

## HAYDEN A. VEGA

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### EDUCATION

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

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### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**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 2023 - 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
- Led twenty research dives off the coast of French Polynesia and California

**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 carbon content in marine 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, N Munk, A Bui, A Stier. **Coral-dwelling fish help corals recover from wounds**

(*In prep*) H Vega, A Bui, E Donham, A Stier. **Models can predict past functional traits of herbarium macroalgae**

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

**Western Society of Naturalists** *Portland, OR (November 2024)*

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

**Bren School of Environmental Science Diversity Leader's Symposium** *Goleta, CA (November 2022)*

- Panelist speaker about BIPOC experience in marine and environmental science

**Bren School of Environmental Science Mantell Symposium** *Goleta, CA (November 2022)*

- Presented research on the locations of southern california whale entanglements and marine debris

**UCSB Undergraduate Research Symposium** *Santa Barbara, CA (April 2022)*

- Presented a fifteen minute talk on water quality factors and macroinvertebrate populations within brackish wetlands

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## MEDIA & OUTREACH

Featured, [Hayden Vega: A First Generation, Triple Major Undergraduate](#), *UC Santa Barbara*, 2025  
Author, **Nadav Kempinski**, *BREN School of Environmental Science and Management*, 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

**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

**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