



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY LONG BEACH  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
**INTERNSHIP  
PROGRAM**

**2020** ANNUAL  
**REPORT**

# WELCOME

“ The 2019 - 2020 academic year brought many challenges to the community, university, and the CLA Internship Program. The COVID-19 health crisis drastically changed the way we worked, connected with employers, and provided student support services. All student internships were impacted in the spring 2020 semester, with at least half of all internships transitioning to virtual internships. With a shift to alternative mode of instruction, we also had to pivot quickly to continue to meet the needs of students.

We very quickly adjusted all our workshops to online webinars and developed resources for students and employers to navigate the change to virtual internships. We were creative, adaptive, and flexible and always kept our students' needs at the center of our work. This year, we will be highlighting student success stories from Gateway to a Promising Profession, showcasing how CLA has worked with the City of Long Beach to provide internship opportunities for students, and introducing a new student program, Design Your Long Beach, to enhance career readiness programming for CLA students. ”

## MICHELLE CHANG

Career Readiness & Internship Program Specialist



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# CLA INTERNSHIP PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS

The CLA Internship Program provides professional development and internship opportunities to Liberal Arts students. Due to COVID-19, workshops transitioned to online webinars and many internships pivoted to virtual internships. Despite the interruption, student interns were still able to develop professional skills and apply their liberal arts degrees to real work challenges, while navigating the realities of a changing work environment.

## IN THE 2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

**626** STUDENTS COMPLETED AN ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP

**107** HOURS AVERAGED BY STUDENT INTERNS

**300** ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES HOSTED INTERNS

**IN THE 2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR, CLA HOSTED**

**007** WEBINARS

**038** PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

**310** STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

# SOCIAL IMPACT INTERNSHIPS WITH THE CITY OF LONG BEACH



## CITY OF LONG BEACH

Center for Community Engagement. In addition to participating in planning processes and conducting outreach to campus stakeholders, our students have served as service learners and interns in support of the census effort. Dr. Beth Manke, Interim Dean for Student Success worked closely with the City Manager's Office team, including Joy Contreras, Management Assistant, Pacific Gateway, as well as other campus staff and faculty.

Due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, the City of Long Beach's work on the census pivoted to reflect the realities of in-person restrictions. And so, the CLA student interns' work necessarily shifted as well. The City found ways to have each student undertake remote work in ways that considered the short- and long-term success of the census effort and care was taken to build upon the initial roles that the students were to play to creatively support the development of interns' knowledge and skills. Each of the four interns had unique areas of responsibility within the larger Census 2020 effort.

While COVID-19 has necessitated a range of changes on campus and in internship sites, the 2020 Census internships at the City of Long Beach provide an example of the campus redoubling its efforts to strengthen its relationship with the local community. The line of communication that was developed between the City, the instructor for the course, and the interns can be a model for internships—face-to-face or virtual. Such internships provide benefits for all developed out of common concern and appreciation for our students' opportunities and impact. On this foundation, the relationship between the campus and larger Long Beach community can continue to strengthen and broaden.



### AMY CABRERA RASMUSSEN

*Professor, Dept. of Political Science & Director, Design Your Long Beach*

In Spring 2020, the City of Long Beach took on four CSULB students as interns to assist with Census 2020 activities. Students worked on site in the City Manager's Office and out in the community, until face-to-face interaction was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the City pivoted in their Census work, they brought the interns along with them, creating remote work that both aligns with the City's efforts and continues to promote the development of interns' knowledge and skills. While the challenges involved cannot be underestimated, all involved turned this circumstance into a lesson in leadership, compassion, care, and concern for our students' success.

Counting everyone in the Census is a huge undertaking, even under normal circumstances, and Long Beach includes several populations that are considered "hard to count". For this reason, the City and its community partners have been in a long-term planning process to ensure everyone in Long Beach is counted. Among these community partners is the CSULB campus, through an effort headed by Juan Benitez and the

# CLA STUDENT INTERNS

BY: INES DE TORRES &  
ALEXANDER YEM



### PEDRO GARCIA JIMENEZ

*Data Management & Analysis  
Support Intern*

In Pedro's role as a Data Management and Analysis Support intern, he provided data entry and analysis that helped the city's census team map progress in enumeration, with an emphasis on hard to count communities via use of government databases and GIS. Amid COVID-19, his role altered. His efforts were redirected towards public outreach to establishments in Long Beach which have low rates of participation in the census. Pedro utilized his interdisciplinary liberal arts education to find different angles on how to approach this problem.

Through tools such as online maps, data about response times from different demographics, and population, he was able to find possible ways to increase participation. As a result of this internship, Pedro discovered he wanted a future in Geography and for his career to be based in Long Beach. His advice to students looking for internships is to, "Apply for an internship related to their major or something that they have interest in doing because that will make them really enjoy doing it and learning more information about it." Pedro is expected to graduate in August 2020 semester with a BA in Anthropology and a minor in Classics.



### MIA HARO

*Project Management &  
Administrative Support Intern*

Mia Haro participated as the Project Management and Administrative Support Intern. Some of her responsibilities included coordinating teams, delegating tasks, and attending meetings with the project manager. As COVID-19 took hold, she was tasked to help with matters of guidance and budgeting. Mia read and provided key takeaways for the team from official guidance and materials developed by other segments of the census apparatus that impacted the city team's efforts. Finally, as the team pivoted its outreach strategy, she was tasked to track the budget for activities and assist with monitoring of the grant funding process.

Her Liberal Arts degree helped her in many ways. Mia expressed how Sociology includes looking through multiple perspectives and understanding systemic inequality. Working with the 2020 Census has helped Mia network and become more confident in her abilities because she was able apply her skills in a non-academic setting. Mia graduated May 2020 with a Sociology degree.



### TAKARA RICHARDSON

*Volunteer & Event Support intern*

Takara Richardson was the Volunteer and Event Support intern. She originally coordinated events, acquired volunteers through public outreach, and edited the U.S. Census newsletter. However, as the pandemic swept the nation, Takara's role shifted. She pivoted her role into the realm of social media, analyzing data regarding Long Beach residents' perceptions on the 2020 Census. At that time she began digital monitoring and "listening" to census coverage on social media. First, she was primarily reading and reporting, then progressively began to develop scripts for responses, and moved on to learn to use a paid social media monitoring tool that allowed the census team to scale up their work through automated reports and more proactive engagement.

Her most valuable takeaway from this internship is determining that project management is the future she sees for herself. The best advice she can give to students doing internships is, "You have to eliminate any sense of imposter syndrome, really tackle that and remind yourself that you're there for a reason. Try to create a balance, be vulnerable and ask questions". She graduated in May 2020 with her degree in Communication Studies, emphasizing in Cultural and Public Affairs.



### NIKKI NELSEN

*Graphic Design & Communications  
Support Intern*

Nikki Nelsen was the Graphic Design and Communications Support intern. She designed promotional materials, took photos, and assisted with social media. After the stay-at-home order began, the team worked to further develop her design skills and craft a stronger independent/remote process to craft designs, solicit and receive feedback, and complete assignments. Nikki's graphics work helped to support the transition to digital outreach while also helping to prepare for in-person efforts later in the summer or fall.

Her Liberal Arts degree helped her prepare for this internship because the skills she learned during her coursework, transferred seamlessly into her internship. One of Nikki's biggest takeaways from this internship was learning how to use illustrator and news designing programs as well as creative thinking. She will be graduating from CSULB in 2021 with a degree in Journalism and minor in English Literature.

# LONG BEACH PROMISE POST-GRADUATION SUCCESS

The Gateway to a Promising Profession program, a collaboration between CLA Internship Program, Pacific Gateway, and the Long Beach Community Foundation was developed in 2019 to assist recent graduates in obtaining employment in Long Beach. Forty-three inaugural students met with Pacific Gateway representatives, Nicolas Lipa and Karla Corona, who prepared them for employment opportunities after graduation. This year, we enhanced the program by requiring students to participate in career readiness workshops. Thirty-seven students completed the program in 2020 and are currently working with Pacific Gateway to navigate the job search process amid the COVID-19 pandemic. We followed up with two former students to learn more about their experience and to share how the Gateway to a Promising Profession program led them to employment after graduation.



**EDWIN LUNA**  
BA in Philosophy

Edwin Luna graduated in May 2019 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy. He is currently working as a Peer Navigator with Mental Health America, Los Angeles. This is a new position within the organization and Edwin, along with his fellow Peer Navigators, has contributed to building a new program at Mental Health America. As a Peer Navigator, he participates in community outreach, community events, and working with youth ages 18 to 24 who have experienced trauma. He networks with local organizations to connect participants to necessary resources. "What I enjoy most about my job is that the organization is in Long Beach and supports the local community. I was born and raised here and I enjoy helping anyone that needs access to resources in the community."

Working with Pacific Gateway helped Edwin explore potential career paths. "When I was in the interview (with Pacific Gateway) I wasn't sure of what I wanted to do. They connected me to an opportunity with Mental Health America. They helped me update my resume and conducted mock interviews. They advocated on my behalf and even called the manager to recommend me. Having that network was really important and I believe helped me get the job." Edwin's educational background in Philosophy contributed to his success in his current role. "Through Philosophy, I learned critical thinking skills and being able to see things from multiple perspectives. This is helpful in my job when it comes to having a unique perspective to share that is different from my coworkers."



**NICOLE SWAYNE**  
BA in Communication Studies &  
Asian American Studies

Nicole graduated in August 2019 with a double major in Communication Studies and Asian American Studies. She is currently working as a Youth Program Facilitator in the Youth Opportunities Center at Pacific Gateway. She provides training and employment placement for at-risk youth, ages 14 to 24, including foster youth, youth on probation, and those receiving CalWorks assistance. She conducts two weeks of professional development training and then places students in paid employment opportunities throughout Long Beach. "What I enjoy most about my role is getting to know the students, learning their stories, where they come from and what motivates them. They have so much optimism and I want to empower them to create a career plan that they can be excited about. The best part is receiving thank you notes from students and hearing about their successes."



Nicole's participation in the Gateway to a Promising Profession Program along with her Liberal Arts education played a critical role in attaining and succeeding in her current position. Nicole noted that working with Pacific Gateway provided her with "networking and access to opportunities that I wouldn't have known about. Nicolas (Lippa) connected me with the Youth Opportunities Center and was very hands-on during the process." Through her Communication Studies degree she "learned a lot about effective communication and presentations" which was pivotal in her ability to conduct professional development workshops for students. Also, her Asian American Studies provided opportunities to "learn about other cultures and learn how to work with a diverse population."



BY: AMY CABRERA RASMUSSEN

Design Your Long Beach is a new CSULB program that facilitates students' designing their way toward careers to positively impact our local community. We empower students to be bridges and changemakers through joining with other like-minded students from across the College of Liberal Arts (and in some cases, beyond!). Students who participate in our programs clarify their values, develop key mindsets to "design" one's way to accomplishing their educational and career goals, and learn from other CSULB students, faculty, and alumni who are positively impacting the Long Beach community.

The use of design thinking to help students shape their post-graduation lives emerged from the experiences of Prof. Amy Cabrera Rasmussen (now DYLB's Director) as an undergraduate advisor in the Political Science department and her offering of courses like the CLA 492 Internship course and senior seminars. She sought out creative and innovative ways to help students grapple with the tough questions about figuring out what one wants to do with one's life. Because the liberal arts has less scripted major-to-career pathways, design thinking can especially help CLA students to build their way forward, finding support and directions along the way.

This past academic year, DYLB hosted standalone and collaborative workshops on design thinking, planning for one's time at the university, and how to craft a career with a social impact—with a special emphasis on serving our Long Beach-hailing CLA transfer students. Student leaders, Alejandra Ceja, Kara Castanon, and Richard Say, co-created innovative and responsive programming for and coordinated outreach to their fellow students. While the COVID-19 public health crisis precluded in-person events, we shifted to online webinars, created a social media presence, and worked to serve faculty teaching various professional development courses online.

Finally, while we have already been working to make sure our implementation of the approach is responsive to the needs of our CSULB students—many of whom are first generation, students of color—we are also working with a national life design working group to ensure our work is even more effective and responsive. We look forward to working more with those in CLA or elsewhere at the university who are finding the approach beneficial to their courses and programming. We think our work can especially contribute to helping students find their purpose amidst the ongoing public health crisis and a time of increased awareness and responsiveness to systematic racial and other inequities. It is our hope that through our efforts, a socially impactful, locally-conscious, and equitable approach to post-graduation success can reach all of our CLA students whether in class, online, or in dedicated programming.

" In DYLB I learned to have empathy for the user and be reflective about my experience. I want to be able to share my story with others, encourage them to be curious, explore opportunities and find their passion. I'm redesigning my path and my goal is to find a career that involves providing support and services to those who are going through family challenges. "



**RICHARD SAY**  
Student, Sociology

" I was drawn to Design Your Long Beach, because it allowed me to focus beyond just a job, but to design my purpose. Before participating, I felt all over the place but with Design Thinking I was able to narrow down my interest and focus on what I want to do. "

**ALEJANDRA CEJA**  
Student, Sociology



" By going to the workshops I was able to develop a university and life view and explore different career paths to reach my goal. Doing a live informational interview was also a transformative experience. I learned that making connections and learning from others is necessary to finding opportunities and that is a new skill I've developed and will continue to use to get further on my path. "



**KARA CASTANON**  
Student, Communication Studies

# THE VALUE OF INTERNSHIPS

At the end of each semester, students enrolled in an internship course are asked to complete a survey to evaluate their experiences and share what they have learned. 317 survey responses were collected and students reported they agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- 89%** I felt like I made a valuable contribution to my internship site
- 90%** I learned about my own strengths and weaknesses
- 90%** I developed general professional skills like time management and the ability to take initiative
- 90%** I was able to apply knowledge that I learned in other coursework to real-world experiences
- 90%** I acquired career-specific knowledge and skills
- 91%** At my internship site, I was given responsibility for a project or set of tasks



# SPRING 2020 INTERNSHIPS

In Spring 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed the way we provided resources and support to student interns. Many internships were suspended or transitioned to virtual internships. In the spring internship survey, we asked students about their experience and how the pandemic affected their internship experience.

## STUDENTS SHARED THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT WITH HAVING TO END THEIR INTERNSHIP EARLY.

“ I was really upset and overwhelmed by the sudden change of my internship status. Although the shelter has remained open, all internships were cancelled. I am happy with the experience I had and plan to become involved with the organization again once the stay at home orders are lifted. ”

“ Although the internship was stressful at times, it was disappointing that I couldn't see all my work come to life after planning and organizing for so long. ”

## OF THE 349 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN AN INTERNSHIP COURSE IN SPRING

**125** COMPLETED THE SURVEY

**063** HAD SUSPENDED INTERNSHIPS

**062** CONTINUED INTERNSHIPS REMOTELY OR IN PERSON

## WHAT WAS THE MAIN BENEFIT OF COMPLETING YOUR INTERNSHIP?

When students were asked the question, four distinct benefits were identified:

### 01 STUDENTS WERE ABLE TO NETWORK WITH PROFESSIONALS & BENEFIT FROM MENTORSHIP

“ It's given me an opportunity to meet new people and share my story with them. Finally, I have gained valuable skills that will definitely help me when I start applying to jobs. ”

### 02 STUDENTS GAINED RELATED EXPERIENCE IN A SPECIFIC INDUSTRY OR CAREER OF INTEREST

“ Getting the experience working in a position I was interested in as a career, I got to see what a work day was like, what resources were available to me, and how much I was able to accomplish with what I had. ”

### 03 STUDENTS FELT THEY WERE ABLE TO MAKE A SOCIAL IMPACT THROUGH THEIR INTERNSHIP.

“ I was able to experience what it would be like to work one-on-one with children and view the impact that I had on them. ”

### 04 THE INTERNSHIP PROVIDED OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE DIFFERENT CAREER PATHS.

“ I got to see my own strengths and weaknesses. This gave me an opportunity to see how much I liked this type of work. This internship forced me to think about future plans after I graduate. ”

## FOR THOSE THAT TRANSITIONED TO VIRTUAL INTERNSHIPS, STUDENT PROJECTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES SHIFTED AND ORGANIZATIONS QUICKLY RESPONDED TO CONTINUE TO MEET STUDENT LEARNING GOALS.

“ At the beginning, it was a little difficult to get set up, considering I would record in the station's studio. However, I was able to make things work and turned out good content for radio. ”

“ We still had our goals in place, but we had to switch up the event that was going to take place on campus. ”

“ I had more fulfilling tasks to do that resulted in a better portfolio. ”



# THE NEW VIRTUAL REALITY OF INTERNSHIPS

During the pandemic CLA Internship Program created new strategies to continue fostering internship partnerships. We shifted in person agency training to online training, created an online employer information form, and employers can now complete Student Field Placements electronically. This has streamlined the partnership process and provided increased flexibility for internship partners. We also created virtual internship resources to help organizations shift to or create new virtual internships. Currently, CLA Internship Program has over 200 official internship partners.

Results from our Spring 2020 survey, showed that almost half of the respondents' internships were suspended for the spring semester. Many organizations had to restructure and quickly adapt to working virtually. Two local internship partners, Long Beach BLAST and Long Beach Forward, were able to make this pivot successfully and continue offering virtual internships.

## LONG BEACH BLAST

LB BLAST interns participate in one-on-one mentoring with a child at one of their partnering sites and focus on building personal trust and support to foster the child's academics, future thinking, and character development. Interns also take a leadership role in recruitment, training, and administrative support for the program. Once the safer at home orders were issued and LBUSD schools were closed for in person classes, LB BLAST had to quickly change the way they provided services to students and supported student interns.

LB BLAST utilized the Microsoft Teams platform to connect with staff and interns and streamlined online collaboration and communication. Intern projects and assignments shifted to meet different priorities of the organization. Assignments included: increasing social media presence to continue to connect with volunteers, school sites and students; creating a virtual activity binder to help the next cohort of interns work remotely; and providing feedback and activities to enhance online intern training.

There were also benefits for moving the internship online, such as the ability to meet as a team. Raul Vazquez, CLA alum and Academic Mentoring Program Manager shared "since schedule's were more flexible, we were able to have all the interns meet together weekly, share their experiences, and provide support and advice to each other."



## LONG BEACH FORWARD

LB Forward's mission is "to create a healthy Long Beach with low-income communities of color by building community knowledge, leadership, and power." They "provide strategic insight and take strategic action in order to strengthen movements for racial and economic justice in Long Beach." Before the pandemic, interns participated by leading outreach efforts, creating materials to present to the community, and assisting with office administrative tasks.

Once the organizations shifted to working from home, they had to develop innovative ways to continue their work. For example, LB Forward had planned for interns to do direct canvassing of hard to count communities to support the city's Census 2020 efforts. Since it was no longer safe to go door-to-door, interns began to do more phone and text banking to connect with residents.

Interns also used their creative and technical skills to create informational videos that are accessible and engaging to continue outreaching to the community. James Suazo, CLA alum and Associate Director of Long Beach Forward, shares some of the benefits of moving to virtual internships, "we are able to meet more often, on a weekly instead of bi-weekly basis, and provide continued support to each other and our community. The interns have taken more ownership of their projects and are dedicated to continue moving the cause forward."



Both organizations will continue to host virtual internships in the Fall 2020 semester. Interns are a vital part of helping the organizations meet their mission. Shifting to virtual internships has challenged them to find creative ways to continue their work and interns have played a critical role in the process. James Suazo shares "CLA interns always bring strong critical thinking skills to the table. They are able to utilize their education and personal experiences to evaluate situations, identify solutions, and move forward collaboratively." Raul Vazquez shares, "CLA interns bring in perspectives from different majors. These perspectives help us see things that the BLAST team might not see and enhances the quality of our internship and services."





**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
INTERNSHIP  
PROGRAM**

**READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP?**  
The CLA Internship Program can connect you to professional opportunities and help you:

- 🎯 EXPLORE YOUR CAREER GOALS
- 📚 DEVELOP MARKETABLE & TRANSFERABLE SKILLS
- 🔗 LINK CLA DEGREES TO WORK EXPERIENCES
- 👥 ENGAGE IN NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES
- 📖 GET ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR INTERNSHIPS

# THANK YOU

We would like to extend our gratitude to College of Liberal Arts students, faculty, staff, and community partners for your support and participation in the CLA Internship Program. With your support we are able to provide valuable internships to CLA students. To learn more about the CLA Internship Program and how you can participate in the program, visit [CLA.CSULB.EDU/INTERNSHIPS](https://CLA.CSULB.EDU/INTERNSHIPS).

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