

Culturally Adaptive Pathway to Success (CAPS) Summer Newsletter

August 2020



Hello Cal State LA students and faculty!

The Culturally Adaptive Pathway to Success or CAPS program has come together to create a summer newsletter highlighting the experiences their scholars had this past summer. CAPS is an NSF funded scholarship that provides financial and academic aid to STEM students.

As we all know, because of COVID-19, summer proved to be difficult in ways that none of us could have expected. This unfortunately led to a summer experience that many people found stressful or discouraging. We hope by showing how everyone spent their summers and how they feel about the upcoming semester, it will show that despite any challenges presented it is possible to push through and succeed!



*Editors: Andrea Abelian &
Byron Garibay*

Civil Engineering

Cassandra Luu

During my summer in quarantine, I took on three other classes in order to enroll into my senior design class. Although I was taking three other classes, I wasn't too busy due to the fact that the classes were essentially 4 days a week that only took about 4 hours of my day. Aside from studying, I spent most of my other free time on playing video games, watching new drama series, and hiking with my friends or family. Most of the games I played during my break were Nintendo Switch games (Animal Crossing, Legend of Zelda games).

The one hobby I picked up would have to be hiking. To get my mind off things and



relieve some stress, I decided that I would try to go hiking more with my friends. I enjoyed hiking for quite some time; however, I never made the time to actually go through with

my hiking plans. With quarantine, my friends' schedules were cleared up; thus, allowing for planning to be a lot easier.

The most exciting part of my summer break would have to be visiting my cousins in Northern California. My sisters, cousin and I decided to go after we had finished with our summer classes. The reason why we decided to visit was primarily because we missed them and wanted to get out of the house. During my stay at my cousin's house, I spent most of my time just hanging with my cousins, nephews, niece, cousin's dogs. Even though most of the time spent was at home due to quarantine, we were still able to come up with different activities to do around the house. Some of the activities we did were playing hide and seek, going on a hike, kayaking and boat pedaling, playing just dance and much more. I really enjoy staying in NorCal, specifically where my cousins were living because it was my first time going up

north, and the temperature was a lot cooler compared to back at home.

With summer coming to an end and the semester creeping closer, I've been feeling quite nervous. Learning via online is a struggle for me because of the distractions at home and not being able to meet up with my friends. Even though these struggles still exist, I believe that it will not be as bad as the first time we transitioned everything to online because I've gotten the time to get used to online learning. Considering that I was able to manage my summer classes, it may be less of a struggle to get through with the remaining year. I am looking forward to my last year at CalStateLA.



*Cassandra's
Hiking Adventure*



Computer Science

Hua Chen

I normally worked during my summers. Though because of quarantine this summer was a bit different. This summer, I had more time to spend with my sibling. I learned how to cook and bake with them. The best thing we made had to be cream puffs. I am a bit nervous about the coming semester, but I know I will be able to push through.



Hua baking

Abigail Garcia

Summer in quarantine was very hard since I am usually at school working on projects for the summer. However, I took advantage of the time and completed two courses online.

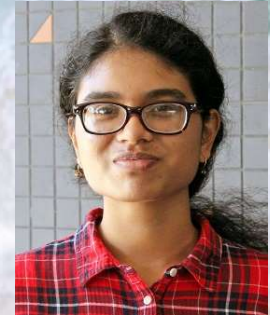
The most exciting thing I did this summer was go to the beach and kayak with friends. I also started hiking a few times a week since it was one of the few outdoor activities that are safe lately.

I am a little nervous to go into the harder upper division courses as well as senior design but overall, I am excited to see what this new school year has in store although it would be nice to be able to go back to campus.



Tabassuma Torosa

Summer in quarantine felt less relaxing since so many amusement parks and public events like concerts were closed. But my memorable moments in summer were baking different types of cake and experimenting with creating traditional dishes. I feel less apprehensive, but I miss the environment and walking around the campus.



Electrical Engineering

Juan Avila

I interned during the summer with Boeing as an Electronics and Communications Subsystem Design Intern and I also took two summer classes, so my summer was very busy

I went to Sequoia National Park with my family for 4th of July weekend where I met General Sherman (Largest tree in the world)

During my free time, I worked on PCB design projects. My current project is tearing down a PS4 controller and recreating the some of the motherboard

This is my last year at Cal State LA, so I feel excited to start the fall semester and take some exciting EE Electives



*Juan meets
General Sherman*



Mechanical Engineering:

Annie Cornejo

This summer I continued my research with Dr. Shen. In collaboration with his robotics team, we designed a quadruped robot.

Although spending the summer in quarantine was not very exciting, I enjoyed spending quality time with my family through our hiking trips.

I feel very grateful, optimistic, and excited for this new semester.



Gary Thu

Summer in quarantine was very busy for me because I took three courses. Although they were challenging, I believe I had a productive summer. The most exciting event that happened this Summer was hiking at many different locations. Most of the time, I hiked alone due to COVID, but it was really fun. In terms of hobbies, I don't think I really picked up any new ones and had any hobbies to begin with. For the upcoming semester, I am pumped because it will be my final year and I hope to finish it strong!



Gary Getting a hair cut

2018 Cohort



Civil Engineering

Alfonso Lima

Summer in quarantine was not something I'd like to repeat ever again, I did not expect to spend pretty much my entire summer indoors. Every week felt exactly like the last.

One of the most exciting things I did this summer was pick up paintballing as a new hobby. I've been going every 3 weeks or so and it's been one of the only times I leave my house for something nonessential, so I really make the most out of it and enjoy myself as well as attempt to get better at it. Being indoors this summer gave me the chance to catch up on some sleep and improve my FIFA skills.

I continue to have mixed feelings about this new semester even though I spent the summer taking 2 courses online, so I should be used to zoom and everything but I could choose, I would definitely pick regular face to face education anytime. I will give it my best effort however to make the most out of this new semester.



Practicing Hobby

Eloy Rodriguez

Summer during quarantine was pretty stressful for me. I decided to take 2 summer classes, but I am so grateful that I passed both of them.

Most exciting thing that occurred this summer for me was golfing for 3 days in Palm Springs. I played 5 rounds of golf in those 3 days and one of the days it was 122 degrees Fahrenheit, so it was pretty intense.

For Fall 2020, I'm prepared but also extremely terrified coming into this semester since I am taking 7 classes and it's going to be online. I prefer going to school and having person to person learning rather than online.



Eloy Playing Golf



Nyle Ussery-Brumfield



This summer in quarantine I spent a lot of time in my room, which isn't so unusual, and it didn't really hit me

how much I had missed until I finally got to see my friends. I have seen my friends only once since quarantine started and it was all about catching up. Quarantine also made me gain a lot of weight, but I intend to work hard and lose it this semester.

The most exciting thing that I did this summer was my internship. I had an internship at Turner Construction in their Estimating Department. It was very fun and fruitful. I learned how to use multiple different estimating software and to manage and communicate with subcontractors during the pre-construction process. The environment there was also very inclusive even though because of covid-19, most of my coworkers worked from home and there were very few of us in the office at the time. If there wasn't a pandemic my experience would have been even better, but it was still great.

Coming into this new semester I am nervous about the online learning experience. I feel like it will be a challenge to be self-motivated, but I can do it as I have before. Many of my professors are taking initiative and adjusting well to this app. I am also the new president of NSBE-CSULA so I look forward to helping my chapter members excel academically succeed professionally and positively impact the community.

Computer Science

Sean Chung

Summer during the quarantine was very chill for me. Personally, I like to chill out indoors rather than outside. Hence, this whole summer I used the time to program a Pokémon game, play Xbox with my high school homies, do summer classes, and talk to people online.

There were two exciting things I did this summer: I caught 65+ shiny Pokémon and worked on my dream game project. In addition, I got an interview with a professional video game developer about his career.

I was able to learn 3+ more songs on the recorder. I was able to learn a lot about C++, Unity, and review old computer science material. In addition, I was able to learn more Japanese.

I have mixed feelings about the upcoming semester because of a certain professor. No, this professor wasn't a bad professor, in fact, I actually enjoyed being in his class, but passing his class was very difficult because of all the new material. Luckily, I love a good challenge, so hopefully, I pass this upcoming class with an A. Aside from that, I am pretty okay with the upcoming semester.



Ernesto Garcia

Summer was less exciting and motivating than other summers mainly because of the limitations and getting Covid-19 itself but I was able to focus on myself and improve what was needed and wanted.

The most exciting thing I did this summer was to build a new computer and decided to join the video game community and take on heavier programming projects for myself.

The hobby that I picked up was working on websites in my free time and video games

I feel a little nervous because I feel like I will not perform the best I can like I expect myself to but also relieved because of not worrying about transportation issues and extra costs.



Byron Garibay

This summer was strange for obvious reasons, but I don't feel like I wasted my time just because going out was not an option. I got to see my younger brother and I spent time with my family. It is always good to distract yourself. I took two courses during the summer, they helped me with my understanding of my major and allowed me to continue moving forward in the pursuit of my bachelor's in Computer Science.

Going into this new semester, I feel excited because I get to continue learning about CS. However, I am worried about how the courses are going to be. I am hoping to learn a new programming language to at least a decent level during this new semester.



***Byron Hiking
with Siblings***

Geovanny D Huerta

It was a whole new experience for me. It was like entering a whole new world, where everyone wears a mask. The adjustment took some time, but I overcame it.

I didn't manage to do much due to this pandemic, but I did manage to work out on my own, which was definitely the most proactive thing I did this summer aside from programming.

I improved on an old hobby, and that was on my video editing & designing skills.

I feel a bit nervous not knowing how my classes are going to function and adjusting to the idea that everything is now going to be taught through zoom. But I will overcome it, I just know it.



Jesica R Lopez De Leon

I took advantage of the extra time spent indoors to do things I had been postponing. I took sociology and political science online to complete some GEs. I actually enjoyed and learned a lot from these classes. I also made an e-portfolio

The most exciting thing was creating ceramic pieces for family and friends. Also, I have improved in my baking skills, so I have made all the birthday cakes for my family this year. It was a good way to pass time and give something to those I care about.

I started hiking as a new hobby, nature is very calming, and it feels nice to get some physical activity after being indoors most of the time.

Coming into this semester, I feel confident in taking online classes because the summer online classes helped me get used to this form of learning. I recommend making and maintain a schedule of assignments, study time, and personal time to avoid getting overwhelmed and procrastinating. I miss interacting with friends and classmates in person but staying safe is more important and in the meantime, we will communicate online.



*Jesica's Amazing
Cake Baking Skills*

Electrical Engineering

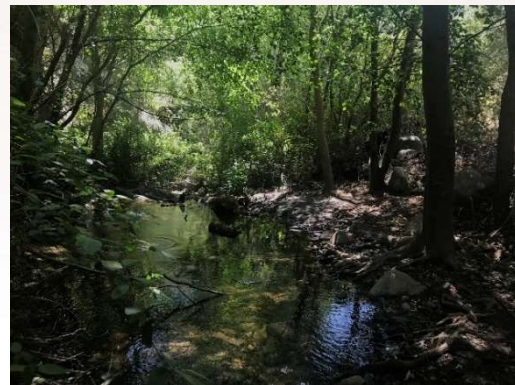
Andrea Abelian

Summer in quarantine was definitely a different summer experience than what I was used to. Because many opportunities and outdoor activities were canceled, I decided to take an online GE at a CC. It was a good opportunity and allowed me to accomplish something beneficial that would help me academically.

The most exciting thing I did this summer was making a 4-hour total hike with my brother and cousin. We hiked to the top of a small waterfall and got to see some great mountain scenery along the way.

I managed to draw a bit over the summer and pursue other artistic projects. I also began to play tennis once in a while which proved to be a good "quarantine friendly sport."

I am looking forward to the convenience of learning from home, however, I will definitely miss my friends and our group study sessions. I am also worried about how I will adapt to my labs being done at home, but I hope that this semester will not prove to be excessively challenging!



*Andrea's Hiking Towards a
Waterfall*

Daniel Del Rio

Summer in quarantine was alright. Even though it was spent entirely indoors, I still had fun with friends through group calls to chat and play games all night long. I ended spending the most amount of time online than any other summer ever.

Since the beginning of quarantine, my family has been remodeling the house. 3 rooms and a bathroom were changed tremendously. It was done between 3 people, and I would help on occasion.

I didn't work on just one hobby but more like a little bit of a lot of things. I learned to cook more food, I learned more about



construction because of the remodeling, while also continuing to practice piano. I didn't practice a whole lot however, there were always distractions pushing me away from it.

I'm feeling a little nervous coming into this semester because I know I'm going to have a rocky start. With rooms still being remodeled and furniture moving around the house, I won't have a solid space to do work in yet. Until that happens, I think this semester will be fine.

David Pacheco

Quarantine really ruined the joy of summer. Because of the pandemic, I didn't leave my house much. I didn't want to put my family at risk. The one time I did was to go to a pool party which was pretty cool.

I really didn't improve, nor did I find a new hobby. All my hobbies are outside activities. So, I just watched Hulu and Netflix if I wasn't busy with my internship. I guess I improved on my TV watching skills.



David Gonzalez

My summer quarantine was slow at the beginning. There wasn't much to do and all the plans I had got canceled or were changed because of quarantine. However, it got more eventful towards the end as I was part of STEP 2020, where I got to help incoming freshmen with calculus and pre-calculus. Not only that but I felt this summer allowed me to focus on myself and on loved ones.

The most exciting thing I did this summer was to be part of the 2020 CSU I-CORPS August Sprint, which allowed me and other fellow colleagues to explore biotechnology commercialization. It involved learning from CSU faculty about a lot of bio-medical engineering and entrepreneur material.



A hobby that I improved upon was cooking. I surprised myself making delicious dishes rather than the simple frozen or package college food.

Coming into this new semester I feel nervous because I know it's going to be challenging and it's going to require 120% of my effort again....but then again that's nothing new.



Victor H Trujillo

My summer in quarantine didn't really feel like it affected me as much since I'm mostly at home. I wanted to go out more, but that is not going to happen.

The most exciting thing I did this summer was hanging out with friends. We had celebrated a friend's birthday and got together. It was great to catch up after so long.

I had a couple of hobbies that I've done. I mostly try to improve my art, either sketch or drawing. Also, recently I've picked up cooking since I celebrated so many birthdays back to back.

I hope that this semester will not prove to be difficult due to the sudden change from physical to online courses. If anything, I would save some money.



Mechanical Engineering

Julianna Hernandez

Summer in quarantine was definitely different than I had expected, but it was still productive. I kept myself busy with Summer classes and going back and forth between my campus job and internship.

The most exciting thing I did this summer was interning at NAVSEA as an SSEP Intern. Even though teleworking, I still got to meet and work with an amazing team, learned more about my role as an engineer in the industry, and got to visit the naval base frequently.

This Summer I definitely perfected the art of binge-watching and also picked up the new hobby of journaling. It has helped me reflect on what I've done throughout the day and help me become more productive.

I am a bit hesitant this semester with everything being taught via Zoom, especially my lab courses. However, I am excited and optimistic that I will still learn just as much and will have a great outcome.



Final Note: Sadly, there is no picture of the 2019 Cohort together as a group.

