

2021 – 22

ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Community and Philanthropy Partners,

For the past 23 years, the UCI SAGE Scholars Program stayed true to its mission to provide underserved undergraduates with mentoring, leadership training, professional development, financial support and access to relevant and meaningful work experience. SAGE is designed to be a high-touch, highly supportive program for our students. As a result of the high quality and frequent services provided, every UCI SAGE Scholars – more than 600 all-time – has graduated from UCI. SAGE prepares students with hands-on opportunities and career development to leverage their UCI education and makes them desirable candidates in their chosen fields.

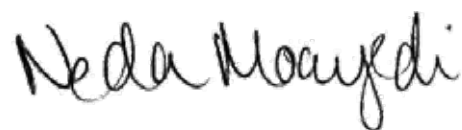
Thirty-six SAGE Scholars graduated from the program in June 2022, representing 25 unique majors, and 25% earned two degrees. Amongst them were Phi Beta inductees, Chancellor's Award of Distinction recipients, Fulbright recipients and semifinalists, and a National Science Foundation recipient. Additionally, many of our scholars interned at companies and nonprofits throughout Orange County. By serving in these paid, yearlong internships, SAGE Scholars receive mentorship and tutelage from leaders, acquire real-world skills, develop their interests and passion and embark on productive and auspicious careers. This is a testament to both our program's ability to support a diverse group of students and interests, and to the talent and determination of our SAGE Scholars, a majority of whom are the first in their family to attend college.

UCI continues to be recognized for doing the most of any university in the nation to advance upward social mobility, and SAGE has led the way in creating upward mobility for high-achieving students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is because of your continued support and involvement that the SAGE Scholars Program can create opportunities for students from all backgrounds to achieve the American Dream.

The following pages include program highlights for 2021-2022. While there are many achievements and milestones to be celebrated, I am most impressed by the community our scholars have built to support and lift one another to thrive, which resulted in a deep sense of belonging amidst a time of isolation and disconnection.

On behalf of the SAGE Scholars and alumni, we thank you! I look forward to another year working together to reach for greater heights and strengthen our community toward a brilliant future.

With gratitude,

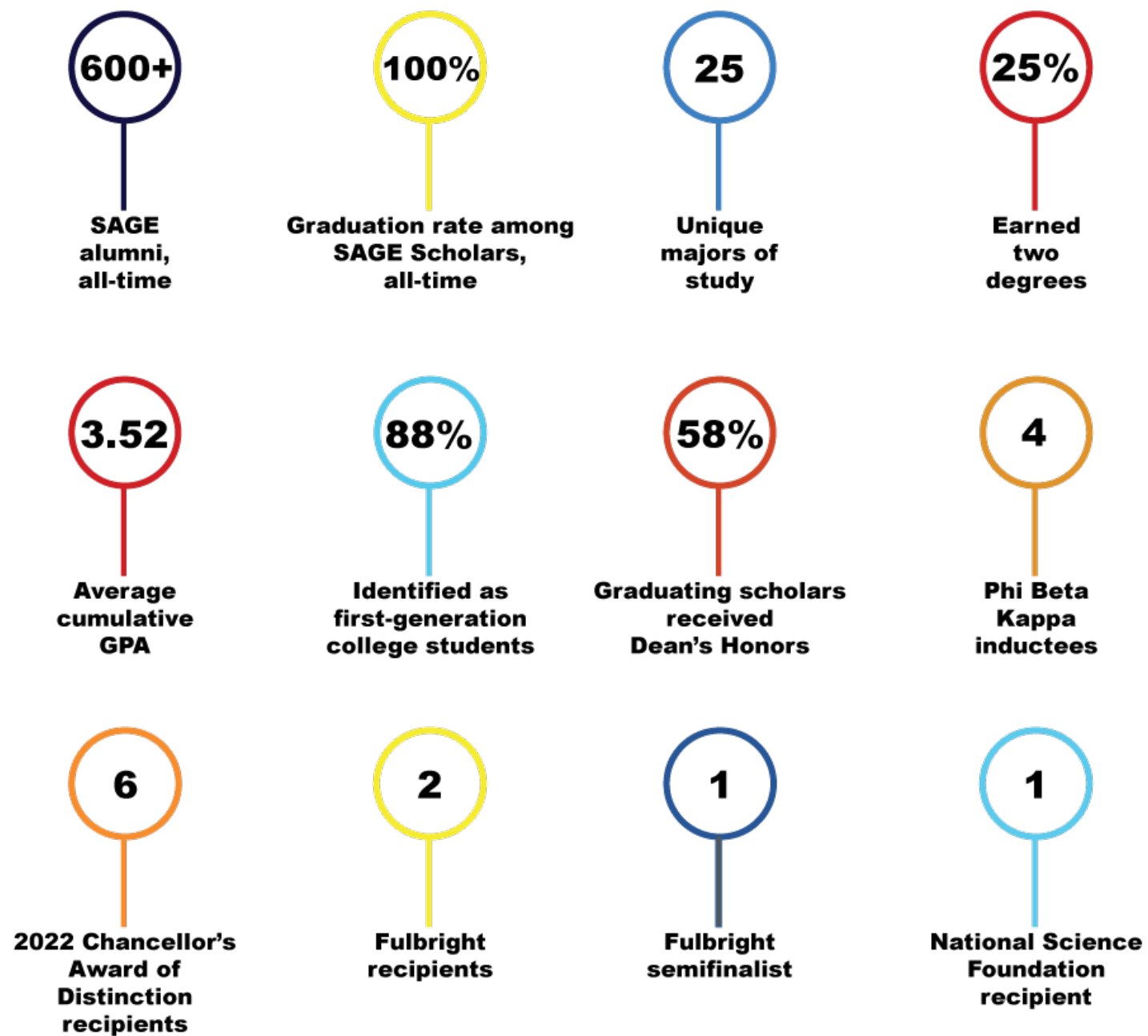


Neda Moayed
Director
UCI SAGE Scholars Program

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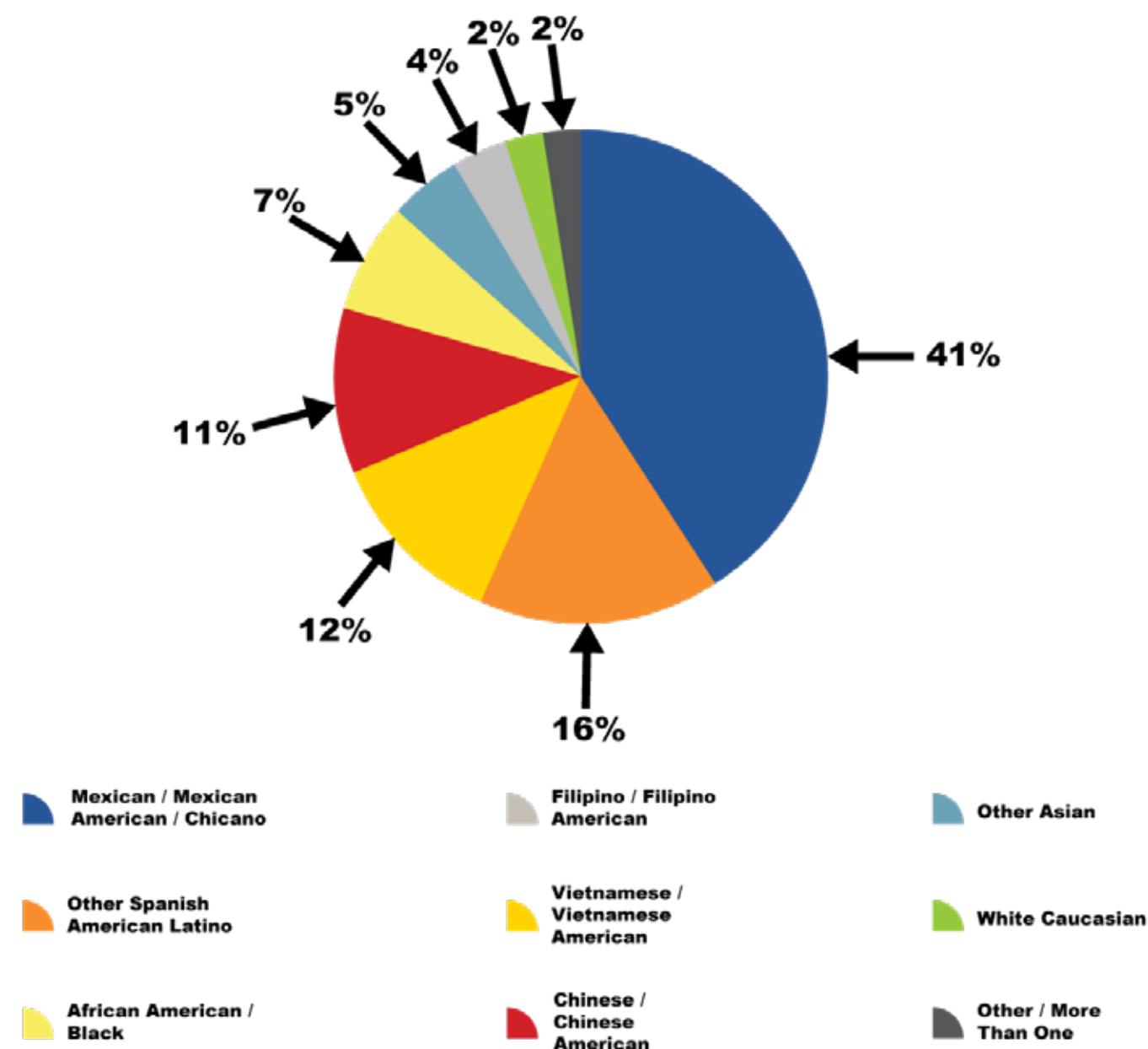
SAGE Scholars Class of 2022 Fast Facts



Statistics are based on the 2022 SAGE Scholars graduating cohort of 36 people.

SAGE Scholars Fast Facts

Ethnicity of all SAGE Scholar Participants

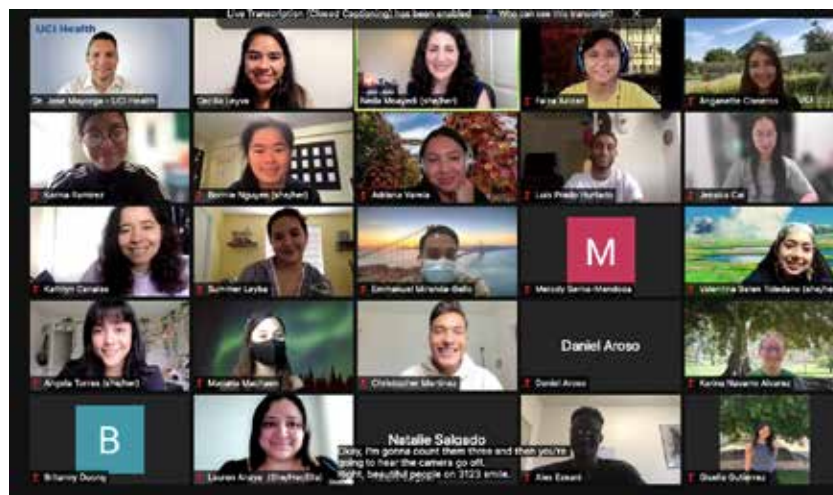


The SAGE Scholars Program utilizes the University of California Office of the President's Student Academic Preparation and Educational Partnerships ethnicity breakdown guidelines. Visit <https://www.ucop.edu/outreach-educational-partnerships/resources-publications/index.html> to learn more.

Signature Events

SAGE Fall Professional Development Course

A 10-week academic, professional, and personal development, 4-unit graded course focusing on the students' successful transition after degree attainment. In this course students learn a range of topics including salary negotiation, financial literacy concepts, and develop an Action Research Proposal to present.



UCI alum, Dr. José Mayorga, was truly inspiring as a guest speaker and shared his life experiences and path to Medical School with the scholars, as well as his commitment for serving low-income communities. Dr. Mayorga has dedicated his Family Medicine career to providing high-quality care to the medically underserved.

Signature Events

SAGE Fall Professional Development Course



Sandra Campero, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Advancement Operations at UCI, has been a champion of the program, and a repeat guest speaker. She shared the challenges in her journey, skills she needed to develop, and lessons learned throughout her life that gives her the grit and tenacity to continue making a positive change in students' lives.

In collaboration with School's First Credit Union, we offer a three-part financial literacy program. Financial Education Specialist, Everardo Velazquez, guided our scholars in understanding the importance of creating a budget, their credit score, and best practices to building a savings.



Signature Events

Randy Lewis All-University Leadership Conference



Sixteen of our scholars were sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs to attend the annual Randy Lewis All-University Leadership Conference. This conference is a unique opportunity at UCI for students, faculty, staff, and administrators to spend the day together to meet one another, network, hone their leadership skills, and discuss important issues facing the University.

Winter Workshop Series

The Winter Workshop Series sets a strong foundation for incoming scholars to prepare them to be competitive applicants for internships, research opportunities, and graduate programs. Throughout the five three-hour sessions, scholars learn about career readiness and tailoring strong application materials. Students receive one-on-one personalized guided advice in creating their best resumes to use in the competitive job market as they apply for internships, and research opportunities.



Virtual Welcome

We welcomed 34 juniors and accelerated sophomores to join the SAGE Family in the Fall quarter.

Signature Events

SAGE Spring Career Readiness Course

Scholars expanded their professional and academic growth in this 10-week hybrid course expanding on their career development, applying their strengths and articulating their transferable skills in the interview process. Students learned about competitive scholarships, research opportunities, and how to navigate networking platforms to create opportunities.

Dr. Reyes-Tuccio, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for the Center for Educational Partnerships, is an equity-minded leader who is committed to creating strong communities within UCI and beyond. She shared her personal and professional journey, and inspired SAGERS to become impactful change agents.



UCI alum Kian Mokhbery is a High-Performance Coach and CEO of Key on Harmony. Kian is a repeat guest facilitator, and crowd favorite, since Fall 2018. He led a deep-dive session into the StrengthsFinder and provided the tools for scholars to apply their strengths not only in the job search process, but in life.

Signature Events

SAGE Leadership Summit

SAGE hosted its fourth-annual leadership summit, and we were delighted to be back in person with our SAGE community! 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. This year, the topic of mental health was emphasized to encourage scholars to prioritize their well-being during these uncertain times.



Our keynote speaker and UCI alumna, Dana Asendio-Schneider, offered inspirational advice as she presented "Keeping it Real in The Real World", and shared the importance of mental health and wellness while navigating the job search and post-graduation goals.

During lunch, SAGE Ambassadors led icebreakers and team-building activities.



Signature Events

SAGE Leadership Summit

Saad Iqbal, SAGE alum, presented two breakout sessions. The first topic, "Doing the Most Without Burning Out," focused on actionable preventative practices. The second session, "Understanding Your Support Network," emphasized the importance of building and maintaining relationships.



Signature Events

Kevin Mendez – HR Insight to Secure a Position

Our SAGE alum shared with our scholars his insight on best practices when engaging with recruiters, provided interview tips, and shared his journey and transition from his undergraduate education at UCI to his full time role at Parker Hannifin.



Dr. Ces'Ari Garcia Del Muro – Owning Your Presence to Realize Your Dreams

SAGE alumna, Dr. Garcia-Del Muro, shared her SAGE journey, and presented on the importance of owning your presence and overcoming imposter syndrome. She is the co-founder of Latinx Education Coach and continues to find ways to give back to her SAGE community.



Signature Events

Service Learning Project – The Giving Farm

Our Scholars spent the day harvesting and packaging food for the local community. The Giving Farm donates 200,000 pounds of produce annually to the OC Food Bank which provides healthy, fresh, and local options to low-income communities.



Signature Events

Networking Event

The UCI OC Alliance – Student Success Committee hosted SAGE’s first networking and mentoring event. Our scholars met prominent community leaders that were excited to offer their mentorship. They were able to make meaningful connections, practice their elevator pitch, share their goals, and build their professional network.

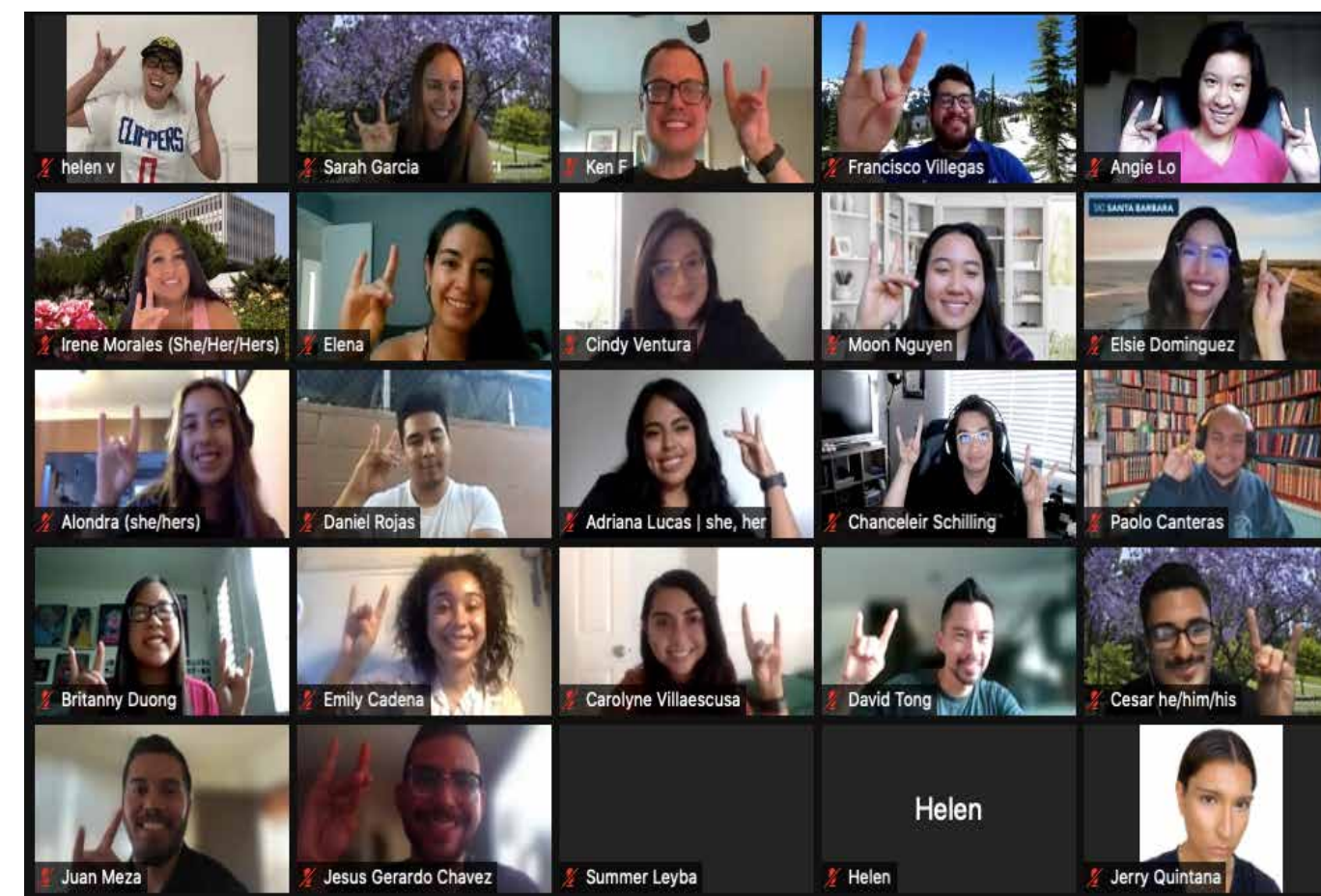


End of Year Celebration

A year-end event to commemorate our 36 graduating scholars’ milestone achievements. With a deep sense of pride, we celebrated their many accomplishments at Irvine Bowling Lanes. Amongst them, we had recipients for Fulbright awards – 3 semifinalists and a finalist, 6 Chancellor’s Awards of Distinction, 4 Phi Beta inductees, and almost 60% receiving Dean’s Honors. Each scholar received an honor cord to wear with their graduation regalia.



SAGE Scholars Alumni Philanthropy



The SAGE Scholars Program launched an alumni-led fundraising campaign at the end of summer and combined it with a generous gift made by our partners at ENO Brands.

Our alumni network, ENO Brands, and several community partners, friends, and UCI faculty and staff rallied together to raise close to \$10,000 in support of current SAGE student awards!

These funds went a long way in helping 23 current UCI SAGE Scholars transition safely back to campus and access the necessary materials, equipment and resources to be successful in their schooling, research and professional development. These gifts remove financial barriers for our scholars and make a difference.

Thank you to every member of our community for joining with us to set these students up for success. Their future looks even more brilliant because of you!

Ambassador Events

To support community bonding between students in the SAGE Scholars Program, the SAGE Ambassadors plan and execute several mixers throughout the school year. During the events, the scholars come together and enjoy refreshments while participating in engaging activities and forming friendships with one another.

Fall Harvest Night



The Ambassadors led an in-person mask decoration and pumpkin drawing/carving contest. Students shared stories of family traditions as they engaged in these activities.

SAGE Peer Mentor Program

This peer-led program serves as a vital component to orient and support incoming students by providing them one-on-one peer mentorship. This promotes wellness, professional development, a sense of belonging, and a supportive network to enhance students' undergraduate experience in the SAGE Scholars program, and at UCI.

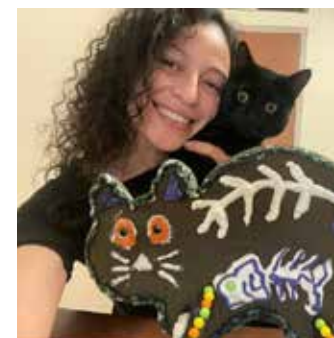


Ambassador Events

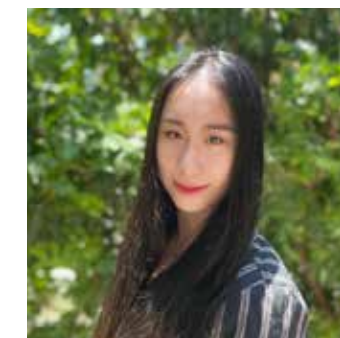
Mentor Matching Mixer

The SAGE Ambassadors facilitated a virtual mentor mixer where our first-year scholars met the second-year SAGE Mentors. After the mixer the scholars selected their preferred mentor and were matched for one-on-one mentorship.

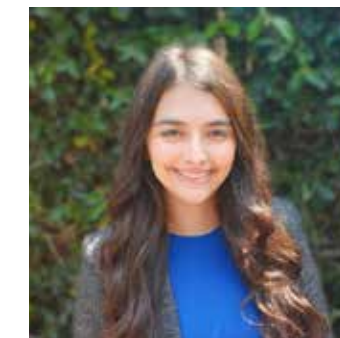
Mentors



Natalie Salgado



Jessica Cai



Anganette Cisneros



Emmanuel Miranda-Bello



Brittany Duong



Moon Nguyen



Angela Torres

Ambassador Events



Smithsonian Museum Hybrid Community Service Event

The Ambassadors led a hybrid community service event allowing scholars to engage in-person or virtual opportunity to give back to the community. Collectively, the scholars helped transcribe historical documents for the Smithsonian Museum.



Midterm Power Up Social

The Ambassadors provided SAGEs a power-up goodie bag to energize and encourage everyone to finish strong with their mid-terms.



End of Quarter Boba Celebrations

One of the most popular events hosted by the Ambassadors this year. Scholars engaged in meaningful conversations and celebrated each other's achievements and accomplishments.

SAGE in the Community



Above: Jennifer Barillas poses with handwritten letters she authored and sent to isolated seniors in care facilities and retirement homes.



Above: Kathlyn Canales volunteering at a food bank to certify foods donated for the community are safely organized for distribution.



Above: Jan Paolo Canteras preparing gift bags filled with basic necessities for the students of Long Beach City College.



Above: SAGEs working together to ensure our beautiful Southern California beaches remain trash-free.

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:



SAGE Thanks You!

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

“As a first-generation Latina, resources like SAGE have truly provided a space for me to ask questions, be vulnerable about my experiences, and find a new place to consider home. Although the students in the program come from a variety of backgrounds, it is evident that everyone is full of love, support, compassion, and generosity. We have built a family that is driven and motivated to improve personally and professionally.

Through SAGE, we have been exposed the scholars to a variety of resources. We have gained new knowledge regarding financial literacy, graduate school, job seeking strategies, and success pathways. In addition, our guest speakers have provided insight on life as first-generation students, as new working professionals, and as individuals of similar identities like Latino/a/x and women. This exposure gave me hope that I too could be successful and one day tell my story to future generations of working professionals. It was amazing to hear about their impact, their motivation, and their passion for their work – a true inspiration guiding me to who I hope to become one day. SAGE has become an outlet for me to refuel my passion for engineering and quality education. This program has been nothing less than a blessing and I hope to be able to continue it's legacy through my story and my future endeavors.

All in all, none of this would have been possible without your generous donation to this amazing program. Your investment in our current development has enriched our college experiences with tokens of golden knowledge and immense amount of comradery and emotional support. The SAGE staff have worked to create a truly authentic and transparent environment that has encouraged collaboration, mentorship, and lasting friendship. I am grateful for all that SAGE and the scholars have provided for me and hope to one day give back to an organization like this in the future to continue paying it forward. Thank you once again!” – **A.Lili Castillo**



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“Thank you for supporting the SAGE Program. It is thanks to SAGE that I was able to set up my future for success. SAGE helped me learn my strengths, my weaknesses, and how to be aware of them to better collaborate with others. SAGE helped me prepare for applying to jobs through cover letters, resumes, and interviewing practice, and it’s what helped me obtain a job for after I graduate. Thanks to SAGE, I was able to get out of my comfort zone and connect with peers and professionals on a personal level. I gained career advice and life advice—how to network, how to perform informational interviews, how to budget, and how to buy a car—which I would otherwise be ignorant about since other classes fail to teach this. I was able to improve so much—both personally and career-wise—due to SAGE, so thank you for supporting us.” – **Faiza Azizan**



“It is very rare for us to acknowledge the role of people who shape us and help us to find ourselves and our way throughout our lives. Today, as I stand and hold my head high, I cannot help but feel grateful for being part of the SAGE family. Being part of this family made me a more knowledgeable person academically and professionally. I would like to sincerely thank you for all of the supports and donations that made this journey possible for me. I shall always remain grateful for all the things I have learned from SAGE.” – **Bahereh Ansari**

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“As a low-income, first-generation college student, navigating the labyrinth of higher education was a persistent challenge that I endured. At times it seemed like when I finally figured something out, the labyrinth would change once more! When I was invited to apply for SAGE, I thought the program would be a catalyst of change in my life.

SAGE Scholars has transformed the trajectory of my life and became my compass. The series refined my professional skills, enhanced my leadership style, and challenged me academically. The perspectives that the program provides are not only about the job search, like informational interviews, but also about salary negotiation, and life after graduating, like graduate school preparation, was invaluable! As a SAGER, it has been a privilege to be surrounded by like-minded individuals who quickly became family due to their support and enthusiasm. I am so thankful for the SAGE Scholars Program and its profound impact on my life. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude for your continued commitment to the SAGE Scholars Program. SAGErs are one step closer to accomplishing our extraordinary goals with your support.” – **Jennifer S. Barillas**



“I found myself in a very tough spot during my first year as a transfer to UCI, battling depression, lack of organization and health problems. I didn’t know who to trust, or even understand what I could do as it was during the COVID lockdown. It was at my lowest that I was able to open up to Ms. Neda and Ms. Cecy and they were able to help me get back on my feet and view the future with hope. Apart from this, the classes and lessons have helped me to understand not just professional etiquette but also financial and social ones too. This quarter I have learned so much and made numerous bonds and connections, however a huge part of this new life is due to SAGE and it is for this reason I want to say thank you so much.” – **Anonymous**

SAGE Thanks You!

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



"I want to share my deepest gratitude for your donation that directly funds my personal and professional development. I can assure you that I am learning so many valuable skills that I can keep with me throughout my career journey. Being a First Generation student I came into college completely blind and just trying my hardest to figure out what was best for my career goals. Finding SAGE I was really exposed to so many learning experiences. Whether it be how to conduct an informational interview or specific job search strategies, I have gained so much confidence to apply these skills. I have also felt so inspired hearing the life stories of guest speakers, how they came to the place in their career today. SAGE has also pushed me to really think over my career in order to make sure it's the best decision for me. Overall, SAGE has been a great blessing in my life and it is with amazing contributions like yours that this program keeps running. Thank you so much!" – **Kathlyn Canales**



"I want to express my sincere gratitude for your support of the SAGE program. Throughout my academic experience, I have participated in several college and university programs, and I can say with no doubt that the SAGE program has been the one that has impacted my career development the most. I am originally from Chile, and I moved to the United States in 2015. It has been very challenging to do the transition to a new culture, language, and life. SAGE has given me the tools to boost my confidence and guide me in my career path. I am extremely grateful to be part of this program and surround myself with people who try their best to achieve their full potential.

Thank you for supporting SAGE. I am confident that the knowledge and skills I have acquired through this program will highly benefit my professional development, and I have already seen its benefits. SAGE is making an impact in many people's lives, and it wouldn't be possible without your support." – **Edgard Diaz-Ramos**

SAGE Thanks You!

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"I want to say thank you for supporting SAGE and giving my fellow SAGERS and I the opportunity of a lifetime to learn valuable professional and personal skills all while creating invaluable friendships. This program has taught me so many valuable professional skills such as advanced resume/ cover letter writing, how to negotiate salary and accountability through realistic goal setting timelines. Most importantly though, SAGE has taught me how to be an advocate for myself. As a first-generation, low-income college student there was a sense of imposter syndrome when I first transferred to UC Irvine. SAGE instilled a new found professional and personal confidence in me that was just not there before by providing professional development workshops and creating such a diverse and safe environment. SAGE has given me the tools to be an effective leader in my community and a mentor to others through encouraging me to take what I learn and use it to lift myself and others up. I cannot thank you enough for being part of my journey and supporting such an amazing program." – **Summer Leyba**



"I am writing to thank you for your generous support, donations and contributions to the SAGE Scholars Program. Since the inception of my involvement with SAGE, I feel empowered and grateful to be in a space that encourages growth in all aspects of our lives. I have learned so much from SAGE such as constructing a strong resume, negotiating salaries, and professional/conference dinner etiquette. Thanks to SAGE, I am more well aware of the power that I hold in spaces, and feel better prepared for life after college. In the future, I hope that I am able to give back to the SAGE family and support the future cohorts of SAGERS. Thank you!" – **Christopher Paul Martinez**



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"On behalf of the SAGE scholars program, we would like to extend a warm hug and gratitude for the sponsorship and donation you have given to us. We understand that sponsoring a program is not an easy task, but we are endlessly grateful for the continued support of our program.

With your support, the SAGE Scholars program can continue to help first-generation, low-income students gain the resources, support, mentorship, and develop the skills necessary for success in post-graduate studies. As a scholar of the program, I am thankful to have been allowed to enhance my leadership, academic and professional skills. The accessibility of receiving one-on-one career advising and mentorship guidance help me prepare for interviewing skills, resume building, and even learning how to negotiate a salary adequately.

My experience with SAGE scholars has been life-changing and has allowed me to be a part of a community that has become a family. With the tremendous support of my peers and mentors, I have been able to gain the confidence and social skills to grow as a professional leader and scholar.

Thank you again for your valuable sponsorship and donations, and we hope we can continue keeping this excellent partnership." – **Emmanuel Miranda-Bello**

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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