



# 2016 UC DAVIS OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARDS

**Monday, May 23, 2016**

*UC Davis Conference Center Ballrooms*



## PROGRAM

Welcome

Outstanding Senior Awards

Center for Student Involvement  
Leadership Awards

Principles of Community Awards

Community Service and  
Civic Engagement Awards

Student Employee of the Year Award

Student Affairs Awards

University Medal

Closing

Reception

## Outstanding Senior Award

(See list of students beginning on page 7) In recognition of a graduating senior from each major who has made an outstanding contribution to his or her learning environment through active academic engagement by involvement in a research group or creative production, significant contributions to classroom discussion, leadership in student groups committed to the advancement of learning, or other intellectual pursuits with faculty and fellow students.

## Advancing Academic and Career Goals Award

*Society of Women Engineers at UC Davis*

In recognition of a registered student organization that successfully promotes academic achievement and provides opportunities for a diverse range of students to explore new areas of interest and develop academic and/or professional qualifications for future success.

## Balanced Leaders Award

*National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) at UC Davis*

In recognition of a registered student organization that best develops members' skills to support time management, academic commitments, social engagement, and self-care. The organization's leaders aspire to achieve academic goals while also maintaining co-curricular involvement and personal wellness.

## Global Engagement Award

*Native American Studies Graduate Student Association*

In recognition of a registered student organization that demonstrates a commitment to exposing UC Davis students to global perspectives, promoting cross-cultural awareness, and exploring intersections of identity between domestic and international communities.

## Inspirational Aggies Award

*Muslim Student Association*

In recognition of a registered student organization that demonstrates a commitment to creating and sustaining a healthy campus climate at UC Davis through programs, activities, and/or initiatives that promote an inclusive and respectful community.

## Organizational Improvement Award

*Solar Car Team at UC Davis*

In recognition of a registered student organization that has taken significant steps in order to improve its overall effectiveness from one year to the next. Areas of improvement may include: member academic success, membership recruitment and retention, budget management, program planning, and leadership while fulfilling the mission and goals of their organization.

## **Excellence in Student Collaboration Award**

*Bhagat Puran Singh Health Initiative*

In recognition of a registered student organization that demonstrates a collaborative and inclusive approach to their projects and a commitment to utilizing diverse frameworks in developing their contributions to education.

## **Adams Award for Leadership in a Student Organization**

*Anna Johnston*

In recognition of individual leadership and accomplishment within registered student organizations, in which the individual effectively directed or influenced the student organization, campus, and/or wider community. The award is in honor of Ted Adams, former director of the UC Davis Student Programs and Activities Center, who wished to recognize student leaders.

## **Principles of Community Week Grant Competition Awards**

In recognition of registered student organizations that are committed to fostering the Principles of Community at UC Davis and that seek to implement activities or programs that exemplify and promote the Principles of Community throughout the student community. The awards are presented by the Office of Campus Community Relations in partnership with the Student Assistants to the Chancellor.

### **Platinum Organization**

*Sher Alliance*

### **Gold Organization**

*Medical Explorers*

### **Silver Organizations**

*Aggies for Humanity*

*Prytanean Women's Honor Society*

### **Bronze Organization**

*Clinica Tepati*

## **Community Service and Civic Engagement Award (First Year)**

*Tiffany Tse*

In recognition of the first year student who has given dedicated service to others that is substantial in breadth, quality, and time commitment. The honoree's service has resulted in a substantive and positive community impact. The honoree not only excels in the areas of leadership and scholarship, but also applies individual abilities in innovative ways to improve the lives of others and has demonstrated a commitment to equity and inclusion.

## Community Service and Civic Engagement Award (Undergraduate)

*Ariella Grozbord*

*Jesus Flores Rodriguez*

*Lauren Salinero*

In recognition of undergraduate students who have given dedicated service to others that is substantial in breadth, quality, and time commitment. The honorees' service has resulted in a substantive and positive community impact. The honorees not only excel in the areas of leadership and scholarship, but also apply their individual abilities in innovative ways to improve the lives of others. The students' service has impacted the campus, local, national, and/or international communities.

## Community Service and Civic Engagement Award (Graduate)

*Hung Doan*

In recognition of a graduate student who has given dedicated service to others that is substantial in breadth, quality, and time commitment. The honoree's service has resulted in a substantive and positive community impact. The honoree not only excels in the areas of leadership and scholarship, but also applies individual abilities in innovative ways to improve the lives of others. The student's service has impacted the campus, local, national, and/or international communities.

## Community Service and Civic Engagement Award (Student Organization)

*Camp Kesem at UC Davis*

In recognition of a student organization known for giving dedicated service that is substantial in breadth, quality, and time commitment. The organization's service has resulted in a positive impact on the campus, local, national, and/or international communities and has touched the lives of many people.

## Student Employee of the Year

*Valerie Cho*

In recognition of a student employee for excellence in reliability, quality of work, initiative, professionalism, and the uniqueness of the student's contributions to the employer.

## Margarita Robinson Student Leadership Award

*Georgia Savage*

In recognition of a junior student for outstanding service and leadership through involvement in recognized student groups and activities. Established in 1982, this award serves as a memorial to Margarita Robinson who was house mother at the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity for 30 years and a founder of the Prytanean Women's Honor Society at UC Davis.

## **Student Promoting Advocacy and Redefining Community Award**

*Sam Alavi*

In recognition of a rising student activist who has displayed a passion for engagement across multiple communities. The award is presented annually by the Community Resource and Retention Centers in homage to a rising student leader who has displayed advocacy for one or more communities.

## **Mary Jeanne Gilhooly Award**

*Brandi Lohr*

In recognition of the graduating woman believed to be the most outstanding in the areas of leadership, scholarship, integrity, and service in the campus community. The award was established in 1942 to memorialize the achievements of Mary Jeanne Gilhooly, recognized as an “unofficial goodwill ambassador to every prospective Aggie.”

## **Veloyce Glenn Winslow, Jr. Award**

*David Belcher*

In recognition of the graduating man believed to be the most outstanding in the areas of leadership, scholarship, integrity, and service in the campus community. This award was established in 1966 to memorialize the achievements of Veloyce Glenn Winslow, Jr., who died while serving as vice president of the student body at UC Davis.

## **Social Justice and Inclusion Award**

*Monique Merritt*

In recognition of the graduating student of any gender who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to social justice in the areas of leadership, scholarship, and service. The honored student has served as a change agent and made a tangible impact on the campus community promoting equity and inclusion.

## **University Medal**

*Lucydalila Cedillo*

In recognition of a graduating senior for excellence in undergraduate studies, outstanding community service, and the promise of future scholarship and contributions to society. The University Medal is the highest university award given to a student completing undergraduate work. The University Medal is awarded at the student's commencement ceremony.

## Outstanding Senior Award

### Carolyn Alessandra

#### *Dramatic Arts*

Tireless and trustworthy, dedicated and driven, professional and proficient, Lyn Allesandra represents the best of what a theatre and dance education can offer. Fearless in her devotion to her fellow students and the work of the faculty, Lyn has been a perfect bridge between the wants of her classmates and the needs of faculty who offer a well-rounded education. She exceeds every expectation and is expert in her execution of every task she undertakes, from organizing student events to working with counseling and faculty to streamline performance concerns. Dramatic Arts is a greater department because she was here, and we will strive to maintain her level of commitment in the future.

### Nina Anderson

#### *Managerial Economics*

Nina has been a remarkable student during her few years at UC Davis. As a sophomore, she was the top A+ student out of 150 enrolled in the toughest course in the Managerial Economic major: Microeconomic Theory. She has subsequently worked as an undergraduate researcher at the UC Agricultural Issue Center, where she has progressed far beyond the relatively routine tasks usually assigned to most student assistants. Because of her analytical and quantitative skills and her talent for clear writing, she is the coauthor of several publications.

### Emery Anderson-Merritt

#### *Geology*

Emery has quietly established himself as an intellectual leader and scholar within the undergraduate community. He was the top student in the capstone field geology course. He is contributing original observations and interpretations with his ongoing senior thesis research involving detailed, field-based studies at two sites along the San Andreas Fault. The research will enable future measurements to determine rates of fault motion at these locations. As part of the UC Davis STEMwiki project, Emery helped to produce open-access structural geology course materials. He is a superbly capable scientist with an impressive breadth of knowledge in diverse areas of Earth Science.

### Jeff Arata

#### *Italian*

Jeff is a double major in Italian and Mathematics with an impressive 4.0 in Italian and 3.88 overall GPA. His insightful, inclusive participation in class activities has consistently characterized his academic engagement. Jeff has been deeply involved in the departmental community through the CIAO club and was an exemplary intern and group leader at a primary school in Florence during his Quarter Abroad experience.

### **Mariah Arevalo**

#### *Computer Science*

Mariah is a fervent student and truly values learning as a lifelong endeavor. She has been an outstandingly engaged student in both the department and the Computer Science Club. She consistently volunteers for UC Davis outreach events, including coordinating a volunteer program to welcome and connect transfer students. She has shown exceptional leadership and educational zeal in her time at UC Davis.

### **Nancy Au**

#### *Sociology – Organizational Studies*

Nancy is a phenomenal student, with the top GPA for an Organizational Studies major. She is incredibly smart and sociologically insightful. Nancy presented her research at this spring's Undergraduate Research Conference. In addition to her unparalleled academic skills, Nancy has excelled in several internships, including one at the UC Center Sacramento Public Policy Program, and has an impressive record of volunteer service.

### **Parnya Baradaran**

#### *Computer Engineering*

Parnya is an outstanding student with a nearly perfect grade point average. Not only does she excel in learning and practicing the course material individually, she has demonstrated exceptional teamwork and leadership abilities in working with her project partners. In addition to being an excellent scholar, Parnya also serves as the academic peer advisor in her department and is the student representative for the Computer Engineering Undergraduate Program Committee (UGPC), providing valuable insight and input from students' perspectives to the committee.

### **Jennifer Bloomquist**

#### *Biological Sciences*

Jennifer is a unique student with great enthusiasm for science and an innate ability to rapidly understand the content and significance of scientific work. Not only has she excelled in her own academic pursuits, she has worked to help other students as a tutor for the Biological Sciences core course in Cell Biology. Through her own initiative, she went above and beyond the responsibilities of a tutor in creating study guides for students for many aspects of the course. Her work has had a huge impact, making students better prepared and more confident in their abilities to master the material.

### **Kaili Brande**

#### *Environmental Science and Management*

Kaili wrote an exceptional honors thesis which examined the mismatch between threats to survival of endangered birds and mammals in California and the strategies used to aid recovery. Her creative work provides guidance to help improve management of public conservation agencies and was presented at the UC Davis Undergraduate Research Conference. Kaili led

outreach for the Environmental Club and worked as an Aggie Ambassador, educating the public about the Arboretum. Her outgoing nature and enthusiasm make her an outstanding spokesperson for the environment and our university.

### **Alexis Caligiuri**

#### *Science and Technology Studies*

Alexis has excelled in all of her courses across a number of different disciplines. Her senior thesis on the connections between Edward Snowden and the culture of science fiction is intellectually ambitious, politically savvy, and remarkably insightful. She is a core member of the 2016 UC Davis iGEM team, adding crucial perspectives to an interdisciplinary scientific research project in synthetic biology. In addition to her extraordinary scholarship, she has been active in ASUCD and other student organizations since her first year on campus. Alexis has also been an important voice for diversity and equality at UC Davis. She is an outstanding citizen of the community.

### **David Castellano-Ladd**

#### *Sociology*

As a McNair Scholar, Provost's Undergraduate Fellow, and holder of a near-perfect GPA, David has distinguished himself as the top graduating Sociology major this year. David has excelled in coursework, including a graduate-level course in statistical analysis, and also in research where his project, "Examining the Link Between Teacher Ratings of Students' Ability and Gender Gaps in Elementary and Middle School Science Achievement" was selected for presentation at the UC Davis Undergraduate Research Conference. David's studies are motivated by his experience as a para-educator and tutor in disadvantaged Sacramento schools. He intends to continue studying educational inequalities through a Ph.D. in Sociology.

### **Lucydalila Cedillo**

#### *Animal Science*

Lucy is the first member of her family to attend college. Not only has she maintained a 4.0 GPA, but she earned A+'s in 75% of her graded courses. Lucy also completed an exceptional undergraduate research project and is currently preparing a manuscript for publication that describes her results. She is always happy to lend a helping hand and is well liked by students, faculty, and staff. After graduation, Lucy will be joining the Biological and Biomedical Sciences Program at Harvard University to pursue a Ph.D. in Genetics.

### **Bethany Celio**

#### *Sustainable Environmental Design*

As a member of the first full graduating class of the new Sustainable Environmental Design major, Bethany has both the top academic record and an impressive record of public service. This year she served as a Carbon Neutrality Initiative Student Engagement Fellow, a student assistant for Professor Claire Napawan, a research intern in Bokashi composting for

doctoral candidate Sahoko Yui, and on several campus committees. She held a lead role for the UC Davis successful 2015 entry into the Solar Decathlon, and she served as a communications intern for the Committee for Green Foothills in Palo Alto. Bethany is a dynamic and popular student with impressive abilities to communicate complex issues clearly, work with others, and solve sustainability problems.

### **Veronica Chan**

#### *Landscape Architecture*

Veronica has demonstrated herself to be a leader who has the diverse skills necessary to tackle the landscape architecture profession. Known by her studio professors to be a dedicated designer with a strong work ethic, she constantly challenges herself and encourages her peers within the design studio, and she takes initiative to hold leadership roles within and outside the classroom. She has received high praise from faculty instructing her in design, technology, and ecology courses, citing her work ethic and her ability to collaborate. She is an active member of the student chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

### **Jiun Rong “James” Chen**

#### *Electrical Engineering*

James is an outstanding student who, besides achieving a close to perfect GPA, has engaged extensively in undergraduate research. He recently published a first-author paper at the 2016 IEEE International Microwave Symposium which is the premier conference in the radio frequency and microwave engineering field. He was awarded an IEEE Microwave Theory and Techniques Society undergraduate student fellowship for his research. In addition, James served as the president of the IEEE student chapter in the 2014-15 academic year and is very active in extracurricular activities.

### **Naomi Cholst**

#### *Agricultural and Environmental Education*

Noami has served as a peer advisor for the past three years, giving her fellow students clear direction in the many different majors within Animal Science, especially Agricultural and Environmental Education. She organized the annual ANS Career Symposium for two years. Her honor's project, “Agricultural Single Subject Waiver,” will be sent to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing in June. Through this project, Naomi has helped both current and future students who seek to become agricultural teachers.

### **Brittany Cunningham**

#### *Marine and Coastal Sciences*

Brittany is graduating from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences with a double major in Marine and Coastal Science and Animal Science with an impressive GPA in both. She was a top student at the Bodega Marine Laboratory (BML) during the summer of 2015, taking both Summer

Sessions and completing two distinct research projects. She then worked as the Bodega Marine Laboratory recruiter, helping advertise the summer courses and advising students interested in taking courses at BML.

### **Megan Deino**

#### *Japanese*

Megan has combined her remarkable performance in all of her classes with exceptional contributions outside of class. She excelled as an intern serving on location in Japan at a particularly challenging children's home over summer 2015 as part of the Japan Children's Home Internship Program (JCHIP). Upon her return, she took a very active role in organizing and administering the program for the next set of interns, assisting in all aspects, including fundraising. Her honors thesis work, as well as her role in departmental and other organizations' events, make her an exemplar of what a student in the Japanese major can accomplish.

### **Louis Edelman**

#### *Aerospace Science and Engineering*

Louis is a bright, enthusiastic, focused, and well-organized student who possesses exceptional communication and leadership skills. In addition to his exemplary achievements in the classroom, Louis was an active member – including captain in 2013/14 – of the UC Davis Advanced Modeling Aeronautics Team (AMAT) RC airplane design team that participated in several SAE Aero Design competitions. Under his leadership, AMAT took home two top awards, including first place in the coveted Overall Advanced Class category, at the 2014 SAE Aero Design West competition in Fort Worth, Texas. In preparation for his graduate studies in Aerospace Engineering, Louis worked as an intern at NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center in Southern California and is currently an intern at NASA Langley Research Center in Virginia conducting research on flow control devices.

### **Ysabel Felix**

#### *Textiles and Clothing*

Ysabel has followed a rigorous curriculum, maintaining an excellent GPA and earning a well-deserved place on the Dean's Honors list. She also served as an academic peer advisor for the Textiles and Clothing major. In addition to this award, Ysabel was presented with the 2016 Outstanding Senior Award by the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists (AATCC).

### **Hope Fisher**

#### *Hydrology*

Hope is graduating with the highest GPA in her graduating class in Hydrology. She has taken an active interest in numerous facets of hydrology which she continuously expanded through internships at research labs within the Land, Air and Water Resources Department. Hope truly represents a role model for her peers by displaying passion, spirit, and a committed desire to make UC Davis and the world a better place.

### **Brian Goebel**

#### *Statistics*

Brian has earned this award based on both his academic excellence and his extraordinary service contributions to the Department of Statistics. With a near perfect cumulative GPA, his academic achievements are truly outstanding. He was an exemplary student peer adviser, developing great rapport with faculty and fellow students, as well as playing a significant role in managing the department growth. He is a wonderful colleague as well as a first-rate scholar.

### **Kelley Hamilton**

#### *Viticulture and Enology*

Kelley is currently working on a research project in Dr. Hildegard Heymann's laboratory on the sensory properties of rose wine made with different production methods. She will be presenting her project at the American Society of Enology & Viticulture conference in June. Kelly is an extraordinary and motivated scholar, and there is no doubt that she will continue to make important contributions to the field of viticulture.

### **Ronald Hart**

#### *Global Disease Biology*

For two quarters in a row since he became a Global Disease Biology major, Ron has made it onto the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Dean's Honors List. His faculty course instructors, independent of each other, describe Ron as a student who is not only very smart and eager to learn, but also contributes positively to the classroom environment and to group discussions. Ron is a role model for students in the major, and most deserving of the recognition that comes with an Outstanding Senior Award.

### **Jessica Howard**

#### *Physics*

Jessica's participation, service, and energetic fundraising for the Physics Club has resulted in many school and public outreach demonstrations, social events, and an expanded club room reference library. She has been a primary mover in the continued success of our popular Picnic Day shows, contributing her strong leadership and organizational skills. Academically, Jessica has one of the highest GPAs in the major as well as being active in undergraduate research. She presented her work at the Undergraduate Research Conference with impending publication of her research. Jessica richly deserves this honor.

### **Yanan Hu**

#### *Chinese*

Yanan is a triple major in Chinese, International Relations, and East Asian Studies and has been a consistently top student in all three disciplines. Equally important is his wide range of significant services to his departments as well as to students and the Davis community at large. In the past three years, he

has taken on multiple roles as academic peer advisor in Chinese, President of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association, and as a teacher of Chinese calligraphy and Tai Chi classes which are open to the public and free of charge. His scholarship and dedication to his community are extraordinary.

### **Lixian “Allison” Huang**

#### *Materials Science and Engineering*

Allison is a current Chemical Engineering and Materials Science Honors student. In addition to excelling in her coursework, Allison is active in Professor Subhash Risbud’s research group. Her project was selected to present a talk at the Undergraduate Research Conference this year titled “Processing Induced Anomalous Superconductivity in Spark Plasma Sintered Bulk YBCO.”

### **Alyssa Hurst**

#### *English*

Alyssa is a double major in English and Evolutionary Anthropology and has a tremendous academic record in both majors. She is an Honors student in English and is currently completing her Honors thesis on the relationship between digital humanities and Medieval Studies. Her thesis strives to re-conceptualize ancient literary works through contemporary electronic media. Alyssa’s research presentations in a number of forums have inspired fellow students in English, Anthropology, and the Study Abroad Program to pursue research interests. As an advocate for university students, Alyssa has worked hard and successfully to represent the needs of students through her work in the Diversity and Leadership Program.

### **Elizabeth Iliuta**

#### *Genetics and Genomics*

Elizabeth is not only highly intelligent and a strong critical thinker, she is also deeply compassionate and helpful to others. She excels both at independent and collaborative initiatives and has greatly helped in furthering the research in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology. She complemented and extended her excellent academic achievements with exceptional research in the lab of Professor Ted Powers. Examples of her public service include volunteer work for Davis CommuniCare Health Center, CDA Cares, and the Special Smiles program at the Special Olympics, all which provide dental care for underserved and special needs populations. For the past three years, Elizabeth has served her fellow students as an officer and, in her senior year, as president of the Pre-Dental Society.

### **Nathan Jayne**

#### *Biotechnology*

Nathan has been actively involved at UC Davis since coming to campus. He has interned in a variety of lab and research settings, served as an officer for the Biotechnology Club, is currently a departmental peer adviser, and has presented his research at the Undergraduate Research Conference for the

past two years, all while maintaining the highest GPA achievable. Nathan is also quick to assist a peer or professor in any way he can with calming assurance and a warm smile.

### **Ethan Jensen**

#### *Chemical Engineering*

Ethan has numerous academic awards and achievements including being a UC Davis Regents Scholar, an Integrated Studies Honors Program participant, and receiving the Phillips 66 (2015) and Chevron (2014) UC Davis Chemical Engineering and Materials Science Scholarships. In addition to maintaining a top GPA, Ethan has also worked as a tutor for fellow CHMS students, served as an Aggie Host for the UC Davis Police Department, and conducted research in Dr. Bill Ristenpart's lab. His volunteer work includes being a "buddy" at the Davis AYSO VIP soccer league for children with special needs. He is also very active in Cru at UC Davis, serving in the music ministry and volunteering as a bible study coordinator.

### **Christine Kelly**

#### *Native American Studies*

Christine is an extremely gifted and well-rounded student who has excelled in all aspects of student life in her department, on campus, and within the larger community. She has been an outstanding student in all her courses, actively seeking numerous activities to challenge herself and expand her intellectual horizons. Some of these include participating in a graduate seminar, completing a senior Honors thesis, and contributing to projects in the Indigenous Research Center of the Americas and the Native American Language Center, both part of the UC Davis Native American Studies Department. She is actively engaged in community activities, most notably completing an internship at the Cache Creek Conservancy in Woodland, CA, in which she created a guided gathering native plant garden along the Conservancy's trail system.

### **Avery Kruger**

#### *Ecology, Evolution, and Biodiversity*

Avery has been a standout participant in lectures, labs, and discussions, and a top performer on exams. He worked in Professor Jay Stachowicz's lab, researching the taxonomy and ecology of seagrass-associated invertebrates. Avery used this as a launch pad for his senior thesis research on the ontogeny of feeding preferences in a marine isopod that plays a major role in seagrass ecology. In addition to his academic excellence, Avery has also been an outstanding citizen of his department, leading the local SEEDS chapter, which is dedicated to increasing participation in ecology by under-represented groups. Overall, Avery is an exceptional person: a top scholar, promising scientist – and an Eagle Scout too!

## **Chelsea Lam**

### *Environmental Toxicology*

Chelsea has distinguished herself as the top student academically in the graduating class. In addition, she has engaged in scientific research on campus as an Aquatic Toxicology Intern and in the Crocker Nuclear Laboratory. She has also interned off-campus with the ZPower Battery Company and the California Department of Water Resources. Chelsea has presented at the UC Davis Undergraduate Research Conference and the 2015 San Francisco Estuary Partnership 12th Biennial State of the San Francisco Estuary Conference. She has served as the Environmental Toxicology Club's Vice President and Treasurer and has volunteered at numerous departmental and student events. Chelsea was awarded the Henry A. Jastro Scholarship and the Thurmond and Hannah Miller Scholarship.

## **Jules Larke**

### *Nutrition Science*

In addition to his exemplary academic record, Jules has made an outstanding contribution in student research. He recently presented his work at the UC Davis Undergraduate Research Conference comparing two analytical techniques for metabolite analysis. He is currently assisting in a study of how microbiota composition and function can be altered by a specific dietary intervention.

## **Amiel Leano**

### *Economics*

Amiel has been an outstanding peer advisor for the last four quarters while consistently maintaining a first-rate GPA. He is an exemplary student and leader in the department and an invaluable asset to the Economics team.

## **Jennifer Liang**

### *Microbiology and Molecular Genetics*

Jennifer is an outstanding young scientist. She brings to the lab an intense sense of curiosity and dedication; more importantly, she gets results. During her time in the lab she has authored a paper that examines the link between small molecules and the developmental program in the soil bacterium *M.xanthus*. She mentors not only other undergraduates but has shared her expertise with new graduate students as well. She is a top student and will go far in her career choice, whether medicine or research – or both.

## **Ana Maciel**

### *Chicana & Chicano Studies*

Ana is an established leader on our campus, in the local community, and on a state level. She has demonstrated great advocacy for social justice and human rights by spearheading the creation of the AB540 and Undocumented Student Center. She is UC Davis' student representative to the University of California Office of the President, President's Advisory Council on Undocumented

Students, and is currently the only student on the planning committee for the national summit on undocumented students. Besides all of these activities, Ana is in her second year working as an advisor and mentor for all students at the AB540 and Undocumented Student Resource Center and the Department of Chicana/o Studies, all while maintaining a healthy grade point average.

### **Kathryn Mains**

#### *Biochemical Engineering*

Kathryn is a conscientious and hard-working student with a strong GPA in the Biochemical Engineering program. She has been fully involved in undergraduate research, working in Dr. Karen McDonald's lab, and has also held internships at DuPont Industrial Biosciences and Molecular Matrix Inc. Kathryn also serves as an academic peer advisor, calculus tutor, and club softball travel coordinator at UC Davis.

### **Ariel Maroon**

#### *Clinical Nutrition*

In addition to her significant academic achievements, Ariel consistently demonstrates strong leadership skills. Her desire to motivate others and personal dedication to community service in the nutrition and medical field is exemplary.

### **Olivia McGuigan**

#### *Mathematics (LMAT)*

Olivia is an outstanding student in terms of both academics and community service. She is majoring in Mathematics in the Secondary Teaching track. She is also doing a minor in Education and is part of the MAST (Mathematics and Science Teaching) program. She has been an active member of the Math Club and served as president last year. Olivia also worked as a UC Davis Orientation Leader and First-Year Experience Peer Advisor.

### **Zion Mengesha**

#### *Linguistics*

Zion combines a passion for learning, finding new challenges, and social justice. A first generation minority student with intense intellectual curiosity, she maintained an exceptionally high standard as a double major in Linguistics and Philosophy. Her initial study for Mentorship for Undergraduate Research in Agriculture, Letters and Science (MURALS), "The Replaceables: Linguistic Prescriptivism, the Regression of Equitable Education and its Implications for Democracy," was published last year in the *Washington Journal of Education Law and Policy*. Zion's senior thesis, which she presented at the UC Davis Undergraduate Research Conference, as well as UCLA and Stanford, examines secondary and college teachers' attitudes towards African American Vernacular English (AAVE).

## **Sydney Morrill**

### *Microbiology*

Sydney came to our NSF Engineering Center grant project for microbiology majors highly recommended by Dr. Miriam Martin, based on her performance in Dr. Martin's general microbiology lab course. Although she is new to our research, Sydney truly stands out for her complete immersion in the project and the breadth and depth of her questions. After just three months on the project, she demonstrates big-picture-thinking on the level of a first- or second-year graduate student. She is in the top 10 of her graduating class of Microbiology majors. However, what is truly impressive about Sydney is her aptitude and enthusiasm for research.

## **Jay Nagin**

### *Mechanical Engineering*

Jay is an exceptionally intelligent and talented student with a mild demeanor and amiable personality. With a 4.0 GPA in his Mechanical Engineering coursework, his excellence extends far beyond the classroom. Jay works in the Intelligent Manufacturing Systems and Mechatronics Laboratory at UC Davis mainly in the area of computer-aided manufacturing application. His understanding of new applications of technology is extraordinary, and he has honed skills and knowledge as an undergraduate student that could be considered superior to master's degree holders. Jay is a model student and remarkable engineer.

## **Gardenia Nahigian**

### *Religious Studies*

Gardenia has distinguished herself in her years as a Religious Studies major. Her academic accomplishments are exemplary, the highlight of which is her exceptional senior thesis, based on original research, on medicine and the Armenian genocide. This academic year, she also served as the department's academic peer advisor. In this position, she demonstrated leadership and initiative, coordinating a variety of activities designed to both help her fellow students and attract new students to the major. Gardenia has been a great ambassador for the Department of Religious Studies.

## **Eric Neill**

### *Civil Engineering*

Eric is driven by his passions for engineering, learning, collaboration, and empowering others. He served on the ASCE Concrete Canoe team in a variety of roles including structural design captain and project manager. As president of Chi Epsilon, the Civil Engineering Honors Society, Eric has worked hard over the past two years to increase student membership and develop an organizational culture of positivity. In addition to his energetic efforts on behalf of the department, Eric also interned with CH2M, assisting with water and geotechnical engineering projects, and trained year round as a member of the UC Davis Cross Country team while he was a lower division student.

## Rachel Olivares

### *Entomology*

Rachel has made exemplary academic contributions as a much-valued teaching assistant for Dr. Robert Kimsey's course in Forensic Entomology and as field entomologist for two courses in forensic fire death investigation. She is highly interactive with her fellow students, faculty, and public agencies through the Entomology Club and participating in scientific studies with the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management that document insect diversity. Her leadership as a student instructor supports her planned career in law enforcement. As a UC Davis Police Academy cadet, she trains teachers and chaplains about mass casualty events, educates students about the dangers of drunk and distracted driving, and feeds the homeless.

## Erin Opray

### *Music*

Faculty describe Erin as a perceptive, thoughtful musician with genuine skill and promise. Erin has focused primarily on music composition and has proven to be one of the most dedicated and accomplished composers in the department. During the 2015-16 academic year, Erin was the only student invited to be in the Honors Composition track. She has also participated in the Early Music Ensemble and studied voice and harpsichord.

## Jennifer Orbell

### *International Relations*

Jennifer's senior Honors thesis addressed an important and timely subject as to whether large oil corporations successfully use legal tactics to avoid liability from large-scale oil contaminations. Through a careful and detailed examination of the Exxon-Valdez oil spill and the Texaco-Chevron contamination in Ecuador, Jennifer detailed the advantages large corporations have to dodge legal liability. The thesis involved a thorough analysis of the case proceedings and the litigation strategies used by the parties and was extremely well-written and thoughtful. It stands as a powerful indictment of the role money can play in our legal system.

## Neda Othman

### *Animal Biology*

Notwithstanding her stellar academic record and appointment as a Regents Scholar, Neda finds time to excel in countless other university activities: grant writing, note taking, presenting at conferences, interning, Chemistry Club, University Honors Program, as well as free-diving, backpacking, rock climbing, rowing, and archery, to name a few. One would think she operates within a tesseract with N-dimensions of time, and that alacrity should be her middle name. She has the most outgoing, intensely curious, independent, and highly imaginative personality.

## **Sara Phelps**

### *Spanish*

Sara has a brilliant intellect, superior research skills, creative talents, and a strong sense of social justice and personal ethics. Her work is always sophisticated and well-researched, her oral presentations clear and concise, and her dedication to her work deeply passionate and unflagging. She seeks knowledge not merely for her personal edification, but to share with others, promote dialogue, and effect real change in the world. She has a distinguished record in the performing arts. For her Honors Contract, she directed and produced a superb production of Guillermo Calderón's "Villa." She excelled in Professor Michael Lazzara's Summer Abroad graduate seminar in Chile, "Memory, Culture, and Human Rights." Sara is exactly the kind of person the department and UC Davis would want to have as an ambassador to the world.

## **Sarah Pollock**

### *Communication*

Sarah has an outstanding academic record and has won many merit-based scholarships, including the 2014-15 UC Davis Prized Writing publication. She was also a participant in the MURALS (Mentorship for Undergraduate Research in Agriculture, Letters and Science) program and was awarded a Provost's Undergraduate Fellowship to support her original Honor's thesis research. She has led and mentored a team of three undergraduate research assistants during her project. Sarah is an incredibly bright, hard-working, and responsible student who accepts challenges and demonstrates leadership both within and outside of the classroom.

## **Jordan Ramalingam**

### *Environmental Policy Analysis & Planning*

Jordan is exemplary both in his scholarship and his passion for environmental awareness and improvement in the wider world. He has put his EPAP education to practical use as assistant to the UC Davis Energy Conservation Office. He also founded a new student organization, Sustainable Resource Operations, intended to connect students to faculty on projects related to environmental sustainability. The enthusiastic way he soaks up course material, the thought and care he puts into his work, and his dedication to changing things for the better in his own community distinguish him amongst his peers and epitomize what the EPAP program is all about.

## **Lilija Rapa**

### *Anthropology*

Lilija has demonstrated a high level of academic excellence as well as major contributions to the department. She helped to co-found the Primatology Club last year and has also been involved in the Anthropology Club. By her broad interests and generous involvement, she promoted interactions between the two clubs and showed that she always strives to think "out-of-

the box.” Lilija has also been very proactive in furthering her educational interests by gaining hands-on experience including attending a summer field school program in Costa Rica and being part of a year-long research project with an Anthropology faculty member. Lilija is eager to challenge herself intellectually, and this is reflected in her department involvement, academic focus, and genuine curiosity.

### **Rebecca Rodriguez**

*Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies*

Rebecca is a committed academic peer advisor in the GSW major and has been a solid campus citizen: Orientation Leader for Student Housing and research assistant for both the Teenagers-as-Teachers Study and for Niños Sanos, Familia Sana in Davis. She has volunteered her services to the Women's Resource and Research Center and interned at Patwin Elementary School in Davis, the Opportunity Program in Woodland, and the Cold Weather Shelter for Davis Community Meals. She is a member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society.

### **Heidi Roodvoets**

*Art Studio*

Heidi is not only an exceptional student and talented artist, she is also dedicated to her peers. Serving as the Lead Director of the student-run Basement Gallery, Heidi has contributed greatly to efforts to promote student works on campus.

### **Dylan Rudd**

*Exercise Biology*

Dylan has demonstrated excellent academic achievement, leadership qualities, and community service. He has earned A+ grades in such diverse courses as Physics and American Humanities while mentoring underserved third graders, conducting research on cyclist palsy and ACL injury risk factors, and serving student athletes as an athletic trainer intern.

### **Yaquelin Ruiz**

*Political Science*

In addition to maintaining a stellar GPA, Yaquelin wrote an outstanding senior Honors thesis examining the treatment of LGBT citizens in Russia during the Putin era. She traced how government actions influenced public opinion which in turn influenced violence experienced by the LGBT community. The thesis was a model of how to apply modern social science methods to a timely and important topic.

### **Simon Saichek**

*History*

Simon is an outstanding, engaged student and a magnificent departmental citizen who has contributed in meaningful ways by fostering collegiality and communications among our students and also between students and

faculty. As President of the Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society, he created community among history majors and expanded opportunities for interactions outside the classroom with both graduate students and faculty members. A true leader, Simon revitalized the Honors Society and engaged others to take on responsibility. He plans to found an outdoor education company that will provide interdisciplinary training to create a holistic narrative of place, creating a sense of connection to the land and motivating stewardship.

### **Rylan Schaeffer**

#### *Computer Science and Engineering*

Rylan is an exceptional student. Among his numerous accomplishments are a leadership role in a seminar on the technical and policy issues related to privacy in the days of the internet. He teaches a very popular special-topics class for undergraduates on BitCoins, a highly relevant topic as online currencies are becoming increasingly prevalent. He previously taught a lower division course on the History of Computer Science as well and has worked tirelessly to advance the student-led seminar program. He also organized “meet and greet” opportunities for students to get to know their faculty and create stronger student-faculty relationships.

### **Katharine Schultz**

#### *Art History*

In a graduating class with many strong students, Katharine’s academic performance stands out as one of the best. She does consistently excellent work in every area of Art History, and her research and writing skills are mature and sophisticated – well beyond expectations for an undergraduate. Her senior Honors thesis, on images of Arcadia in 18th Century European painting, tackles a valuable but neglected topic and shows promise of developing into an important contribution to the field. She gives back generously through department service as an academic peer advisor. With warmth and enthusiasm, she regularly recruit students into the Art History major, and she has been enormously helpful in improving student advising and outreach activities.

### **Madison Seeley**

#### *Animal Science and Management*

“Maggie” has represented UC Davis at Bishop Mule Days for the past three years, during which she was a member of the Intercollegiate Pack Team. She served as team captain for two of those years and led them to consecutive Reserve Championships. She has also been a stallion manager intern, the Horse Contest coordinator for the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Ag Science Field Day, and now is a breeding management intern at the UC Davis Horse Barn.

## Ajay Sharma

### *Exercise Biology*

Ajay has demonstrated academic excellence with a 4.0 GPA, as well as strong research skills gained over the course of four years with Dr. Neil Hunter. Ajay has been a valuable contributor to the Imani Clinic. In addition, he developed a brochure guide for high school students with Professor Aldrin Gomes.

## Jensen Spear

### *Pharmaceutical Chemistry*

As a student at UC Davis, Jensen has spent the past two years working for the Center of Educational Effectiveness helping develop and explore teaching techniques that enhance learner-centered instruction. This opportunity led her to assist Dr. Ozcan Gulacar with research in Chemical Education focusing on students' understanding of problem solving and finding ways to increase achievement levels at the undergraduate level. Jensen also assists in Dr. Sheila David's Chemical Biology research lab which focuses on DNA damage and its role in disease and cancer onset. Jensen's academic career at UC Davis has helped contribute to many aspects of undergraduate education as well as the research community.

## Natascha Starr

### *German*

The faculty of the German Department are unanimous in selecting Natascha for this recognition. Natascha is a highly gifted, serious, and mature student who is exceptionally engaged in the cultural and intellectual life of the German program and who is also an excellent and generous student leader. Natascha is a highly competent, well-rounded, and congenial young woman who promises to succeed at whatever future goals she sets for herself. She is an excellent young scholar, concerned about and generous towards her peers, and an effective and energetically-engaged leader. She is richly deserving of this award.

## Jianwei "Daniel" Tang

### *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology*

Daniel stands out in his academic excellence and overall enthusiasm for his subject. He worked for four quarters on organic synthesis research with Dr. Peter Beal in the Chemistry Department, while maintaining a near-perfect GPA. Daniel is currently applying for medical school where he hopes to begin his training in 2017 to become a psychiatrist.

## Audrey Torrest

### *Neurobiology, Physiology & Behavior*

Audrey is extraordinarily intelligent, talented, curious, and compassionate. Her motivation, hunger, and curiosity for science are truly inspiring. She has an excellent academic record, has conducted cutting edge research leading to publications in top-tier journals, and has volunteered

considerable time to promote health care to those less fortunate. Audrey is a sure bet for future success!

### **Tiffany Trieu**

#### *Design*

Tiffany is quietly confident, highly proactive, and has an excellent work ethic. Her projects consistently reflect a high level of research, analytical thinking and ideation, communication, and technical competency. As a junior working at the Internship and Career Center, she realized that Design needed its own career fair in order to help students meet employers in various design industries. She took it upon herself to make this happen. Working with an all-student volunteer staff, she created what has now become an annual event. Her commitment to her peers and tireless volunteerism for the department, all while maintaining her own stellar academic record, demonstrate that she is truly an outstanding senior.

### **Tiffany Wiriyaphanich**

#### *Food Science*

Tiffany is talented and extraordinary. Her active involvement in the Food Tech Club, Institute of Food Technologists, College Bowl, and Spoon University has gained her much knowledge and skills to share with others. There is no limit to Tiffany's growth and achievements in college and beyond.

### **Kiana Youssefzadeh**

#### *French*

Kiana stood out as an excellent, hard-working and very intelligent student in all of her French courses, and she has shown unflagging energy and enthusiasm in all of her work for the major. Her contributions to the program both inside and outside the classroom – whether by taking the lead in class discussions or by serving as the academic peer advisor in French – have been invaluable and were always much appreciated both by instructors and fellow students. The French faculty is very happy to honor her for her achievements.

