



Introducing our 2020 Scholars (Internal only)



Cristobal Castañeda is a second-year student from Martinez, California who is transferring his Environmental Sciences major at Diablo Valley College to UC Davis this fall. His interest in conservation started when he migrated to the US from Mexico through natural landscapes. He is overjoyed to know that programs like DDCSP are here to support his goals. His dream is deeper community involvement in land management, and he is considering a career in the National Park Service or the Bureau of Land Management. He has worked in the Youth Interns Program and with the National Park Service, bringing young people, particularly refugees, into natural spaces. He hopes to use conservation as a way to unite broad coalitions of people who care about the environment.

Kathryn Hart is a second-year student from Fort Wayne, Indiana who plans to major in Environmental Sciences and minor in Spanish at Indiana University. She spent her childhood exploring river banks and escaping into nature documentaries. She had formative experiences conducting tree and soil field research at the Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge. This inspired her to pursue conservation research. She wants to explore and learn more about nature, pursue a graduate degree and ultimately be a government biologist advancing federal conservation efforts.





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Fana Scott is a second-year student from Washington, D.C. who plans to double major in Biology and Environmental Studies at Eckerd College. She gained experience with nature by working with Crater Lake National Park. She wants to develop community-based research and conservation education programs and hopes the DDCSP program will help her decide on her exact path.



Sheila Marie Ringor is a second-year student from Honolulu, Hawai‘i majoring in Sustainability Studies and Political Science at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (Honolulu, Hawai‘i). Sheila Marie immigrated from the Philippines at age 11. Growing up in Hawai‘i has greatly informed her interest in both endemic and island biodiversity, as well as the socio-political failures and successes in protecting the environment, motivating a career in policymaking. She is first-in-family to attend college.

Joshua Stewart is a second-year student from Pennsylvania majoring in Meteorology with a minor in Entrepreneurship, Math, Climate Science & Policy at the University of Miami. He is passionate about the environment and climate, and would like to build expertise in research and conservation to apply his entrepreneurial drive to the climate crisis.





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Michael Angelo Fernandez is a second-year student from Guam who plans to double major in Chemistry and Biology and minor in Mathematics at the University of Guam. He has a passion for conserving rare and endangered plants, which he was introduced to in Guam. He is particularly interested in how endemic plants are revered and used in indigenous knowledge, and how this is an important aspect in their conservation. In DDCSP he would like to continue doing research and eventually become a professor at the University of Guam to advance the conservation of native flora.

Isabella Rosado is a second-year student from Sunnyvale, California majoring in Environmental Studies and Economics, and minoring in Spanish at Yale University. Visits to her mother's birth country, Honduras, and her Latinx culture and upbringing influenced her passion for conservation. Motivated by the rapid changes she has seen in Honduras, she is focused on preserving biodiversity and healthy ecosystems. At home, she has been involved in developing a climate action plan. Ultimately, she hopes to empower indigenous perspectives in restoration and preservation of the environment.





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Genesis Perez is a fourth-year student from Puerto Rico who is majoring in Biotechnology with a minor in Biology and Chemistry at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico. Growing up in a rural mountain town surrounded by lush greenery Genesis has a deep connection with natural landscapes. She hopes the UCSC DDCSP Program will propel her in a conservation research career around biodiversity protection and restoration. She is particularly interested in increasing the effectiveness of restoration and conservation efforts as well as increasing diverse

representation in these fields. Genesis is the first in her family to attend college.

Tahiry Langrand is a second-year student from Virginia who plans to major in Sustainability, and minor in Spanish Language Studies, at Arizona State University. He was raised in a household that taught him to be close to nature. He grew up playing outdoors and volunteering with environmental organizations. He is a rabid naturalist and citizen scientist interested in the interface of biodiversity, human communities, and sustainability. He co-founded a network for sustainability startups, Constellation, and is its Executive Director. In the future, he plans to attend graduate school and focus on research. Longer-term Tahiry would like to work for or start a nonprofit conservation organization, with the goal of encouraging others to connect with nature and change their lifestyles to support conservation.





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Jennifer Delgado is a second-year student from Houston, Texas attending Carleton College. She developed a deep connection to nature through outdoor experiences and through family stories about living in rural Mexico. She wants to broaden environmental writing in conservation to include the Latinx community. She is the first in her family to go to college.



Jean Nikolas Clemente is a first-year student from Yona, Guam double majoring in Biology and Earth and Oceanographic Sciences at Bowdoin College. Growing up in Guam he fell in love with what he perceived as a tropical Eden, but he came to learn that the silent jungles were a shadow of what had once been. He is deeply motivated to conserve Guam's ecosystems by whatever means necessary. He'd like to be a professor in Guam so that he can encourage others to find ways to conserve Guam's ecosystems and multiply his efforts.



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Valerie Tafoya is a second-year student at Depauw University in her hometown of Chicago majoring in Biological Sciences. She aspires to get a joint PhD / DVM so that she can inform, design and implement captive breeding and translocation programs for endangered animals. She is a Committee Chair on the Lincoln Park Zoo Conservation Ambassadors Board and has experience working there and at the Shedd Aquarium. She is first-in-family to attend college.



Isaac Aguilar is a second-year student from San Marcos, California double majoring in Ecosystem Management and Molecular Environmental Biology at UC Berkeley. He believes his connection to nature stems from learning the history of his grandfather's rancho. He aspires to a career conducting wildlife research and teaching others about the environment. His plans include graduate school to wildlife research expertise. He once thought this path would force him to choose between interests in social justice and conservation, but feels empowered by DDCSP to combine these interests in his work.



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Kian Kafaie is a first-year student from San Francisco, California who intends to major in Environmental Science at Brown University. Through his lens as the child of Iranian immigrants, he is passionate about bringing his global perspective to the intersection of othering and the climate crisis. He is an activist and organizer who has rallied support in Alameda County, and he wants to take this grassroots organizing approach to massive movements to protect biodiversity, avoid climate catastrophe and achieve social equity.



Kellie Navarro is a first-year student from Attleboro, Massachusetts majoring in biology with a minor in environmental studies at Bowdoin College. She wants to become a marine conservation biologist and hopes to find others who are as passionate about environmental issues through the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program. She also plans to help communities who are being affected by environmental destruction and empower the voices of marginalized communities.





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Marion Powell is a second-year student from Hawai‘i who plans to major in Environmental Science and Anthropology at Willamette University. Growing up on the small, mostly deforested island of Moloka‘i, her passion for taking care of the environment began at a young age. She started her own research and conservation projects to combat deforestation on Moloka‘i and was recognized for it at the Hawai‘i State Conservation Conference. She continues to fight a narrative of defeat in conservation. Her goals are to widen her conservation skillset to policymaking so that she can also advocate more widely for indigenous communities affected by climate change.



Amina Muumin is a second-year student from Woodbury, Minnesota who is planning to major in Environmental Science, Policy and Management and a minor in Corporate Environmental Management at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Like other DDCSP scholars, she is passionate about fixing environmental issues and began expressing her concern and interest in 2017 to her Somali immigrant family by teaching them how to recycle. She plans to be a park ranger and change the narrative around what a park ranger looks like -- that it can be a hijabi woman with her lived experience. She is first-in-family to attend a four-year college.



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Amy Quintanilla is a second-year student from California majoring in Environmental Physics at Wellesley College. She was taught by her parents, Salvadoran immigrants, to respect and honor the land that nurtured and fed them. She has experienced how environmental racism puts communities in danger and lack of equity in STEM education compounds disproportionate impacts on marginalized communities. Her goal is to be an environmental engineer where she can improve environmental and public health while also strengthening environmental education in minority communities. She is most interested in how environmental engineering can better serve Latinx and indigenous communities. She is a first-generation college student.



Adriana Maciel Metal is a second-year student from Berkeley, California majoring in Environmental Studies at Yale University. She began to see environmental racism as it affected her family in Salinas, California, and she resolved to study and change how the physical environment is shaped by powerful institutions. She wants to be a researcher and problem solver, linking science to communities and decision-makers. She is particularly interested in community-based solutions

in ocean conservation.



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Shantae McIntyre is a second-year student from Bridgeport, Connecticut majoring in Marine Biology with a minor in Anthropology at the University of Connecticut. She was drawn to nature growing up in Jamaica, fishing with her father, and exploring the islands. Early on, she witnessed disappearing resources, lower catches, fewer animals and other signs of environmental degradation that strengthened her resolve for conservation. Shantae hopes to contribute to conservation research at the

federal level safeguarding marine species, ecosystem, and the human communities that rely on them.