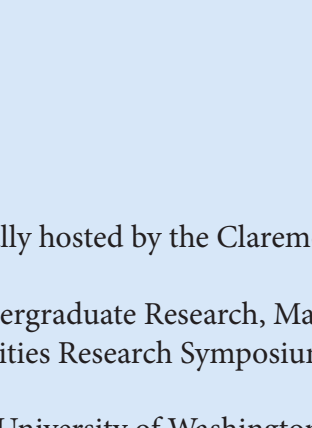
- **Mario Garcia Paez**, Molecular Cell Biology, Summer Honors UG Research Program (Harvard MS)
- **Tina Nguyen**, Chemistry, MIT Summer Program in Biology & Neuroscience
- **Simon Chau**, Molecular Cell Biology, Caltech WAVE Fellows Program
- **Mariana Leyva**, General Biology, University of Michigan Climate Change REU



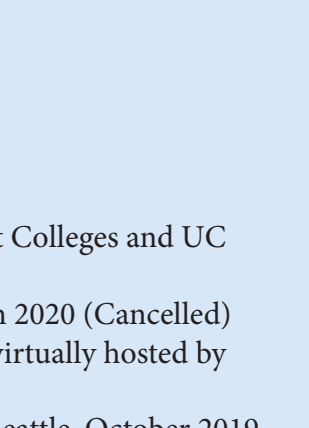
**Andrew Alvarez**,  
Major: Biochemistry  
Graduating: Spring 2021



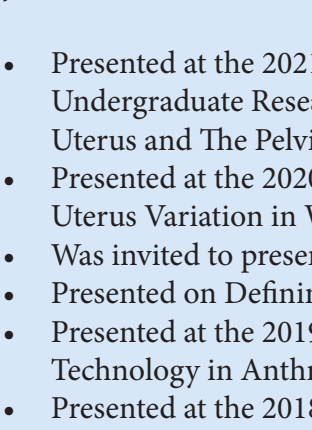
**Jubilee Munozvilla**,  
Major: Biochemistry  
Graduating: Spring 2021



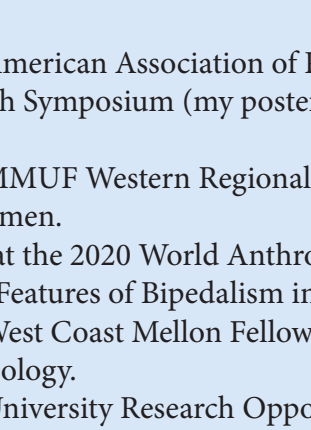
**Aaron Chavarria**,  
Major: Chemistry  
Graduating: Spring 2021



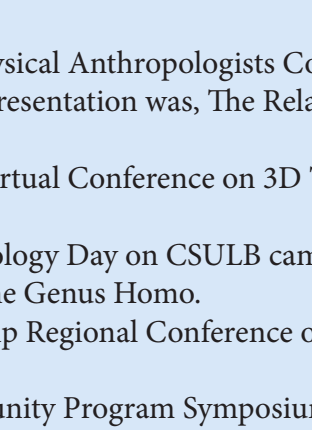
**Robert Mejia**  
Major: Biochemistry  
Graduating: Spring 2021



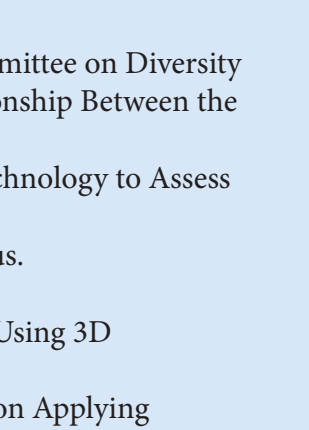
**Sergio Platero**,  
Major: Molecular Cell  
Biology  
Graduating: Spring 2021



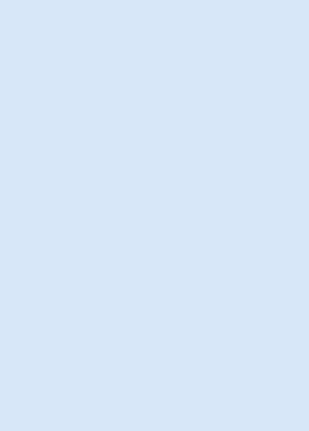
**Jorge Rodriguez**,  
Major: Molecular Cell  
Biology  
Graduating: Spring 2021



**Richard Tran**,  
Major: Chemistry  
Graduating: Spring 2021



**Mario Garcia Paez**,  
Major: Biochemistry  
Graduating: Spring 2022



**Tina Nguyen**,  
Major: Chemistry  
Graduating: Spring 2022

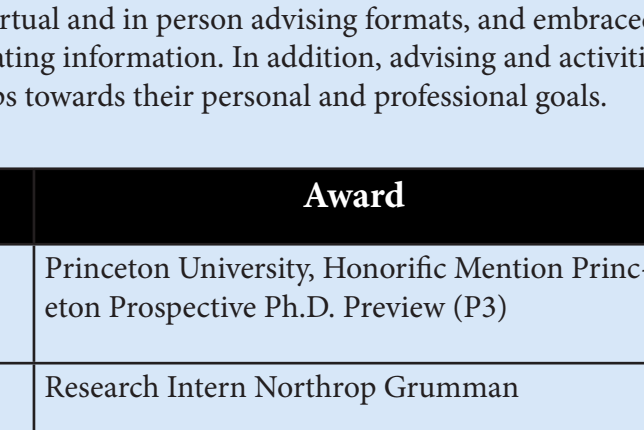


**Simon Chau**,  
Major: Molecular Cell  
Biology  
Graduating: Spring 2022



**Mariana Leyva**,  
Major: General Biology  
Graduating: Spring 2022

## Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship



### What is MMUF?

The [Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program](#) is the centerpiece of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's initiatives to increase diversity in the faculty ranks of institutions of higher learning. Established in 1988 by William G. Bowen, then the president of the Foundation, and Mellon program associate Henry Drewry, the MMUF program began with an initial cohort of eight member institutions.

### MMUF Goal and Objectives

The fundamental objective of MMUF is to address, over time, the problem of underrepresentation in the academy at the level of college and university faculties - specifically, faculties in the humanities and selected social sciences. This goal can be achieved both by increasing the number of students from underrepresented minority groups (URM) who pursue PhDs and by supporting the pursuit of PhDs by students who may not come from traditional minority groups but have otherwise demonstrated a commitment to the goals of MMUF. The MMUF program is designed to encourage fellows to enter PhD programs that prepare students for professional careers in the humanities and selected social sciences; it is not intended to support students who intend to go on to medical school, law school or other professional schools.

### Batoul Akil:

#### *Orientalism and Islamophobia in Western Movies and Television: From Primitive Weaklings to Barbaric Terrorists*

Islamophobia and Orientalism are seen in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, paintings, photography, movies, and shows. The development of orientalism and Islamophobia through art shows that art is one of the greatest forms of propaganda, it can shape the minds of viewers and lead them to a certain way of thinking. This is the case in most western art, which has created an unrealistic image of Arabs and Muslims. For example, movies and shows like "The Dictator," "NCIS," "American Sniper" and more, which advocate the idea that Arabs and Muslims are primitive and terrorists. The consequences to repeatedly using Arabs and Muslims as terrorists, has evoked fear and hostility from many westerners. Islamophobia is something learned, like cultural norms and hegemonic "truths," which rely in repetition and pitting one group identity against another. Constantly misrepresenting a richly diverse group of people in a reductive, negative way will definitely have consequences. Increased exposure and contact between diverse communities of people provide the best counters to combat xenophobia.

### National conference participation:

Batoul Akil (2018). Orientalism and Islamophobia in Western Movies and Television: From Primitive Weaklings to Barbaric Terrorist, Western Regional Conference, Seattle, Washington.

Batoul Akil (2020). Orientalism and Islamophobia in Western Movies and Television: From Primitive Weaklings to Barbaric Terrorist, Western Regional Conference, University of California, Riverside.

### Joshua Acosta:

I first became involved with the Office of Undergraduate Research Services (OURS) as a participant at the annual CSULB Student Research Competition in February 2019. That same year, I successfully applied to the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF), taking part in the second ever cohort at CSULB. For the past two years, I've participated in many enriching research opportunities to cultivate my scholarly profile and prepare myself for graduate school. At CSULB, I've received a number of awards from the Department of History, the College of Liberal Arts, and the university. Notably, I was selected to be a Sally Casanova Scholar from across the CSU system and was one of three individuals to be a recipient of the Outstanding Baccalaureate Student Award by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. I've also served as President of the History Student Association, the Department of History's undergraduate organization, working to foster community in a K-me of remote learning during the 2020-21 academic year. I will be graduating with a BA in History this Spring 2021.

My research has evolved from Pacific colonial history in the 18th and 19th centuries toward trans-Pacific history through the experience of Asian-American immigrants in the 20th century. In the Fall of 2021, I will be starting my first year as a Ph.D. student in the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. I was awarded the competitive UC Eugene Cota-Robles Fellowship, a five-year full funding package to complete my doctoral studies by the UC Berkeley Graduate Division.

### Fellowships & Scholarships:

- Sally Casanova Scholar, 2020-2021
- Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, 2020-2021

### Research presentations:

- Mellon Mays Western Regional Conference, virtually hosted by the Claremont Colleges and UC Riverside, November 2020
- Abstract accepted by the National Council on Undergraduate Research, March 2020 (Cancelled)
- Richard Macksey National Undergraduate Humanities Research Symposium virtually hosted by Johns Hopkins University, April 2020
- Mellon Mays Western Regional Conference at the University of Washington, Seattle, October 2019

### Awards:

- Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society Nominee, UC Berkeley, March 2021
- Eugene Cota-Robles Fellowship, UC Berkeley, March 2021
- Outstanding Baccalaureate Student Award from the College of Liberal Arts, February 2021
- Elizabeth Nielsen History Award, CSULB Department of History, March 2019

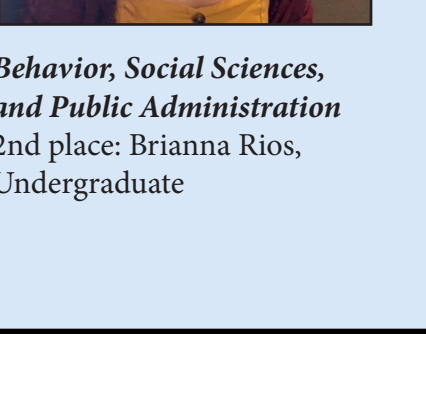
### Service:

- President of the History Student Association, CSULB, 2020-2021

### Jackie Macias:

- Presented at the 2021 American Association of Physical Anthropologists Committee on Diversity Undergraduate Research Symposium (my poster presentation was, The Relationship Between the Uterus and The Pelvis).
- Presented at the 2020 MMUF Western Regional Virtual Conference on 3D Technology to Assess Uterus Variation in Women.
- Was invited to present at the 2020 Virtual Anthropology Day on CSULB campus.
- Presented on Defining Features of Bipedalism in the Genus Homo.
- Presented at the 2019 West Coast Mellon Fellowship Regional Conference on Using 3D Technology in Anthropology.
- Presented at the 2018 University Research Opportunity Program Symposium on Applying Micro-Computed Tomography Imaging Techniques to Visualize the Anatomy of Vertebrate Animals.
- Received honorable mention from the Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Program.

## McNair Scholars Program



### CSULB McNair Scholars Program

The [Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program](#) is a TRIO program funded by the U.S. Department of Education and designed to prepare and support underrepresented undergraduate students in their pursuit of doctoral studies. To meet the needs of our students, McNair has increased accessibility to our services including evening office hours, writing support, graduate school support, social justice curriculum, virtual and in person advising formats, and embraced various methodologies in disseminating information. In addition, advising and activities are designed to ensure students develop action steps towards their personal and professional goals.

McNair Scholar	Award	Year
Alexi Reed	Princeton University, Honorable Mention Princeton Prospective Ph.D. Preview (P3)	2020
Jessica Crisantes	Research Intern Northrop Grumman	2020
Gisselle Moreno	ANDALE Scholars Program	2020
Rebeca Griego	Research Intern NASA's Orbital Debris Program Office (ODO) at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas	2020
	Arizona State University (ASU) MS in Science and Technology Policy program	2021
Kylie Foster	Sally Casanova Scholar	2020-2021
	Florida Atlantic University (FAU) PhD in Neuroscience	2021
David Ramirez	Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) PhD in Mechanical Engineering	2021
	Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) Fellowship	2021
	Research Intern Naval Air Warfare Center WD China Lake	2020
Sebastian Marroquin	UCSD MRSEC REU program	2021
Victoria Diaz	Rutgers REU/RISE GET UP Program	2021
Lilia Martinez	UC Berkeley Labor Summer Program	2021
Jessica Valencia	UC Santa Barbara Summer Research Program	2021
Taryn Williams	Sally Casanova Scholar	2020-2021
	University of California, Irvine PhD in Business Management	2021

### McNair Scholars Publications:

Kelly, K. R., Ocular, G., Zamudio, J., & Plascencia, J. (2020). "But what about the beginning?" Young children's independent narrative structure and how mothers promote chronological coherence during narrative conversations. *Narrative Inquiry*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.19082.kel>

Franco, D., Zamudio, J., Blevins, K. M., Núñez-Larios, E. A., Rico, U. M., Iñiguez, S. D., & Zavalta, A. R. (2020). Early-life ketamine exposure attenuates the preference for ethanol in adolescent Sprague-Dawley rats. *Behavioural brain research*, 389, 112626. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbr.2020.112626>

## Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP)



### CSULB LSAMP

The [Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation \(LSAMP\)](#) program at California State University Long Beach is part of the statewide effort [CSU-LSAMP](#) to enhance the math and science skills of students who have faced or face social, educational, or economic barriers, and are majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM).

### LSAMP Alum Spotlight: Calum Shelden

The Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) would like to congratulate LSAMP Alum, Calum Shelden for being a recipient of a Graduate Research Fellowship from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The five-year fellowship includes three years of financial support including an annual stipend of \$34,000 and a cost of education allowance of \$12,000 to the institution.

Cullum has been a Ph.D. student at the University of California, Davis in the Electrical and Computer Engineering Graduate Program under the mentorship of Dr. Jeremy Munday. His research project involves the investigation of non-equilibrium Casimir forces hoping to realize, for the first time, quantum repulsion in air on a scale relevant to nanodevices.



## CSU-Systemwide Student Research Competition Award Winners

### 33rd Annual CSULB Student Research Competition

The purpose of the Annual Student Research Competition is to showcase excellence in scholarly research, and highlight creative activity conducted by CSULB undergraduate and graduate students. The Student Research Competition featured oral presentations to an audience of fellow students, university community members, and a jury of distinguished faculty.

### CSULB Student Research Competition

- Behavioral, Social Sciences, and Public Administration: **Brianna Rios**
- Biological and Agricultural Sciences: **James Chor**
- Business, Economics, and Hospitality Management: **Elena Kotanchyan**
- Creative Arts and Design: **Shenaya Yazdani**
- Education: **Katherine Lacy**
- Engineering and Computer Science: **Nelson Minaya**
- Health, Nutrition, and Clinical Sciences: **Diana Pham**
- Humanities and Letters: **Kelly Sturgeon**
- Physical and Mathematical Sciences: **Steven Guillen**



**Business, Economics, and Hospitality Management;**  
Elena Kotanchyan



**Physical and Mathematical Sciences;**  
Steven Guillen



**Biological and Agricultural Sciences;**  
James Chor



**Education;**  
Katherine Lacy



**Engineering and Computer Science;**  
Nelson Minaya



**Humanities and Letters;**  
Kelly Sturgeon

### 35th Annual CSU-Systemwide Student Research Competition

Cal Poly Pomona hosted the 35th Annual CSU-Systemwide Student Research Competition this year. Out of 197 student projects by 230 CSU Student Research Competition Delegates, 3 CSULB students were awarded second place. Please join us in recognizing our students' accomplishments in their research.



**Health, Nutrition, and Clinical Sciences; Interdisciplinary**  
2nd place: Diana Pham, Undergraduate



**Behavior, Social Sciences, and Public Administration**  
2nd place: Brianna Rios, Undergraduate



**Creative Arts and Design**  
2nd place: Shenaya Yazdani, Undergraduate