

## EDUCATION

**University of California Santa Barbara** | *B.A. Marine Science* | 2021- Present | GPA: 3.96

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## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**UCSB Bren School of Environmental Science and Management:** *Santa Barbara, CA*

*Shark Analyst* (January 2025 - Present)

- Compile a dataset of shark fin measurements for every known species of shark to inform finning vulnerability models

**Marine Science Department, College of Creative Studies:** *Santa Barbara, CA*

*Teaching Assistant* (January 2025 - Present)

- Assist instruction of upper-division marine science data courses in R programming language

**UCSB Ocean Recoveries Lab:** *Santa Barbara, CA*

*Research Technician* (January 2022 - Present)

- Conducted an independent research project studying the effect of fish-coral mutualisms on a coral's ability to respond to wounds
- Conducted an independent research project on the predictive ability of herbarium specimens on the functional ecology of marine macroalgae

**UCSB Bren School of Environmental Science and Management:** *Santa Barbara, CA*

*Data Research and Communication Outreach Intern* (June 2022 - September 2022)

- Synthesized data visualizations regarding the impacts of marine debris in California and Hawai'i using ArcGIS and RStudio
- Drafted media and communication materials to inform the public about the effect of marine debris on wildlife

**UC Santa Barbara Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration:** *Santa Barbara, CA*

*Laboratory Coordinator* (August 2021 - March 2023)

- Led an independent study of invertebrate stratification in sediments as a restoration efficacy indicator
  - Organized, trained, and supervised volunteers performing invertebrate collection and analysis
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## PUBLICATIONS

*(In prep)* H Vega, L M Feitosa, S Gaines. **A Complete Dataset of Fin Morphometrics for Sharks**

*(In prep)* H Vega, N Munk, A Bui, A Stier. **Coral-dwelling Fish Help Corals Recover from Wounds**

*(In prep)* H Vega, A Bui, E Donham, A Stier. **Macroalgal Herbarium Specimens Can Predict Historical Ecosystem Functions in Kelp Forests**

*(In prep)* L M Feitosa, H Vega, S Gaines, **Fin Morphometrics Predicts Finning Vulnerability**

Acknowledged, **Debris Free Seas: Assessing Economic Losses and Impacts to Fishers, the State, and the Environment from Lost Fishing Gear**, Masters Project 2023

H Vega, A Sanford. **Deadliest Bycatch: Summarizing and Mapping a Debris Free Sea**, Poster 2022

H Vega, A Grinstead, J Huitema **Aquatic Invertebrate Monitoring at Devereux Slough**, Poster 2022

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## PRESENTATIONS

**Fish are Friends and So Are You!** *Worster Symposium, Goleta, CA, (May 2025)*

- A fifteen minute talk on work funded by the Worster Foundation and its impact on DEIJ

**Fish are Friends: Fish Help Corals Heal** *UC Undergraduate Research Symposium, Goleta CA, (April 2025)*

- A ten minute talk on the role of coral-associated fish in coral lesion healing

**Fish are Friends: How Fish Help Corals Heal** *Western Society of Naturalists, Portland, OR (Nov. 2024)*

- A fifteen minute talk on the effect of coral-fish mutualisms on coral recovery

**Approaches to DEIJ in the Environmental Sphere** *Bren Mantell Symposium, Goleta, CA (Nov. 2022)*

- Panelist speaker about BIPOC experience in marine and environmental science

**A Whale of a Problem: Mapping Fishing Debris**, *Bren Mantell Symposium, Goleta, CA (Nov. 2022)*

- A poster on the locations of southern california whale entanglements and marine debris

## **Invert Monitoring in Coal Oil Point** *UC Undergraduate Research Symposium, Goleta, CA (April 2022)*

- A fifteen minute talk on macroinvertebrate populations within brackish wetlands

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## MEDIA & OUTREACH

Featured, [Hayden Vega: A First Generation, Triple Major Undergraduate](#), *UC Santa Barbara*, 2025

Artist, [Coal Oil Point: A Seaweed Mosaic](#), *UC Reserve System*, 2025

Featured, **Blue Future: Citizen Science and Activism**, *Patagonia*, 2024

Co-author, [Diving in to REEF Safe Sunscreen: Meet the Scientists](#), *Avasol*, 2023

Author, **ODA: Twenty Years of Debris Free Seas**, *Ocean Defenders Alliance*, 2022

Author, [Safe Boating and Fishing Practices](#), *OC Coastkeeper*, 2020

Author, [How our Intern Brought Fishing Line Recycling to Seal Beach](#), *OC Coastkeeper*, 2020

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## FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

**Honorable Mention: Best Fifteen Minute Talk** (2025)

**Schmidt Foundation Mentorship Award** (2025)

**STEMSEAS Oceanographic Fellowship** (2025)

**Worster Foundation Research Grant** (2024)

**UCSB Career Catalyst Award** (2024)

**College of Creative Studies Travel Grant** (2024)

**UCSB Environmental Studies Research Grant** (2024)

**Tom Rogers Scholar** (2024)

**SACNAS - California Sea Grant Pathways to Inclusive Research Training Program** (2023)

**Shoreliner Scholar** (2023)

**Tom Rogers Scholar** (2023)

**Coastal Fund Research Grant** (2023)

**DIVERsity in Diving Fellow** (2022)

**Bentson Scholar** (2022)

**Bren Environmental Diversity Leaders Fellowship** (2022)

**FUERTE Undergraduate Fellow** (2022)

**Hispanic Scholarship Scholar** (2021)

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## SERVICE

**UCSB FUERTE Mentor** *Santa Barbara, CA* (January 2024 - Present)

- Mentor undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds during field research experiences

**UCSB Diversity in Diving Mentor** *Santa Barbara, CA* (January 2023 - Present)

- Chaperone and support new divers as they complete their scientific diving certifications

**Goleta Surfrider Foundation** *Santa Barbara, CA* (October 2021 - Present)

- Sample and publish bacteria content of UCSB beaches

**Orange County Coastkeeper** *Costa Mesa, CA* (August 2020 - September 2021)

- Draft blog reports about safe boating and angling practices

**Seal Beach Fishing Line Recycling Program**, *Seal Beach, CA*, (August 2020 - Present)

- Founded a community program to recycle fishing line in Seal Beach, CA

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## Skills

AAUS Diver, Rescue Diver, Nitrox Diver, CPR & First Aid, RStudio, ArcGIS, ImageJ, EDNA, French biliteracy