



CAPS

Culturally Adaptive Pathway to Success
Summer Newsletter

AUGUST 2021

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Jessica Lopez De Leon*

Hello Cal State LA students and faculty!

The Culturally Adaptive Pathway to Success (CAPS) program has created this summer newsletter to share the experiences their scholars had over summer 2021.

CAPS is an NSF-funded scholarship that provides financial and academic aid to STEM students.

This summer some COVID-19 regulations were lifted and with safety precautions, everyone was able to participate in outside activities. Many were able to attend their internship in person, explore new interests, and spend more time with family and friends. They have grown in skills and as individuals. We hope you enjoy reading about the experiences of these talented scholars.



Civil Engineering

This summer in I grew as an adult a lot. At the end of last summer, I left my mom's house to live on my own. I did it with what I had saved up from my internship last year. With that and scholarship money I was able to live on my own without support. Now I have moved into an even bigger apartment not too far from school. This summer I had an internship at Turner Construction again, this time as a field engineer. I learned even more than expected. I got to see 2 different projects on the site, one just starting, and the other nearing its end. This was cool because

I got to see a lot of both processes. I ended my summer with an exciting trip to Atlanta to visit my uncle. Covid has made a lot of things hard but it certainly pressured me into learning more about myself and what I want to do with my life. Coming into this new semester I am excited to go back on to campus. I have a lot of things this year to look forward to. There are 2 conferences this year for NSBE nearby and I am also hoping to get to run this year. Hopefully we don't regress into full quarantine.



Nyle Ussery



Although this summer I was thankfully able to catch a much-needed break, it was still another summer in an ongoing pandemic that does not seem to be ending anytime soon. I remember really hoping last year that this summer would be much different and we would have hopefully been past this pandemic, unfortunately, we didn't get to see that happen. One of the most exciting things that happened this summer was hanging out and catching up with some of my cousins whom I hadn't seen in two years. This summer I was also able to pick up exercising regularly and went on night runs almost every day. I also finally kicked a soccer ball after more than a year and began to go play once in a while at a park with my friend.

I am very much looking forward to this fall semester as we'll finally be able to return to campus and I hope to see many of my friends whom I haven't seen since the start of the pandemic. I really hope leaving the enclosures of my house and returning to campus will bring me some much-needed encouragement and motivation.



Alfonso Lima





Civil Engineering

This summer I decided to take a break from reality and focused on getting my mental state back to shape from a stressful semester. I spent the summer working STEP from June to July and also went on a family road trip. I got the opportunity to drive from Los Angeles to New York City. We made a lot of stops along the way and I got to see a live buffalo in Yellowstone National park. From there, we headed to Mt. Rushmore before reaching Mall of America in Minneapolis. This mall was enormous and had 2 mini-golf courses and an amusement park inside. From here we went to Chicago where I saw the Michael Jordan statue, the bean, and the sky rise. Our next stop which was probably my favorite was Niagara Falls. Honestly, I would recommend everyone to visit this place. Then before reaching New York, we went off track to see Boston and Salem which were full of rich history and scary stories. Last stop was New York where I saw the Statue of Liberty, Times Square, and where the Twin Towers once were. Overall this road trip reminded me that I have a life outside school and I should enjoy a bit more often.



Eloy Rodrigues



After officially being done with my last spring semester at school, I decided to spend time with my friends before all of us would get busy with work or school. In mid-June, my friends and I decided to go on a graduation trip to each others' schools and northern California. The trip was a great way of relieving the stress and finally getting away from the screen.

Although I wasn't able to find a job immediately after graduation, I would say that all the time I spent with my friends and family was definitely worth it because I don't think I would have any other time to spend with them once I officially start working. As of right now, I am studying to pass my FE exam as well as applying for jobs.



Cassandra Liu

Class of 2021



Computer Science



What I did over the summer was helping out my family the best I could with new tasks because Covid has been plaguing my family pretty bad. I attended summer school to finish the necessary courses I needed to graduate in four years: Micro-econ and Pan African Studies. I ended up ensuring my GPA was just a little bit but was better than nothing. This is also the first summer where I actually focused on myself. I was able to travel to new places like Hawaii and explore a lot more of California. I'm back to being more fit, I have been practicing piano, the guitar, and I purchased a sewing machine so I'm making different things and messing with clothes, along with finishing my project car. I am now studying more code and different skills as well to have around my belt for work and internships.

Ernesto Garcia



This summer I had an internship with Northrop Grumman. It was on sight which meant I moved to Alabama for the entirety of the summer. I worked, met some people, and got to play fut alongside another intern. Once back from Alabama, I spent some time with my friends and family.



Byron Garibay



Computer Science



This summer I took some classes to take off some workload from my senior year. One of the classes was Microbiology where I learned to cultivate microorganisms to make sourdough bread. I had fun learning how to create AR Lenses using the Snapchat studio software. Some of my lenses can be used in the Snapchat app.

Now that more things have been opening I was able to spend more time with friends and family outside. My favorite place we went to this summer was Knott's Berry Farm. I had not gone since middle school so it was a lot of fun. Another thing I did was learn to roller skate with my sisters. We are still not great but it's been fun practicing together.

For the past year, I have enjoyed online learning but I am excited to go back to campus and see my friends again. I will do my best to enjoy my last year of college!



Jesica Lopez De Leon



Firstly, I hope everyone had a great summer! For the start of my summer, I decided to take a bit of a break to relax after completing my degree before I start the rigorous job search process. As the summer progressed I started to be more proactive in my job search. I received a good amount of interviews as well as rejections. However, I continue to be positive about my future. I hope my juniors will continue being positive in their academic career and future!!

Hua Chen

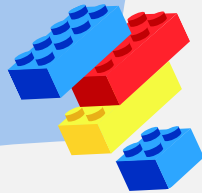
Class of 2021



Computer Science



If I had to describe my summer break with one, it would be "awesome sauce." To start, I had the opportunity to intern at a consulting firm called Avanade. Although Avanade held the entire internship online for obvious reasons, I received professional certificates, software engineering skills, and networking opportunities. I would recommend students to apply for Avanade for the experience. Aside from my work life, I began a new hobby of collecting Lego sets for my city. I plan to create a Blade Runner-like city with lego sets. In addition to that hobby, I was able to go on a lot of beach trips to San Diego with my family. There I was mostly building sand sculptures and eating seafood. Those are the most exciting things I did this summer. Thank you.



Sean Chung



Abigail Garcia

Class of 2021



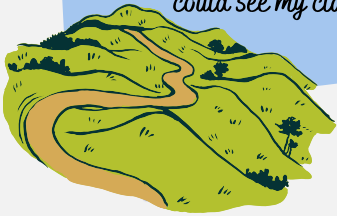
This summer I had the opportunity to complete and internship at Avanade as a Business Analyst and ended it with a full time offer as soon as I graduate. This was an amazing company to intern for, although it was virtual, I learned a lot about being independent and becoming my own advocate for my skills. This summer I collaborated and assisted project manager in creating export forecasts for various milestones for Microsoft Fast Track project, increasing time reporting efficiency by 40%. I also participated in Environmental Sustainability Hackathon and worked in a team environment to develop a consultation pitch for an Environmental Sustainability Lifestyle App. In addition I maintained data health to an assigned cost portfolio for Avanade with 600 clients. Incorporating all these tasks, I mostly developed skills in the brainstorming, planning and presenting process from a consulting perspective. The greatest take away was learning the importance of working as a team and not being afraid to admit confusion.



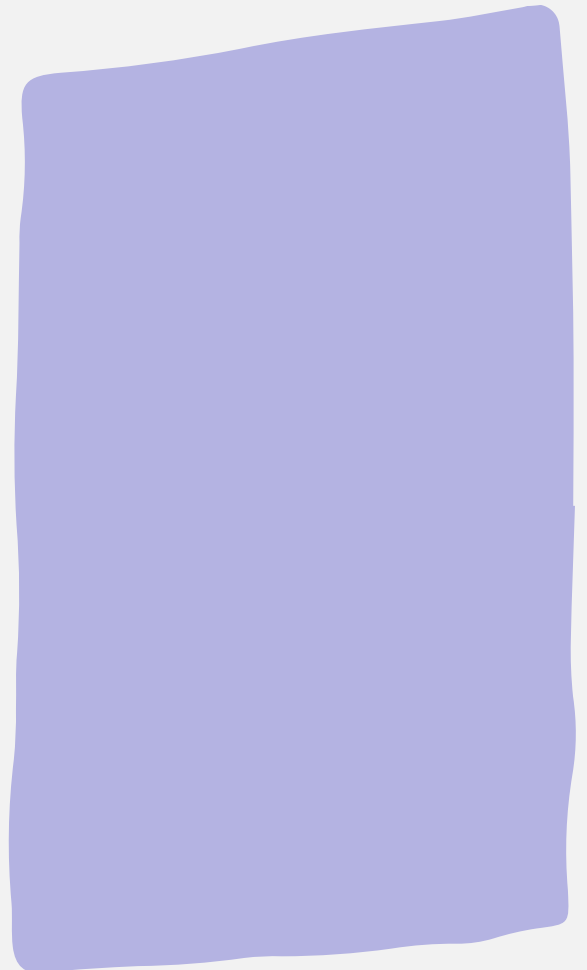
Computer Science



Summer during coronavirus was busy for me since it was my last summer as a college student. I also took my last elective class and had fun doing outdoor activities with my friends. The most enjoyable thing I did was seeing my friends after so long and hiking along the Griffith Park trails. I have also started playing more video games such as Sims 3, GTA 5, and Control. Around the end of summer, I finally graduated and celebrated with my family and friends in a small graduation party. I was also nervous about job hunting, but I was able to get some interviews and gradually go to next stages. One tip that helped me was to keep applying as some interview processes are slow. Also, to take small breaks since applying can be frustrating and to brush up on LeetCode. Aside from that, I enjoyed my last year, but I wish I could see my classmates in person.



Tabassuma Torosa
Class of 2021





Electrical Engineering

My summer has been good so far. Though I stayed at home most of the time, I've mostly been hanging with my family, trying to beat the heat. I've gotten new books to read, playing my latest video games, having movie nights with my siblings, and gotten to know our new dog in the family. Whenever there was free time, I sometimes clean whether it's my room or the house. For the past year, we have been on virtual calls, having to see all our friends and families behind a screen. Now that the situation has been gradually improving, we are just one step away to get things back on track. It hasn't been easy but nothing can change overnight. We just have to wait and keep each other safe until we reach that goal. That's the plan.



Victor Hugo Trujillo Jr.



During the first 2 weeks of the summer, I was able to get lots of rest. I did some small experiments in which I built some circuits discussed in my classes, throughout the spring 2021 semester. I was able to build a common emitter bipolar junction transistor amplifier, some passive filters, and some rectifier circuits. I also played video games like Call of Duty Warzone and Apex Legends. For the remainder of the summer, I was an intern at Extron Electronics. It was very exciting and nerve-racking because it was my first internship. I really enjoyed it as I got the much-needed hands-on experience. Not only did I learn more, but I also networked with many engineers that have years of experience.

Moving forward, I am going into my senior year of my Electrical engineering degree. I am very excited as I am taking many upper division courses. I am extremely excited for the power electronics course and learning more about electronic applications. I am also looking forward to gaining even more hands-on experience as we will now be able to go back to the labs.



Cesar Ramirez





Electrical Engineering

My summer 2021 was a little more exciting than the previous summer. This summer allow me to spend time with my family. I took a trip with my family to Santa Catalina Island where I got to scuba dive and swim in clear waters. This trip allowed for me to relax a little and have a small adventure with loved ones. During the summer, I was doing research under the guidance of Dr. Deborah Won and Dr. Arturo Pacheco Vega in CEaS (Center for Energy and Sustainability). I was part of a project in which we explore Energy Expenditure models for a Caloric Metric. Both adaptive energy expenditure models were finished and are currently analyzing the results. A hobby that I improved upon even more was cooking. I surprised myself making even more complex meals I thought I'd never be able to pull off. Coming into this new semester I feel nervous because I know it's going to be even more challenging than the last...but then again that's nothing new.

David Gonzalez



My name is David, and I'm currently majoring in Electrical Engineering with a concentration in computer engineering and so far it has been an incredible experience. Although the college has had the occasional challenges and hardships, with the support of my friends I have always managed to push through and succeed. Following graduation and completion of my bachelor's degree, I will be continuing my education and pursuing my master's at CSULA with hopes of finishing in 2024.

Over the summer, I have been primarily focusing on my internship as a component engineer at Raytheon. My position consisted of parts management for the various programs within the company. Outside of my internship, my summer also included exploring the diverse activities that LA has to offer such as horseback riding, restaurant hopping in order to try different vegan cuisines, and exploring the gun ranges in the city. Overall, it has been a new and surprisingly pleasant experience.



David Pacheco





Electrical Engineering

Since this summer has had a more lifted environment outside, I was able to hang out in person more frequently than last year. By going out to eat about every other week, it helped me recover from the stresses of junior year. Junior year was harder than usual due to the online format. I wasn't expecting this year to be this mentally draining, but I'm thankful for all the meetups I've had with friends or simple voice calls with them in the night to recover from the year. It's something that I've really been needing and not getting enough of this past year. Another thing I did to mentally recover is playing a new genre of games I haven't dove into before: fighting games. I've dabbled in them with friends on occasion but never put the time into them. This summer I wanted to change that and learn what it takes to be good at playing fighting games. And although I'm still not as great as I wanted to be, it's been a fun experience learning the genre. When I'm not doing these things, I spend a lot of time being with my family, my brothers in particular. During my junior year, I could always rely on them to be there to have someone to talk to that's not about coding or complicated equations about signals. They have been great at providing me with casual conversations on how we're doing.

Daniel Del Rio



Overall, this summer was much better than 2020. I was able to go to NYC with my brother during the first week of June which was a great experience. We got to see all the touristy places such as the Statue of Liberty, the Met, and Coney Island; we also got to do native NYC things like taking subway and eating \$2 pizza. I did not have an internship, but I was accepted into the Google Hardware Product Sprint (HPS) program, a summer-long program in which we were taught essential skills for hardware engineers and were also tasked with creating a working clock by the end of summer. I was able to design my clock's schematic (decided to create a clock that tells time in binary), design the PCB layout, then program it to display time as well as have other features I had envisioned for it. I also continued doing research with Dr. Won in the field of biomedical engineering which was also a very interesting as I was gaining hands-on experience with HPS and research experience with Dr. Won. Finally, I was able to see my friends more often during this summer which was really nice after being isolated from them for around a year. I'm very thankful we can finally be back on campus as I can already tell my education and social life will improve tremendously.

Andrea Abelian





Electrical Engineering

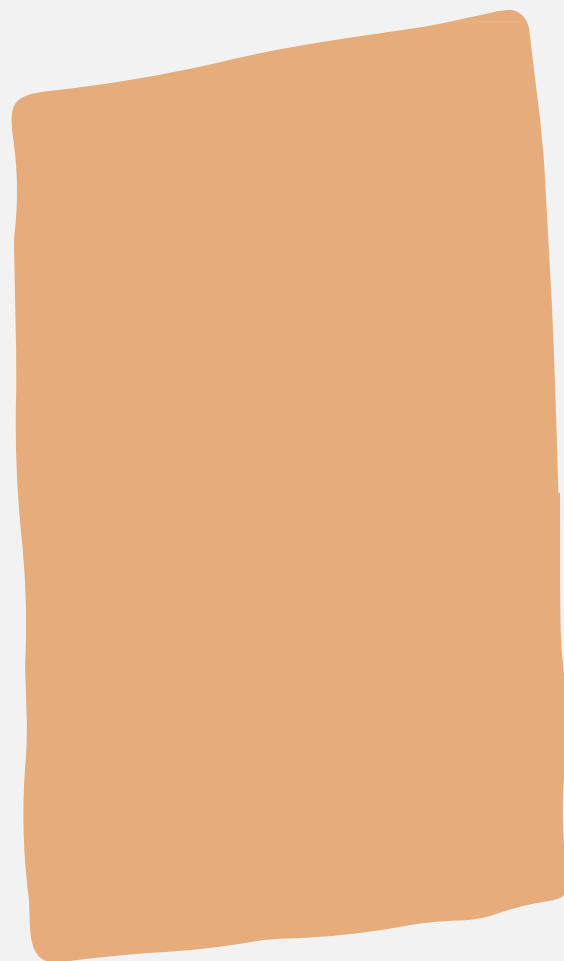
This summer, I had the pleasure to intern with Microsoft's Mixed Reality team as an Electrical Engineering Intern! I was able to work on and contribute to Microsoft's HoloLens. I was able to work on my schematic capture and board design skills and impact ongoing projects. Besides working on this innovative device, I connected with the Hispanic & Latinx community-based in the bay area, where I found mentors to help guide me through my internship. Now that my internship has ended, I have started my Electrical Engineering graduate program at Cal Poly Pomona and will be returning to Microsoft in Summer 2022.

To my fellow CAPS scholar, you are almost at the end of your undergraduate! Enjoy every moment and make sure to finish strong. As companies are starting to bring back employees, they are also looking to fill some empty seats. Although you have to focus on academics, take time to work on your post-college journey. I encourage you all to look at upcoming conferences such as GMIS, SHPE Convention, and WE21. These conferences will allow you to showcase your skills to companies for a potential fit for employment.

If you're looking into grad school, start looking at requirements and funding! You don't want to be applying last minute and not turning in the best application because you'll be setting yourself up for failure.



Juan Avila
Class of 2021



Mechanical Engineering



This Summer, I relocated to Arizona to work for Raytheon Missiles and Defense (RMD). I moved into a house with three other roommates, and it's been an adventure meeting new people, as well as exploring the state. The weather is hot and dry, but over time, you get used to it. Lately, it's been raining, so it helps cool down the temperature a bit. Occasionally, my roommates and I would watch scary films every weekend before we head off to bed and work on jigsaw puzzles together, ways for us to bond. We would also bond over food, as you can see in the picture. Also, I have been trying to learn how to play the piano and reading books during my downtime. As for work, it's been thrilling to learn from people who have years of experience. Currently, I am working remotely from home, so I do save money on gas. There are clubs inside the company, and I got myself involved in Drag Racing Club and Rocketry Club. So far, work hasn't been too much on me; however, I am sure it will become difficult once things start to pick up. Lastly, I do want to mention that I miss my family and friends. I get homesick from time to time, so I would occasionally call them. I plan on visiting them every 2-3 months to stay connected. The picture provided is the last time I went back to visit them after the commencement.



Muang Myat Garry The Class of 2021



This particular summer was an interesting one as it is the first summer that had no summer classes. The beginning of the Summer was rather boring as I had mainly played Video Games, however, as entertaining as that is, I eventually got bored and started to look into Rendering. I started to learn how to use a program called Blender. I followed a tutorial online and modeled a donut. Besides learning how to use Blender, I was also going outside a lot more. This was mainly due to my friends being in town and we like to be outdoors. We've gone hiking every weekend, mainly to Griffith Park. The best hike we've had was going to the Hollywood sign when it was nearing sunset and then seeing the city, it was an amazing sight. We also played Basketball every Wednesday or Thursday, as that is a sport we all enjoy playing. This last week of summer vacation, my plans were to help my friends get their stuff ready to move, as they live on campus and only came into town as they wanted to be with family. Overall this summer was perhaps one of the best summers I've ever had.



Marwin Tempunohaya



Mechanical Engineering



This Summer, I returned to my internship at NAVSEA as a project lead out in Oxnard. It was fun finally being able to work in my office on base and meet the rest of my team for the first time. It did take a while to get used to the new work routine and to catch up to speed with pending projects, but I was soon able to catch up with things. Since I was the only intern for the first month, it took a while to get acclimated with everyone, but I was able to make friends with my coworkers, help train the new intern, and even got to go to dinner together few times. It was really great being able to meet new people and get advice from experienced engineers as to how to approach my last year of undergrad.

Besides my internship, I took a summer class in order to lighten my course load in preparation for my senior year. Despite work and school, I still managed to take a break this summer and enjoy some much-needed time with my family and high school friends whom I had not seen in a long time. Overall, it was a great and productive summer.



Juliamma Hernandez



Over the summer, I had the opportunity to work with Cummins Inc as a Genset Engineering Intern. My responsibilities included producing engineering solutions on the 95 L Gensets. I had the opportunity to complete my internship in a hybrid manner from both Los Angeles and Fridley, Minnesota. Overall, this internship was a very rewarding experience. I had the opportunity to network with other interns within the company, test my designs within the manufacturing plant, and visit different landmarks in Minnesota with my coworkers.

This summer, I also traveled to Rosarito, Mexico for the first time to visit my family. Coming into this semester, I feel very excited to start on my Senior Design Project

Annie Cornejo

