

# the Honor code

FALL 2012  
ISSUE VI





# UHP

California State University Long Beach

## Staff

**Beth Ellis** justifies all text, to make up for those that don't stay in line.

**Alison Ernst** likes wearing sweaters with animals on them.

**Ben Huynh** is currently being shipped to the West in a shoebox.

**Talia Lamb** refuses to type in Times New Roman.

**Peter Matatics** is a manner police to the grammar police.

**Meagan Meylor**'s two best friends are her cats.

**Sage Overoye** has pre-ordered all 27 Nancy Drew computer games.

**Sierra Patheal** is currently battling her addiction to semicolons; she has not yet been successful.

**Albert Pham:** System.out.print("I love %d!", geeks);

**Laura Tanimoto** doesn't need shades because she's already got ND filters.

**Alex Villaneda** has caught all 649 Pokémon. Gotta catch 'em all!



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# EVENTS

## Coffee with the KING

by: Sierra Patheal



On Monday, September 10, 2012, over 100 Honors students and faculty gathered at the Karl Anatol Center to discuss the state of the University with CSULB President **Dr. F. King Alexander**. The gathering marked the 5th annual Coffee with the King, where Honors students can bring forward any and all issues to the head of the University over refreshments in a low-stress setting. The discussion opened with recognition of some of CSULB's recent achievements: the admission of over 8,000 new students despite the continuing budget crisis and the success of the U-Pass bus system, which grants at least 9,000 students per day free transit within Long Beach. However, President Alexander quickly shifted his address towards his vision for the future of the University—and the active role of the students in that vision. “My goal,” he said, “is to keep our doors open.” He underlined efforts to safeguard the value of CSULB's degrees, protect access to classes, and promote extracurricular opportunities so as to make a Bachelor's degree from CSULB as meaningful as possible.

Students are not without responsibility in President Alexander's vision for the University, either. Early on in the event, the President urged students to vote in the then upcoming election—“Vote like you've never voted before.” He addressed key ballot issues like Proposition 30, asserting that the current generation of students has a responsibility to “step into leadership sooner, because [their] generation is being forgotten.” It lies on the students' shoulders, along with those of their professors, advocates, faculty, family, friends, and, ultimately, fellow citizens, to make clear the message that education, both higher and lower, cannot be cut.

On this same note, President Alexander also encouraged students to look beyond their twelve to eighteen units per semester when it comes to education. Students who only go to class and go home aren't receiving a full education, GPAs notwithstanding. A dedicated proponent of study abroad, internships, and hands-on experience, President Alexander urged, “Don't be afraid to go somewhere else. You can always come back.” From his own education, he deemed his graduate studies in Oxford, England, one of the most enlightening experiences of his life.

Later, after covering a number of other topics, including the California Dream Act, the Greenhouse Gas Bill, CSULB's unit cap, and the recently-completed construction projects on campus, President Alexander was asked to discuss his favorite, odd things about the CSULB campus. The Design students' new campus model, which features such eclectic details as professors' cars in habitual parking spots and students in the Brotman Hall fountain, almost topped the list, but the endangered blue heron which has dubbed the koi pond in the Japanese Garden his all-you-can-eat buffet, won out in the end. “These little stories always pop up,” President Alexander laughed.

Students seemed satisfied and motivated by the discussion, Honors student Omotunde Oguntoyinbo going so far as to say the President's “articulate,” “inspirational” speech motivated her to want to speak with him further, beyond the event. As the event set out to encourage students to approach President Alexander with questions and concerns, Oguntoyinbo's response displays exactly the desired result. All in all, the discussion was very successful, and we look forward to continuing the event for many years to come.

## BATTLING BUDGETS

by: Kristine McGowan

The California budget has affected everyone within the CSU system: faculty, staff, students, and university programs, such as Cal State Long Beach's University Honors Program. According to UHP Assistant Director Terri Iler, the Program has had to adapt to stricter course enrollment requirements. Although the Program's total membership has not been significantly affected, Iler said there's more pressure now to fill UHP classes as compared to years past. “There's less justification to have the liberty to close off our classes to non-Honors students,” she explained. Previously the Program could hold a class of ten Honors students, but it's now much harder to rationalize such a small class and prohibit non-Honors students from joining. Only five years ago, UHP offered almost double the number of courses it has available for the 2012-13 academic year due to these reasons.

College Board's most recent annual report on college costs and student aid, Trends in College Pricing, revealed that, “in 2011-12, the average published price for in-state tuition and fees for full-time public four-year undergraduate students in the nation was \$8,244” per year. Iler said Honors students have told her of anxieties to find jobs and finish school in four years so their families can afford the cost of college.

These rises in tuition have also seen parallels in federal grant and tax credit increases for students, which have helped to keep costs of tuition and fees for families relatively low. Some argue that while the government may have helped students in this way, it has not

done much to keep tuition low. “The states cut budgets, the price [of college] goes up,” Patrick Callan, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education told the Long Beach Press Telegram. “For 25 years we've been putting more and more money into financial aid, and tuition keeps going up. We're on a national treadmill.”

The national average price of in-state tuition and fees at four-year universities increased by another \$631 in the Fall 2011 semester, or 8.3 percent, from what it was a year prior. Leading the way in this jump was the state of California with its 21 percent tuition increase, the largest of any state. This Fall, students were reprieved due to the passage of Proposition 30, preventing California State Universities from receiving an additional \$250 million budget cut. With the passing of Proposition 30 came a student fee reduction; the campuses, subsequently, reimbursed each student with a \$249 refund. Cal State Long Beach carefully planned to ensure the accommodation of the 2012-2013 Schedule of Classes.

Budget prioritizing within the CSU has also created tension among faculty, resulting in the California Faculty Association's one-day strike on Nov. 17, 2011, at CSU Dominguez Hills and CSU East Bay. The union wanted to bring attention to the problems it sees in the CSU's prioritizing of certain budget items.

However, CSU spokesperson, Erik Fallis, said such energy should be recentered on the state. “We really need to focus our collective energy to have the state refocus its energy on higher education,” Fallis said. “We're not going to get out of this cycle unless we have the resources to provide a quality education and serve students the best way we can.”

## Notes from Nele

Dear UHP Students, Alumni, Faculty, and Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to write a few words from the Director's desk. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to this year's Honor Code editorial staff for its hard work on this issue of the UHP newsletter. I am sure that Honor Code readers will marvel with me at the professional design and the in-depth reporting that informs every single page of this publication!

I am particularly happy to see that our Honors Program's events initiatives—which are all geared towards delivering invaluable on- and off-campus resources to our Honors students—are starting to bear fruit: There is nothing more gratifying in my profession as a CSULB faculty member than seeing students succeed in obtaining prestigious internships, winning highly-competitive scholarships and awards, or gaining entry into the graduate school program of their choice. This Honor Code highlights the many forms student success can take in the hope that it may inspire other Honors students to explore similar ways of building a bright future for themselves.

As our recent UHP Self Study indicates, our Program graduates more and more students every year with Honors Certificates and we are exceedingly proud of our students' perseverance and achievements. In the spirit of many more great things to come, Go Geek!

Dr. Nele Hempel-Lamer  
University Honors Program, Director

## TIMELINE of EVENTS

### 08/26 – UHP Beach Bonfire

We bid summer a fond farewell – and gave our new friends a warm welcome! – with games, food, and plenty of sun at the beach. We dug our toes in the sand and roasted marshmallows around the fire with the coolest Geeks you've ever met.



### 09/10 – Coffee with the King

Our 5th Annual “Coffee with the King” was a great success, with over 100 UHP students in attendance! This coffee hour provided a unique opportunity for Honors students to meet the CSULB President, Dr. F. King Alexander, in person and talk about concerns, such as Prop 30, and learn more about their unique campus, equipped with its very own blue heron.



### 9/24 – Big Scholarship Workshop

UHPers brought their lunch to the Big Scholarship Workshop and were informed about the great opportunities available to them through national and international scholarships.

### 10/12 – “Go Global!” Workshop

This session provided information on academic and extracurricular opportunities that promote global and cross-cultural understanding. Center for International Education (CIE) representatives shared details about international experiences: long term and short term study abroad, internships, and scholarships.

### 10/14 – AIDS Walk Los Angeles

The UHP participated in this annual walk and raised over \$650 for the AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA). APLA provides many free-of-charge services to people living with HIV/AIDS, while also running the largest network of HIV prevention programs in the country. This was a great opportunity to take part in the community and



stand up to social injustice, all in a fun and healthy manner!

### 10/26 – UHPSA Halloween Party

Even though we are all a bit too old for trick-or-treating, costumed UHPers joined to share a night of eating way too much candy and pizza at the Halloween festivity, Honors-style!



### 11/10 – CSULB Homecoming

The UHP partnered with the President's Scholars to run a fun-filled booth with games and socializing! Together we attended the Homecoming game and cheered on our men's basketball team!

### 11/17 – UHPSA Bowling Night

A group of hard working UHPers took a well-deserved break from their studies and enjoyed bowling, games, eating, and friends!



### 12/07 – Dr. Hayes Guest Lecture

The CSULB University Honors Program Student Association was excited to host Dr. Tyrone Hayes, a renowned UC Berkeley Integrative Biology Professor, for a lecture on his pivotal research concerning the detrimental effects of pesticides on both frogs and humans. His findings on the links between industrial pesticides, reproductive disorders in frogs, and various cancers in humans have been targeted by pesticide corporations since the late 1990s. Such corporations have attempted to silence or discredit him to prevent him from publishing further studies. Over 130 UHPers and guests

attended this event on the last day of classes of the Fall 2012 semester. For a synopsis of his research, visit his website at [www.atrazinelovers.com](http://www.atrazinelovers.com).





# THESIS & RESEARCH

## Student Successes



This past semester I have been attending the lab meetings of Dr. Gharakhanian whose lab studies lysosomal trafficking, biogenesis, and function. She uses these studies to understand more about what causes cancer and to possibly develop anti-cancer drugs. Currently, I am learning about the lab's work until I take more classes and, later, I will possibly assist with research. Next semester I will begin volunteering in The Institute for Integrated Research in Materials, Environments, and Society (IIRMES) science lab on campus. There I will assist in research on organic and proteomic materials. Both of these opportunities are helping me strive for my ultimate career goal of being a clinical pediatric oncology researcher at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, a dream career I have had since I was seven years old.

- Elizabeth Garfinkle



This summer I will get my first taste of what it really means to be a public accountant. As a future Audit Intern for KPMG, I will be auditing the financial statements of some of the most high-profile companies in the world. KPMG is one of the world's largest and most prestigious accounting firms, one of the "Big Four". It's the "Big Four" that have clients that include Disney and Apple, as well as many other popular, publicly traded companies. I also know that I won't be sitting behind a desk cranking out tax returns; I'll be interacting with individuals from these companies and working as a team with my fellow KPMG-ers. I am absolutely thrilled to begin working towards my future as an accounting professional.

- Alison Ernst

## tips that make cents

by: Talia Lamb

➤ With the increase in California State University tuition, there has been a proliferation of debt acquired by college undergraduates as they are forced to rely more heavily on student loans. It is no surprise, then, that University Honors Program (UHP) member, **Kim Pearson**, has decided to focus her Honors thesis research on student debt. Kim, a current Senior, is pursuing a double option in Finance and Management with a sub plan in Supply Chain Management while also interning at Molina Healthcare. When asked why she chose to research this issue, she explained, "I feel like I'm fairly good at saving money [and] I like the idea of financial advising: helping people save money themselves."

Kim claims that her initial intent was to determine if the rise in student debt was a direct consequence of the University's tuition increase; interestingly, she discovered that this was not the case. "What I'm finding is that it's [really] students who don't care as much," she says. Through her research, Kim found that many undergraduates do not concern themselves with their student loan debt and disregard the fact that this money is borrowed. "A lot of people feel as though college is free because they don't have to pay the majority of the loans back now, but once they graduate, [it] hits them hard," she explains. Many students do not realize that this money has to be paid back very soon after they leave school, which can be a rude awakening when they graduate. This brings us to a critical question: How do we solve this issue of student debt?

Kim offers a tip of her own: "Start paying off your student loans as soon as possible. Don't put it off." By waiting, students risk higher interest rates, which ultimately results in paying more than the initial loan amount. Unfortunately, Kim found that this happens all too frequently. Many graduated students attempt to find a well-paying job before beginning payments, which proves to be more detrimental than helpful. Although finding a better paying job would be ideal for anyone, paying off student loans is just as important and should be done immediately following graduation. While this serves as a possible solution for rising student debt, Kim advocates for other inexpensive routes.

"Go to community college first," Kim encourages. Community college is an affordable option that allows students to decide on a major before attending a four year university. Kim claims that students directly out of high school do not always know what career path they want



to take and community college grants them the time they need to explore their options, while also obtaining an Associate's degree. It can drastically decrease student debt due to its affordable cost and even prevent students from needing loans.

Loans are perceived as a reasonable way to secure money for college, but they are not the only option. Kim claims, "There are always ways to go around taking out loans." Saving earlier for your college education is her main recommendation. While this suggestion rests largely on the shoulders of parents, Kim believes that saving plans, such as Plan 529, can be a solution for many high school students looking to fund their higher education. According to the U.S. Secretaries and Exchange Commission, Plan 529 is a tax-advantaged savings plan designed to encourage saving for future college costs. This plan is sponsored by states, state agencies, or educational institutions and provides two savings plans: pre-paid tuition and college savings. Each plan provides savings options for educational funds and encourages parents to begin saving for their children's college tuition sooner, rather than later.

According to Kim's research, average student debt takes about thirty years to pay off. With these statistics, student debt has proven to be a huge issue in the academic world, but there are numerous solutions to resolve the problem. Take Kim's advice and begin paying off those student loans as soon as possible; in the long run, you'll gain more than you lose.

## the golden TICKET

by: Heather Youmans

➤ As another semester gets underway, the "big question" may be surfacing for several juniors and seniors: What follows graduation? A majority of graduates will find their way into the workforce, while others may have their sights set on graduate school. If graduate school is right for you, what area of study should be pursued considering your skills, interests, and passions? And how do you get that golden admission ticket between your fingertips?

### The 'Right' Fit

If you are intrigued by a graduate degree, ask yourself: Is it the right moment in your life for graduate school? If so, you must also ask which program is the "right fit" for you. "For graduate [school], you want to have an idea of why you're going and what you want to do with this degree when you are done with school," said Career Development Center advisor Wayne Tokunaga in a phone interview. "With undergraduate [studies], it's more about self exploration and when you graduate you may do something with your degree, or you may not. And that's ok."

In cases when students don't know what the right next step is for them, Dr. Hempel-Lamer recommends taking a few years off after earning your Bachelor's and gaining work experience.

"Often enough, I think the students in Honors are important, make use of the professors on think that they need to go to graduate school, but campus and ask them questions. They can be they don't know why or where," University Honors Program Director Dr. Nele Hempel-Lamer said in an application preparation. Now is the time to start building close rapport with professors and intern-determine which program specifically addresses ship supervisors inside and outside of your major the professional limitations you may face during departments. They can provide you with support, employment, due to lacking a graduate degree. advice, and letters of recommendation. Establish-

In the end, deciding to attend graduate school depends on where you want to take your your recommenders to write a more meaningful letter that is specific to you as a student.

It's also highly recommended that you ask several mentors to review your personal statement, so they can give you critical feedback on your writing and approach to the prompt. Remember, the personal statement is your opportunity to separate yourself from other applicants, so draw from your relevant experience, find your voice, and answer the prompt. Do your research about the program, its faculty, and the kinds of students they are seeking.

Most graduate school programs also require applicants to take the Graduate Records Examination (GRE), Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), or a similar, field-specific entrance exam, so register online soon, start studying, and consider enrolling in a prep course such as those offered by CSULB's College of Continuing and Professional Education (e.g., the CCPE offers a Graduate Records Examination prep course for \$450) or buying a book online to study independently.

Good luck on your post-graduation plans, whether that is employment or graduate school and remember this: The Honors office staff is always here to help!

Look around the Cal State Long Beach campus and you'll find a myriad of helpful sources. Make an appointment with a graduate school advisor at the Career Development Center, consult your faculty members, and visit the Honors office to speak with Dr. Hempel-Lamer or Terri about your interests. Although a strong GPA and test scores

## fuel for thought

by: Jill Pestana

➤ I literally jumped for joy when I received the email confirming my admittance into the Student Independent Research Internship (SIRI) Program at the NASA Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL) in Pasadena. I had been accepted into my first choice of projects: I would be working with Dr. Charles Hays in an electrochemistry lab, optimizing catalysts for fuel cells during the Spring 2012 semester. I had never taken a course in electrochemistry, but my previous research and internship experiences gave me confidence, and I knew this experience could reveal my passion for energy research.

When I began studying at California State University Long Beach (CSULB) in Fall 2008, I decided to work toward a Bachelor of Science in Physics with a Minor in Music. Since then I have been actively involved in many programs and in organizations on and off campus. In addition to my involvement in the University Honors Program (UHP), I have taken advantage of numerous on-campus opportunities: I spent a

month researching astrophysics, a summer researching magnetic thin-films, and I have been the President, Secretary, and an active member of the Society of Physics Students. Off campus, I interned for a summer at NASA Dryden Flight Research Center with the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) Program, and now work for SOFIA's Education and Public Outreach Department as a web consultant.

I began my UHP thesis project about a year ago in the Nano-optics Lab in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. In short, I analyzed nanoscopic images of the solid acids Cesium Dihydrogen Phosphate and Cesium Hydrogen Sulfate in collaboration with Caltech's Solid State Ionic Group, which develops Solid Acid Fuel Cells. As I delved further into my research, I realized fuel cells really intrigued me. When my professor announced the opportunity to intern at JPL, I immediately skimmed through the topics and found a lab investigating fuel cell catalysts. It was fate.

Since January 2012, I have interned at JPL through the SIRI and Research Apprenticeship (RA) programs, researching catalysts for fuel cells. Fuel cells are clean-energy converters that use hydrogen to produce electricity and could one day replace environmentally harmful energy converters, like gasoline combustion engines. My research experimentally tests anode and cathode conductivity and durability. I can talk for days about the science, but in the lab I run experiments and analyze data to identify the most efficient anode and cathode ingredients. So far, I have learned a plethora of technical skills, and I have met many intelligent people who have contributed so much to scientific research that I feel "unworthy" to be in their presence. In addition, my mentor is inspirational, and always eager to teach and help. As advice to those unsure about their future, use this time of uncertainty to explore a variety of areas and acquire many skills. The people you meet can be just as important and influential as the experience itself. Also, ask questions; it demonstrates that you think critically. When you apply for opportunities, never negatively view your lack of knowledge; you are never expected to know everything when first entering an internship or a job, especially as a college student.

After I graduate in December 2012, I will be continuing at JPL as a graduate student intern until I begin graduate school in Fall 2013. I am very excited to add that the results of our experiments from the past year are in the process of being published, and that my mentor wants to hire me as a researcher! I definitely do not have my life planned out, but my undergraduate education and experiences established a platform to begin my professional life. I am ready to take the next step into a graduate program, and look forward to all the unknown possibilities that my future holds.



# STUDY ABROAD

## from the west coast to COSTA RICA

by: Alex Villaneda

➤ For **Allison Kielhold**, the adventure began with a late-night plane ride straight into the heart of Central America, Costa Rica. She was on the way to meet her host family with whom she would be staying for the next year as part of her study abroad experience. Little did Allison know that her adventure would not be confined to Costa Rica but would also take her throughout the continent, from beautiful island volcanoes in Nicaragua to a stranger's couch in Panama. Who knew studying abroad could be so adventurous?

Although she had the option to only spend a semester abroad, Allison decided from the get-go that she was going to stay for a year. "I was kind of tired of Long Beach; I grew up in Southern California and went to school in Southern California, so I really wanted to be gone for a while." As an International Studies major with a focus on Latin America and a minor in Spanish, Costa Rica seemed like the perfect place for Allison to

study; however, this choice didn't just fall into her lap by chance. She had to go out and search for it. "Our school didn't really offer a program that I was interested in. I wanted to go to Central America, so I started going to study abroad fairs and looked online and went to our study abroad office. I found a program that had the area I

wanted and with the classes I needed for my major so I could still graduate on time," says Allison. The program she found, though, was not directly through CSULB, which ended up causing some problems for her later-on. Allison is currently out collecting signatures from faculty advisors in order to transfer all her credits properly. "It's kind of a pain, but I think it's worth it," she states. "It's just going to office hours and finding people to sign." Would you be deterred from the adventure of a lifetime because of a few signatures?

To any student thinking about studying abroad, Allison has two words for you: "Do it." She believes that the best way to learn is to immerse yourself. Even with her three years of Spanish in high school and two semesters' worth at Long Beach, Allison still wasn't prepared for Costa Rica. She described an incident in which she mistakenly used the word "embarazada" thinking it meant embarrassed during a conversation only to find out later that she had instead told someone she was pregnant. "My host family made fun of me a lot. They [joked], 'We could probably make a dictionary of all the things you say that don't make sense.'"

As a result of being around them constantly,

she increased her proficiency in Spanish and decreased her incidents of misunderstandings. "I think just being around people who speak it all the time and having to use it every day is the only way to learn because [in Long Beach] you don't really practice unless you're in class."

Even through the awkward moments, Allison really connected with her host family. "They started calling me their Tica daughter. I really felt like part of their family." She plans on visiting them again later this year. Allison's experience not only taught her in the classes she took, but outside as well. She learned how to cook Costa Rican food (although not as well as her host mom, she admits) and got to meet a lot of interesting people. Allison believes that her experience has changed her life and says, even if given the chance, she wouldn't do anything different.



## mandarin meanderin'

by: Albert Pham

to take a semester to study a language she had never learned in a country entirely new to her? GlobaLinks Learning Abroad gave her that chance and spirited her away to the Far East in the Spring of 2012, where she studied Mandarin at Minzu University in Beijing, China.

"Indescribable," was, in a word, Cassandra's summary of her experience in China. From meeting fellow international students from Ireland, France, Kazakhstan, and Japan to studying "one of the hardest subjects [she has] ever attempted," Cassandra had an unforgettable four months in Beijing. In fact, upon completing her semester at Minzu, she realized that she wasn't ready to go home and moved to an apartment in Jinan, capital of Shandong province. A friend was currently teaching English there and suggested that Cassandra attempt to do the same.

Following her arrival, Cassandra was given an interview at a local private school and was hired on a probationary basis, giving her the opportunity to prove herself as an English teacher. After a few weeks, her superiors received positive feedback from the students' parents and other staff members. From then on, she became part of the school and had, in Cassandra's words, "nothing but a great experience teaching." She made friends and described the other teachers at the school as "extremely inviting."

During the school year, Cassandra explained her duties as teaching students English on the weekends. On average, she would usually teach eight classes each day on Saturday and Sunday. Meanwhile, on the weekdays, Cassandra would go to primary school to teach promotion from all over the classes for her school, which she claimed was extremely fun. Cassandra thoroughly enjoyed her time in Jinan and explained, "Jinan is a nice city to live in, because it is a relatively small capital city in China, with a popu-

➤ **Cassandra Durian** decided that she needed a change of scenery and a break from her CSULB routine. What better way than to study abroad? She was looking for a place with a population of nearly 7 million." Cassandra taught in Jinan for five months. So what is there to do for nine months in China? According to Cassandra, the day-to-day life is pretty laid back. With biking the norm, and cheap taxi fares, it's easy to get around and explore the city. The street market is a favorite destination, where two weeks' worth of groceries of fresh fruit, vegetables, poultry and spices will add up to thirty renminbi, or five U.S. dollars. The availability of high-speed trains makes touring the country a relatively easy task. And there are always other travelers and international students to go with to the clubs, the movies, and to sample the local cuisine.

Cassandra asserts confidently, "I think [studying abroad] is definitely something everyone should experience. It's healthy to get out of your comfort zone." And to those who may want to teach in a foreign country? "I'm definitely going back to China to teach. It may be a little nerve-wracking at first, but you are never alone! There are other people from all over the world who travel to teach!"



## midnights in PARIS

by: Ben Huynh



➤ "Basically, I isn't *that* foreign) were just two of the gland, and her father tapping into his inner just sat around perks of Cynthia's extended stay. What ner ninja spirit to catch a Romanian pick-and ate a bunch was foreign, however, was the environ- pocket in the London Underground. of macarons," ment she found herself in. "People didn't If you asked her, Cynthia would

**Cynthia Yeung** judge you or look down on you. Everyone definitely advocate studying abroad at wanted to help," she wistfully recalls. some point during college. She intimat- Surrounded by a vast array of different ed, "Some of the people I met became describes her internship at Paris Fash- perspectives, students majoring in every my best friends." With everyone sharing ion Week. A current senior in the BFA graphic design program at Cal State branch of the art family, and professors so a common passion to experience the Long Beach, Cynthia began her de- passionate about their subjects that they world and self-improve, it certainly makes lightful European adventures during bordered on fanatical, one would have sense. And for a travel fiend like Cynthia, the spring semester of her junior year. no choice but to grow as an artist. the opportunity to get out of the country She knew that she wanted to travel Besides furthering her educa- is also especially appealing. "I can't stay abroad, but found that the school did tion, Cynthia was also able to take on home, especially not in California, for not offer any programs for art which an internship for Paris Fashion Week. too long!" she expresses. Homesickness appealed to her. Instead, she con- Although essentially a waitress left to was definitely one English term she left sulted independent programs online, snack in her free time, she was also re- back in America. The language barrier found a fancy 15-week course at Par- sponsible for dressing models for show- was also not too difficult to overcome, de- sons Paris and, in a last minute deci- room galleries where clients would come spite not knowing any French prior to the sion, was off to experience to spectate. Her work ethic ended up im- trip. "A lot of people spoke English, and the most rewarding and pressing her employer so much that she anything else I could just mime out," she exciting semester of her received a summer job offer (which she explains. But she notes that one stereo- college career thus far. had to defer so she could finish school type did happen to hold true: "The food Access to muse- first). Other amusing anecdotes she de- is definitely as good as you'd think."

ums stocked to the jani- scribed included biking 10 miles through torial closets with high art the rain from the Château de Chambord and a community of peers to reach her train back to Paris before it that drank, sweated and departed in half an hour, encountering bathed in oil paint (figu- the Queen and Kate Middleton grocery ratively, of course; France shopping during her spring break in En-

## the SPIRIT of adventure

by: Meagan Meylor



➤ The sun crept across knowing [it] like the back of my hand and loved the feeling of being comfort- the mountains of sand as able and adapting to a new place," Samie explained.

**Samie Blasingame** laid In Argentina, Samie also had an internship at a zoo where she worked back on the warm dunes to conserve the condor, one of the most endangered birds in the world. She of Laguna de Huachina learned how to feed them and return the animals to the wild. After interning in Peru after taking mul- at the zoo, she had the opportunity to travel to the Rio Negro Desert for tiple classes...in Spanish. a week where, along with other workers from the zoo, she observed the This was just one of the condors in the wild. "It was a magical experience. I learned how to live off many experiences Samie the earth and be close to nature. It was very environmental," Samie ex- had during her six-month pressed.

travel abroad program in In all three countries, Samie took all of her classes in Spanish. This South America. was a challenge at first, but it helped her get a grasp of the language. In or- A 5th year International der to learn the language quickly, she studied a lot and lived with a host fam- Studies major, Samie be- ily. To students considering studying abroad in a Spanish-speaking country, came interested in the Es- Samie recommends surrounding oneself with Spanish-speaking people in pañol y Cultura en Latino order to avoid falling into the comfort and familiarity of speaking English. America (ECELA) Interna- "Distance yourself from tendencies to speak English as much as possible," Samie said. She quickly picked up the language and hopes to one day teach English to students in other countries.

Through her travel abroad program, Samie learned that she is very adaptable and does not mind getting a little dirty or sleeping in small, cramped places; that's all part of the experience. Samie claims that this es during the weekdays and spent the weekends exploring her unfamiliar surroundings. "In Peru, there was always something to do. I went on a lot of trips to places such as Machu Pichu and Lake Titicaca," Samie reminisced. After Peru, she visited Santiago and Vina del Mar in Chile, where she ven- tured along the coast, tried a lot of seafood, and delved into a new Lat- in American experience. Her final stop was to Argentina, where she visited many markets, arts and craft fairs, and met numerous people in the city.

Since the program started up every Monday, students were always coming and going, so Samie met new people every weekend. "I was in Ar- gentina for the longest amount of time, so it felt like home to me. I ended up



# INTERNSHIPS

## swimming with the FISHES

by: Beth Ellis

➤ Amelia Benavente Blanco loves films and she loves making films even more. During the summer before entering college, Amelia was given the opportunity to put her passion of film-making to good use: she landed an audiovisual internship at the Aquarium of the Pacific.

It was not easy for Amelia to find a summer internship. “I began to realize that all, or most of [the internships], specifically stated that they preferred a junior or senior in college, if not a graduate, and I was not yet a freshman,” said Amelia. As the application process continued, Amelia found herself becoming more and more discouraged. However, Amelia found encouragement from her mother, who stood behind the idea of never knowing what will happen when you take risks. After talking with her mom, Amelia decided not

to allow the preferred college year dissuade her from applying.

Shortly after, Amelia discovered that the Aquarium of the Pacific offered a film internship. “I quickly applied, since I love animals, and the whole feeling of being able to work in a nice ambiance close to home was more than encouraging,” explained Amelia. Amelia’s supervisor was impressed with the amount of experience she had at such a young age and called her shortly after reviewing her application. Due to her prior volunteer experience in various fields and her contribution to a number of films, Amelia was ready to begin working alongside professional co-workers after one training day.

As a part of the Audiovisual Department, Amelia contributed to making videos for children’s activities in classrooms, interactive films throughout the aquarium, and videos that expand knowledge for the general public. The interns also conducted educational videoconferencing with

schools in other states to teach them about marine animals and the aquarium itself. “It is incredible to see the amount of things [everyone is] involved in that the ordinary visitor is not aware of,” said Amelia.



Amelia has been working in the Audiovisual Department of the Aquarium of the Pacific for two semesters now since her start in the fall of 2011. Blanco has acquired an immense amount of hands-on experience in filming and editing, working extensively with the aquarium’s animals, lectures, festivals, activities, and performances. “It has been longer than expected [but] it has been such a wonderful experience that I will value forever,” said Blanco. In her first

job, Blanco has been able to learn valuable knowledge from professionals in an organization that is also connected with something she loves: film. The Aquarium of the Pacific is located at 100 Aquarium Way in downtown Long Beach. You can find more information about the aquarium’s programs by visiting [www.aquariumofpacific.org](http://www.aquariumofpacific.org).

## making the MAGIC happen

by: Jessica Ivey & Sierra Patheal

regular job for the day—and I was terrified I’d done something wrong.

My boss sat across from me. “Do you know Liz?” I didn’t. “Well, she’s a pretty big name around here. And she came to me about you today.” By this point, I was having troubles breathing. “She wanted to give this to you.” The card read, *Thank you for showing the magic to someone.*

As it turned out, Liz—the general manager of food and beverage in Disney’s Magic Kingdom—had seen me kneeling outside Pinocchio’s, talking to a girl in a wheelchair and letting her play with the marionette. I’d done it because I’d loved the joy on her face; I hadn’t thought anyone was watching. Unseen actions do get noticed, though, no matter how trivial they seem. This was only one of the many lessons I learned from the Disney College Program internship during Spring 2012 at Disney World, Florida.

After learning about the program from the Career Development Center, I decided to send in my application in hopes of embarking on a journey to “the Happiest Place on Earth.” Although the application process was rigorous, to say the least, consisting of not only a written application but also a phone interview and character compatibility test, I received a confirmation email about two months later that I would be working in food service at Walt Disney World in a matter of months.

In the beginning, it was extremely taxing. I had no idea who my roommates would be, where I would be living, or even what job I would have. When I finally received my position, I couldn’t help my disappointment. I’d be working as a cashier and food server at ESPN’s Wide World of Sports stadium, not even in a theme park. Nevertheless, I made a conscious effort to keep a positive attitude, always smiling and being the go-to person for my group as

➤ “Jessica? Could you come to my office for a minute?”

My heart stopped. I nodded, stepping in. I was still dressed in the stylized German costume I’d worn while playing with the marionette doll and trying to attract visitors to the restaurant. It was my first day working at Pinocchio’s—Disney had shifted me over from my

office for a minute?” I was terrified I’d done something wrong. I nodded, stepping in. I was still dressed in the stylized German costume I’d worn while playing with the marionette doll and trying to attract visitors to the restaurant. It was my first day working at Pinocchio’s—Disney had shifted me over from my

cash fund each day and deliver it to the safe in the evening. This was a huge responsibility because the fund was divided between all the registers and handled by multiple staff members during the day; whenever there was a discrepancy in the fund, such as a surplus or shortage of cash, the other general tellers and I were responsible for deciphering what had happened and fixing the problem. Considering the fund could get up to \$75,000 in a day, it was extremely stressful—but I loved it.

I also tried out a number of other jobs during the internship, like the work at Pinocchio’s mentioned above. Working with Disney taught me an array of organizational and leadership skills that will help me excel in any career I choose. I am a stronger, more responsible person for the experience, and the internship opened my eyes to career possibilities I’d never considered. Anyone who has ever dreamt of making a difference or wants to experience something new should apply for the Disney College Program; it will change your life, if you let it.

much as I could. It paid off, and within a matter of weeks, I was promoted to general teller during the annual Atlanta Braves Spring Training season. As a general teller, it was my job to balance the manager’s cash fund each day and deliver it to the safe in the evening. This was a huge responsibility because the fund was divided between all the registers and handled by multiple staff members during the day; whenever there was a discrepancy in the fund, such as a surplus or shortage of cash, the other general tellers and I were responsible for deciphering what had happened and fixing the problem. Considering the fund could get up to \$75,000 in a day, it was extremely stressful—but I loved it.



## a CAPITAL plan

by: Peter Matatics

➤ Last spring **Philip Takhar**, a Political Science major in the Honors program, received an email from his department describing an internship program with California State University Sacramento (CSUS); CSUS invites college students from all the CSUSs, including its own students, to intern in the state government system. This internship begins in January and serves as a semester by counting for both six units of Political Science and the major’s required practicum. This program also entails the participation in two seminar classes, which total 12 units. This opportunity greatly interested Philip, so he approached Dr. Richard Hazely, the head of internships for the Political Science department. With Dr. Hazely’s aid he ascertained that the program fit his needs, prepared all the components necessary for applying, and was accepted!

In mid-January he headed up to the state capitol and joined a group of about thirty other students. After orientation, the first item on

each student’s agenda was securing an internship. This entailed going around to the offices of different politicians and putting in applications. Philip soon found that those accepted to this CSU program were considered a valuable commodity by the Sacramento political scene; there were more offices asking than there were interns, giving Philip and the other students multiple offers to choose from. As he was free to be selective, Philip quickly determined his criteria for the ideal position, starting with the sort of duties he would be asked to fulfill. He interviewed at the office of an assembly member whom he particularly liked due to his policies, but respectfully denied the offer because the work did not seem challenging. Instead he accepted a position in assemblyman Nathan Fletcher’s office, the only elected independent at the time. His workload began with simple around-the-office tasks, such as filing contacts, managing data, or answering the phone. Then his supervisor had him write a biography on each of the 80 assembly members and 40 senators in the capitol. While Philip initially saw the task as trivial busywork, he gained valuable knowledge regarding every important political figure there.

When Philip started going to hearings and the floor, he could now recognize many of the faces. He knew their names, positions, and political histories and when a politician gave a speech, he could hear it with an understanding of the speaker’s context. Eventually Philip was given meatier work to do through writing policy reports: he would be given an issue that was coming up and be asked to write an in-depth review of it. This meant researching plenty of facts through the Public Policy Institute, going to hearings to pick up relevant data, and even having interviews with various political actors in the capitol. As policy spans all topics, this internship opportunity is open to students from all majors. For instance, Environmental Science and Policy majors may find it interesting that Net Energy Metering was a big issue during Philip’s spring internship. Environmentalists and the energy corporations, such as PG&E, are making sure their concerns are protected in new legislation until the process can be set up to be stable and financially beneficial to both parties. Throughout this internship Philip learned a lot. By the end he was attending complicated floor hearings that required a lot of background information of policies, current bills, and terminology, information which he then possessed. He also became close friends with many of those in the program with him, not to mention the contacts he made in Sacramento. Should he ever choose to start a career in the capitol after graduation, he certainly has built a firm foundation for it.



## redistricting your education

by: Alex Villaneda

**Victoria Palacio** got to join them. As a junior majoring in Sociology with a minor in Political Science, Victoria was interested in pursuing public policy. What better place to do so than Washington D.C.?

After attending an internship presentation co-hosted by the University Honors Program and the Career Development Center, she decided on a program that sounded interesting: The Washington Center. Although she had read about it a little during her research, the presentation offered new information. She was surprised to find that contrary to what she had previously believed, she could receive a full semester’s worth of credit by attending.

The Washington Center is a unique program that offers courses, weekly speakers, and helps place students at an internship. According to Victoria, “The process was [this]: you tell them what you’re interested in, they see how Congressional districts were changing. In order to better prepare for the future, the non-profit she was working for needed information on view with them individually. Then, out of the ones that accept you from the interview, you decide whether you want to accept [the internship] offer.”

The site on which she decided was the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, which is a non-profit bank. When asked why she chose this internship over the others, Victoria said, “I was interested in public policy and lobbying, but more so in a community development [aspect], and that’s what this one offered. It seemed like a good fit for me.” In addition to creating community building programs, they advocate for money to support non-profits that already exist.

➤ As our nation’s capital, Washington D.C. is full of many hardworking and eager professionals looking to get ahead in the world. This past year CSULB student

Upon completing her internship, Victoria found great help in developing the professional skills she will need for the future. Not only did she perform typical clerical duties, but she got to attend meetings with the rest of the office’s staff and work on a research project that would benefit the entire corporation of 700 people. “The project [required] me to do research on Congressional elections, and redistricting, which supplements what I have learned in Political Science at CSULB,” she explained. The purpose of her research project was to see how Congressional districts were changing. In order to better prepare for the future, the non-profit she was working for needed information on which congressmen would still be able to help them and which ones they would need to befriend in order to keep moving towards their goals. Victoria believes her experience in D.C. has given her a lot more confidence. “It was a great experience; I loved the city, but it wasn’t an easy experience.” Having a tough boss, Victoria learned how to be unafraid to put herself out there. Being placed in a challenging situation allowed her to grow. “I am appreciative that the Honors Program exposed me to the opportunity to intern in D.C. I now know what it takes to be a professional,” says Victoria, “and I am more confident and competent as a result of this experience.”





# PROFESSOR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## the life and language of Lizette Alvarez

by: Laura Tanimoto

CSULB and has been a University Honors Program (UHP) member ever since she was a freshman. Year after year, she has shone in her undergraduate studies by getting involved in activities and organizations like Japan Club and an internship with St. Mary's Medical Center from 2009 to 2011, as well as working at the Learning Assistance Center as a tutor and trainer for other tutors. In 2010, she became the Community Outreach Officer on the UHP Student Association Executive Board. By the end of her term, she had set many event precedents, organizing fundraisers and beach cleanups, putting together social events and planning the AIDS Walk, which raised almost a thousand dollars under her leadership in 2011. In addition to all of this, she also rocked her Honors thesis after finding a major she was truly passionate about.

Her journey to find this major was no cakewalk, considering she changed it many times. Just like many students on this campus, she found herself discontented with the first few majors she chose. But unlike many others, she was unafraid to change her major. She went from biochemistry, to art, then hotel management, pre-nursing, and, as a junior in 2010, she finally became a Spanish major. In the end, she found what she loved, and this great discovery has taken her to new heights.

One of her most notable achievements is her Honors thesis entitled "Indigenous Languages in Contemporary México: Preservation, Restoration, and Cultural Re-invention." It was written under the guidance of Dr. Rita Palacios, a faculty member in the Spanish department, and it provided an in-depth exploration of endangered languages of Mexico. She says, "Many people don't know there are indigenous languages in Mexico," and adds that "the general perception is that Mexicans speak Spanish only." Indigenous languages go unnoticed because some are only spoken, but through her research, she discovered that a few of the languages are in the process of being preserved in writing. Lizette's thesis was selected to receive the highly regarded "Best UHP Thesis Award" for 2011. She says, "I didn't see it coming!" and notes that she almost did not attend the awards ceremony because she had a final right afterwards. She recalls Dr. Nele Hempel-Lamer hinting that she should attend. She was definitely glad she went.

Lizette's resilience and her tenacity to find a passion has led her to where she is today: a graduate student at CSULB, pursuing her Masters in

You remember being asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Right? But has your answer stayed the same throughout the years? Most likely not. Even though a few people may be born with the intrinsic knowledge of what they would like to do with their lives, many of us are not. So where should one start searching?

**Lizette Alvarez** is a sweet and compassionate student here at CSULB and has been a University Honors Program (UHP) member ever since she was a freshman. Year after year, she has shone in her undergraduate studies by getting involved in activities and organizations like Japan Club and an internship with St. Mary's Medical Center from 2009 to 2011, as well as working at the Learning Assistance Center as a tutor and trainer for other tutors. In 2010, she became the Community Outreach Officer on the UHP Student Association Executive Board. By the end of her term, she had set many event precedents, organizing fundraisers and beach cleanups, putting together social events and planning the AIDS Walk, which raised almost a thousand dollars under her leadership in 2011. In addition to all of this, she also rocked her Honors thesis after finding a major she was truly passionate about.

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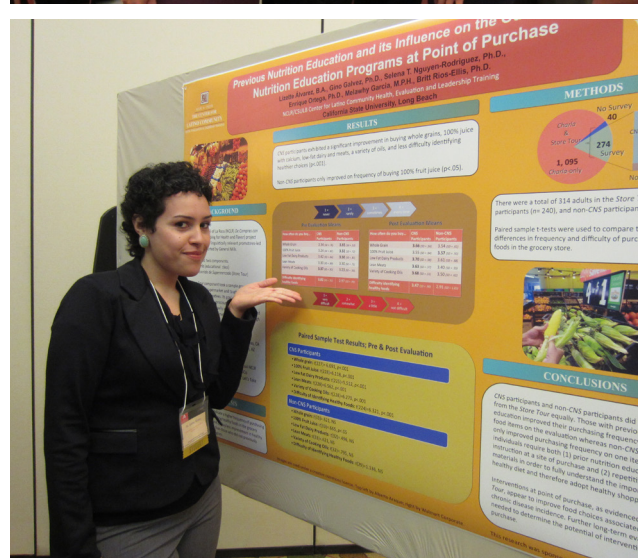
Lizette's resilience and her tenacity to find a passion has led her to where she is today: a graduate student at CSULB, pursuing her Masters in

Lizette's resilience and her tenacity to find a passion has led her to where she is today: a graduate student at CSULB, pursuing her Masters in

Public Health. She hopes to do her graduate thesis on unequal access and disparities in health and education in Latin America. She was also granted a Fellowship under the University's National Council for La Raza (NCLR). She is in a subgroup of NCLR called H2OLA, or Hispanic Health Opportunity Learning Alliance, and is working as a mentor to undergraduates who have a background in or passion for Hispanic culture and are studying healthcare. She connects her mentees to helpful resources on campus, exposes them to researching techniques, and introduces possible graduate school paths. Her hope is that the mentees pass on the knowledge to others and create a ripple effect.

As far as the future is concerned, Lizette still says, "I don't exactly know what I see myself doing." She has narrowed her spectrum of choices immensely, but she says she tries to create short term, two-year goals to keep herself in check, but not to restrict herself from other choices. She hopes to pursue a Doctorate in interdisciplinary immigration, urban studies, or Latin American community studies. Lizette feels that college has so much to offer and that many students have yet to fully open their eyes to the possibilities at CSULB. She firmly believes that "you should study what you love." Even though some people may dismiss passion because the pay is higher in another job or because the person is under pressure to study a specific topic, Lizette says that as you study what you love, "confidence grows and you'll find creative ways to be successful."

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## a sly guide to JOB HUNTING

by: Alison Ernst



This past semester I had the opportunity to sit down with UHP Professor **Stacy Young**, who teaches a course titled "Theory and Techniques of Interviewing." Even if you are a few years away from graduation, you may be applying for internships or a part-time job. Good communication and interview skills are critical in the application process for any position, and these tips can help you in getting that offer.

**How can students differentiate themselves in the interview process, specifically when the application is online?**

With an online application, there is the resume and cover letter as well as the actual interview. The

principle to separate yourself is the same for both. One of my recommendations is to make yourself more memorable by giving concrete examples to illustrate your skills. Many people make the mistake of listing the top 25 adjectives that describe them.

**Are there any keywords that employers look for on a resume/cover letter?**

There aren't keywords that I look for that will help someone get an interview. When employers look at the stack, they first look for who's going in their "No" pile. Having inconsistent use of space and minor things, like not proofreading, being too generic or too vague, can put you in that pile. Another common mistake that I often see on resumes is that people describe their duties at a particular job very generically, as opposed to what they brought to that position. That's something that will get you weeded out, because employers don't know enough about you to make a determination.

**In the course description for Communication Studies 344, you cite communication skills as being extremely important for applicants. Is there any way for students to improve these skills?**

Many employers say that communication is the top skill that they're looking for. People can refine their skills by being more aware of their communication, self-presentation, and how other people might be interpreting that. You should try to adapt to your audience. If they're looking for someone to be more formal, then act that way.

To help improve your skills, there are also several books that highlight some of the basic communication skills employers are looking for. Taking even one communication class while you're in school can really help.

**How should interviewees answer a question about job experience when they have little to no field experience, themselves?**

People often have more experience than they realize, and one neglected area is your coursework

and classes. You worked with teams, you worked under deadlines, you've had conflict; you have a lot of the skills that employers are looking for. Although you might not have the professional experience, you definitely have it with your coursework. If you're involved in any campus organizations, professional organizations, or volunteering, then you can use those as examples, too.

**How do you feel about employers using Facebook as a method to screen applicants?**

It's very common. Every employer that I have talked to says they see what they can find out on Facebook. I think that people have a right to have their personal life, but I also understand that sometimes – depending on the job that you're in – you're always on the clock and always representing that organization, even when you're not at work. I can somewhat see both sides, but my recommendation for people is to make sure that your Facebook page is on lockdown and well protected.

**Do have any advice for students going out into the job market?**

Be prepared to know things about the organization to which you are applying. One of the weed-out questions that I ask people is, "What do you know about our organization?" If you do your research, it makes you look like you're being more of a critical consumer. You're not going to take any job, but you have researched it and this seemed like a good fit for you.

Be sure to practice answer questions out loud, because how you think you're going to answer a question doesn't always come out that way. You can Google 50 most commonly asked interview questions and use those for practice.

My last piece of advice is to send a thank-you note. Only about ten percent of job applicants send any kind of thank you. It's a good opportunity to stand out and refresh the employer's memory of who you are. Even if they don't offer you the job now, they may remember you and save your information or refer you to a friend. You never know how it can help you.

## mini spotlights scholarships & volunteering

I have had the **Laurance Family Foundation Scholarship** for the past 4 years. Dale Laurance, the former president of Occidental Petroleum is the benefactor. It gives me \$24,000 per year for turning my life around during high school.

I also recently became a Pearson Campus Ambassador. It is a highly selective position for students and my role involves providing support for students using Pearson Education products like My ( ) Lab.

- **Omotunde Oguntinyinbo**

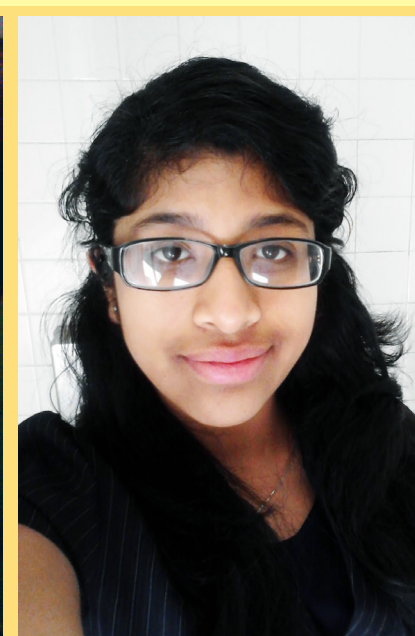


Volunteering at **Long Beach Memorial Hospital**, I listen to patients' life stories. I learn how precious life is as a young mother confesses that she originally planned an abortion, but is thankful for her newborn son. An older woman tells me about her double mastectomy and how thankful she is for her life. A husband cares for his wife as she faces cardiac surgery, loving her as he promised "in sickness and in health." I have seen life and death taking place. It is an experience that I will remember as I start CSULB's nursing program.

- **Jessica Kim**

The **Beauchamp Family Scholarship** is awarded to an undergraduate who works at least 20 hours per week and receives no financial aid from federal or state grants. My personal statement described the struggle of balancing school and work and career aspirations. As HSSA representative, I am responsible for attending the College of Health & Human Services Student Council meetings where we discuss our org's events and organize volunteer and networking opportunities for students. I connect my fellow E-boarders of HSSA to the greater CHHS student council.

- **Jennifer Granillo**



"This semester I received a cash award from the **Hispanic Scholarship Fund**, through the Darden's Restaurant Group Inc. I applied through the general HSF scholarship application last Fall 2011; this consisted of writing a few short essays and submitting a letter of recommendation. My award was in the amount of \$2500. The Hispanic Scholarship Fund is a great organization because it fields many scholarships into one logical application, as well as providing useful information and direction for minority college students."

- **Yessica Gomez**