

# Sylvia Zuniga

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I am a fourth year undergraduate at the University of California, San Diego, majoring in Cognitive Psychology and minoring in Cognitive Science. I am interested in research topics in the Cognitive and Social Psychology fields. I am specifically interested in social norms, problem solving, decision making, and human-computer interaction. I am currently a research assistant at the Social Cognitive Development Lab at UC San Diego, under Dr. Gail Heyman, researching attitudes student and non-student groups have towards ChatGPT.

## Education

**University of California, San Diego**

Bachelor of Science in Cognitive Psychology

Minor in Cognitive Science

**Sep 2021 - Present**

**Expected 2025**

**GPA: 3.83**

Chancellor's Associates Scholar (CASP)

Triton Research & Experiential Learning Scholars Scholar (TRELS)

## Awards

Chancellor's Associates Scholarship Program (CASP)

*University of California, San Diego - Full Ride*

Aug 2021 - Present

Triton Research & Experiential Learning Scholars (TRELS)

Research Summer Program

*University of California, San Diego - \$5,000*

Jun - Aug 2024

Best Presenter Award

CSUSM 30th Annual Psychology Student Research Conference

*California State University, San Marcos*

May 2024

Anderson Travel Award

*University of California, San Diego - \$200*

Dec 2023

Muir Student Travel Scholarship

*University of California, San Diego - \$300*

Nov 2023

IDEA Scholars Program

Jul 2021

Jacob's School of Engineering  
*University of California, San Diego - \$1,000*

Quest Bridge  
2020 National College Match Application  
*Semi Finalist*

Sep 2020 - Dec 2022

## **Research Experience**

### **Research Assistant**

**Jun 2023 - Present**

University of California, San Diego  
Social Cognitive Development Lab, Dr. Gail Heyman

- Lab focuses on diverse topics including academic dishonesty, children's psychological development, and artificial intelligence
- Became lead for two studies on ChatGPT, initiated shortly after its release, to explore user behavior and societal impacts of AI
- Developed coding schemes and categorized and analyzed data for research studies
- Authored abstracts and manuscripts based on study findings
- Conducted peer reviews and piloted studies to ensure research quality
- Provided feedback to fellow research assistants to improve study execution
- Presented research findings in lab meetings and academic settings

### **Review Team Lead**

**Jun 2023 - Present**

University of California, San Diego  
Social Cognitive Development Lab

- Collaborated with a team responsible for literature reviews, peer reviews, pilot studies, and other tasks requested by senior lab members
- Led and guided the review team during sessions to support lab research and information-gathering efforts
- Created and assigned tasks, ensuring clarity and alignment with project goals
- Provided support by answering questions from team members and senior staff
- Monitored task progress and ensured timely completion of assignments within deadlines

### **Research Summer Program Scholar**

**Jun - Aug 2024**

Triton Research & Experiential Learning Scholars (TRELS)  
University of California, San Diego

- Participated in a program providing hands-on experience in research, creative projects, and public service under UCSD faculty mentorship
- Dedicated 30 hours per week to an independent research project
- Attended weekly cohort meetings to collaborate and share progress with peers
- Presented research findings through a slide presentation at an on-campus conference

## **Conference Presentations**

**Zuniga, S., Gabrenya, A., Waltzer, T., & Heyman, G. D. (2024).** How is ChatGPT integrated into society following its release? Students and their new tool. Poster presented at the UC San Diego Lab Expo, San Diego, CA.

**Zuniga, S., Gabrenya, A., Waltzer, T., & Heyman, G. D. (2024).** How is ChatGPT integrated into society following its release? Students and their new tool. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology annual convention, San Diego, CA.

**Zuniga, S., Gabrenya, A., Waltzer, T., & Heyman, G. D. (2024).** How is ChatGPT integrated into society following its release? Students and their new tool. Poster presented at the CSUSM 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Psychology Student Research Conference, San Marcos, CA.

**Zuniga, S., Waltzer, T., & Heyman, G. D. (2024).** Naturalistic research on ChatGPT experiences. Talk presented at the UCSD Summer Research Conference, La Jolla, CA.

## **Manuscripts**

**Zuniga, S. (2024).** Attitudes toward ChatGPT: A case study of ChatGPT adoption among student and non-student groups. [Manuscript in preparation]

## **Volunteering**

### **Sun God Festival Volunteer**

Apr 2022

Associated Students office of Concerts & Events (ASCE)  
University of California, San Diego

- Volunteered for student-run music and arts festival overseeing photography operations

### **Bear Gardens Volunteer**

Apr & May 2022

Associated Students office of Concerts & Events (ASCE)  
University of California, San Diego

- Volunteered for student-run daytime carnival
- Helped with setting up and cleaning up the carnival
- Hosted carnival games, music stations, picture stations, and assisted attendees

### **Customer Service Volunteer**

Sep 2019 - Sep 2020

SHARP Health Care, Chula Vista, California

- Volunteered for SHARP hospital gift shop
- Helped patients with gift shop needs

- Exposed to work experience in a professional setting

**Vice President, Publicity Manager, and Volunteer**

Jul 2019 - Mar 2020

Key Club Local Chapter, Hilltop High School

- Facilitated meetings and volunteering opportunities for local Key Club Chapter at Hilltop High School
- Made digital and physical posters to promote volunteering opportunities

**Technology Manager and Volunteer**

Jul 2019 - Mar 2020

Key Club International, California

- Oversaw promotions (digital posters and social media posts) on volunteering opportunities
- Made promotional material for State Chapter

## **Activities**

**Member and Part of the Event Committee**

May 2023 - Present

Psi Chi at the University of California, San Diego

- Attend weekly meetings to discuss opportunities, professor spotlights, participate in committees (research, business, event, volunteer, journal, Psi BETA)
- Help plan and set up events and promote professional engagement with the psychology community

**Vice President and Member**

Jul 2017 - Jun 2021

Hilltop High School Robotics Club

- Oversaw meetings, made decisions on volunteering and fundraising opportunities
- Built and programmed robots to compete in VEX Robotics competitions Locally and Nationally
- Participated in the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) in Del Mar in 2019 and 2020 as a robotics designer, safety captain, and mechanic
- Focused on leadership, teamwork, and community, including community service

**Member**

Jul 2017 - Jun 2022

Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)

- SHPE is a national society who aims to empower the Hispanic community in STEM
- SHPE helps its members find their place as Hispanics in the engineering world, providing career services, scholarship opportunities, informational sessions, and more

## **Additional Skills**

Languages: English and Spanish

Programming Languages: Python, R, MATLAB, HTML, git\_bash

Programs & Applications: Google Hub, Microsoft Office, VSCode, Jupiter Notebook, GitHub, Canva, CapCut, MediBang Paint