



# The Honor Code

A Year In Review May 2017

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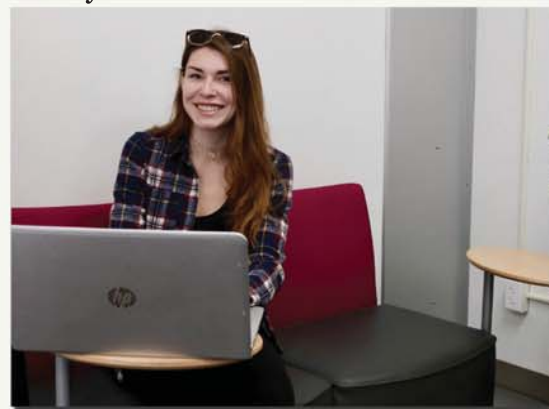
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# It's Just Rocket Science

Julia Katz

You know those Boeing airplanes that fly over campus? Kassidy McLaughlin can control them! Okay, well maybe not quite, but she's well on her way, considering she has spent her last three summers interning for National Aeronautics and Space Administration, more commonly known as NASA Armstrong. Kassidy, age 20 and a third-year mechanical engineering major, is not only a remarkable student in the Engineering Honors Program (EHP), but is also a rocket scientist in the making.

Kassidy's first summer with NASA's Pathways Intern Employment Program was in 2014 at Edwards Airforce Base, approximately 22 miles northeast of Lancaster, and she been hooked ever since. She describes the experience as the ideal system for students. "You're hired full time and then when you go back to school, you go on leave without pay until each summer." The program is a full-time position during the summer with a cohort of interns from around the country. The end goal is an enticing

opportunity as well; "When you graduate, you have the possibility of being offered a full-time position."

Each summer, Kassidy has gained unique and valuable experiences. During her first summer, she was assigned to a project that tested the ability for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) to sense and avoid other aircrafts. "I made models of airplanes on computers and pulled data to see how well they did."

She took a semester off for her second project which consisted of researching ways to redefine aerodynamic principles using what was called Preliminary Research Aerodynamic Design To Lower Drag (PRANDTL). Her mentor was Al Bowers, the chief scientist of that particular center. Kassidy proved herself up for the challenge, producing data that matched her expected calculations.

For those who may never step foot in a NASA facility, Kassidy explained the work environment as one that anyone could be comfortable in. "It's very welcoming [at Edwards Airforce Base], one of the friendliest ones I've known after touring some others." The employees are helpful

and Kassidy still maintains contact with the mentors she has worked for. When the interns had time off, they enjoyed exploring the beauties of a California summer. "It's hard work, but with all the help, it's easy enough."

Kassidy wasn't always set on being a rocket scientist. Like most college students, Kassidy explored various options in terms of studies and activities. Before her experience with NASA, she was interested in environmental science. "After my first summer, I realized this is really what I want to do!" The experience gained from these internships was instrumental in helping Kassidy find her career path. She learned valuable skills in regards to professional communication, creativity, and the importance of knowing when to ask for help.

At CSULB, she has followed her personal career advice of joining extra-curricular

activities that relate to what one is interested in. She is part of the Society of Women Engineers and enjoys community service through the College of Engineering aside from obligations with the EHP. She's also a sister of the Panhellenic sorority, Delta Delta Delta. In her free time, she enjoys going to the beach, shopping, and binge-watching TV shows (including Grey's Anatomy and Gilmore Girls).

Kassidy hopes that her time with NASA will ultimately lead to a career involving space shuttles and becoming a project manager. She has a number of interests and wants to gain experience in biomedical engineering, robotics and water systems in city development. Wherever the future takes her, Kassidy is immensely grateful for the knowledge and insight working with NASA has given her.



# THE HAPPIEST

## Internship on Earth

Sophia Soliman

Isn't it everyone's childhood dream to work at the happiest place on Earth? Alicia Demaree, a UHP Senior, was lucky enough to fulfill that dream. Alicia was able to spend her Spring 2016 semester participating in the Disney College program in Florida. As a Hospitality Management major, she joined the program in order to experience working with Disney, as well as to satisfy the internship requirement of her major. Working for Disney, Alicia loved feeling like she was a part of a family, an aspect she hopes to find in all her future endeavors.

Alicia wanted to be part of the Disney College program for years, and after a bit of encouragement from her peers, she finally decided to apply. While she was initially assigned to front desk, she was quickly transferred to work on attractions. This unplanned change taught her a valuable lesson: in a fast-paced work environment such as Disney, it's important to embrace new roles and focus on the positives in every situation. Though she was upset at being transferred, she made the best of it and embraced her new position. She ended up loving working in attractions and was even able to take on a few shifts at the front desk, thereby serving not one but two roles during the program.

The best and worst part of working at Disney boiled down to one aspect: the guests. Though there were difficult guests, knowing that she helped a guest have an amazing vacation made the experience worthwhile. One of Alicia's favorite moments of the internship was her interaction with a young girl dressed as Elsa. Elsa's bubble wand disastrously broke during the day, but Alicia and her co-worker were able to not only replace the bubble wand, but to provide Elsa and her family with Alicia's own FastPasses to the new "Frozen Ever After" ride. Elsa returned to the attraction later in the day and asked for Alicia specifically to accompany her on the ride. After, her mom took a photo of the two to commemorate the special day. Alicia recalls the memory fondly, stating that it made her day and that guest relation experiences such as that "really make you remember why you love your job and why you want to work for Disney."



While Alicia was in Florida, the state was rocked by the Orlando shootings at Pulse Nightclub, where 49 people lost their lives and 53 people were injured. Alicia admired Disney's grace, understanding, and support during that time. She recalls coming into work on June 12th and watching the events unfold live in the cast member break room. After the shooting, Disney immediately supported the Orlando community by hosting blood drives on behalf of the injured, holding fundraisers and counseling, as well as commemorating those affected with a moment of silence in Magic Kingdom. Alicia also witnessed Disney's response to the heartbreaking loss of a two-year-old boy in an alligator attack near a Walt Disney World hotel. For both events, Disney implemented increased security and modified regulations. One of Alicia's favorite aspects about working with Disney was having a safe work environment. "Disney is really there for you," she remarks, "If there's ever a threatening situation, they're there to keep you safe."

Overall, Alicia was not only able to work in a major corporation but also actively learn the ever-changing field of hospitality management. Alicia was able to fulfill her dream, learn more about Disney, and take time off of school to explore in Florida. Now that she's back in California, Alicia is continuing to work at Disneyland during the weekends, though she's mainly focusing on her coursework. She's currently searching for a human resources internship in order to gain work experience before she graduates. After her whirlwind experience, Alicia is ready to turn the hospitality management world on its head.



# Prototype CSULB:

## A Club Founded by Honors Students

Tara Thomas

In the Spring of 2015, mechanical engineering major Will Hovik, 21, perused the bustling tables at the bi-annual Week of Welcome event, searching for a community of individuals that would be able to reflect his passions for innovation and entrepreneurship. Some clubs came close such as the Maker Society, a group centered around 3-D printing technology or the Society of Automotive Engineers, but Will was hoping to find something more open-ended. He envisioned an all-inclusive hub of ideation that would serve as a catalyst for collaboration and growth, both business-related and personal. From this ambitious concept and the lack of current fulfillment grew the organization now known as Prototype CSULB.

At its core Prototype's goal is simple: to provide students with the resources and support necessary to develop their ideas and themselves. Despite its simplistic nature, the execution of this goal has proven quite the challenge. In order to turn his club into a reality, Will knew he needed a highly motivated support team. Luckily, living on campus made his search easy, and at times Will found himself staying up late into the night talking with others about the limitless possibilities for this exciting new organization. He found his true support system in fellow engineering majors and Honors students Riley Dunn, 21, and Diego Aguilar, 21, who helped transform Prototype CSULB from concept into reality. Riley's intense focus and motivation drove the drafting of the club's first constitution while Diego's unique insight and advice grounded the club with structure and purpose. In essence, having an idea is a start, but without an outlet to gain feedback and connect with those who want to help, the spark can fade and truly brilliant ideas can remain unrealized. Will notes this occurrence as a major challenge facing the community aspect of CSULB, "too many people, especially at this commuter school, come to class and then just go home," Will believes that Prototype can provide a solution to this sense of disconnect by establishing, "a place where students can come and bounce around ideas ... a creative space with room for people to grow."

Will recalls an enthusiastic start during the fall of 2015, with many curious students attending the first few meetings and sharing their awesome ideas. Brainstorming sessions on possible projects produced proposals like firefighting robots, reward-based parking apps for commuters, garbage-collecting drones, and much more. As the semester progressed, however, road blocks began to appear: membership became less consistent, communication was hectic, and project teams were having trouble getting established and staying motivated. Despite this, Will and his new board of executives decided to remain positive and continue developing the club instead of giving up.



As with any innovative idea, working through hardships and shortcomings is one of the key paths to success. Within the club's second year, much of the focus became addressing the challenges at hand. Some members felt the weekly meetings were unproductive or not suited to their particular interests. To remedy this, the executive members created a more structured schedule, including personal and professional development workshops, more brainstorming time and an increased number of social events to inspire a greater sense of community, trust, and friendship among members. Increasing club reputability and resources is being achieved by deepening the relationship with the College of Business on campus. "We are very involved with the business department here. And I hope to get more involved with Engineering and the Arts as well," says Will.

The future also provides many opportunities for growth and evolution within the club. One of the larger scale goals is a Prototype-run event called InnovateCSULB that would bring campus organizations, students and local businesses together in order to execute a social-action project within the community. Will notes another opportunity for growth stating that, "Dean Solt [College of Business] and a couple other business professors ... are working to change the culture of Long Beach State to be more of an innovative, start-up-community type school. I hope that Prototype can be sort of attached at the hip with this initiative." One additional connection for Prototype that may serve to expand the club's recognition would be increased involvement with thesis project development, for both Honors and graduate studies. In the end, all of these plans for expansion converge on the ideal of making Prototype an accessible, reputable and valuable resource for anyone who may need it.

In order to promote inclusivity, Prototype maintains a policy of free membership for students of all majors. If a student is interested in getting involved, Will suggests, "You can see the organization itself as a company and focus on running it, or you can come to the club with an idea and work towards creating an actual business within your team." Even if a potential member is not particularly interested in business or innovation, there is almost always a way in which they can contribute their unique skill set somewhere within the organization. Any alumni, faculty, or local businesses interested in this burgeoning organization are welcome to become a part of this unique new community. As a parting word to all CSULB students, Will reminds us to "Take your passions one more step than academia does." Join a club, start your own club, or get involved in your community because so many opportunities are waiting just beyond the classroom walls; you just have to look!



# She Might Even Be a Rock Star

## Katelyn Campbell

Millions of people dream of being on stage in front of 15,000 people; of having a crowd sing along to their songs; of being a rock star. For Lucy Giles, this dream is reality. Playing for huge crowds, making music, and making memories was her actuality in the fall of 2016.

Lucy is in her first year studying studio art, but she has another identity that separates her from the rest of the student body at CSULB. Lucy and her sister, Gwennie, founded the punk rock/rock 'n' roll band Dog Party when they were just nine and eleven years old, respectively. Lucy sings and plays the drums while her sister sings and plays the guitar. Unlike most bands that begin in adolescence, Dog Party has found major success. Besides having five records available for purchase on iTunes, Dog Party recently had the privilege of opening for the punk rock band Green Day during their 2016 tour that began on September 20, 2016, and concluded on October 26, 2016.

Although Lucy was living the rock star dream, she still had to balance work and school while on tour. Due to the tour dates, Lucy was gone for an entire month during the Fall 2016 semester,

and even though she was met with some opposition from professors regarding make-ups and alternate assignments, Lucy pushed through to ensure that she and her sister wouldn't have to miss performing. Lucy stated, "It was a crazy whirlwind of trying to get stuff done, but it was totally worth it." She managed her time accordingly, and at the end of the semester she could say not only that she toured with Green Day but also that she achieved three A's and two B's in her classes.

Aside from passing her classes, Lucy saw success with her band beginning to gain a fan base. She remarked, "Seeing people smiling, dancing, and singing along to our material is euphoric. It's the reason I do what I do." Her ultimate wish is to inspire people and make them happy with what she's doing. Currently, she is working on her next album and is excited to see what the future of Dog Party brings.

As for Dog Party's available records, all five are out on iTunes, on Spotify, or on the AsianManRecords website. Her personal favorite songs are "Be My Friend," "Peanut Butter Dream," and "O Brave New World." The fan favorites typically include "Jet Pack" and "The World is Not a Game."



# She's with Her — Katie Henson

Few students choose to be involved politically beyond voting every four years. Most young people feel distant from politics, assuming their voices don't matter. Some, however, believe that they can make their voices be heard. One such student is Steph Argent, a freshman theater and political science major. She is an Honors student who had the unique opportunity of participating in Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign. This amazing opportunity came the summer before she started college, and is just the start of how politically involved she plans to get.

Steph's involvement began when she was offered fellowships related to the campaign that she could not be a part of due to school starting. Instead, she decided to become involved in the campaign locally by phone banking, which involves cold-calling people to encourage them to vote, and helping inspire others in Long Beach to participate. She saw this as fun and worthwhile, but it was just the tip of the iceberg for her. Steph has been fascinated with politics for years, stemming from her father's same love and her memories of Obama's elections. During the 2008 election, Steph developed an admiration for Hillary Clinton, and hoped she would run again. Sure enough, Clinton announced her campaign, and on Steph's birthday, no less. This inspired her to become involved in the movement, fighting for her hero and learning about political processes at the same time.

Steph started college strong, working hard as the CSULB ambassador for Hillary Clinton and joining the CSULB College Democrats Student Organization. On the momentous day of the election, Steph joined her fellow college Democrats in anxious anticipation. However, by the end of the night, Hillary Clinton had suffered a narrow defeat. This was something that both frustrated and inspired Steph. She didn't feel like her efforts were a waste, but rather an important step toward deciding what she wants in life and seizing hold of it. Steph is currently deciding if she wants to be an actress to inspire change through art or a politician to directly cause change. "If she can't be our champion, maybe I can," she says, "no matter how farfetched that might sound."

Being proactive has opened doors for Steph that she never anticipated. She is the auxiliary political director for the College Democrats, and, as such, had the opportunity to go to Sacramento to lobby state legislators for more affordable and accessible higher education. She is even considering helping campaign for the 2020 election, and hopes that Kamala Harris will run. She is taking classes that will help shape her stances and expand her knowledge on real-world issues, one such class being UHP 201, an Honors class discussing climate change and sustainability. Now that the election is over, Steph is applying for internships to work with senators and local politicians, but she will never forget the impact that Clinton and her campaign have had on her. Having already taken so many amazing opportunities so early in her higher education, there is no telling what the future will hold, but for Steph and potentially the world, the future is looking bright.



Go Beach

# Don't Mock It 'til You Try It

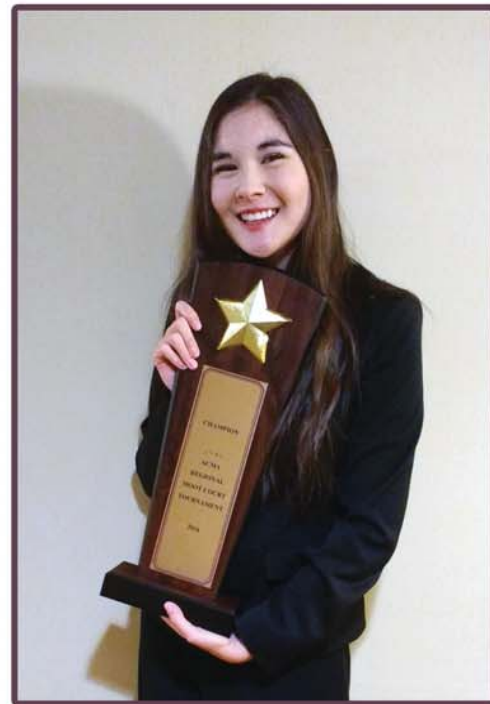
Tara Thomas

One of the goals of the Honors program is to enrich the education of students with diverse perspectives and critical minds. This pursuit also rings true for the team of ambitious students who participate in the appellate argument simulations known as moot court. For those who are not familiar with the process, moot court competitions consist of 40-minute oral arguments where two-person teams must support both sides of a given court case (20 minutes to each side). This performance is then judged based on the student's knowledge of the case, responses to questioning, professional demeanor and forensic skills. Freshman marketing major Anna Sasaki has gained invaluable experience and achievement participating in this organization.

Coming from a background of debate and mock trial in high school, Anna was looking for something similar at the college level. She reached out to the moot court team at CSULB through the recommendation of a friend. She has since competed across the country, winning a scrimmage in the fall, qualifying at regionals in November, and

going on to rank in the top 32 at nationals this January. All of these accomplishments would not have been possible, however, without the support of her debate partner, her teammates, and the club's head coach, Dr. Lewis Regiel.

The amazing people that she met were just one of the many high-points of Anna's experience in moot court. She also noted the outstanding networking opportunities it has provided her with in the legal community,



being that many of the competition judges are practicing lawyers themselves.

The specific skills being practiced throughout the program also provide an advantage when it comes to future job prospects. "Every employer is going to be

looking for somebody who is a team player, somebody who can communicate ideas well, somebody with good critical thinking skills," she explains. In addition, the development of a more analytical mindset has proven useful in academics, especially when it is necessary to approach complex problems or topics from multiple viewpoints.

On the topic of varying perspectives, Anna also mentioned the cultural differences that they had to account for when competing across the country. One instance involves her teammate's inclusion of a humorous jab at Donald Trump in one of his speeches that was well-received in the liberal climate of Southern California, but was rightfully modified when they took their argument to the southern state of Louisiana. "You kind of have to know your audience," stated Anna. Being able to communicate respectfully and effectively with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds is one of the crucial lessons she has learned from competing on the team.

Anna's favorite memory as a moot court member surprisingly took place after an unexpected defeat in Colorado Springs. Back at a hotel following the competition, Anna remembers commiserating with the team until nearly two in the morning. "It was a really good bonding experience," she recalls, "I think because we all shared in that disappointment and were all on this level of feeling mediocre and wanting to push harder for the next competition." As with any competitive endeavor, sometimes you win and sometimes you fail. The most important part is learning from the experience and walking away with the passion to practice more and try harder in hopes of doing better the next time around. Anna already feels like she has made significant progress with her public speaking and research skills since she first started moot court this past summer, and looks forward to what might be accomplished in her remaining years.



Anna Sasaki (center) and partner Just Adofina (right of Anna) holding awards for their moot court program, accompanied by their coach and donors.

# Golden Opportunity

Katherine Henson

The opportunity to study anywhere in the world is not only rarely taken, but taken for granted. Many CSULB students are content with Southern California's sense of familiarity and stable weather, seeing no reason to take classes anywhere else. Fourth-year Chelsea Powell, however, had a much different view of how her school experience should be. Chelsea is a Spanish major with a minor in TESOL (Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages). She has loved the Spanish language since high school, and has been fascinated with Spain for years. After her first year as a Psychology major, Chelsea discovered her true passion for Spanish and changed her major with an added minor in TESOL to incorporate her love of teaching English learners. She spent fall of 2015 in Spain and summer of 2016 in Costa Rica, describing these as amazing opportunities that taught her about herself and the world around her.

Chelsea sees Spain as the beginning of it all: the origin of the Spanish language and the country that established Latin America. She took advantage of the Study Abroad program on campus and spent her fall semester in Spain at the University of Salamanca. This university was established in 1218, which Chelsea found fascinating. Being able to attend such a historic university only added to her excitement. Chelsea enjoyed sightseeing, though she experienced a bit of discrimination as an American student. She also described the grading system in Spain as being much harder than at CSULB, with her entire grade being based on one project and one exam. Despite these difficulties, Chelsea still loved her time in Spain, especially being able to eat authentic Spanish food and travel to places like Barcelona and Portugal. She left feeling much more confident in her ability to speak Spanish, and claims that studying abroad is a great way to learn a language. She feels that studying abroad isn't for everyone – it has to be due to a genuine interest in the opportunity, and culture shock and adversities are inevitable. However, she says that studying abroad is a great way to learn about yourself and others around the world, and it gives people a completely new perspective. "It makes you a more well-rounded person," she says. "It's important to see how other people live. We're a very diverse country, and we forget about people living in other places."

Chelsea describes her experience in Costa Rica as a golden opportunity that fell right into her lap through the Honors Program. After her semester in Spain, Chelsea returned to the U.S. three weeks into the spring semester. She had to quickly compile a schedule, and the only Honors class available was International Studies 320: Migration and Modernity. It was through this class that she met Dr. Fouratt, whose research is focused on Central America. Chelsea learned about the region through the class, and the



luckiest part of all, she says, was Dr. Fouratt's offer to join her in a six week stay in Costa Rica. This began as simply another study abroad experience, with Chelsea seeing everything from beaches to banana plantations, but to push herself even further, she decided to apply for an internship during her stay. She landed a position through the Centro de Desarrollo Integral in Barrio Mexico, a poorer area outside of San Jose. Chelsea got her dream opportunity: teaching English to those who, despite their circumstances, wanted to learn.

Chelsea was given the unique opportunity to teach a five-week class as she saw fit. She developed lesson plans, assigned homework, and taught a class ranging from middle school students to the elderly. Everyone brought with them different skill levels and motivation, with some learning as a hobby and some for job opportunities. Most of her students were natives, with a few Nicaraguans, but all were motivated to learn English and attend class. Chelsea taught them a range of language skills from vocabulary to grammar, and she could not have had more fun teaching them. "It wasn't a chore at all, just fun — I looked forward to going into work every day," she recounts. Her favorite part of the experience was developing lesson plans, though she admits to procrastinating in making them at times. She had



previous experience teaching English language learners at a San Diego high school, but there are many different challenges when attempting to teach Central Americans in comparison to North American teenagers.

Chelsea's trip to Costa Rica has become the basis for her Honors thesis project. People from all over Central America seek refuge in Costa Rica, either for political or economic reasons, and all face some challenge in integrating. Nicaraguan immigrants, in particular, face the most prejudice and lack of opportunity. While in the country, she researched refugees and immigrants in Costa Rica and how their educational needs were being met. Chelsea interviewed people in Costa Rica from different origins such as Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Columbia. From this research, she hopes to understand why Central Americans choose Costa Rica as their new home, and how the country and its people are treating them. After completing her thesis and graduating from CSULB, Chelsea hopes to get her teaching credential and work with high school English learners in San Diego. She never imagined she would be able to experience such amazing opportunities as an undergraduate, especially within such close range of each other. The Honors program gave her a once-in-a-lifetime chance to travel and teach. If not for her Honors class with Dr. Fouratt, she may have never had the chance to practice her passion of teaching English – a sign to always seize every golden opportunity.

# A Different Approach

Julia Katz



Most students gearing up to attend a university immediately after high school look forward to the new classes, environment, and activities. This was not the case for Annajane Murphy, 19, a first year student majoring in theatre arts with a possible minor in creative world literature or criminal justice. What she was looking forward to was her gap year in Serbia.

The vibrant redhead from Arcata, California decided to sign up for a program through The American Field Service (AFS) for an opportunity to explore and self-reflect. “I wanted to go someplace that I really had no pre-conceived notions about,” Annajane explained. She decided Serbia was the ideal place to do that.

Annajane essentially repeated her senior year of high school in the science program taught at a local high school, or *Gimnazia*. “I chose the science track because fewer kids spoke English, and I wanted to make sure I learned Serbian,” she explained. The initial challenge paid off and now Annajane can speak conversational Serbian. She proved herself to be an academic rock star even before she began at CSULB as a President’s Scholar and University Honors Program student.

When Annajane was not in class, she had a blast exploring the nearby cities. From joining a choir, going out for Turkish coffee, or just spending time at the host family homes, Annajane had plenty of time to accomplish her goal of self-exploration. When asked to compare the atmosphere to Southern California, she shared, “The towns are way more laid back ... Serbian time is like an hour late!”

To get a taste of Serbian culture from your location, here are some insider tips. In terms of transportation, Annajane remarked, “People definitely have fewer cars; it’s

public transportation.” Buses were ideal for getting place to place. Annajane added, “My first host family had one car that the dad would drive upon occasion.” Another tip: be prepared to eat meat and lots of it. burek is a common pastry, which is filo dough layered with meat, cheese, or fruit. It is traditionally enjoyed with drinking yogurt.

Returning to California and CSULB, Annajane has a new perspective of the world. Overall, the world seems smaller but full of friends everywhere. Her exchange class consisted of 23 people, Annajane being the only one from the United States. “I definitely gained a knowledge of cultural differences,” she reflected. “Now, when I learn about world affairs, I can always fact check with someone that’s on the ground.”

Annajane has remained active throughout her studies at CSULB. She enjoys events organized by UHP, RAs, and the campus at large. When she is not busy auditioning for roles, Annajane takes Krav Maga classes—a form of self-defense mixed martial arts created by the Israel Defense Force—. Annajane is succeeding in terms of her studies, but also as a world traveler with a newfound confidence in herself and the world. Annajane mused, “I feel like it was a very good transition into fending for myself.”



## Playing the Fields

Devynne Honsa

I had the pleasure of sitting down with a member of the Honors Program to discuss her study abroad experience. Esmeralda Castro, 21, traveled to the United Kingdom over the Spring 2016 semester to further her studies pursuing a degree in Kinesiology at CSULB. Her time away taught her more about herself and helped broaden her perspective of the world.

Almost immediately, I noticed her joy and enthusiasm. Talking about her experience in Europe made her face light up. We had a great time laughing and discussing her adventures. During her semester, she traveled to many cities throughout Europe, including Barcelona, Vienna, Prague, Edinburgh, and Manchester. She remarked that the traveling was one of the most exciting parts of the trip – especially considering she had never traveled using public transit before. She explained, “I learned [the public transportation system] on the go. I was surprised how great it was, and it was easy.”

Esmeralda is an avid soccer player, having played since she was five years old and now playing on the club team at CSULB. Traveling to the U.K. didn’t stop her from participating; she was also able to visit several stadiums in Manchester. She described the incredible experience of sitting front row at one of the soccer games at Etihad Stadium. When asked who she went with, Esmerelda laughed. “No one!” she said. “I went by myself, because nobody wanted to go with me. It was my only solo trip.” Even though she went alone, she admitted that it is one of her favorite memories of her experience in the U.K.

We started talking about the actual “study” aspect of a study abroad program, diving into discussion on the classes she took. As a senior at CSULB, Esmerelda currently plans to continue her education after graduation to become a physical therapist. She noted that the classes she attended gave her the opportunity to learn about some careers and programs that she had never heard about before, including programs that focused on allowing people with disabilities to engage and participate in sports comfortably. She said that learning about how other cultures incorporate different sports programs encouraged her to try to bring the things she learned abroad back to her community at home.

As for advice for anyone considering studying abroad, Esmerelda has one thing to say:

**“Just do it!”**

She recalled her time abroad with nostalgia and remarked that “the hardest thing about the trip was coming back to reality once it was over.” As we parted ways, she admitted that she wants to go back every day – and the way she smiled when she talked about the trip made me want to jump on a plane and head to Europe myself.



## Get Nervous

Katelyn Campbell

As the semesters drag on, we, as college students, realize that our education will soon come to an end and we’ll have to enter the workforce. Some may go straight into their careers, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, but many others will find themselves applying for and attending graduate programs, increasing their knowledge in their fields to better prepare them for the “real world” jobs. Beth Ellis, a graduate student at UC Irvine and former Honors student, chose the latter.

Beth is currently working toward her master’s degree in teaching and single subject credential in English language arts. She graduated from CSULB in Spring 2016 with a Bachelor of Arts in English education with an emphasis and a minor in journalism. While she attended CSULB, Beth was a part of the Daily 49er and The Honor Code. Along with her graduate studies, she is currently student teaching at Foothill High School in Tustin Unified School District and working as a server at California Pizza Kitchen.

Teaching hasn’t always been Beth’s ultimate career goal. Though she was initially interested in the field of journalism, Beth realized that it wasn’t for her. Thinking back on her decision to switch, Beth stated, “I realized that my passion was at the front of the classroom. I adore journalism and the entire newsroom scene, but I quickly realized that I only liked being involved in it because I was good at it.” Beth decided to take on the challenge and switch her major to English education in her junior year.

Beth is one of sixty students in her master’s and credential program; it lasts only fourteen months compared to the usual twenty-four to thirty-month programs. She stays busy with a jam-packed schedule beginning at five in the morning and often not ending until eight at night, but she states, “I am ready and willing to invest the bulk of my time into this program because I value it so highly. It is one of the greatest and most reassuring feelings to know that I am exactly in the place I am meant to be.” Beth looks forward to one day showing her students the versatility of language, making a difference in their lives and learning from them in ways she never thought possible.

When it comes to teaching, Beth’s biggest fear is that she will walk into her classroom prepared with a lesson plan that does not engage and motivate her students.. Her biggest desire is to simultaneously teach and motivate her students, and failing to do so would be the equivalent of letting them down. Regardless, Beth is excited to start her career as an educator.

Her advice to those choosing a major and career is to recognize what truly excites you. If



you’re nervous, it’s a sign that you are where you’re meant to be, so find what makes you nervous. Her advice for future educators is to go “meta.” She remarks on the necessity for teachers to truly understand the reason why they want to teach, what they want to get out of the career, and the value they see behind their choice. Remember folks, **“Stay nervous!”**



# Caitlin Sojka and the National Institutes of Health Internship

*By Alysha Robinson*

When you are approaching the end of your undergraduate career in college, the nerve-wracking question of “What’s next?” begins to sink itself into every crevice of your mind, making it almost impossible to think of anything else. Alumna Caitlin Sojka, 22, a former marine biology major at CSULB, currently pursuing a career in biomedical research, felt the same heavy burden while approaching the end of her college years. Caitlin was very committed to her school work and research in her years at CSULB, but she hadn’t yet conceived of a concrete idea for her future. She took some time to adjust to the heavy workload during her first two years of college; subsequently, when she applied to an internship during her sophomore year, she was rejected.

This story, however, is not one of tragedy but of triumph. After her rejection she buckled down and developed a sense of drive and discipline that lead her to be accepted into the National Institute of Health program (NIH). The prestigious NIH program is located in Maryland and “gives recent graduates the opportunity to work in a research lab as well as take classes, if they choose to do so, so long as they apply to PhD or MD programs upon completion.” NIH conducts research involving biological ailments. Caitlin is working with doctors and principal investigators with years of experience on diseases such as the genetic syndromes: Smith-Lemli-Opitz syndrome (SLOS) and Niemann-Pick Disease, type C1 (NPC1). Many of the labs she works in are case-sensitive and cannot be disclosed!

To change her trajectory from rejection to success, Caitlyn began researching and seeking out opportunities. She utilized CSULB campus

resources to make connections. Prior to being accepted into the program, she worked in the lab on campus for several years. She also participated in another internship at the Medical University of South Carolina and a research program in Japan. However, her experience in the NIH program is “very different from working in a research lab as an undergraduate.” She must be very self-reliant as it is very common for her to never see her boss or for them to not even know her name. This major adjustment does not dissuade her from continuing to strive for greatness though. Upon preparing for the program, she remarked, “I had to come to the realization that I would make mistakes and embarrass myself on occasion, but that’s just part of the process.” She is working on accepting her losses and learning from them rather than feeling defeated.

Caitlin went into a two-year internship rather than going straight to graduate school because she “did not feel ready to apply for graduate school and wanted more research experience in a biomedical laboratory.” Caitlin emphasized that, “what you learn in a classroom is only a fraction of what you need to know.” You can study a book all day, but it will not be the same as getting real world experience on how to utilize it. She chose to intern to determine if she actually liked biomedical research. Thus far she has discovered, “I really need to incorporate marine biology into biomedical research because that is what really excites me.”

Caitlin almost didn’t apply to the NIH internship as she was a marine biology major and most of the students that apply have a pre-med background, but it ended up being one of the best decisions of her life. She exclaimed, “Anyone who is afraid to apply to a program: think about how great it would be to get accepted and that the worst that could happen is that you have to keep looking.” So, start on those applications.



# It's the Most Stressful Time of the Year

Alysha Robinson

It's spring, the sun is shining, and you're starting to relax in preparation for summer unless you're a senior working on your thesis project. Take comfort from recent graduate Rachel Thomson who has successfully completed hers. A major in kinesiology exercise science, Rachel found inspiration for her thesis topic through an internship at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center in their Cardiac Rehab Center in the fall of 2015. The patients she worked with at the rehab center along with her kinesiology class, entitled Clinical Exercise Electrocardiography, inspired her to conduct her research on cardiac rehabilitation for phase III patients. Phase III is part of a three-phase program at the hospital to help people suffering from cardiac symptoms. This final phase is an out-patient program that includes exercise,

prescribed following a cardiac event or condition. It is meant to maintain the health benefits acquired in phase II, and is for patients who feel more comfortable exercising in a facility that can aid in any issues that might occur.

Rachel encourages others not to tackle their thesis all on their own. She received considerable help from her research advisor, Dr. Schick, whom she selected to be her mentor after taking one of his classes. Despite starting with a different advisor, she decided to switch to Dr. Schick because he knew how to challenge her and understood and supported her goals for the project. When she hit roadblocks during her research, she would turn to her advisor and even her mom and twin sister for encouragement. Her advisor was also there to help her edit and revise her thesis statement which she had to do



many times throughout the process.

The Cardiac Rehab Center also proved to be very helpful in her research; they provided much of the data for her thesis. She was able to speak with the director and then get International Review Board (IRB) approval, which is needed when working with human subjects. From there she was able to use data based on the patients at the rehab center to provide evidence for her research. She recommends to consult any resources available for assistance on one's thesis journey, including advisors, teachers, family members, and the Honors program staff.

Rachel looks back on her thesis project as a positive experience, saying she enjoyed bonding with everyone else also working diligently on their thesis. To all those who are about to start their thesis, Rachel says, "Make sure you pick something you are passionate about and find a thesis advisor who will be passionate about you and your interests and share them as well. This is a big part of your life right now, and everyone involved should be on board. It is supposed to be fun. If you have to stop and really ask yourself what you are doing, don't be afraid to change your topic."



# Engineering, Biology, and Dual Gradient

Sophia Soliman

While most students attending CSULB are gearing up for Spring Break, seniors in the University Honors Program are kicking their thesis projects into high gear. UHP senior Rodolfo Amezcua is no exception. His thesis, entitled “Dual Gradient Chemotaxis Chamber System” is about chemotaxis, or the movement of chemicals in relation to a chemical gradient. As a whole, Rodolfo’s thesis holds many exciting innovations and implications for the worlds of engineering, biology, and medicine.

Though dual gradient may sound intimidating, even to those without a science background, his thesis essentially explores how to simplify it. Rodolfo likened the biomaterial cube to food coloring. When the food coloring passes through the sides of the cube, it is called a “dual concentration gradient.” Rodolfo measured how quickly the metaphoric food coloring passed through the water cube so that he could identify the gradient when encountering cell migrations in future experiments.

Rodolfo was inspired to research this topic after examining similar studies. Other research utilizes just one chemical to study the process of chemotaxis, while Rodolfo’s thesis utilizes two

**Rodolfo’s thesis holds many exciting innovations and implications for the worlds of engineering, biology, and medicine**

chemicals. He states that he and his advisor, Dr. David Stout, “wanted to create a more physiologically relevant scenario to study how cells move.” Rodolfo’s experiment is likely one of the first to examine cells exposed to a dual chemical gradient, meaning it will yield valuable physiological information. For instance, his upcoming experiments will measure the migratory behavior of the cells when they are exposed to the dual gradient. In the human body, many different cells are often exposed to different dual gradients. As such, Rodolfo’s research could be applied to “combat diseases such as cancer or sepsis where understanding cell migration plays a crucial role in ultimately developing better treatment or therapy.” Overall, Rodolfo’s thesis project could possibly yield essential data for researchers to further analyze the human body and how best to treat it.

# Chemotaxis Chamber Systems, Oh My!

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Rodolfo remarked that though he enjoyed certain aspects of working on his thesis, like utilizing the computing language called MatLab, it was not without its challenges. The process was uniquely difficult as it required not just familiarity with engineering, but biology as well. Rodolfo, though extensively knowledgeable in the former, needed to educate himself on biological processes in order to successfully conduct his thesis project. He states, “Biology can be so complex. There's plenty of proteins and signaling pathways to learn about.”

University Honors students utilize their senior thesis projects as a way to explore their majors from a new angle and with “real world” implications. For Rodolfo, that meant applying the knowledge gained throughout his undergraduate career to research a topic that could potentially help save lives. At CSULB, the senior thesis project is not just another tedious requirement to achieve a degree; it provides an opportunity for students to showcase what they’ve learned and ultimately make a difference in the world.



# Honors House Reaches New Heights

## Devynne Honsa

128 Honors residents. Four Honors resident assistants. Two floors. One family. For the first time, the University Honors Program gained an entire Honors Academic House that has been led by a team of four Honors resident assistants. The Honors House is an academic living community that gives like-minded students the chance to live and learn together.

The Honors House started out as a single floor managed by one RA in the 2015-2016 academic year. Today, the Honors House, now located on the first two floors of the Los Cerritos building in Hillside College on campus, is run by a team of four resident assistants: Elijah Henry, Drew Jorgenson, Emily Sanders, and Chiara Metellus - all exceptionally dedicated members of the University Honors Program.

The Honors House is unique, compared to other residential communities on campus. It is an academic house exclusively for UHP students that encourages intellectual growth, community engagement, and innovative ideas. The environment of the Honors halls in Los Cerritos differ from the other halls in the residential colleges. "Since starting as an Honors RA, I have learned that Honors students are some of the most disciplined and hardworking students and residents," Chiara said. "I don't remember my building consistently overcrowding the classroom to study last year."

The Honors House also allows students to be more connected to UHP, as they are constantly immersed in an environment of learning with fellow members of the program. Drew says that he feels more connected to the Honors program because of his job as an Honors RA. "We have been able to be hands on with the Honors Program in our event planning and in our brainstorming of the bright future of the Honors House," he says. "The hardest aspect of being an Honors RA is incorporating the UHP mindset of academic success while also maintaining an atmosphere of fun and safety."

Diversity and inclusiveness are a huge part of what makes the Honors House so special; the RAs as well as the residents all come in with different majors, backgrounds, ethnicities, interests, and yet are united under the umbrella of being a part of UHP. Utilizing each of their unique skillsets, backgrounds, and personalities, the Honors RAs each bring different perspectives to the table when holding events for their residents.

"As a freshman illustration major in the Honors community, I raised a couple eyebrows," Elijah said. "Many of my peers were engineers, discussing complicated equations and theorems while I did figure drawing in my sketchbook. And while I attended Honors classes, events, and hung out with the Honors guys and girls, I never got to fully understand the scope of what it takes to facilitate an Honors

community." Now as an Honors RA in the new Honors House, Elijah feels more connected to UHP, and he is even able to incorporate the arts into the Honors House events. "It's been so much fun to combine elements of creativity and important aspects of social justice into each event I put on," he said. "Residents seem to respond well to letting their creative juices flow while thinking about their place in the community as an Honors student. We recently had a poetry and positivity night where students got to write poetry and share ideas, while at the same time expressing insecurities and opening up to other residents."



The merging of the first two floors of Los Cerritos to create the Honors House was a huge undertaking, but has been a remarkable success. Emily says that all four of the Honors RAs personalities blend to make the Honors House a great place to be. "All of our different strengths balance and they are one of the first places I go to for support in this job," Emily says, regarding her fellow RAs. "The Honors House has expanded tremendously since last year and I know each one of us has played a part in making that happen."

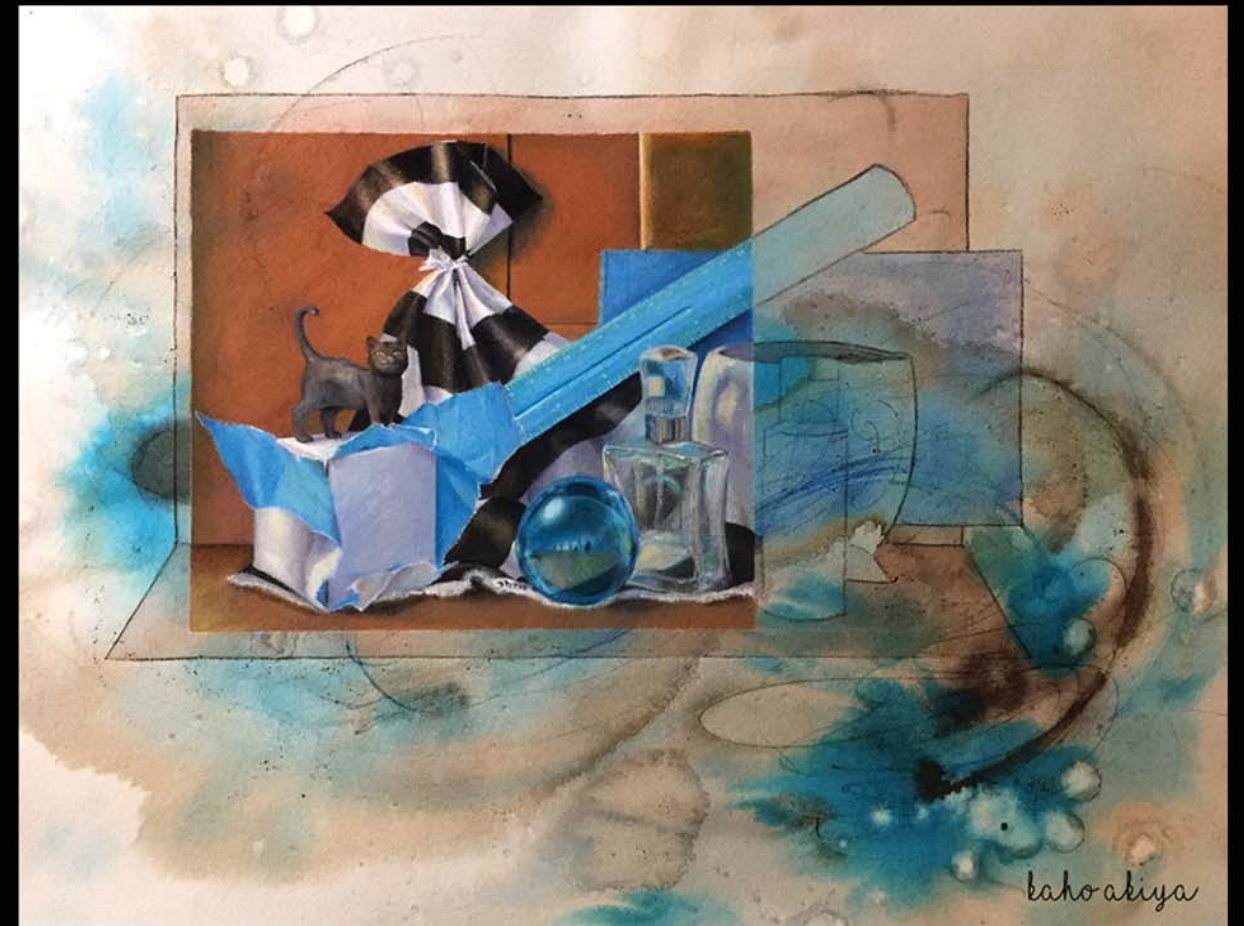
As time goes on, hopefully the Honors House will continue to grow and expand, allowing more and more Honors students the chance to connect and thrive together in a living environment. Future students can become part of this distinguished living situation; when applying for student housing online, they can choose to live in the Honors Living Community. Spaces are limited each year, though, so it is important to secure a spot as soon as possible.



## To Me

A poem's meaning is that faded Polaroid picture  
that you took fourteen years ago when you were high  
and melancholy (it took patience for it to develop  
as you didn't want to shake it);  
the one you joke about when guests are over,  
and reminisce how you threw it away long ago,  
only to pul it out from under your mattress  
once they have all left.  
To gaze at it with white bedsheets draped over your head,  
and a flashlight tucked under your chin.

Poem by: William Luke



*Blue* By: Kaho Akiya



Art By:  
Alexis Zendejas



Art By: Katarina Stiller



Photography By: Sean Isma



Photography by: Brian Vu



**Absolution  
Dedicated to Mary**

**A quiet voice yells in her head.  
She taps the side of her leg exactly three times.  
Tap, Tap, Tap,  
She straightens her posture.**

**At six, she is handed a piece of notebook paper.**

**Name Poems  
The letters of her name stand printed  
in bold, black font  
to make it easier and neater  
for her to fill in the blanks.  
Her name is spelled wrong.  
She is silent  
and says Nothing.  
So she changes her name for Mrs. Higgins.**

**Now she has an h in her name.  
She cannot think of any h words.  
Mrs. Higgins suggests  
Happy.**

**She pulls her tangled hair through the iron clamp.  
The cool girls wear brand-new white vans and uneven eyeliner.  
She pulls her hair harder as the flat iron  
hisses and hisses.  
Her hair lies in flat bumpy sections.**

**She hears the opinions of the girls in the dorm.  
And she obeys.  
She touches the porcelain seat  
and holds on.  
She is a great unknown actress;  
she longs to stutter.  
So someone from the audience will yell,  
“See, it’s all pretend!”  
But she is a magician of sorts,  
and she is just feeling tired today.**

**She lies in bed.  
Perfectly Awake  
She is fine, fine, fine.  
How are you?  
She screams silently.  
Tap. Tap. Tap.**

**The Church is across from the convenience health food store,  
where she used to shop freshmen year  
before she actually paid for her groceries.**

**A portrait of Pieta  
hangs on the door.**

**The overhead fan whirs slowly.  
She can hear the wooden pew  
Hitting the porcelain tile:  
Thump!**

**She sits quietly.  
Tap, Tap, Tap  
Considers leaving . . .  
Tap, Tap, Tap.  
She walks inside the darkly lit room.**

**She looks down.  
She whispers.  
Her voice cracks.  
The Irish priest remembers:  
Kayla.  
She is surprised he remembers who she is.  
She looks up.  
She notices the bulb from the light fixture  
needs replacing.  
It flickers on and off  
On and off.**

**She lets her hands drop  
to her side.  
Yes, that’s me.  
It’s nice to see you again.  
She smiles**

Poem by: Elizabeth Chelling

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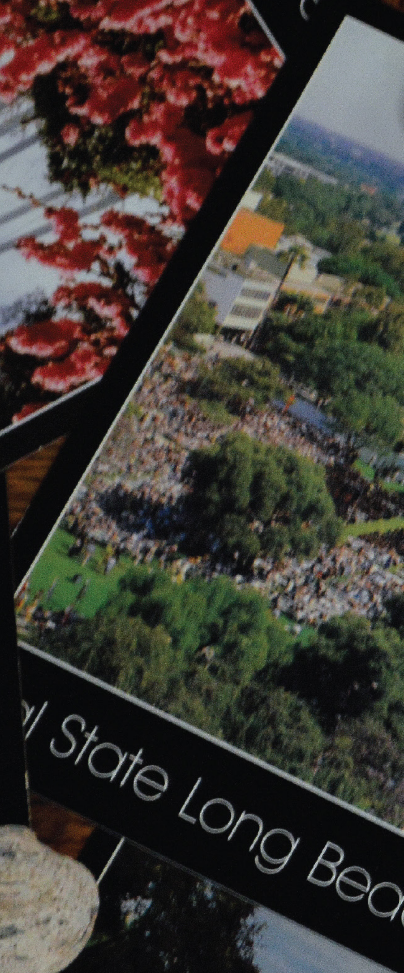
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