

# 2020 – 21

## ANNUAL REPORT



To Our Supporters,

Now in its 22<sup>nd</sup> year, the UCI SAGE Scholars Program is a two-year leadership development and business acumen training program for high potential, low-income students. The program provides undergraduates who have significant financial need with the tools to invest in their future through leadership training, career and graduate school planning, and access to internship and scholarship opportunities.

SAGE is designed to be a high-touch, highly supportive program for our students. Due to the high quality and frequency of services provided, 100 percent of UCI SAGE Scholars – more than 570 all-time – have graduated from UCI. SAGE prepares students with hands-on opportunities and career development to leverage their UCI education, and positions them as desirable candidates in their chosen fields.

Throughout the pandemic, SAGE and its community partners rallied to serve the UCI SAGE Scholars with renewed vigor and dedication. SAGE programming – including classes, counseling, networking events, workshops and the annual leadership summit – continued in a virtual format to safely support students. As a result of pandemic-related stress points, there was a significant increase in the need for student counseling support for social-emotional wellness, as well as business acumen training to effectively prepare students for entering the workforce during a global pandemic.

The *New York Times* recently recognized UCI as the No. 1 university doing the most for the American Dream. The SAGE Scholars Program is proud to align with this strategic initiative and to serve as a vehicle for underserved students to achieve their American Dream.

The following pages include program highlights and profiles of our 2021 graduating class. Reading through their stories, I cannot help but be impressed by their journey, inspired by their accomplishments, and hopeful for the future these individuals will make for themselves and their community.

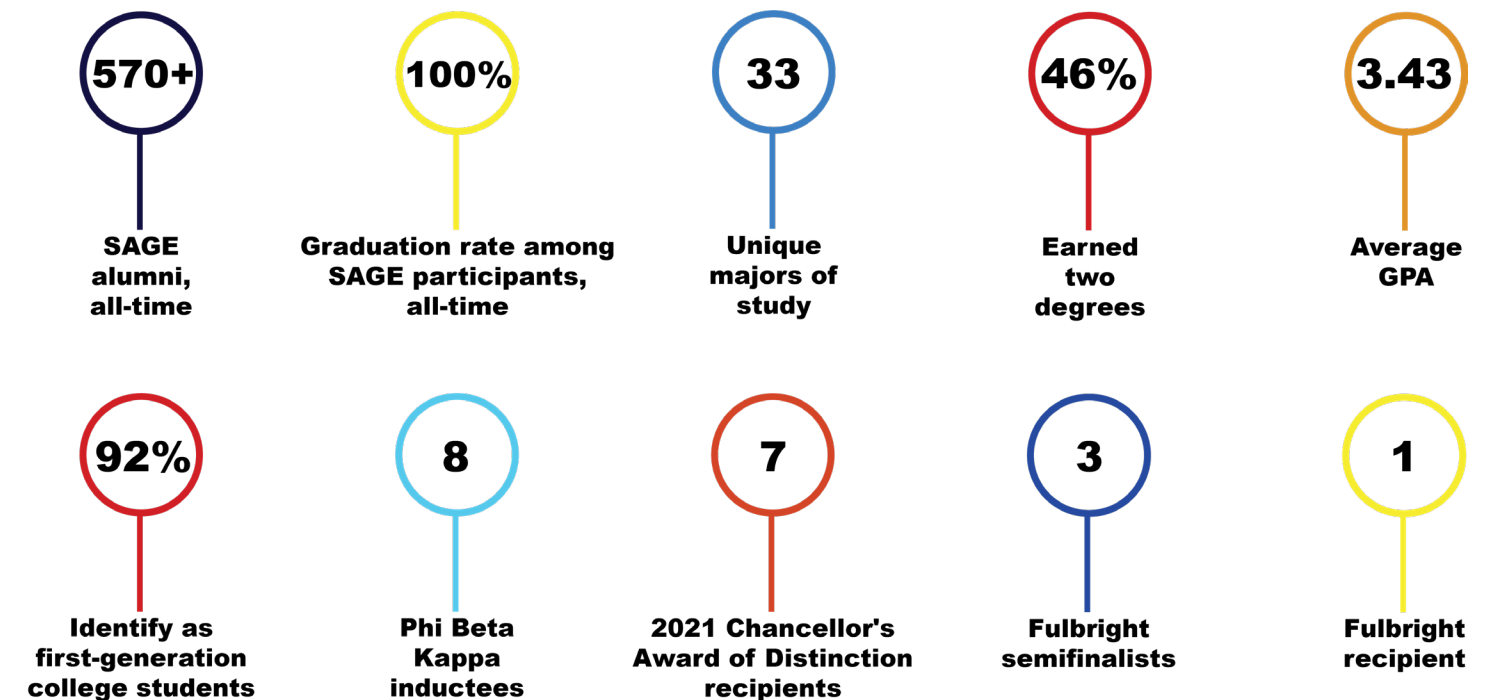
As always, on behalf of all our Scholars and alumni, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our sponsors, donors, and community partners for your continued support and involvement with the UCI SAGE Scholars Program. While our world continues to look a bit different right now, it is because of your support that our scholars are still accomplishing incredible things in the community and beyond.

With gratitude,

*Neda Moayed*

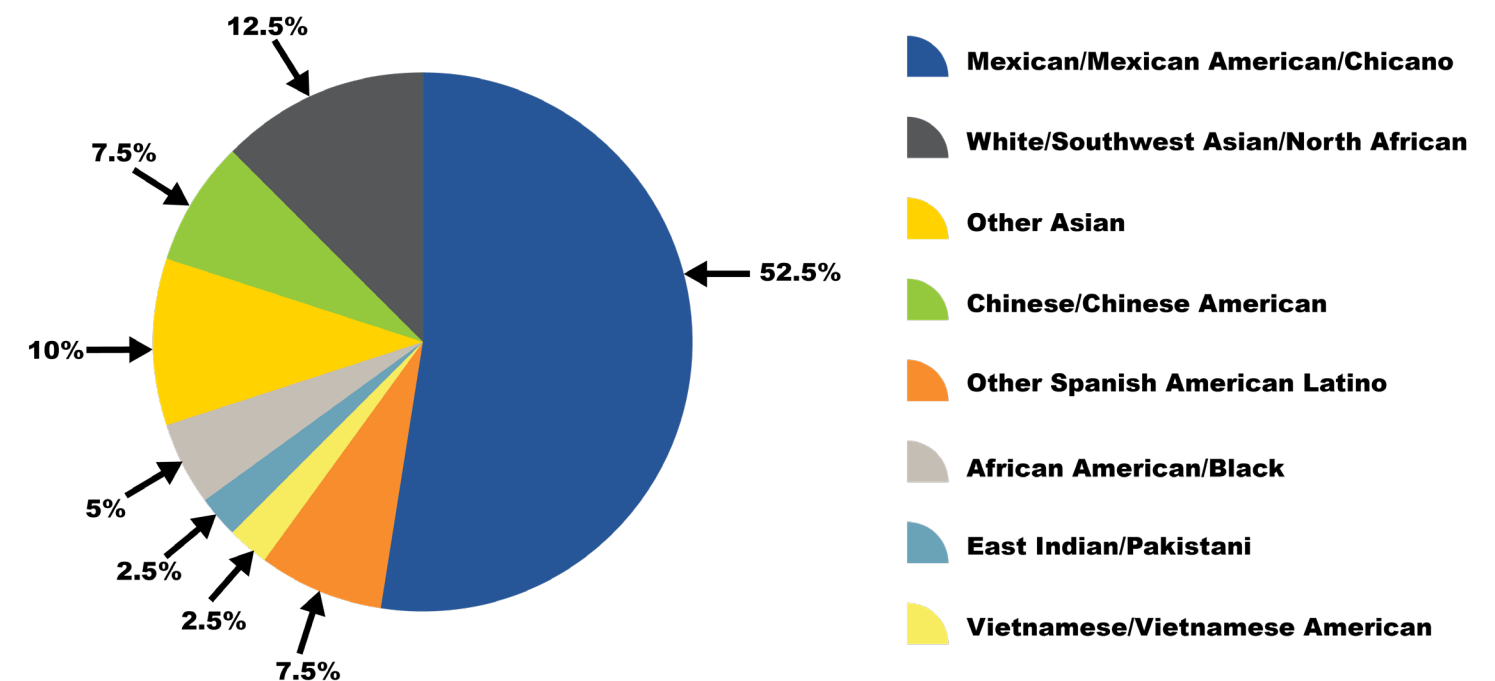
**Neda Moayed**  
Director  
UCI SAGE Scholars Program

# SAGE Scholars Class of 2021 Fast Facts



*Statistics are based on the 2021 SAGE Scholars graduating cohort of 39 people.*

## Ethnicity of SAGE Scholars, 2020–21 Cohort



The SAGE Scholars Program utilizes the University of California Office of the President's Student Academic Preparation and Educational Partnerships ethnicity breakdown guidelines. Visit <https://www.ucop.edu/outreach-educational-partnerships/resources-publications/index.html> to learn more.



## Juanalberto Alvarez

B.A., Business Economics  
B.A., Film & Media Studies

- Served as the 2020-2021 SAGE Ambassador
- Marketing Intern for Cinema Libre Studio
- Serves as a Scholar for the Hispanic Scholarship Fund
- Peer advisor for the Campus Organization and Volunteering Programs
- Accepted full-time position as an Accounting Analyst for Deutsche Bank

*"Through this program I gained a wonderful group of mentors that have taught me so much ever since I joined the program. Whether that be through the workshops they host or our one-on-one meetings, I feel I have grown so much not only as a professional but as an individual. Thank you for all of the ways that you have helped me grow. I truly feel like I have gained so much since I joined this program."*



## Isabella Angulo

B.S., Chemistry

- Interned at FUJIFILM Irvine Scientific
- Formed startup with fellow UCI students
- Recognized as Best Delegate at UCI Engineering Conference
- Inducted member, National Society of Leadership and Success
- Accepted full-time position as Assistant Product Line Manager for Cell and Gene Therapy at Fujifilm Irvine Scientific

*"As I reflect upon my undergraduate career which is coming to an end soon, I see all the times that the SAGE program has given me words of wisdom and moments of gratitude that I will cherish. I have had a challenging college experience but my academic success and professional success began to thrive once I had the guidance from the SAGE scholar program."*



## Daniel Ascencio

B.S., Electrical Engineering

- Interned as a firmware and hardware engineer
- Built three different virtual reality gloves
- Designed and built a prototype for wireless LED tubes
- Passionate about art and entrepreneurship
- Accepted Sales Engineer position for oVio Electronics

*"Thank you SAGE for creating a program where students like me can learn information that others pay thousands of dollars for. I'm eternally grateful for the opportunity to be a part of SAGE history at UCI. Thank you corporate sponsors, donors, and foundations for supporting SAGE students. This program has truly changed my life and I'm positive that I owe my success and graduation to this program."*



## Jessica Balero Lingaitis

B.S., Biological Sciences

- Awarded Dean's Honor List throughout undergraduate education
- Research Assistant for the Huxman Ecology Lab
- Worked in chemistry and biology labs to expand laboratory skills
- Awarded UROP Fellowship for her research project *"The Effect of Altered Precipitation Regimes on the Wood Trait Plasticity of Semi-Arid Shrub Species"*
- Accepted a full-time position with Walking Fish Therapeutics as a Biotechnology Laboratory Assistant

*"Being a part of the SAGE community was a new experience for me because I'm from an area where not too many others had similar backgrounds or challenges as I did. I was able to connect with people on a deeper level because they faced similar hardships to get to UCI, and this definitely helped me to feel more a part of a community and I truly felt I had people supporting me."*





## Navid Bazmoon

B.S., Business Information Management  
B.S., Computer Science

- Software Engineer and Researcher at the California Plug Load Research Center
- Received Elliott Family Foundation Merit-based Scholarship
- Received Julian Feldman Endowed Merit-based Scholarship in Information and Computer Science
- Worked as Wireless Software Engineer Intern at Nihon Kodan America and Irvine-based startup Otter Lab
- Accepted a Software Development Engineer position with Amazon

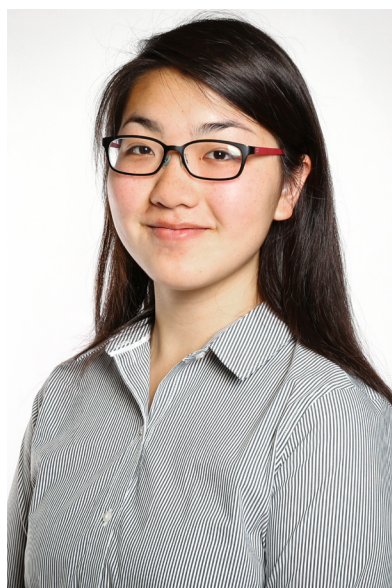


*"The internship experience that I had with Nihon Kohden America was great. I received a lot of support from my team and my manager during my internship. I learned a lot from both the technical and professional sides. This amazing experience helped me to become successful in my education and career development. I want to thank Nihon Kohden America for this great opportunity."*

## Kelly Chen

B.A., Chinese Studies  
B.A., Education Sciences

- Served as teaching assistant in second-grade classroom
- Recipient, UCI Academic Excellence Scholarship
- Worked as International Peer Group Mentor for first-year international students
- Research assistant in Working Memory & Plasticity Lab
- Seeks to pursue Ed.D. degree and become principal at a low-income community



*"Thank you for allowing me to receive training in professional skills that have helped me gain more confidence transitioning into a career after graduating. I have also been able to help my mom find work due to the knowledge I learned from SAGE, and I am very grateful I have the ability to do so. The SAGE staff have been an important part of my support system at UCI, and I deeply appreciate all the help and advice I've received from them in terms of addressing my personal, academic, and professional struggles."*

## Miriam Escobedo Gomez

B.A., Education Sciences  
B.A., Psychological Science

- Received Resilient Student Parent Scholarship
- As Secretary for Zotting with Dependents at UCI she created a community to support student-parents
- Worked as student coordinator for Early Academic Outreach Program; worked with high school alma mater to help students with applications
- Interned as an administrator for the Division of Continuing Education at Santiago Canyon College
- Will begin her M.S. in Counseling, option in Student Development in Higher Education at Cal State Long Beach



*"I am beyond thankful for the SAGE Scholars Program for guiding and pushing me to be the best version of myself in my academics as well as strengthen my professional skills including the importance to attend to my well-being. Thank you for the support and guidance during our one-on-one counseling, especially through the graduate application process, otherwise it would have been impossible."*

## Devanga Fonseka

B.A., Business Administration

- Served as 2020-2021 SAGE Ambassador
- Served as a student assistant with the Financial Services department at Paul Merage School of Business
- President, Tau Sigma National Honors Society
- Member, Campuswide Honors Collegium
- Created mentorship program to support incoming transfer students during pandemic



*"I would like to thank all the sponsors, donors and foundations that have chosen to actively support SAGE and contribute towards the impact this program has had in my life. I would not be the same person I am today without SAGE and I will always be grateful that such a program exists for students like me who struggle through university. I thank SAGE everyday for being a steady pillar whenever I need help, support and direction."*



## Cintya Garcia

B.A., Social Ecology

- First-generation college student; transferred from Santa Ana College
- Served as the Business Operation Intern at ENO Brands
- Participated in the DREAM Project Fellowship and served as the Program Assistant for the SAGE Scholars Program
- An essential worker at the the Fresh Hub during COVID-19 pandemic, she served as the Student Assistant supporting students' food insecurities
- Aspires to work in Student Affairs and pursue a graduate degree

*"The SAGE Scholars program is the underdog from the movies. A underrepresented program that I am very grateful to be a part of. Thank you SAGE for welcoming me in. Thank you to ENO for the opportunity and the warm welcome. I had fun rotating and meeting the team at a closer level."*



## Emily Ha

B.A., Business Economics

B.A., Public Health Policy

- Studied abroad at the National University of Singapore
- Board member, Dean's Ambassadors' Council of The School of Social Sciences
- Founding President, Prison Education Project at UCI
- Interned at Prescribe Wellness, UCI Douglas Hospital, American Heart Association, and ERTechnologies
- Driven to pursue master's degrees in Health Administration and Public Policy

*"Thank you for helping me build my professional skills as I prepare to enter the workforce. The skills that I have learned have been invaluable to my future career goals. Thank you for the opportunity to build close relationships with a fantastic group of student leaders. I have made friendships that will last a lifetime as a part of the SAGE cohort, and I am so blessed to be part of a supportive community."*



## Merwa Hamid

B.S., Biological Sciences

- Transferred from Santiago Canyon College
- Involved in MedLife, Muslim Student Union, and Syrian American Medical Society
- Volunteers for Kaiser Permanente, Meridian Senior Living, and Anaheim Public Library
- Volunteers at UCI vaccination site, assisting individuals receiving COVID-19 vaccine
- Planning to attend medical school, become an OBGYN

*"I am so thankful for the one on one counseling SAGE staff provides for its students. These sessions have allowed me to reflect and talk to someone about my academic progression. Thank you to all of the sponsors, donors, and foundations that continue to support the SAGE Scholars program. The program has always encouraged me to be my best self and has helped me through some of my toughest academic and personal moments. I will forever be thankful."*



## Maggie Huang

B.A., Criminology, Law and Society

B.A., Psychological Science

- Research Assistant in UCI Bilingualism, Mind, and Brain Lab
- Worked in Dean's Office, as the front office student assistant for the Samueli School of Engineering
- Provided administrative support for UCI's Pharmaceutical Sciences Administrative Office
- As the team leader for Youth United Community in Action she coordinated 15 community service events for 50 members
- Plans to pursue master's degree in Social Psychology or Industrial-Organizational Psychology

*"The SAGE Scholar courses helped me enhance my leadership, resume, cover letter, and salary negotiation skills. The one-on-one counseling with SAGE staff has been inspirational. After every conversation, I discover something new about myself. Thank you for your sponsorships – it has enhanced my undergraduate academic success, graduate school preparation, career preparation, and many lifelong skills."*





## John Ibarra

### B.S., Electrical Engineering

- Degree emphasis in Radio Frequency, Antennas, and Microwaves
- Worked on project that reduces our carbon footprint
- Designed and wired the harness diagram on a dashboard of a racecar to determine the amount of voltage running through vehicle
- Designed electronic glove that allows stage performers to control lighting and visuals
- Accepted full-time position as Electrical Engineer for the Radio Frequency Navy branch at China Lake Naval Air Base



*"I am thankful for the SAGE Scholars program in helping me see a visual roadmap to my career. The program helped me in building my resume, communication, interview skills, and every aspect in shaping me as a new professional."*

## Saad Iqbal

### B.A., Criminology, Law and Society

### B.A., Psychological Science

- Participated in Social Ecology Honors Program and Advanced Field Study
- Undergraduate Research Assistant for Hot Cognition Lab in the Department of Psychological Science under Dr. Peter Ditto
- Conducted research regarding *Latinx Students, Graduate School and Academic Family: A Qualitative Study* under the mentorship of Dr. Jeanett Castellanos
- Received Outstanding Contribution to Social Ecology award and the Chancellor's Award of Distinction
- Presented and defended research findings at the 2020 SAEP Symposium: *"Participation in Alcohol and Drug Treatment Programs in State Prison Inmates"*



*"Being a SAGEr means that I have a community to lean on when things get tough. I also have advisors to honestly vent to when things don't go my way and plan with to move forward and grow exponentially."*

## Michelle Leyva

### B.A., Psychological Science

- First-generation student
- Recipient, Chancellor's Excellence Scholarship
- Worked in Multimedia Resource Center, UCI Science Library
- Aspires to teach English in another country
- Seeks to earn master's degree in Social Work



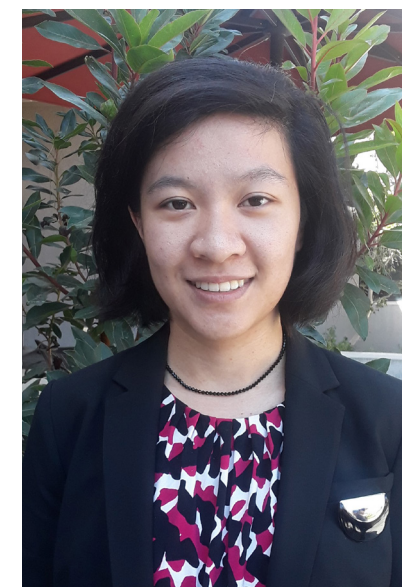
*"The SAGE Scholar courses helped me become less intimidated of public speaking due to our elevator pitch and group project assignments. With one-on-one counseling with SAGE staff I was able to explore my future plans. I feel like I can achieve anything I want to do. I would also like to thank the general corporate sponsors, donors, and foundations. Without you, the wonderful experiences I lived through would be unavailable."*

## Angie Lo

### B.A., Political Science

### B.A., Sociology

- Worked in Office of the Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs Development
- Served as 2020-2021 SAGE Ambassador
- Co-Secretary General, UCI Model United Nations
- Plans to work for a nonprofit that fosters social change
- Accepted into UCDC, plans to intern in Washington, D.C. summer 2021



*"The SAGE Scholar courses have taught me so much about professional and career development that I would never have known otherwise. The skills I learned in resume writing and elevator pitches are things I will carry with me long after graduation. My time at UCI has definitely been better ever since I joined the program, and although I am sad to be graduating, I know that I will always be a member of the SAGE family."*



## Jorge Lopez

### B.S., Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

- First-generation college student; transferred from Santa Ana College
- Recipient of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Educational Achievement Foundation award
- Received ASUCI Anteater Resilience Grant
- Copper Homeostasis Student Research Assistant at California State University, Fullerton
- Looking to pursue graduate or medical school

*“One of the most important things that I will take away from my time as a SAGE Scholar is being prepared so when opportunities come, I am ready. SAGE classes have been crucial by providing speakers that allow for personal development and leadership mentorship, which I found useful in developing the necessary skills to join the workforce or to continue my education to post graduate school. I am eternally grateful to have been part of such an inspiring and motivating group that has propelled me to think of endless possibilities.”*



## Sofia Montenegro

### B.A., English

- Minor in Literary Journalism
- Was awarded a library-sponsored scholarship
- Awarded the Crankstart Foundation Scholarship
- Tutors and works directly with ELD students at Loara High School
- Plans to earn her Single Subject Teaching Credential from CSULA

*“As a first-generation and transfer student, I wasn’t sure I belonged at UCI, but when I got an email suggesting I would be a good candidate for the SAGE Scholars program, I instantly felt excited that there was a place for me on campus. In the program, I was able to meet other like-minded students, learn their experiences, and gain the confidence I needed to be successful during and after college. With the help of the program, I was able to earn a much needed scholarship and employment as a tutor, which I truly enjoyed.”*



## Ricardo Montes

### B.S., Computer Engineering

- Transferred from Cerritos College
- Recipient of Dean’s Honor List
- Plans to pursue master’s degree in Computer Science and Engineering
- Interned as a Front End Developer for Edyza
- Accepted a position as the Software Engineer Associate with Orbee Auto

*“Thank you to the corporate sponsors supporting the SAGE Scholars. With the endorsement you provide, SAGE is able to reach out to a community in need. Thank you to the SAGE alumni for the guidance and experiences you share. I would also like to thank SAGE for showing me that large growth occurs when one focuses their attention on the skills they innately have and enjoy.”*



## Irene Morales

### B.A., Criminology, Law and Society

### B.A., Education Sciences

- Studied at the University of California Education Abroad Program in Rome, Italy
- Lobbied to increase state funding for higher education at the State Capitol in Sacramento
- Recipient of the UCI Alumni Association Distinguished Anteater Award, the Maxine E. Nevin Leider Scholarship for Social Justice Leaders, and the UCI Cross Cultural Center Dr. Joseph L. White Scholarship
- U.S. Fulbright Scholar semifinalist
- Accepted full-time position at UCI, Early Academic Outreach Program as the Presentation Team Member

*“The SAGE Scholars courses have provided me with the knowledge to enhance my leadership, academic, and professional skills. As a first-generation college student, it has been invaluable to gain job search knowledge, interview skills, and graduate school preparation. SAGE has provided me with a genuine support system that prioritizes personal growth. I have gained invaluable friendship and mentorship from students and staff who share similar backgrounds, which has provided me with greater inspiration and motivation within my educational and professional pursuits.”*





## Jocelyne Munoz

B.A., Education Sciences  
B.A., Social Policy and Public Service

- Served as Pathfinder Peer Educator for Student Outreach Research Center
- Supported low-income students as an Academic Tutor for Upward Bound Program
- Research Assistant under the guidance of Dr. Shanyce L. Campbell for the Race in Quantitative Research Project
- Awarded Scholarship for Independent Students, Dean's Honor List for eight quarters
- Served as a Course Peer Assistant for Dr. Jeff Johnston in the School of Education



*"When I joined SAGE during my third year, I did not realize the impact it would have in my life. The program allowed me to join my fellow peers in engaging workshops and classes. I am most grateful for the care and attention I received from the staff. The entire SAGE family provided me with the support that I needed as an underrepresented student to propel me towards success."*

## Kimberly Murga

B.A., Psychology

- Specialization in Sensory Processing & Information
- Minor in Biological Sciences
- Advised high school girls with college applications in Girls Inc.
- Recipient of the Chancellor's Excellence Scholarship
- Mentored and tutored low-income students during the pandemic for Anaheim Union High School District



*"SAGE has been an exceptionally beneficial program for me and has also been immensely encouraging. My classmates have been incredibly kind and welcoming, and we lift each other up. With the help and support of SAGE, I feel more confident and capable of achieving my dream and ending the cycle of poverty in my family."*

## Katia Necoechea Madriz

B.A., Education Sciences  
B.A., Psychology

- Served as Peer Academic Advising Program Coordinator, overseeing team of 70 advisors
- Served as Policy Intern for Advocates for Justice & Education in Washington, D.C.
- Received Emerging Leaders and Researcher Scholarship
- Recognized by the School of Education *cum laude*, School of Social Sciences *magna cum laude*, and received the Chancellor's Award of Distinction; Phi Beta Kappa May 2021 Notable Member
- Accepted into the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, will participate as an English Teaching Assistant in Madrid, Spain



*"To me, being a SAGER is having a second family to lean on, with a strong sense of community between the students and the staff, who I feel comfortable reaching out for help with my personal, academic, and professional goals, even beyond UCI. I am extremely grateful for the SAGE Scholars Program and all the skills, tools, and resources they provided me to navigate the last two years of my undergraduate career and the start of my post-undergraduate career."*

## Edson Orozco

B.A., International Studies  
B.A., Sociology

- Recipient, Chancellor's Excellence Scholarship
- Participant, UCI Costa Rica Immersion Program
- Worked as Leadership Coach at Ant-Eatery
- Mentored first-year undergraduate students
- Conducted research for Summer Academic Enrichment Program



*"Being a SAGER means having a family and friends who can support one another through good and bad times. Being part of the SAGE Scholars program really gave me a sense of belonging, where I felt respected and welcomed at all times. I love that I was able to be surrounded by amazing people who have goals and want to be successful just like me. Thank you, SAGE alumni, for giving back and supporting the program. Thank you for paving the way for future generations."*



## Daniel Palafox

B.A., Criminology, Law and Society

B.A., Urban Studies

- Served as a Teaching Assistant for the Saturday Academy of Law
- Researched the impact of environmental policies on local communities in Costa Rica
- Served as Summer Legal Institute Fellow for American Civil Liberties Union
- Participated in Global Services Scholars in South Africa
- Plans to take the LSAT during summer 2021 in pursuit of his long-term goal of attending law school



*"I would like to thank the SAGE Scholars program for playing an influential role in my time here at UCI. The structure and community afforded me the support needed to push myself towards my goals. If not for my counseling with SAGE staff, I would not have been aware of important opportunities, a number of which I secured as a result of the conversations we had. Since day one, a sense of community was established that remains true to this day."*

## Irma Rivera

B.S., Civil Engineering

- Minored in Urban and Regional Planning and recipient of Students Rising Above scholarship
- Interned by editing drawings using AutoCAD and Civil 3D for HDR, Inc.
- Seismic Design Competition Captain for Earthquake Engineering Research Institute
- Research & Design Intern for Hitachi America, Ltd.
- Accepted full-time position as a Field Engineer with Whiting-Turner Contracting Company



*"These were some of the most insightful courses I took. Thank you so much for preparing us with important skills. It has been an absolute honor to be in a room full of passionate and resilient people. Thank you so much for your contribution; it truly had a fruitful impact in my college career. I am grateful that the SAGE Scholars program is available to students."*

## Noe Rodriguez Cisneros

B.A., Public Health Policy

- First-generation college student
- Awarded Dean's Honors List for seven quarters
- Outreach & Advocacy Intern at Alzheimer's Orange County
- Community Service Chair for Phi Delta Theta
- Plans to focus on pediatric medical treatment in occupational therapy



*"I am very appreciative of the SAGE Scholar courses, as they were definitely some of the most helpful throughout my educational career because they focus on helping bridge the achievement gap through the development of leadership, professional and financial skills. Thank you to everyone who has made the SAGE Scholars program possible. Through this program, I found a group who supported me throughout my endeavors and always helped me throughout my successes at UCI."*

## Hector Rojas

B.A., Political Science

- Served as 2020-2021 SAGE Ambassador
- Seeks to attend graduate school and become a counselor
- Served as Program Assistant for the First Year Experience
- Participated in UCDC and served as an Intern for the Urban Education Leaders Internship Program
- Has position as Recreational Intern at Los Angeles Parks & Recreation



*"The SAGE Scholars program gave me a sense of belonging and the confidence to succeed and thrive. The SAGE staff supported me throughout my time at UCI and offered resources and opportunities that helped with my professional and personal development. Thank you for your continued support of the program. It means the world to me and everyone in the SAGE cohort."*



## Mark Rojas

B.S., Applied Physics

- Board member, Society of Physics Students
- Project Lead, Engineers for a Sustainable World
- Leading team that is designing carbon emission tracker
- Competed in Geothermal Design Challenge, hosted by U.S. Department of Energy
- Will begin his master's in Mechanical Engineering at Cal Poly Pomona

*"The SAGE Scholars program has allowed me the opportunity to develop and improve my resume and cover letter writing skills that are essential to be competitive in this job market. I am also appreciative of the One on One counseling with the SAGE staff! I might have never made the push to transition into a new career path without these meetings. The program has given me the opportunity to discover what it means to be a working professional. I sincerely appreciate the skills I learned through the program and I am excited to apply these skills in the next chapter of my life!"*



## Cesar Rosales

B.A., Language Science

B.A., Psychology

- Awarded Chancellor's Award of Distinction
- Earned degrees in bilingualism and second language acquisition
- Implemented research program and led independent, faculty-mentored projects
- Long-term goal to pursue a doctoral degree in Linguistics
- Accepted position as an interpreter for LanguageLine Solutions

*"Participating in the SAGE Scholars Program has been an amazing and transformative experience. As a first-generation student, the SAGE Scholars Program enabled me to feel a sense of community at UCI. I found meeting with SAGE staff very helpful because I left each session with clear, actionable, and immediate steps I could take to reach my goals."*



## Nina Rucci

B.A., Philosophy

- Specialization in Law and Society with minor in Civic and Community Engagement
- Marketing Manager and Administrative Assistant for Irvine Smile Design
- Co-President, Ethics Bowl Team and Chief of Operations, Pre-Law Society
- Recipient of M.F. and Marvel Monia Johnston Scholarship
- This summer she will take the LSAT and apply to law schools this fall

*"I am so grateful for my experience. This program has helped me become a better student and leader at UCI and in my community. It has provided me the support and community that I know I can lean on and trust to encourage me not only while I am finishing my degree but also after graduation."*



## Gerardo Sanchez

B.S., Computer Science

- Created an atmosphere monitoring system for computer engineering project
- Member of MAES: Latinos in Science and Engineering
- Created prototype of a surrounding environment scanner that created 3D model of a scanned area
- Software Engineer Intern at OMEGA Engineering
- IT and Network Services Intern for Nihon Kohden America

*"I am so thankful that I came across the SAGE Scholars Program because it gave me the experience I needed to be more confident and competent after my graduation. This experience is a privilege that I wish more people would have access to because it helped me so much. I would like to thank all the donors that have given generously to the SAGE Scholars Program. Through your support, many of us were given the access and ability to continue pursuing our goals."*





## Judit Solorio

B.A., Anthropology  
B.A., Political Science

- First-generation college student
- Seeking to attend law school and become an immigration lawyer
- Personal Assistant to business owner Angela Ling
- Awarded Dean's Honors list for five quarters
- Serves as Legal Advocacy Administrative Intern at Human Options

*"I would like to thank SAGE for helping me gain an internship with Human Options as a legal advocate administrative intern. This internship allowed me to improve my communication and teamwork skills. I would also like to thank the corporate sponsors, donors, and foundations for their contribution to the SAGE Scholars Program which allowed myself and many others to develop valuable networking, professional, and educational skills that we would have otherwise gone without if not for SAGE."*

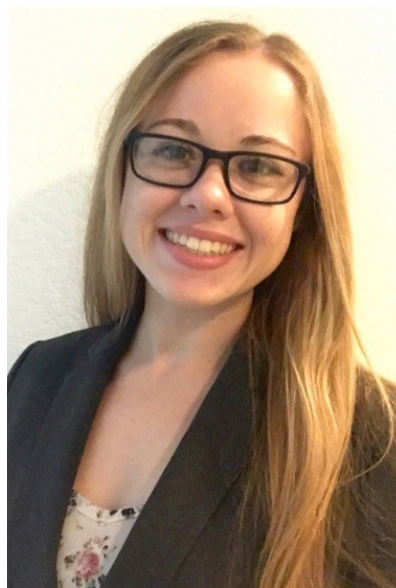


## Victoria Staton

B.A., Criminology, Law and Society  
B.A., Psychological Science

- Undergraduate research assistant for the Child Development Laboratory under Dr. Quas
- Completed research project on perpetrator-victim relationship dynamics in adolescent sex abuse cases
- Treasurer of the UCI Chapter of Psi Chi, the Psychology Honor Society
- Worked as Teaching Assistant for UCI Law's Saturday Academy of Law
- Will be participating in the Pre-law Outreach Program (POP) summer 2021

*"I want to thank the SAGE Scholars Program for helping me get a head start on important life skills, such as cover letter and resume building, networking, and financial literacy. Thanks to SAGE, I feel confident in my ability to be a competitive applicant in my desired field."*



## Zayan Suraiya Reza

B.A., Public Health Policy

- Undergraduate lead researcher within the Public Health Honors Research Program
- Rotational Intern for the Minority Association of Pre-Health Students (MAPS)
- Interned with Orange County Nursing Home Infection Prevention Project
- Awarded Dean's Honor List, Public Health Honors
- Presented at the 28th Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium

*"I am appreciative of the sponsors, donors, and foundations which support SAGE, contributing to the forging of extraordinary paths by incredible first-generation, low-income college students. I am grateful for the SAGE Scholars program, and to all the SAGE staff for their hard work and dedication to sustaining such an impactful program. Thank you for all that you do and continue to do for students who have dreams just like me!"*



## Subham Thakulla Kshetri

B.S., Computer Science and Engineering

- Awarded Dean's Honor List
- Won Best Infrastructure Hack title in HackUCI hackathon
- Looking forward to full-time software engineer work post-graduation
- Will pursue master's degree after gaining work experience
- Built a sorting robotic arm using Raspberry Pi, Motor HAT, and N20 Geared Motor to increase recycling efficiency

*"Many thanks to SAGE Alumni for guiding and connecting with me and my fellow cohort group. The amount of information and advice that I have received from alumni has been a key moment for me in deciding my future career path. I appreciate the thoughtfulness and guidance that provided me with different leadership opportunities, financial literacy, career readiness and salary negotiation skills. As a first-generation college student, these workshops and activities have a profound impact on my life journey and will forever stay with me."*





## Karina Velazquez

### B.A., Political Science

- First-generation college student, awarded the Dean's Honor List for eight quarters
- Member, Legal Education Committee, Office of the Internal Vice President within the Associated Students of UCI
- Published research at UCI Summer Academic Enrichment Program Research Symposium
- Participated in Campus-Wide Honors Collegium and Department of Political Science Honors Program
- Wants to become a lawyer to provide affordable legal counseling to low-income, underrepresented communities



*"As a first-generation and low-income student, I am thankful for being a part of the SAGE program. I have received valuable guidance regarding leadership, professional development, and transferable skills. I look forward to being able to give back to my SAGE community. Without your support, we would not be able to have the same opportunities."*

## Isabel Villalpando

### B. A., Education Sciences

### B.A., Sociology

- Served as an Alternative Break Site Leader, addressing social justice issues, specifically hunger and homelessness
- Awarded Chancellor's Award of Distinction, Latin Honors *cum laude*, and Latin Honors designation of *magna cum laude*
- Served as College Adviser for Early Academic Outreach Program, assisted students with academic advising and college applications
- Accepted full-time position at UCI, Early Academic Outreach Program as the Presentation Team Member
- Will begin K-12 School Counseling Master's Program at California State University, Long Beach in fall 2021

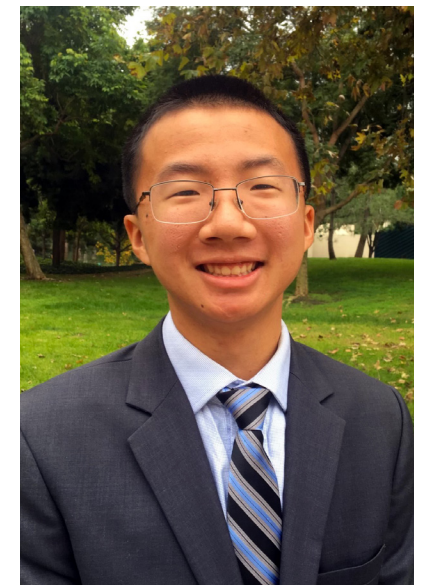


*"The SAGE Scholars courses have taught me financial literacy and career readiness. I am grateful for what I have learned through these courses and the confidence I have gained in my resume and cover letter writing skills. Due to this, I secured an internship with UCI's Upward Bound Program and UCI's Early Academic Outreach Program."*

## Thomas Ye

### B.A., Quantitative Economics

- Research experience began as a first-year student involved in Campuswide Honors Colloquium
- Research Assistant for Chubb Wright Research Lab, studied psychological tendencies related to the grouping principle and the dimensions of color
- Organized monthly property-wide programs for 60+ residents as Community Assistant for American Campus Communities, creating warm, inclusive environment
- As undergrad, enrolled in graduate classes in Discrete Math and Probability Theory
- Plans to work in data analytics



*"I'm truly thankful for having a cohort that was filled with self-motivated and driven individuals. Overall, SAGE has been really helpful when it comes to advocating for myself. Also, I've learned how to network and communicate much better."*



## SAGE Signature Events

**The SAGE events, workshops and seminars empower our students to learn, grow, and succeed in their education and all aspects of life.**

### Welcome Celebration

During winter 2021, we welcomed 37 students to the SAGE family with interactive virtual games that fostered networking and a sense of community.

### Annual SAGE Summit

This all-day event is designed to be a transformative experience that enhances each scholar's leadership capacity and promotes career readiness competencies for successful transitions from college to career. The scholars participated in this interactive summit through a variety of workshops and team-building activities to improve their personal and professional development.

Topics include: communication skills, strength-based leadership skills, networking and professionalism, along with essential skills such as growth mindset and resilience, emotional intelligence and self-awareness.

### Winter Workshop Series: Career Readiness Workshops

We provided five business acumen workshops where students developed essential career readiness tools and soft skills to support their professional branding. During the bootcamp our scholars developed a strong resume, wrote tailored cover letters, created and enhanced their LinkedIn profiles, and received and practiced their interviewing skills.

### Leadership Development Seminar

We use a strength-based approach to support our scholars in discovering their strengths and becoming more engaged to thrive in their education and in all areas of their lives. Our financial literacy guest speakers designed tailored curriculum with best practices for personal finance and confidence for real-world money management skills.

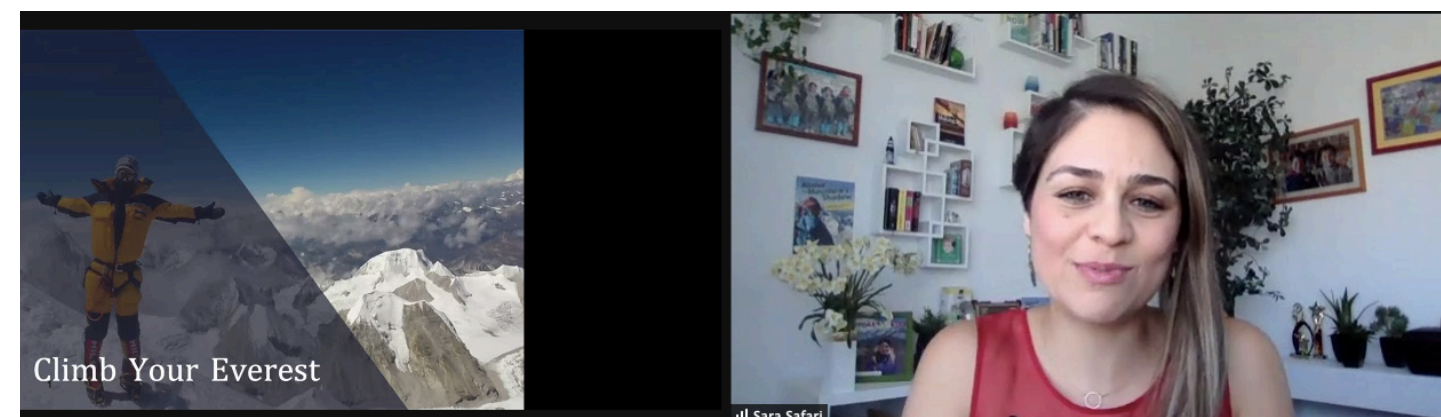
### Action Research Seminar

Participants explored the concept and processes of an action research proposal by developing their own action research, composing a literature review, designed their methods of data collection, and learned about the impact they can make in a low income community. As part of the students final presentation scholars presented and discussed with their peers their proposal and received feedback on their ideas.

### Spring Professional Development Workshops: Alumni Panel

Our SAGE Alumni inspired our scholars by sharing their experience, knowledge and wisdom about post-graduate life in the corporate world and their graduate education.

### Spring Professional Development Workshops: TEDx Speaker Sara Safari, "Climb Your Everest"



Sara shared with our scholars strategies to develop actionable goals and connect their passions and interests to help advance what matters most to live a life with meaning and purpose.

### SAGE Ambassador-Led Events

Our Ambassadors facilitated 6 student-led events to create and build a sense of community. Piloted a mentorship program for incoming scholars, to increase awareness of campus resources, provide support and guidance outside of classroom learning, and peer-to-peer networking to mitigate social and academic roadblocks.



## SAGE in the Community

Our scholars made meaningful contributions to local nonprofits by volunteering at least 10 hours per quarter. Giving back provides our scholars a platform to become change agents and develop closer ties to their community. Our scholars volunteered at nonprofits that combated social challenges in their community. Some examples include controlling the spread of COVID-19, ending homelessness, bringing cultural awareness and diversity to communities, tutoring low-income students, and addressing food insecurities for families and individuals in need.



Daniel Toluwanimi Aroso (2nd to left) with staff from the Adventures to Dreams Enrichment in Long Beach.



Karina Navarro – Renewable Farms



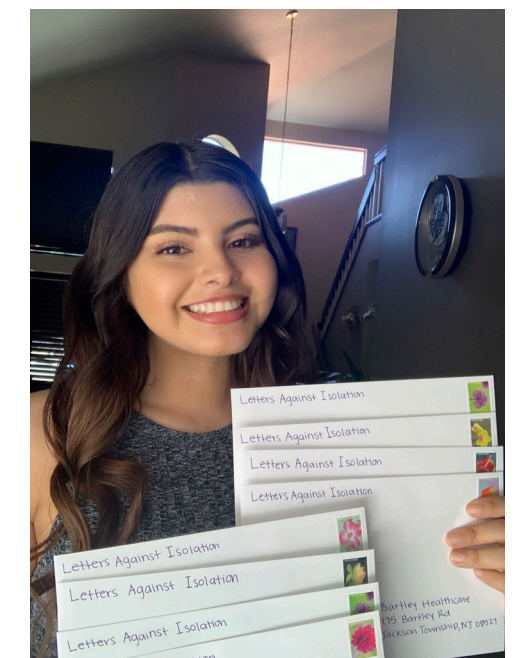
Katia Necoechea Madriz – Feeding Day Go



Elizabeth Yanira Montoya – Headband Project



Samantha Lemus – Watts Winter Initiative



Giselle Gutierrez – Letters Against Isolation

### Some of the nonprofit organizations the SAGE Scholars volunteered with include:

- Adventures to Dreams Enrichment
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County
- ENgin
- Free Rice
- Feeding San Diego
- Feeding Day Go
- Fresh Basic Needs Hub
- Headband Project
- Letters Against Isolation
- Orange County United Way
- Patient Projects
- Renewable Farms
- Southeast Asian Success Annual Youth Conference
- San Musae Cultural Center
- World Food Program
- Watts Winter Initiative



## Bright Futures for SAGE Scholars

Graduates of the SAGE Scholars Program have gone on to work at the most recognizable and prestigious companies in the world, including but not limited to:



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## SAGE Thanks You!

Everyone from the SAGE Scholars program appreciates your generosity and support!



## Our Donors

Thank you to the many sponsors of the SAGE Scholars Program over the years.  
Your contributions help in providing programming, resources and  
inspiration to the future leaders of Orange County.





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