



COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

# 2018 PHI THETA KAPPA LUNCHEON

ALL-CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
ACADEMIC TEAM AWARDS

APRIL 2, 2018 | SACRAMENTO CONVENTION CENTER





# Program

## ALL-CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC TEAM AWARDS

APRIL 2, 2018 | 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM

### **I. Music, American River College Jazz Collective THE MECHULA**

- **Jackson Riley - Saxophone**
- **Nick Bentz - Keyboard**
- **Andrew Mearns - Bass**
- **Peter Bell - Drums**

### **II. Introductions**

### **III. Recognition of the All-California First, Second, and Third Teams**

### **IV. Award Presentations**

### **V. Closing Remarks**

### **About Phi Theta Kappa All-California Community College Academic Team Program**

Building on the success of the national All-USA Team Program, Phi Theta Kappa launched the All-State Academic Team Program. The purpose of this program is to provide recognition at the state level for these top community college students.

This year 27 California community college students were selected for the All-California Academic First Team, 28 students for the second Team and 28 for the Third Team. The Community College League of California is proud to sponsor this award ceremony at which all team members receive medallions of honor and a certificate recognizing their accomplishments.

Grades, leadership and community service determine selection to the All-California first, second and third teams. The selection for the All-California teams was determined by the scores nominees received from Phi Theta Kappa judges at the national level selecting winners for the national academic teams. These 83 students represent some of the best of the two million students enrolled in California's 114 community colleges. California's community colleges underwrite their students' success daily. The most diverse students body in higher education succeeds every day by completing associate degrees and certificate programs; getting jobs; transferring to baccalaureate programs; or furthering a lifelong habit of learning. Even though community college funding is limited - and funding per students is less than any other higher education institution in the state - dedicated and professional community college faculty and staff keep service to students their number one priority.

ALL-CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
ACADEMIC TEAM AWARD WINNERS

**FIRST TEAM**

Hanan Ali, Southwestern College  
Megan Anderson, Mt. San Jacinto College  
Britney Brown, Cerro Coso Community College  
Alvin Cook, Southwestern College  
Leah Edwards, Hartnell College  
Nadia Escobar, San Diego City College  
Jeffrey Jauregui, MiraCosta College  
Karen Mei Ling Lai, Skyline College  
Kylene Landenberger, Sierra College  
Caleb Mertz, San Diego City College  
Jennifer Nauert, Mendocino College  
Caitlin Peterson, Cerro Coso Community College  
Toan Phan, San Diego Mesa College  
Juliene Porciuncula, Cerritos College  
James Riback, Mt. San Jacinto College  
Justin Roosenschoon, Butte College  
Amanda Ruiz, Sierra College  
Philippe Schicker, Citrus College  
William Seaton, Mt. San Jacinto College  
Daniel Soroudi, Orange Coast College  
Eunice Sou, Fullerton College  
Karina Tarasova, San Diego Mesa College  
Michael To, Fullerton College  
Edgar Velazquez, Las Positas College  
Alex Volzer, Butte College  
Khalid Yasseen, Irvine Valley College  
Edilberto Ylo, Mt. San Antonio College

**SECOND TEAM**

Marissa Anderson, Irvine Valley College  
Debbie Lou Angeles, West Hills College  
Armando Arevalo, Cuyamaca College  
Meana Arghandehwal, Moorpark College  
Amber Barajas, Chaffey College  
Wendie Beddingfield, Ohlone College  
Christopher Beller, Napa Valley College  
Brian Chavez Bolanos, Hartnell College  
Cyerra Davis, Taft College  
Merari De La Cruz, Mt. San Jacinto College  
Clarisa Flores, Porterville College  
Amir Freeman, Mt. San Antonio College  
Mariela Germann, Cerro Coso Community College  
Tzitziki Hernandez, Napa Valley College  
Greg Kutzbach, Cerro Coso Community College  
Wing Sum Lam, Ohlone College  
Karina Linares, Long Beach City College  
Matthew Lobue, American River College  
Nicole McKinney, Solano Community College  
Thanh Nguyen, Skyline College  
Benson Njau, Merritt College  
Jack Pinkston, College of the Canyons  
Britt Rucker, MiraCosta College  
Hannah Schaffner, Antelope Valley College  
Deshawn Seymour Sr., Solano Community College  
Haruka Tabuchi, Saddleback College  
Marisela Vazquez, Cuyamaca College  
Christopher Yang, Las Positas College

# ALL-CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC TEAM AWARD WINNERS

## **THIRD TEAM**

Heather Allen, Grossmont College  
Osbert Ayeni-Aarons, Sacramento City College  
Miranda Borges, Mendocino College  
Michael Brown, Fullerton College  
Nicole Buechler, Saddleback College  
Denis Byaliy, Diablo Valley College  
Christian Cital, De Anza College  
Kelly Clemen, San Diego Miramar College  
Hannah Collins-Macdonald, Palomar College  
Justin Drake, Shasta College  
Naomi Elling, Porterville College  
Aimee Hostetter, San Diego Mesa College  
Nneoma Kanu, College of San Mateo  
Natalie Lechtaler, Merritt College  
Kristabel Mendoza, Southwestern College  
Nhan Nguyen, San Diego Miramar College  
Tien Nguyen, Santa Ana College  
Kana Onishi, Grossmont College  
Daniela Pineda, Chaffey College  
Juan Quintero, Oxnard College  
Mairi Regalado, Shasta College  
Wilson Saiki Junior, San Diego City College  
Latif Swallah, De Anza College  
Hieu Tran, Santa Ana College  
Nicolas Vallone, Palomar College  
Kayla Wetmore, Moorpark College  
Annette White, Long Beach City College  
Chloe Williamson, Citrus College

# All-California Academic 1st Team



**Hanan Ali**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: Southwestern College Biomedical**  
**Major: Engineering | GPA: 3.75**

Hanan is a second year international student from Kenya majoring in Biomedical Engineering at Southwestern College. She hopes to become a physician who provides affordable, quality healthcare to underserved populations in sub Saharan Africa. Growing up in a third world country, Hanan witnessed many suffer as a direct result of poverty and corruption, with children as young as 5 having to beg on the streets to get by. This encouraged her to pursue healthcare and made her the active community organizer and activist she is today. As part of her efforts to create change, she has participated, as well as, hosted awareness events on important issues such as food insecurity and homelessness. She also dedicates her time to spreading knowledge and ensuring students like her get the support they need by tutoring and mentoring them in different settings.



**Megan Anderson**  
**Age: 30**  
**College: Mt San Jacinto Community College**  
**Major: Nursing | GPA: 3.82**

Megan is a passionate advocate of women's reproductive rights during childbirth and an avid campaigner for improving access to and standards of perinatal care in the United States and worldwide. She is pursuing her bachelor's degree in Nursing and hopes to eventually obtain a master's degree in Nurse Midwifery and Women's Health. She serves as a mentor in the Honors Enrichment Program and as the Executive Finance Officer of MSJC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter. In addition to being a full time student and working part-time as an assistant at a government consulting firm, she is also a Birth Doula and Lactation Educator and Counselor. She gives back to her community by running two local support groups for pregnant and postpartum women and raises awareness by volunteering her time to help coordinate and participate in community events. Megan is also a single mom of four children and coaches little league soccer.



**Britney Brown**  
**Age: 17**  
**College: Cerro Coso Community College**  
**Major: Mathematics | GPA: 4.00**

Homeschooled at the age of 12, after seven years of public education, Britney took her first college class at 13 and graduated high school at 15. She will graduate from community college at 17 with six Associates Degrees in mathematics, computer science, engineering, and various liberal arts. Outside of her STEM-driven education, Ms. Brown also maintains a variety of hobbies including dance (ballet and contemporary), music (violin, piano, guitar, flute, and classical singing), and martial arts (Taekwondo and Kung Fu). These hobbies eventually became lead roles, including Thumbelina, Hamm from Toy Story, the Archangel Gabriel from The Nativity, Beth from Secret Garden, Mary Poppins, Lily from Secret Garden, and the Ghost of Christmas Past from A Christmas Carol. Britney describes herself as a black belt ballerina that sings Phantom of the Opera while studying math.



**Alvin Cook**  
**Age: 36**  
**College: Southwestern College**  
**Major: Economic-Statistics & Computer Science | GPA: 3.83**

Alvin is a member of PTK, and actively serves on the ASO as the Senator for the School of Business and Technology, and Vice Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. He is founder of the Infinity Beyond Club, which helps students develop personally and professionally. Alvin serves on the SWC Accreditation Oversight Committee and Professional Development Committee. As a U.S. Delegate for the Global Entrepreneurship Congress he helped expand the entrepreneurial ecosystems in Brazil, Colombia, and South Africa. He strives to bridge the gap between underrepresented groups and the innovation economy. As a Connect Fellow, volunteering for a local non-profit accelerator for life science and technology startups, he was part of a team which secured a \$2.5MM grant to build an accelerator in a low-moderate income community. Alvin will earn an Associate's Degree in Math and Science. He was accepted to Columbia University in the City of New York.

# All-California Academic 1st Team



**Leah Edwards**  
**Age: 28**  
**College: Hartnell College**  
**Major: Biology & Chemistry Major | GPA: 3.50**

Leah has been accepted into Stanford University's Leadership Education for Aspiring Physicians Program. Leah started a pilot program called Walk for Autism in Salinas, where volunteers walked a 5k to raise donations for Autism Speaks. Ms. Edwards chose this as her project because her younger brother, Billy, has autism. She hopes that Walk for Autism will help prevent other families from struggling the way my mother has. Before Walk for Autism, there was no event targeting families with children with autism. "We needed a place where families could come together, get support, resources, information, and solidarity they need," says Leah. This experience taught her how to approach formal organizations and work with others to bring her community together. Since then, Leah has become the Director of Interclub Council at Hartnell College. Her goal is to use her skills to help other students achieve something that they believe in.



**Nadia Escobar**  
**Age: 40**  
**College: San Diego City College**  
**Major: Liberal Arts & Science | GPA: 3.97**

Nadia Escobar is from Tijuana, Mexico. When she came to the U.S., she had a dream to become a college child development professor, but she didn't know the language or have any money. San Diego City College was her opportunity to start again. She is the mother of three children, one of whom is a special education student who will enter SDCC this Fall. Her daughter currently attends SDCC. Nadia appreciates the college opportunities such as the scholarships she has been awarded: the Friends of Downtown Scholarship, Board of Trustee's Scholarship, the Osher Scholarship, the Honors Program Scholarship, the ASG Membership Scholarship, the EOPS Scholarship, and recently the All-California Academic Team scholarship. In gratitude, she participates in community services and special events. She is president of Phi Theta Kappa, Beta Iota Kappa chapter. She plans to transfer to SDSU to complete her Bachelors Degree and Masters Degree, in Spanish.



**Jeffrey Jaureguy**  
**Age: 28**  
**College: MiraCosta College**  
**Major: Bio-Statistics | GPA: 3.65**

Jeff Jaureguy is a full time re-entry student at MiraCosta College. He is majoring in bio-statistics and is transferring in the fall 2018. He is the current Vice President of scholarships for PTK, former President of the STEM research club, and is an active Honors student. For over 2 years Mr. Jaureguy has completed original scientific research focused on climate research at the California State University of San Marcos. He has presented this research at over 10 national conferences including SACNAS, ABRCMS, and at prominent universities such as the UIUC, UC Berkley, and UCSD. After Mr. Jaureguy traveled internationally and witnessed environmental issues, poverty and suffering in the world, he decided to dedicate his life to education and service. The sense of universal responsibility motivates him to succeed. Whether it's conducting environmental research, or mentoring students, he wants every action in his life to reflect his virtues.



**Karen Mei Ling Lai**  
**Age: 26**  
**College: Skyline College**  
**Major: Respiratory Care Major | GPA: 4.00**

Karen Mei Ling Lai is a Respiratory Care major at Skyline College. She is in the Honors Transfer Program and served as President for her Phi Theta Kappa chapter and Respiratory Care Club Senator, where she creates and leads programs for the betterment of her college and community. Karen started and led a project creating videos in eight languages to educate the public about proper usage of metered-dose inhalers. She is involved in various organizations that assist community members. She works at a lung-health organization and volunteers at senior centers, STEM and health fairs, and food banks. Karen aspires to be a Respiratory Care Practitioner and an Asthma Educator to serve patients and their families, especially the pediatric population. She plans to earn a Doctorate in Education to become a Respiratory Care Educator. Karen wants to inspire individuals to aim high, believe in their capabilities and work toward their dreams.

# All-California Academic 1st Team



**Kylene Landenberger**  
**Age: 21**  
**College: Sierra College**  
**Major: Applied Math | GPA: 3.87**

Kylene is pursuing a degree in applied mathematics and intends to study biomechanical engineering in graduate school. She is president of the Beta Mu Zeta Chapter at Sierra College, where she has successfully reignited the club after years of inactivity. As club president, she has strengthened her member's leadership skills and worked with her local community. She is also president and founder of Sierra College's STEM Club, the first club to offer guest lectures, specialized tours, workshops, and networking resources for all STEM students. She works for her college's math department tutoring all levels of mathematics and is a teacher's aide for multi-variable calculus. She is deeply devoted to serving others and is passionate about creating a supportive environment for everyone. After graduate school, she hopes to remain in academia and pursue research in human biomechanics for limb loss and abnormal cases, and later help develop technologically-advanced prosthetic limbs.



**Caleb Metz-Vega**  
**Age: 31**  
**College: San Diego City College**  
**Major: English | GPA: 4.00**

Caleb Mertz-Vega is studying English at San Diego City College and is currently the Vice President of his Phi Theta Kappa chapter. He has focused his studies on social justice and advocates for a more peaceable future. In 2017 he was awarded a peace studies scholarship for his contributions to the social justice conference at City College. Each year at his college, he has remained on the Dean's List due to his 4.0 GPA in all studies. His academic goals are to earn a Ph.D. in English and to then be a professor at the college/university level. With the focus of Peace, Caleb intends to continue publishing books, articles, and essays that will continue the conversation in a positive direction.



**Jennifer Nauert**  
**Age: 36**  
**College: Mendocino College**  
**Major: Alcohol & Other Drug Studies/Human Services | GPA: 4.00**

Aside from being the mother to three beautiful children, Jennifer Nauert is a high honors student, on the president's list, a multiple scholarship winner, the recipient of Mendocino College's Human Services Academic Achievement award, and a member of Phi Theta Kappa. Jennifer grew up in poverty, enduring unthinkable childhood abuse that resulted in her making poor decisions that landed her in prison. In 2008, she had 2 massive strokes and 7 brain aneurysms, leaving the right side of her body paralyzed. After a brief stay in a nursing home, and years of physical therapy, she learned to live again. Jennifer is the Founder and President of Mendocino College's Students For Recovery Club. She loves volunteering at the Salvation Army, and at her children's schools. Her goal is to transfer to Humboldt State University and pursue a master's degree in Social Work, so she can open a non-profit residential treatment facility.



**Toan Phan**  
**Age: 23**  
**College: San Diego Mesa College**  
**Major: Computer Science | GPA: 4.00**

Toan Phan is a first-generation student and is currently enrolled in the Honors Program at San Diego Mesa College. With hard work, he has been able to maintain a 4.0 GPA and earned a place in the Dean's Honor List. Toan is Vice President of Service of his college's Phi Theta Kappa chapter. Additionally, he is President of the Vietnamese Student Association, where he focuses on developing a community for Vietnamese and Vietnamese American students that promotes cultural preservation and inspires others to succeed. At home, he loves biking with his five-year-old nephew around his neighborhood. Toan also loves cooking traditional dishes for his family every day. Seeing smiles on people's faces really motivates him to serve others. Toan hopes to transfer to UC Berkeley, majoring in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, and ultimately go to a graduate school to do research in Artificial Intelligence.



# All-California Academic 1st Team



**Juliene Porciuncula**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: Cerritos College**  
**Major: Sociology Major, 4.00 GPA**

Juliene is a community college student applying to transfer to a 4 year university in Fall 2018. Ms. Porciuncula has conducted her own independent research on female victimization in slasher films and presented her findings at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) last year. Juliene will be presenting again this year on research regarding gender reinforcement in Halloween costumes. Besides working two jobs, she spends her free time volunteering at her church or tutoring homeless children with a non-profit organization called School on Wheels. Juliene hopes to earn a Ph.D. in Sociology to become an educator and researcher. She is very grateful for all the people who have inspired, educated and supported her throughout her journey.



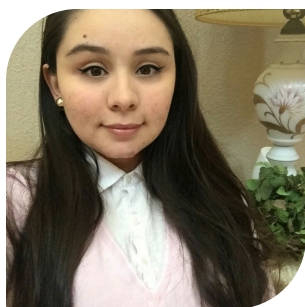
**James Riback**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Mt. San Jacinto College**  
**Major: Computer Science | GPA: 3.78**

James Riback is a computer science major with a minor in mathematics. His experiences during college, such as volunteering in the community and working as a math/programming tutor, have inspired him to teach as a professor one day. He has had the pleasure to work closely with the computer science faculty on campus, including introducing new ideas into the computer science curriculum. After transferring this fall to a university to complete his bachelors, James would like to pursue his Ph.D. and delve into research regarding machine learning and robotics. This upcoming summer, James will be working at Los Alamos National Laboratory. His work there will consist of developing augmented reality applications that will allow environmental engineers working in hazardous environments to perform structural integrity examinations safely with the use of holograms.



**Justin Roosenschoon**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Butte College**  
**Major: Computer Engineering | GPA: 3.78**

Justin Roosenschoon found his passion for engineering and science at a young age and knew he would become an engineer early on. Once he got to Butte College, he quickly joined the Phi Theta Kappa chapter of Butte College and soon became Vice President of Honors in Action where he led Butte's team to create an augmented reality platform for local schools to use. Justin spent his time at Butte College earning Associates degrees in Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics, and plans to transfer to a UC to finish his education in Computer Engineering.



**Amanda Ruiz**  
**Age: 21**  
**College: Sierra College**  
**Major: Nursing | GPA: 3.80**

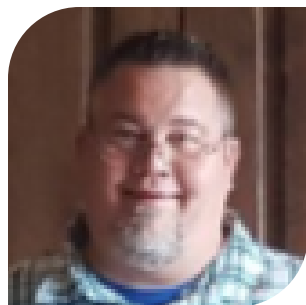
Amanda C. Ruiz is the VP of Scholarship of Phi Theta Kappa's Beta Mu Zeta Chapter. In addition to her work with her PTK chapter, she is the founder of Sierra Buddies, which is a program that provides birthday gifts to children of disadvantaged students at her community college. She can be found on campus working as a biological science and chemistry tutor for the TRiO and EOPS programs. Her passion for helping others has driven her to volunteer at a local hospice, giving companionship to those who are terminally ill. As a first-generation college student and the daughter of two immigrants, she aspires to be a role model for her younger family members. Amanda plans to become a forensic nurse and focus on domestic abuse cases. She hopes to transfer to Sacramento State to pursue a BSN before going on to earn her MSN.

# All-California Academic 1st Team



**Philippe Schicker**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: Citrus College**  
**Major: Mechanical Engineering | GPA: 4.00**

Philippe Schicker is an international student at Citrus College, currently majoring in Mechanical Engineering as a Sophomore. Originally from Hamburg, Germany, Philippe moved to the U.S. to pursue his goal of earning a degree in the United States. Mr. Schicker ultimately decided to become an Engineer during his volunteer time in Namibia, Africa where he learned how much help is needed in under-developed countries. His long-term goal is to continue his education at a graduate-bridged doctoral program where he will be able to specialize in research. He also hopes to one day be a part of Engineers Without Borders, because he believes that there is nothing better in life than doing what you love while also contributing to make the world a better place.



**William "Bill" Seaton**  
**Age: 46**  
**College: Mt. San Jacinto College**  
**Major: Political Science/Philosophy | GPA: 3.92**

Bill is a non-traditional student who returned to college, after a successful career in information technology, to pursue his childhood dream of becoming a lawyer. Bill is an Honors Mentor and during his two years at Mt. San Jacinto College, he founded and served as President of both the Oxfam Club at MSJC and SEAL (Students for Environmental Action and Leadership). He is also the Fellowship Officer for the PTK Beta Delta Omega chapter and served as chairman of the chapters 2017 Holiday Food and Toy Drive College Project. Bill's current efforts include organizing a debate for the candidates in California's 42nd Congressional District and planning "SEAL Camp", a four day/night sleep away camp for environmental education and activism. Bill is hoping to attend the University of California at Berkeley in the Fall of 2018 with his sights set on law school and a career as a social justice crusader.



**Daniel Soroudi**  
**Age: 18**  
**College: Orange Coast College**  
**Major: Biology | GPA: 4.0**

From the age of 7, Daniel Soroudi has known that he wants to have a career in Medicine. He volunteers at a Pediatrics Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders. He also volunteers at a local Hospital in order to surround himself with those in his future profession. Daniel takes part in activities like these to understand and appreciate the Doctor-patient interaction. Furthermore, he conducts his own research on Alcohol Abuse among College students to better his own community. Daniel also serves as the Membership Coordinator of Phi Theta Kappa and is a 5-star PTK Member. Daniel is planning on transferring to UCI and majoring in Neurobiology and eventually enrolling in Medical School.



**Eunice Sou**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Fullerton College**  
**Major: Economics Major | GPA: 4.00**

Apart from being an Honors and full-time student, Eunice is also involved with several leadership opportunities. At Fullerton College, Eunice was elected as the Vice President of Recruitment for PTK where she oversaw several recruitment projects, helping to expand the club. She is currently serving as the President and founder of UNICEF Club, a collaboration initiated by her to raise more awareness for children way less fortunate than she is. Additionally, Eunice also participates in her school's California Cousin Mentor Program, where she helps new incoming international students transit and adjust to the new environment. Passionate to help others with her academic knowledge, she also took on tutoring positions on and off campus where she volunteers to tutor her fellow peers and homeless children in California. Currently, Eunice plans to be the first in her family to graduate from a four-year university and do more good with her knowledge gained.

# All-California Academic 1st Team



**Karina Tarasova**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: San Diego Mesa College**  
**Major: Business Economics | GPA: 4.00**

Karina Tarasova moved to San Diego from Moscow, Russia. Prior joining San Diego Mesa College, she took an eight-month gap during which she followed her childhood dream of becoming an actress. Soon, she gained admission to a prestigious Arts College in Moscow. Concurrently, the opportunity to attend junior college in the U.S. for a year before transferring to a four-year university became an option. At the San Diego Mesa College, Karina decided to pursue her desire to study business and economics. She is an active student leader and a community volunteer. Karina also travelled to and studied in countries like Germany, Egypt, England, India, and China. She had intensive language programs in the United States, Yale University; Germany, Humboldt Institute; and England, Embassy School. In her free time, Karina loves to spend time with her sister and close friends. She also enjoys dancing, snowboarding, and playing volleyball.



**Michael To**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Fullerton College**  
**Major: Biological and Biomedical Sciences | GPA: 3.91**

Michael To is an assiduous scholar, and an Honors student at Fullerton College. His fair-minded, yet compassionate qualities inspired him to pursue a research career in cognitive neuroscience and medicinal therapies. In particular, Michael carries a soft spot for individuals suffering from drug-related addictions; through the acquisition of academic and professional skill sets, which his educational pursuits continue to develop, he seeks to elucidate novel interventions for those suffering from chemical dependencies. As a humanitarian, Michael gives back to his community through service as a Supplemental Instructor for General Chemistry, a College Reading and Language Association certified tutor, and as the Chair of Service for his PTK Chapter. His commendable resolve and dedication earned him national recognition; Michael was designated a Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Semi-Finalist for both the 2017 and 2018 academic years. He will transfer to either Pomona College, or UCLA to continue his educational journey.



**Edgar Velazquez**  
**Age: 21**  
**College: Las Positas College**  
**Major: Computer Science | GPA: 3.60**

Edgar is a full-time student who moved from Mexico to study college. Language barrier, living alone, and a new culture were some of the biggest barriers he had to face. He is the co-founder and vice president of HIS club, where he focuses on helping Latinos in STEM to transfer with tutoring, scholarships, support and more opportunities. He is also the president of the Honor Society (Alpha Gamma Sigma), he has to lead and find extracurricular activities, community service, and much more for all of its members. He works more than twenty hours per week as a Math and Computer Science tutor at his community and college and outside school. He was the Inter-Club Council for the Computer Science Club for more than a year. This opportunity helped him to improve his coding skills. He will be transferring to a four-year university in fall 2018.

# All-California Academic 1st Team



**Alex Volzer**  
**Age: 30**  
**College: Butte College**  
**Major: Health Care Administration | GPA: 3.85**

Alex Volzer is a transgender pre-medical student and practicing massage therapist for 8 years, interested in improving health care access and services for marginalized and underprivileged communities. He has spent the last 10 years developing a new business model for primary care delivery utilizing Integrative Medicine and started a successful pilot three years ago in Chico, CA. As the VP of Honor's in Action in the Butte College chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, he organized a medical mission to Nigeria to install a waste management system at a small, rural clinic serving the Igbo people. At his college, he also worked closely with administration to develop an associate's degree for pre-medical students that will be added to the 2019-2020 course catalog. Alex plans to transfer in the fall of 2018 to pursue a dual bachelor's degree in Health Care Administration and Community Development before attending medical school.



**Khalid Yasseen**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Irvine Valley College**  
**Major: Molecular & Cell Biology | GPA: 3.63**

Khalid Yasseen began his path to medicine at Irvine Valley College, where he serves as a Student Ambassador and is a member of the Psi Beta Psychology Honors Society. Anything related to medicine interests Khalid, which is why he has been conducting research for a year and a half, both at IVC and Saddleback College, IVC's sister campus. In addition, Khalid gains hands-on clinical experience by volunteering his time at Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian as a Health Scholar. He currently works as a licensed Pharmacy Technician and holds a license as an Emergency Medical Technician. He is passionate about helping others, which is why he serves as the President of the Pre-Medical Society at Saddleback and helps provide members with resources that will help them in their career paths. He hopes to transfer this coming fall to UC Berkeley before applying to medical school.



**Edilberto Gabriel Ylo**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Mt. San Antonio College**  
**Major: Nursing/Pre-Med | GPA: 4.00**

Edilberto "Iggy" Ylo is an honors student at Mt. San Antonio College. As a Filipino, he immigrated to the United States in 2015. As a Nursing major, Iggy is planning to transfer to CSU Los Angeles in Fall of 2018. Being a very involved PTK member, he served as the Secretary for the Alpha Omega Alpha chapter in 2016, and was eventually elected as the chapter's President in 2017. In addition, he also works as a Student Assistant and Honors Student Ambassador for the Mt. San Antonio College Honors Program. With a drive for success and a passion to help those in need, Iggy one day aspires to graduate from the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and become a cardiologist. His dream is to be able to retire in the Philippines and establish his own clinic that would provide free healthcare to the poor.

# All-California Academic 2nd Team



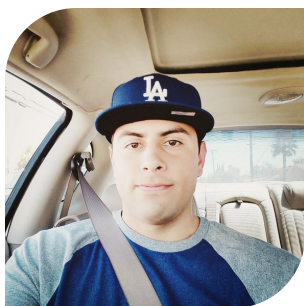
**Marissa Anderson**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: Irvine Valley College**  
**Major: Biology | GPA: 3.84**

Marissa Anderson is a student, Honors Program member, and researcher at Irvine Valley College. Through her leadership positions as Vice-President of Scholarship of the Phi Theta Kappa Alpha Omega Mu Chapter, and Coordinator of the Honors Program Student Council Research Team, Marissa has been actively involved in promoting and facilitating undergraduate research on her campus. Marissa has lead two research projects. "The Antigen of Truth: Inoculating Anti-Vaccine Proponents to Treat an Epidemic of Misinformation" examined the modern resurgence of the anti-vaccine movement through the internet, and its link to outbreaks of preventable disease nationwide. "Trigger Warning!: Restricting Speech on College Campuses May Be Hazardous to Students" collected data on 300 California Community college students and faculty in order to examine their perceptions on free speech rights on campus. Beyond the classroom, Marissa volunteers as a Health Scholar in the Diagnostic Imaging department at the Kaiser Permanente South Bay Medical Center.



**Debbie Lou Angeles**  
**Age: 29**  
**College: West Hills College Lemoore**  
**Major: Computer Information Systems | GPA: 3.94**

Debbie Angeles was born in Olongapo City, Philippines, and moved to the United States when she was four. She is the daughter of two U.S. Navy veterans and a mother of beautiful 10-year-old daughter. In her short time at West Hills College Lemoore, she has organized and/or participated in several campus events including a Filipino-American History Month Diversity Conversation, Club Rush, and Leadership Camp. She also spearheaded her PTK chapter's involvement in the local Relay for Life event. Aside from being the president of her PTK chapter, she is also the Associate Student Body Commissioner of Clubs and the student representative for the Curriculum Committee. She will graduate this May with an Associate of Science in Computer Information Systems and various local certificates in Computer Programming and Networking.



**Armando Arevalo**  
**Age: 25**  
**College: Cuyamaca College**  
**Major: Physics | GPA: 3.91**

Armando Arevalo is a student at Cuyamaca College. As a dedicated student, Armando does the extraordinary to learn. This includes tutoring, working in groups and reading ahead to learn in advance. The Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Pi Omicron Chapter has opened doors for him to grow as an academic and community-based individual. He is truly grateful for this unique experience and will continue to strive to accomplish his goals.



**Meana Arghandehwal**  
**Age: 18**  
**College: Moorpark College**  
**Major: Accounting Major | GPA: 4.00**

By taking the CHSPE, Meana Arghandehwal graduated a year earlier, skipping her senior year of high school and getting an early start to college. Meana is now a full-time sophomore student at Moorpark College where she is majoring in Accounting and planning to transfer Fall 2018. With her hard work and motivation to succeed, she kept a 4.0 GPA throughout her two years in Moorpark College and will be obtaining three Associate's Degrees in Business Administration, Economics, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Also, Meana is an avid volunteer in her community. She teaches little kids at her local mosque every Sunday and is a volunteer tax preparer for VITA- an organization that files taxes for low-income families. Meana aspires to be a certified CPA and hopes to continue her volunteerism throughout her path in obtaining her Bachelor's.

# All-California Academic 2nd Team



**Amber Barajas**  
**Age: 22**  
**College: Chaffey College**  
**Major: Psychology | GPA: 3.89**

Amber is currently studying psychology and will graduate with an associates degree for transfer in psychology in May. She is planning on transferring to a four-year university and obtaining her bachelors degree in psychology. In addition to being a student she works as a student assistant in the language success center on her college campus. She also serves as the president of the Beta Kappa Pi chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, is the Inter Club Council Representative for Chaffey College's psychology club, and volunteers three hours each week at a local homeless family shelter that specializes in transitional housing. She wants to use her degree to help others and is interested in working with those who are suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, like her uncle. When she isn't handling all her responsibilities or studying she enjoys reading, hiking, spending time with family, and going to concerts.



**Wendie Beddingfield**  
**Age: 43**  
**College: Ohlone College**  
**Major: Political Science | GPA: 4.00**

A political science major at Ohlone College, Wendie is planning to transfer to a 4-year university in the fall of 2018 after receiving an Associate of Arts degree in both Social Science and Human Developmental Science with a Certificate of Accomplishment in Communications in May. She is currently the recording secretary of the Beta Tau Mu chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, volunteers at her church teaching preschool children and has been an intern at All For the Family Legal Clinic in Castro Valley since 2016. Wendie has been married to Gabriel Beddingfield for 24 years and is the mother of Katherine (21), Jacob (17), Rebecca (15) and Nathaniel (13). In 2016, Wendie returned to college after a twenty-plus year hiatus to receive a bachelor's degree followed by a JD to practice family law. She plans to offer skilled, compassionate representation to lower-income clients facing very difficult and emotional legal issues.



**Christopher Beller**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Napa Valley College**  
**Major: Percussion | GPA: 3.75**

Christopher Beller is a Bay Area musician and vocalist majoring in Percussion at Napa Valley College. When out of class, he professionally performs drum set around the Bay Area. He has performed Legally Blonde: the Musical at the San Anselmo Playhouse, and Heathers: the Musical at both the Missouri Street Theatre and the Novato Theatre Company. He has performed with his Metal band, Crimson Oath, in San Francisco at The Fillmore, among other venues. He volunteered to play drums with Shakespeare Napa Valley for the summer 2017 showings of A Midsummer Night's Dream. He will be drumming at the San Anselmo Playhouse for their showing of Annie, and will be drumming in the original Bay Area Musical, Just My Type, at the Ross Valley Players. He plans to Transfer from NVC to a four year university at the end of Fall 2018, eyes set towards new horizons in music performance.



**Brian Chavez Bolanos**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Hartnell College**  
**Spanish Major, 4.00 GPA**

Brian Chavez Bolanos is currently a Hartnell College student. He plans to attend to CSUMB, CSU Fresno or SJSU to obtain a Masters Degree in Spanish, and help his community through education by being a professor. Brian and his family joined his father in the United States nine years ago to start a new life and realize his "Latin American Dream". For Brian, education is a priority, because it is essential to make a difference in our society. For this reason, he has worked for three semesters as a tutor and supplemental instructor at Hartnell College. In addition, he was President of the Spanish Club and currently serves as the Secretary. His ingenuity and inspiration has been recognized in creative writing contests at Hartnell College and CSU Fresno. His goal is to academically assist future generations and create awareness about the importance of diversity in the United States.

# All-California Academic 2nd Team



**Cyerra Davis**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: Taft College**  
**Major: Biology | GPA: 3.92**

Cyerra Davis is a sophomore at Taft College who also lives a very active life on top of her education. She is a student athlete and plays softball at Taft College all while taking rigorous courses. Alongside being a student athlete, Cyerra is also a tutor at Taft College and enjoys tutoring in courses such as Biology, Chemistry, and upper English courses. In addition to her already busy schedule, Cyerra has been a Kern County Special Olympic coach since 2014 and loves to volunteer her time with this wonderful group of people. After Cyerra graduates, she plans to transfer to BYU Utah in order to graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Biology. She then plans to transfer to a dental school in California to obtain a Doctors of Dental Surgery Degree in hopes to enter into an Orthodontic Residency program in aspiration of becoming an Orthodontist.



**Merari De La Cruz**  
**Age: 21**  
**College: Mt. San Jacinto College**  
**Major: Criminology | GPA: 4.00**

Merari De La Cruz plans to graduate with honors and transfer to Fresno State University in the fall to earn her Bachelors of Science in Criminology with an emphasis in Victimology. Merari serves as a Fellowship Officer of the Beta Delta Omega Chapter. Last semester, Merari lead a Survivor Bag Drive, collecting numerous clothing items for the Center Against Sexual Assault of Southwest Riverside County and helped raise awareness of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and Title IX. Merari is also a state-certified advocate at a rape crisis center in her community. After two semesters as Vice President, Merari was nominated as President of her college's Criminal Justice Club. She seeks opportunities for members to gain first-hand experiences in the criminal justice system. Merari's career goal is to understand what can compel a person to commit horrendous crimes while providing a voice to survivors of crime.



**Clarisa Flores**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Porterville College**  
**Major: Liberal Studies | GPA: 3.70**

Clarisa Flores was born and raised in the Central Valley. She began attending Porterville College in 2015 and graduated after fall 2017. While attending Porterville College, she was a double major of Liberal Arts and Social Science. After graduating last semester, she transferred to CSU Chico as a Liberal Studies major. She is studying to be an elementary school teacher because of her love for children. While attending college, she volunteered in a local elementary school as a kindergarten aide and volunteered in a local youth soccer league as a soccer coach for young boys in which she was involved in every year throughout her life. She now works as an instructional aide for a local school district while continuing her education. She hopes to make an impact in her community as an elementary teacher after obtaining her bachelor's degree and teaching credential.



**Mariela Germann**  
**Age: 35**  
**College: Cerro Coso College**  
**Major: Business Administration | GPA: 3.89**

Mariela Germann is a single mother and an ESL student at Cerro Coso Community College. She works for Community Action Partnership of Kern as a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor with the purpose of helping others to change their lives. Her workplace has motivated her to change her life by pursuing a higher education. By doing so, she has achieved to receive academic awards and scholarships. Since early age, her parents taught her the importance of education. Therefore, she believes that education is obtained only by oneself's merit. In addition, she will be the first fully-online student to graduate in the Honors Program. Her main goal is to show her young daughter that with effort, dedication, and commitment anyone can achieve any goals that one sets upon oneself. Nevertheless, Mariela is persistent to reach her goals and dreams, and she is considering to transfer to Bellevue University.

# All-California Academic 2nd Team



**Tzitziki Hernandez**  
**Age: 21**  
**College: Napa Valley College**  
**Major: Biological Science | GPA: 3.60**

Tzitziki Hernandez attends Napa Valley College and plans to transfer to UC Davis where she will continue her studies as a Biological Sciences major. Ms. Hernandez intends to receive a Bachelors Degree from UC Davis and participate in research projects to experience different fields to reinforce her career. Tzitziki then plans then to attend medical school and become a pediatrician. During her early college years, Tzitziki was blessed with a little sister (Leilani), who was born with physical abnormalities that required numerous doctor appointments and hospitalization. Helping children like her sister motivates Tzitziki to apply her knowledge and cultural background to make a difference in the lives of all Latino communities.



**Greg Kutzbach**  
**Age: 34**  
**College: Cerro Coso College**  
**Major: Computer Information System | GPA: 4.00**

In Spring 2018 Greg will be completing his AS degrees in Computer Information Systems and Cyber Security. During his two years at Cerro Coso College he earned five CompTIA certifications including Security+. Being inspired to change his career path after his grandmother's computer was hacked and ransomed, he left his IT Director position to pursue his passion, Cyber Security. His educational goal is to earn a B.S. and either an M.S. or Ph.D relating to computer security. His primary goals are philanthropic in nature. Greg seeks to promote and help design technologies that will be freely accessible to everyone and will prevent attackers from taking advantage of people's trust. The focus of this will be on the senior population, whom he believes are especially vulnerable targets. Mr. Kutzbach would also like to contribute to security related open source projects that promote worldwide information security.



**Wing Sum (Jaime) Lam**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Ohlone College**  
**Major: Business Administration Major | GPA: 4.00**

Spirited and curious, Wing Sum constantly establishes herself in various positions and organizations seeking opportunities to learn while benefiting others. Elected as a senator of the Associated Students of Ohlone College, she raised awareness for gender equality and mental health. As the founder and president of Ohlone College's Financial Analysis and Management Education Club, she brought people and ideas together by planning events like LinkedIn and resume workshops. Despite her intense academic course-load, Wing Sum never compromised her passion for sports. She represented her college water polo and swim teams at regional and state level competitions and became the swim team captain. Ms. Lam teaches swimming to children with special needs and coaches competitive swimmers at a local swim club. When she's not at school or in the pool, she enjoys outdoor activities, traveling, discovering food, spending quality time with family and friends and getting a good amount of sleep.



**Karina Linares**  
**Age: 23**  
**College: Long Beach City College**  
**Major: Psychology Major | GPA: 3.8**

Karina Linares currently attends Long Beach City College and will be transferring in fall 2018. She is pursuing a degree in psychology and dreams of becoming a school psychologist. Karina immigrated to California when she was five years old, and she was raised the majority of her life by a single mother. Growing up her life was unpredictable, but when she started college, she realized that the effort she put in would equate to the results, so she spends countless hours studying and doing homework to excel academically. Ms. Linares has also dedicated the last two years tutoring children who are doing poorly in school in order to help them reach their academic goals. Karina is an active member of her school. She is part of the honors program and three Honor Clubs including Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.



# All-California Academic 2nd Team



**Nicole McKinney**  
**Age: 40**  
**College: Solano Community College**  
**Major: Political Science | GPA: 3.74**

Nicole is a Political Science major with an educational background in Criminal Justice with plans to transfer to UC Davis and ultimately be accepted into their Law School. She is interested in programs that will help her community and currently volunteers at her local Juvenile Hall with a program called the Peace Ambassador's Program through Solano College. The mentorship program teaches youth about peace and college preparation. Nicole knows the importance of leadership roles within her community and wants to make a difference. As an active member of Phi Theta Kappa and former President of the Beta Mu Gamma Chapter at Solano College she enjoys fundraising and finding different ways to donate to the community promoting team work and fellowship within the club.



**Thanh Nguyen**  
**Age: 27**  
**College: Skyline College**  
**Major: Business Administration | GPA: 3.82**

Thanh Nguyen is currently studying Business Administration at Skyline College. She is Co-President of the Beta Theta Omicron Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and is in the Honors Transfer Program and the Alpha Beta Chi Chapter of the Kappa Beta Delta business honor society. Thanh is a Supplemental Instructor Leader for Statistics and Calculus and Peer Mentor at Skyline College. Through Phi Theta Kappa, Thanh has volunteered at senior centers and middle schools. She developed and implemented Leadership Development Workshops at Skyline College. Thanh plans to transfer to San Francisco State University in the Fall of 2018. She aims to work in the Human Resources Department of a hi-tech company. Thanh wants to inspire her classmates and colleagues to aim high and work diligently to achieve their goals.



**Benson Njau**  
**Age: 34**  
**College: Merritt College**  
**Major: Natural Science | GPA: 3.67**

Ben Njau was born in Kenya and immigrated to the U.S. in the fall of 2013. He settled in Oakland where he enrolled in classes at Laney and Merritt College with the intention of attaining an Associate of Science Degree and later transferring to a four-year college. Njau will be graduating with an AS in Natural Sciences in May 2018. Njau Tutors English at Laney through the Umoja-Ubaka program. Njau served as the chairman of Inter-Club Council at Laney College in 2016, where he enjoyed serving the diverse students of Laney Community College. One of his proudest moments has been climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania as a youth instructor with Outward Bound Kenya. Njau then started working with Outward Bound California when he migrated to the U.S. As an instructor, he has had the opportunity to explore California, and mentor inner-city California youth. Njau is married and has a 9-month old son.



**Jack Pinkston**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: College of the Canyons**  
**Major: Accounting Major | GPA: 3.76**

Jack Pinkston is a sophomore at College of the Canyons, graduating in June 2018 with an AA in Accounting. Jack plans to transfer to a 4-year university to complete a Bachelors Degree in Finance with an emphasis in Financial Services. Mr. Pinkston likes to spend his time volunteering as a high school JV football coach, and also works part time at Jersey Mikes. Jack is dedicated to his classes and achieving the best grades he can. Jack works hard to maintain a balance between classes, working and coaching so he can do well in all aspects of his life. He is committed to his educational goals and is grateful for the opportunity to attend college.

# All-California Academic 2nd Team



**Britt Rucker**  
**Age: 44**  
**College: MiraCosta College**  
**Major: Business Administration | GPA: 3.92**

Britt Rucker is currently a business student at MiraCosta College. She will transfer to CSU San Marcos in the fall. There she will study Business Administration with an option in accounting. After earning her Bachelor's degree, she plans to earn her CPA license. While working for a couple of years she plans on earning a Master's degree in Taxation. Eventually, she would like to own her own income tax preparation business and possibly pursue a Ph.D. in Leadership. Britt also enjoys volunteer work, art, architecture, gardening, photography, swimming and hiking. Spending family time with her husband and their dog makes her the happiest. Her favorite volunteer job is working at Interfaith Ministries through the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program. The VITA program was instrumental in solidifying her choice of career.



**DeShawn Seymour Sr.**  
**Age: 33**  
**College: Solano Community College**  
**Major: Psychology | GPA: 4.00**

DeShawn Seymour Sr. is a returning graduate and alumni of Solano College. Mr. Seymour is a diligent, hardworking student that believes in working smart. As a student majoring in psychology, he maintains a 4.0 GPA and has received recognition of President's honors in nearly every semester. He is an active member of the UMOJA Scholars Club and an active member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Deshawn's intent is to transfer to UC Davis where he plans to earn a B. A., Masters, and Ph. D in Psychology. Deshawn believes in having strong ties to my community and as such, he has dedicated over 35 hours every week in volunteering as a Youth Athletic Director and Head Coach for several Fairfield youth programs for the last 6 years. Deshawn is a loving husband of 17 years and a father of four amazing children.



**Haruka Tabuchi**  
**Age: 21**  
**College: Saddleback College**  
**Major: Computer Science | GPA: 3.97**

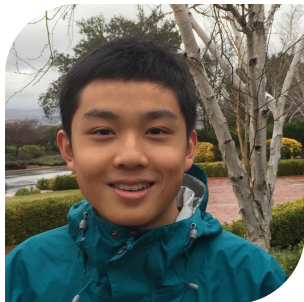
After graduating from high school at the age of 18, Haruka moved to the United States to pursue a higher education away from her family in Japan. Initially, she experienced a difficult time communicating with professors and classmates because of her language barrier. However, Haruka has improved her English skills through being actively involved in club activities including Phi Theta Kappa. Having overcome her language and cultural barriers, Haruka will complete the Honors Program at Saddleback College in May 2018. She also serves as Vice President of Administration of Alpha Gamma Sigma. With her love of math, Haruka started to study Computer Science and became a math tutor at the Saddleback College Tutoring Center. Haruka hopes to transfer to the University of Michigan or Cal Poly SLO because of their outstanding research programs. As her future career goal, she wants to contribute to innovation in self-driving car technology.



**Marisela Vazquez**  
**Age: 34**  
**College: Cuyamaca College**  
**Major: Sustainability/Landscape Architecture | GPA: 3.98**

Marisela Vazquez is a junior at Cuyamaca College. She will be transferring to San Diego State University with the intention of obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Sustainability. Her passion for gardening and art, both led her to a career that is the perfect combination of the two; Landscape Architecture. After completing her degree at San Diego State University, she will apply for the graduate program being offered at California Polytechnic State University in the field of Landscape Architecture. It is her desire and passion to help her community move toward designing and implementing more sustainable practices within the landscape. Marisela has begun her efforts to help her community through her involvement in various PTK volunteer activities. She has also served the Phi Theta Kappa Alpha Pi Omicron Chapter as acting Secretary since Fall of 2016.

# All-California Academic 2nd Team



**Christopher Yang**  
**Age: 15**  
**College: Las Positas College**  
**Major: Physics | GPA: 4.00**

Christopher Yang plans to transfer to UC Berkeley to major in Physics. At Las Positas College, he is president of the Math Club and Mu Alpha Theta Mathematics Honor Society, webmaster of the Alpha Gamma Sigma Honor Society, a tutor at the Las Positas College Tutorial Center, and a member of the Honors Transfer Program. In the Honors Transfer Program, he has performed research on tidal forces, molecular dynamics, and finite-difference methods for Poisson's equation. In the Mu Alpha Theta Honor Society, he develops 3D hands-on activities that demonstrate geometry, trigonometry, and proportionality.

# All-California Academic 3rd Team



**Michael Brown**  
**Age: 47**  
**College: Fullerton College**  
**Major: Business Management | GPA: 3.53**

Michael Brown is a husband, father of four, and works as a respite care provider with a behavioral respite company in Fullerton, CA. Michael has attempted college several times in the past, but it never really clicked or worked out for him. However, since 2016, he has flourished at Fullerton College, and having been recruited to PTK has been an honor. He is dedicated to completing his journey to a degree and starting a psychology practice with his wife and several of her fellow students. Mr. Brown has already laid the groundwork for this project, and believes each accomplishment furthers him toward his goal.



**Nicole Buechler**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Saddleback College**  
**Major: History | GPA: 3.58**

Nicole Buechler is currently a part-time server and a full time student with hopes to transfer to CSU Fullerton in fall of 2018. Her goal is to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Arts for History and continue on with Fullerton's teaching credential program. After earning her degree and before starting her career as a high school teacher and future community college professor, Nicole plans on traveling the world. So far she has travelled to 14 countries on three different continents. Her travels have resulted in a passion for adventure, love of diverse culture, and a want to pursue education, to share her experience with future students. As former President of Alpha Gamma Sigma, Sigma Epsilon chapter, and a current member of Phi Theta Kappa, her experience has given her an appreciation of the volunteering needs of a community, teamwork, leadership, and intercommunications.



**Denis Byaliy**  
**Age: 26**  
**College: Diablo Valley | GPA: 4.00**

Denis Byaliy is a Russian-born economics student who's getting ready to transfer to a university. In May of 2018, he will receive an AS in Economics and an AA in Business from Diablo Valley College. Aside from his major coursework and active participation in 3 honors societies, Denis has a vast interest in mathematics. Upon finishing his economics degree, he plans on returning to school to get a second degree in math. Having spent both halves of his life living in two different countries, Denis became quite accustomed to learning new things. He feels that as humans, it's our prerogative to explore the uncharted, and absorb as much as possible at every step of the way. Having given himself time off after high school, Denis was able to grow and come back, taking academia head-on. His top three picks for universities include Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, UC San Diego, and Harvard.



**Kelly Clemen**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: San Diego Miramar College**  
**Major: Literature Major | GPA: 4.00**

Kelly was born and raised in San Diego, and has always had a passion for reading and writing. In addition to attending Miramar College, Kelly works part-time as a barista, and is also working with her professor and peer as part of the PATH program, to help arts and humanities students transfer to UC San Diego. She plans on participating in the program herself, and intends to transfer to UC San Diego to major in Literature/Cultural Studies, and potentially minor in Film Studies. Kelly's favorite book is East of Eden by John Steinbeck.

# All-California Academic 3rd Team



**Justin Drake**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Shasta College**  
**Major: Business Major | GPA: 3.94**

Justin is a 20 year old student from Redding, California looking forward to hopefully attending California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo next fall. Justin works part-time for a local beer distribution company, while attending school full time. Justin is honored to be formally recognized for his academic achievements; but unfortunately is unable to attend this ceremony honoring students from colleges across California. This honor continues to motivate him not only in his academic career, but as well as in his personal career.



**Aimee Hostetter**  
**Age: 48**  
**College: San Diego Mesa College**  
**Major: Physical Therapist Assistant | GPA: 4.00**

Aimee began her pathway towards receiving her A.S. degree in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program almost 4 years ago when she began her volunteer work as a trainer at PEP4U, a non-profit gym for Parkinson's patients. She wanted to pursue additional certifications for classes to bring to PEP4U, only to discover the requirement to be a licensed PT/PTA. Aimee returned to school to meet the prerequisites while working as a PT Aide. Upon acceptance to SD Mesa College, she began tutoring for the Allied Health Dept. and volunteering for another Parkinson's program, Rock Steady. She will graduate in May, sit for her State Board exam in July, and is excited to bring her new found knowledge back to PEP4U in Orange County where she resides with her husband and 3 kids.



**Nneoma Kanu**  
**Age: 19**  
**College: College of San Mateo**  
**Major: Accounting | GPA: 3.68**

Nneoma Kanu is a sophomore and an Accounting major at College of San Mateo (CSM). Having very strong cultural roots due to her Nigerian Parents and being the oldest of four, she was raised to be very competitive and ambitious. Right out of high school, she knew she wanted to continue playing volleyball and decided to commute almost 50 miles for two years to attend CSM and play on their team. Through this, she was able to receive the 2017 Second Team CCCAA All Conference for Women's Volleyball and the 2016 Women's Volleyball Scholar-Athletes Award. She works as a library assistant at Canada College and is a 13-2 Volleyball coach for Bay Area team. Along with work, she has also been a Sunday school assistant at her church for almost 4 years and has a marketing and accounting internship that has allowed her to learn so much about the field.



**Natalie Lechtaler**  
**Age: 36**  
**College: Merritt College**  
**Major: Business Administration | GPA: 3.90**

Natalie is an East Bay native, mother, and proud student of Merritt College in Oakland, CA. Education has become a major driving force in Natalie's life. Her academic plan is to become a Marketing Manager. She has earned an Associates of Science-Transfer Degree in Business Administration, a Human Resource Management Certification, a Social and Behavioral Science AA, and an AS-T in Psychology. Natalie is a proud Phi Theta Kappa honor roll student. She plans to transfer to UC Berkeley, where she will earn her Bachelor's Degree in Marketing. After graduation, she plans to pursue her career goals with Pixar in marketing.

# All-California Academic 3rd Team



**Kristabel Mendoza**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Southwestern College**  
**Major: Accounting | GPA: 4.00**

Kristabel Mendoza is a sophomore at Southwestern College. She will be transferring to San Diego State University in Fall 2018 to finish her degree in Business Administration Accounting and continue with her CPA certification. She previously attended Mater Dei Catholic High School for 4 years prior to graduating in May 2016. Since enrolling at Southwestern College in Fall 2016, Kristabel has been taking 18 units per semester and has been volunteering as a tax preparer for SWC's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, a program that provides free tax return preparation services to low-income people. In addition to her volunteer services, she also offers tutoring to middle school children that are struggling with school work. As an accounting major, she has also immersed herself in helping her father in his business by assisting with bookkeeping. She hopes to one day become a CPA and continue to help her father's business.



**Nhan Nguyen**  
**Age: 28**  
**College: San Diego Miramar College**  
**Major: Political Science Major | GPA: 3.79**

Nhan Nguyen is a non-traditional student who returned to college after serving 8 honorable years in the United States Marine Corps. As a returning student, Nhan is the embodiment of resilience and dedication as he was able to transform his 1.3 GPA to 3.79 in two semesters. He has distinguished himself as a political science major with the intent of later earning his Juris Doctorate Degree in Law. As a father to his one year old son, Nhan aspires to be a role model by working full-time and going to school full-time as well. He is a member of the Honors Program, a Phi Theta Kappan, and the co-chair of the LGBT Alliance Task Force at his college. In addition, he has volunteered over 1000 hours of community service. After completing his lower division coursework, he plans to transfer to the University of California, Berkeley this fall.



**Tien Nguyen**  
**Age: 21**  
**College: Santa Ana College**  
**Major: Biochemistry | GPA: 3.72**

Tien Nguyen was born and grew up in Vietnam. She came to the U.S. in 2015 when she was 19. She attended college after one year of living in California. She is majoring in biochemistry at Santa Ana College. Her favorite subjects are Biology, Chemistry, and Mathematics. She plans to complete her college courses, earn her Bachelor's degree, then apply to Pharmacy schools. Her goal is to become a Pharmacist. She decided to study in the healthcare field because she loves to work in hospitals. Also, she loves to do research and explore the human body. She is so curious about how our body systems are working. She chose Pharmacy because she wants to help other people improve their health, especially her parents. She is completing hundred hours of volunteering at St. Joseph Hospital of Orange, and will continue to give back to her community.



**Kana Onishi**  
**Age: 23**  
**College: Grossmont College**  
**Major: Wellness & Self-Development | GPA: 4.00**

Kana Onishi is a Japanese international student who has been in America for close to two years. She is passionate about nutrition and helping people live healthy lives. She is planning to transfer to a California State University to further study nutrition and possibly work with diabetic people who need lifestyle and nutritional advice in the future.

# All-California Academic 3rd Team



**Juan "Johnny" Quintero**

**Age: 44**

**College: Oxnard College**

**Major: Business Administration & Entrepreneurship | GPA: 3.75**

Johnny is an Oxnard College student that has an accelerated transfer opportunity to begin the business administration & entrepreneurship program at the CSUCI Martin V. Smith School of Business in Spring 2018. Concurrently, Johnny is also pursuing a certificate in Construction Technology at Ventura Community College District. Outside of school he works as a personal trainer and creator of the Jedi Training System. He also works with an internet start-up in San Jose, CA, by establishing their call center and outside sales format. Always one to be in the trenches, Johnny spends most of his free time volunteering at a community center in downtown Oxnard. Among his myriad of interests, Johnny enjoys studying, working out, listening to live music, watching movies, spending time with family, Phi Theta Kappa events, and trying out new places to eat.



**Wilson Saiki Junior**

**Age: 28**

**College: San Diego City College**

**Major: Political Science Major | GPA: 4.00**

Wilson Saiki Junior was born and raised in Brazil, and moved to the United States in 2013. He is currently studying Political Science at San Diego City College, and hopes to have a career in government or working for organizations that care about progressive issues for social justice. Wilson decided to study Political Science after campaigning in the 2015-2016 Presidential primary election. Even though he is not yet a citizen yet, Wilson volunteered for Senator Bernie Sanders and had the opportunity to learn about the American political system during this time on the campaign. Wilson enjoyed talking and learning from people of many different backgrounds, traveling to Nevada, Arizona, and California. At San Diego City College, Wilson has been a member of Phi Theta Kappa since November 2017. He is also the Vice-President of APSA (Asian and Pacific Islander Student Alliance) and plans to transfer to a UC Berkeley or UCSD in the fall 2019.



**Hieu Tran**

**Age: 33**

**College: Santa Ana College**

**Major: Electrical Engineering | GPA: 4.00**

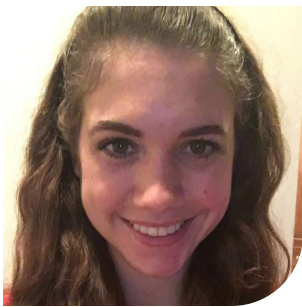
Hieu Tran relocated from Vietnam with his family in 2014, which he admits was not easy to restart his life at age 30. Hieu is currently earning his BA degree, looking for a new job, and adapting to a brand-new environment. While college life might be a smooth and easy experience for some, he must always give two hundred percent effort to succeed. With limited English as an immigrant, Hieu often ends up reading textbooks again at home to catch up with other classmates. Going to college is indeed a bittersweet experience for him since he can see obviously that his vision is being enlarged as the time passes by. While on the other hand, he must also sacrifice precious time with his family to focus on studying. Consequently, he has done it—earning a 4.00 GPA over of 5 semesters (84 units), which gives him the courage to move on.

# All-California Academic 3rd Team



**Annette White**  
**Age: 57**  
**College: Long Beach City College**  
**Major: Psychology | GPA: 3.89 GPA**

Annette White is a widow, mother of three adult sons and eight grandchildren. She is a returning student seeking to earn her degree in Psychology after many years of absence. She is currently a volunteer at Love Beyond Limits a non-profit organization in the city of Long Beach where she currently works with at-risk children/youth as a mentor and fundraiser. Annette returned to college the spring of 2016 and has been a full-time student ever since. She is currently scheduled to transfer to the University of North Texas for the fall 2018 semester, where she hopes to earn her Bachelor of Science degree. She plans to go on and eventually earn her LMFT (Licensed Marriage, Family Therapist). Her plans are to start a non-profit organization of her own working with children and youth who have been incarcerated or have parents that are incarcerated.



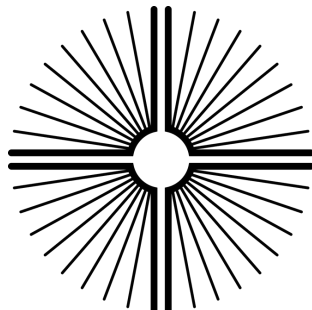
**Chole Williamson**  
**Age: 20**  
**College: Citrus College**  
**Major: English/Creative Writing | GPA: 3.94**

Chloe Williamson is extremely honored to take part in this amazing opportunity! During her first semester of college Chloe was put on the Dean's list. Since then, she has made the President's List. Ms. Williamson is an English and creative writing major at Citrus College.



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