

Summer Blanco

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Education & Training

PhD Student, Plant Biology University of Georgia, Athens GPA: 4.00/4.00	Aug. 2021 – Present
Post-baccalaureate training, Success in Graduate Education (SiGuE) Program Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI Advisor: Dr. Erich Grotewold	Aug. 2020 – June 2021
Bachelor of Science, Biology major with Botany Subplan California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA Summa Cum Laude	Sept. 2015 – May 2020

Academic Fellowships

Presidential Fellowship (\$10,000 stipend supplement) University of Georgia, Athens	Sept. 2021– Present
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (\$34,000/yr)	Sept. 2021– Present
Minority Biomedical Research Support-Research Initiative for Student Enhancement (\$7,488/yr) California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA	June 2017 – May 2019
Summer Research Early Identification Program (\$5000 stipend) Leadership Alliance	June 2018 – Aug. 2018
Achieve Scholars (\$1000 stipend/yr) California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA	Sept. 2016 – June 2018
Louis Stoke Alliance for Minority Participation Fellow (\$2000 stipend) California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA	Feb. 2016 – June 2017

Honors & Awards

Dr. Paul C. Hiemenz Award (\$2000) California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA	Feb. 2020
Woody Ornamental Identification 1st Place National Collegiate Landscape Competition, Colorado State University	March 2019
Harold Lint Memorial Scholarship (\$750) Department of Biological Sciences, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA	June 2018
Cal Poly Pomona College of Science Dr. Wu Scholarship (\$750) Department of Biological Sciences, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA	June 2018
Marilu Johnson Scholarship (\$800) San Diego Flower and Plant Society, San Diego, CA	June 2018
Cut Flower & Foliage Identification 1st Place National Collegiate Landscape Competition, Alamance Community College, NC	March 2018
Celebration of Teaching Future Teacher Nominee College of Education and Integrative Studies, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA	Oct. 2017
American Florists' Exchange Scholarship (\$2,200) American Floral Endowment, Los Angeles, CA	July 2017

Minority Affairs Committee Travel Grant Recipient (\$500)

American Society of Plant Biologists, Honolulu, HI

June 2017

Program Recognizing Outstanding Undergraduate Distinction Scholar (\$500)

Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA

June 2017

Research Experience**Evaluating Growth and Development in Greenhouse Propagation***Ball Horticultural Company*

May 2019 – Aug. 2019

West Chicago, IL

Advisors: Dr. Todd Cavins and Dr. Will HealyObjective: To evaluate the effect of mist duration on rooting speed and uniformity using a variety of propagation substrates**Developing a Novel Transformation Technique in *Aquilegia coerulea****Harvard University*

June 2018 – Aug. 2018

Cambridge, MA

Advisor: Dr. Elena Kramer; Post-doc mentor: Dr. Stephanie ConwayObjective: To develop protocols specific to *A. coerulea* to replicate a published pollen-based transformation technique**Techniques to Understand Floral Organ Abscission in *Delphinium* Species**

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

July 2017 – May 2018

Pomona, CA

Advisor: Dr. Bharti SharmaObjective: To understand floral organ shedding in agriculturally important *Delphinium* species**Studies to Understand Transition to Flowering in *Aquilegia coerulea****California State Polytechnic University, Pomona*

Feb. 2016 – June 2017

Pomona, CA

Advisor: Dr. Bharti Sharma; Graduate student mentor: Tim BatzObjective: To understand the transition to flowering in response to vernalization in *Aquilegia*

Oral Presentations**Rose, Bud, and Thorn: Reflections on pursuing a PhD in Plant Biology**

College of Science Seminar, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

March 2022

Pollen Magnetofection: Developing a Novel Transformation Technique in *Aquilegia coerulea*

Creative Activities and Research Symposium, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Aug. 2018

Techniques to Understand Floral Organ Abscission in *Delphinium* Species

Summer Research Symposium, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Aug. 2017

Poster Presentations**Pollen Magnetofection: Developing a Novel Transformation Technique in *Aquilegia coerulea***

Leadership Alliance National Symposium, Hartford, CT.

July 2018

Morphological Studies to Understand Transition to Flowering in *Aquilegia coerulea*

American Society of Plant Biologists Conference, Honolulu, HI

June 2017

Studies to Understand Floral Transition and Inflorescence Patterning in *Aquilegia coerulea*

Southern California Conference for Undergraduate Research, University of California, Riverside

Nov. 2016

Development of Tissue Culture and Transformation Protocols for *Aquilegia* and *Nigella*4th Annual CPP Student Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Conference, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

March 2016

K-12 STEM Education

Scientific Research and Education Network (SciREN) Participant

January 2022

University of Georgia, Athens

- Attended Lesson planning workshop and developed 3rd grade lesson plan specific to my graduate research topic
- Attended networking event and presented lesson plan to local K-12 educators

Ernest Prete Jr. K-12 STEM Education Mentor (\$5100 stipend)

Aug. 2019 – Dec 2019

Center for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Pomona, CA

- Communicated program goals and expectations between program directors, instructors, and fellows
- Conducted one-on-one advising meetings with fellows throughout the semester
- Coordinated with program mentors to lead training workshops for fellows

Ernest Prete Jr. K-12 STEM Education Fellow (\$5100 stipend)

Sept. 2018 – May 2019

Center for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Pomona, CA

- Provided tutoring support in a K-3 Autism Spectrum and Related Disorders classroom at Kellogg Polytechnic Elementary School in Pomona, CA
- Attended workshops on tutoring, lesson planning, and classroom instruction
- Co-planned and taught a plant life cycle lesson according to the Next Generation Science Standards

Mentorship & Service

Research Mentor Training certification

May 2022

Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL) Network

Cientifico Latino Graduate School Mentorship Initiative, Graduate student volunteer

Aug. 2021 – Present

Science Educational Enhancement Services, Peer Mentor

Sept. 2016 – May 2020

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA

Achieve Scholars, Peer Mentor

Sept. 2016 – June 2018

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA

Outreach & Advocacy

Athens Science Café, VP of events

May 2021 – Present

University of Georgia, Athens, GA

- Coordinating monthly, accessible and engaging scientific presentations for the local Athens community

Plant Biology Graduate Student Association, Teaching and Outreach chair

May 2021 – Present

University of Georgia, Athens

- Creating professional development opportunities for the Plant Biology department graduate student body
- Planning and executing outreach events targeted at local K-12 students and the Athens community

Early Career Plant Scientist Section (ECPS) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion subcommittee member

Aug. 2020 – Present

American Society of Plant Biology (ASPB)

- Coordinated and participated on panel for a workshop titled, “Navigating your fellowship application”, an event with a moderated discussion with 5 panelists that were awarded external academic fellowships
- Coordinating workshop and serving as a panelist for ASPB 2022 meeting titled, “Grad School Primer: How to Navigate the Challenges of Academia”

Voices of Color Co-founder

June 2020 – May 2021

College of Natural Science, Michigan State University, MI

- Founded group that coordinated community-building events for graduate students of color in STEM fields

Blanco CV 3

Voices of Color Co-founder

Dec. 2018 – May 2020

College of Science, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Pomona, CA

- Founded group (of 3 student leaders) that coordinated events to support students, faculty, and staff of color
- Organized and lead two 2-hour meetings each semester with ~20 attendees including students, faculty, and staff to educate and connect community members
- Met monthly with the Dean and Associate Deans of the College of Science to communicate program goals and address student concerns discussed at each meeting

Social Justice Leader

Aug. 2019 – May 2020

Pride Center, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

- Maintained community lounge cleanliness and engaged with community members
- Participated on LGBTQ+ student panels to provide ally education to students and faculty
- Promoted Pride Center and Cultural Center resources/events to students

Volunteer Experience

Rose Float Decorations Chair

Jan. 2018 – Dec. 2019

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Pomona, CA

- Determined floral material used to create color, texture, and theme for the Cal Poly Universities student-built entry in the 2019 Rose Parade, “Far Out Frequencies”
- Coordinated with the California Cut Flower Commission to procure floral material donations
- Supervised student leaders working with over 1000+ volunteers during Decorations Week in Pasadena, California
- Awarded the Extraordinaire Award for the most extraordinary float

Rose Float Decorations Assistant Chair

Jan. 2017 – Dec. 2018

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Pomona, CA

- Determined floral material used to create color, texture, and theme for the Cal Poly Universities student-built entry in the 2018 Rose Parade, “Dreams Take Flight”
- Supported the Decorations Chair in organizing priorities and meeting deadlines
- Awarded the Past President’s Award for most outstanding innovation in the use of floral and non-floral materials

Grow Native Nursery Volunteer

June 2015 – Aug. 2015

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, Claremont, CA

- Propagated California native plants for retail nursery production and restoration purposes