

## Advising Matters (1)

Home (/home) » Recognition (/recognition)

» Excellence in Advising & Student Services (/recognition/excellence-advising-student-services)

» Excellence in Advising & Student Services 2020 & 2021 Recipients

# Excellence in Advising & Student Services 2020 & 2021 Recipients

---

On behalf of Berkeley's [Council of Advising and Student Services](https://advisingmatters.berkeley.edu/about/advising-council) (<https://advisingmatters.berkeley.edu/about/advising-council>) and our [awards planning committee](https://advisingmatters.berkeley.edu/recognition/excellence-advising-student-services) (<https://advisingmatters.berkeley.edu/recognition/excellence-advising-student-services>), we are pleased to announce the recipients of our 2020 and 2021 Excellence in Advising and Student Services Awards and to express our sincere gratitude to all our nominees for their outstanding contributions. These awards recognize the positive and innovative impact our recipients have on student learning, engagement, and belonging on the Berkeley campus. Congratulations to each of the award recipients listed below on this important achievement. The selection committee had a pool of very talented individuals from which to choose, and we wish to acknowledge our many nominators and contributors to this challenging selection process.

**You are warmly invited to join us in recognizing our award recipients and Celebrating Our Collective Efforts on Wednesday, December 15, from 1:30-3:00 p.m. PST via Zoom.** We look forward to celebrating the entire student services community and your on-going hard work and dedication to supporting students. We also look forward to spending well-deserved time together for some much needed joy, laughter, music, games, and some amazing giveaways/prizes! There will be opportunities to share kudos and gratitude with each other. **RSVP by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, December 6 for this event (<https://forms.gle/YB36oeaXLDWLPYR6>) and take a few moments to add your words of gratitude and thanks to individuals and teams within our student services community on this 2021 Kudoboard (<https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/JoEkX0JM>).**

Thank you for making Berkeley a better place for students and for all of us!

---

## Equity Champion

**Brenaia Blue**, Office of Undergraduate Advising, College of Letters and Science

*"Brenaia has a wealth of office and institutional knowledge and has extended herself to champion diversity and equity whenever possible. While current events have affected our ability to connect personally with students, Brenaia has consistently maintained student support to those who may be inadvertently absent from previous efforts, and has been inclusive of all students. In addition to her*

*own efforts, Brenaia has facilitated opportunities for her colleagues to join her in supporting diverse student populations and is a passionate and vocal advocate of equity. Brenaia is an inclusive, and adept adviser that pays attention to detail to deliver consistent care and service."*

**Christopher Hunn**, Electrical Engineering & Computer Sciences, College of Engineering

*"Christopher Todd Hunn is the equity champion! He shared his expertise in inclusive practice in more than 25,000 individual counseling sessions for TAs, undergrads, grad students, staff, and faculty where he has served as an advisor. He has advised new lecturers and 400+ GSIs/ tutors on mitigating cheating, stereotype threat, unconscious bias, and microaggressions. He has advised CS scholars and CS mentors to support underprivileged students in navigating EECS, academia, and a sense of community at Cal. He is core faculty for the Equity-Oriented Advising and Coaching program that equips advisors and students services professionals with evidence-based practices that have increased student engagement, success, self-efficacy, and belonging."*

**Fatima Alleyne**, College of Engineering

*"Fatima is one of the most dedicated, innovative, and hard-working professionals that I have had the pleasure of working with. She leverages her project management, student affairs, teaching, STEM, and DEIB expertise to lead, direct, provide, and assess programs that impact campus climate. One of her hallmark initiatives, which has received recognition from both college and campus leadership, is the EMPOWERing Engineers for Positive Change program. This program has transformed the student experience by using pioneering and data driven methods to support faculty, staff and students in fostering an inclusive climate. Fatima approaches her work using a social justice framework and is the definition of what it means to be a champion of equity."*

**Ricky Vides**, College of Engineering

*"Ricky Vides has been a champion for equity in the department of mechanical engineering (ME). He has worked to increase access to resources and support for all students with an emphasis on students from under-served communities, including first-generation college students or students from under-represented groups in engineering. His tireless efforts have had a positive impact on the ME community by creating a ME Scholars program that includes peer-mentorship and professional development. His work has also had a positive impact on the greater Bay Area, by working with California based high school teachers to create hands-on projects that will introduce and engage students from under-resourced schools about career opportunities in engineering."*

**Shamaya Pllum**, College of Chemistry

*"Shamaya Pllum is a revolutionary advisor who brings antiracist praxis into her role as an advisor and program coordinator for the College of Chemistry. She centers the voices of first-generation, nontraditional, transfer, POC, and BIPOC students at the College of Chemistry. She has created institutional support for students through the peer tutoring program and peer advising program and has spearheaded capacity-building programs among her colleagues and peers in order to strengthen the integrity of these programs. She is truly remarkable and has fostered a sense of collaboration, support, equity and justice in the College of Chemistry."*

**Tomie Lenear**, Student Parent Center, Centers for Educational Equity & Excellence

*"Tomie imbues equity into every facet of the Student Parent Center. He remembers every name and story he comes across, that's why we lovingly call him Father Tomie. He has given the parenting student community a place to call a second home. He exemplifies the kind of person that students need in their corner. Tomie goes above and beyond to advocate for the needs of student parents but most importantly he is transparent and shows up as his full-self, and reminds us to hold our identities close and our head high as we navigate a campus as large as Cal."*

## Virtual Advising Innovation

**Eden Nasher**, Summer Sessions & Study Abroad

*"Foreseeing the complexities and potential impacts of virtual instruction on the student's experience, Ebrahim Nasher developed an interactive virtual resource called the "Cub Hub" to provide "real time" advising opportunities and simulate the type of support and experiences students would have in our on-campus program. Through his innovative approach we were able to support the advising, engagement, and learning needs of over +600 domestic and international students in our Berkeley Pre-College Scholars program. Thanks to Ebrahim's exceptional contributions, we are very proud to say this past summer was one of the most successful iterations of our Pre-College program to date!"*

**Lyn Rivera**, Department of Plant and Microbial Biology, Rausser College of Natural Resources

*"Lyn Rivera is a graduate adviser extraordinaire. Coming to our department with over five years of advising experience, Lyn was able to bring her professionalism, compassion and even - keeled attitude to her new position as the GSAO for the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology in April 2020 during the pandemic. Interviewed in person, on-boarded in the new digital environment, she did not skip a beat on the purpose of her job--students first, clarity and simplification on processes, building trust. Lyn has gone above and beyond to become a respected and trustworthy member of our staff and department."*

**Virtual Advising Front Desk Team:** Sonya Scott, Phuong Tang, and Darshani Alahan (leads); Cat Ming Hubbard, Rachel Remillard, Anna Sanderson, Magali Mercado, Lauren Ash, Brittany Kulusich, Briana Chavez, Silvia Guzman, Jesús Arciniega, Brandilyn Gilbert; Office of Undergraduate Advising, College of Letters and Science

*"While COVID inevitably required advising offices across campus to leverage technology, none did so to the scale and magnitude of the L&S Office of Undergraduate Advising's Virtual Front Desk. The L&S Virtual Front Desk team worked closely together to transform student services. These innovations ensured service during COVID and will continue to influence improvements to service delivery for years to come. Many COVID-inspired innovations were "almost as good" as in person. The L&S Virtual Front Desk is actually much better than what we offered in person before COVID, and will be a key part of our serving our 23,000 students going forward."*

## Success with Less

**Amanda Minafo**, Departments of Italian Studies, Scandinavian, and Slavic; Celtic Studies Program, College of Letters and Science

*"Despite a shrinking staff and incredibly complex advising position, Amanda is innovative and welcoming in her advising of the students in our four departments, covering nine major and eight minor tracks. She recently streamlined a number of forms of advising information online, and she voluntarily participated in L&S Advising events for which she was praised. Her dedication to excellence is reflected in her caring, professional, and inclusive interactions with students and others. The core competencies, goals and principles of Berkeley Advising have been clearly demonstrated in the direct experiences of both Amanda's students and her fellow campus colleagues who have collaborated with her."*

**Cal Student Central Peak Time Staff Team:** Alexandria Williams, Chelsea Yost, Christian Riesgo, Genaro Olivares Isaura Linares, Jamie Wiegert, Kisha Evans, Luis Rodriguez, Michael Cervantes, Sully Diaz, Zhanyl Saparbekova

*"CSC strives to support student success with a service-oriented, cross-trained, and solution-seeking professional staff. During the Fall 2020 peak period, they answered 2545 calls with an 85% handle rate, closed 2864 student cases and with the assistance of their partners, made 2460 calls using a callback system. The team did amazing work even though they were short three full time staff members in comparison to Fall 2019. Not only were they able to keep up with the increased demand even with the reduced staff, but we were actually able to make improvements to their services in order to provide excellent customer service."*

**Christine Mullarkey & Jennifer Ochoa,** Department of Psychology, College of Letters and Science

*"The dynamic duo of Christine and Jennifer has saved the Psychology department thousands of dollars over the next years through their innovative rethinking of the major admission process. While the department stands to save money for no longer licensing database software, our students gain much from the new process. Admissions decisions are now made on a rolling basis. Students have the opportunity to connect with advisors in developmental conversations that promote engagement with the department, personalized advising based on goals and interests, and increased awareness of the myriad offerings available to them within the department and across campus."*

**Data Science Advising Team:** Marjorie Ensor, Aaron Giacosa, Amanda Dillon, Kimberley Nguyen, Laura Imai

*"During the 2020 year, the Data Science Advising team has embodied the idea of Success with Less. On top of the shift to remote learning and working from home, multiple members of the team spent part of the year on extended leave. Every member of the team responded by stepping up to take on new responsibilities, innovate, and continue to prioritize excellent advising to students. Their strategies for success included implementing a suite of paperless advising systems and developing an advising residency program with L&S to both build relationships and address a critical staffing shortage."*

**Interdisciplinary Social Science Programs Team:** Nithya Raghunathan, Dreux Montgomery, Alex Maurice, College of Letters and Science

*"The advising team for Global Studies and Political Economy have been working with reduced staffing since the Pandemic began. The advisors pulled together with fantastic camaraderie to keep the advising program running smoothly. They reviewed and simplified processes to make procedures easier for advisors and students. These included on-line forms and records, infographics that help students understand administrative processes, simplification of the website and the handbook, creation of peer advising programs, greater use of google docs to share information. They did these innovations while continuing to provide excellent service to students at a time when students are much stressed."*

## **Outstanding Peer Advisor, Mentor, Counselor, or Ambassador**

**Aileen Lavelle**, Rausser College of Natural Resources Peer Advisor Leaders

*"Aileen constantly finds new ways to immerse herself in the Rausser College of Natural Resources community and creates a space for students to feel seen and heard. She is eager to help and adapts to new challenges with grace and enthusiasm. Her efforts have bolstered enthusiasm amongst the peer advisors and the student community at large. Aileen has spearheaded several innovative programs amid the pandemic, including virtual Peer Advisor office hours for prospective students during Cal Week and a Faculty Research Panel, aimed to demystify undergraduate research and provide access to Rausser College faculty. We believe Aileen consistently goes above and beyond in her role as a peer advisor to positively impact our Rausser College community."*

**Alex Jo**, Berkeley Study Abroad

*"Alex Jo is a student-focused, thoughtful, and equity-oriented Peer Adviser on the Berkeley Study Abroad team. One project that exemplifies Alex's star quality is when she led BSA's partnership with the EOP to support satellite advising for first generation, low income, or historically underrepresented students. She liaised with EOP staff, created a schedule, and adjusted current advising documents that would allow EOP students to feel included and encouraged to explore study abroad. Additionally, Alex also led trainings for other Peer Advisers who got involved in the project."*

**Andrew Estrada Phuong**, Graduate School of Education & Division of Equity and Inclusion

*"Andrew's the best equity-oriented educator and mentor and is in the top 1% of leaders. He has advised students on navigating their major, academia, career, wellness, disability accommodations, grad school, and securing fulfilling jobs. He led student success programs for CE3 students, and has advised/ impacted 500+ faculty, GSIs, students, mentors, and staff since 2010 with equity-oriented pedagogies. He partnered with 10+ organizations to create student success programs that optimized URM students' wellness, achievement, and professional success. He co-leads an Equity-Oriented Advising and Coaching program to support advisors and student services professionals with research-based strategies that have increased student success and belonging."*

**Daniel Legrand**, Department of Music, College of Letters and Science

*"Daniel Legrand is an award-winning advocate and peer mentor in the Music Department. Drawing on his training as a certified Intercultural Development Advisor, Daniel provides exceptional support and guidance to his fellow students. Since 2014, he has consistently worked to build community and*

*solidarity among graduate students in the Music Department, and has been a leading voice for graduate student professionalization. He is a thoughtful intellectual interlocutor, forthright advocate, and loyal friend. As one peer wrote: 'I am lucky to have Daniel as a colleague and friend, and the Music Department is better as a result of his presence and labor.'*"

**Jed Terrence Lee**, Student Environmental Resource Center

*"Jed Lee is a senior majoring in Society and Environment and has devoted their undergraduate career to environmental advocacy issues as the Student Environmental Resource Center Community Organizer and as a member of the Students of Color Environmental Collective. Their work includes organizing UC Berkeley's cohort at the 2018 Rise for Climate, Jobs, and Justice March, and coordinating campus events including the "Remembering Joy and People Power: Climate Resilience Through Spoken Word", and the "Students of Color Environmental Conference". Jed is dedicated to supporting students on their environmental activism journey, creating spaces that are rooted in joy and healing."*

**Tatiana Nikolaeva**, Career Center Peer Advising

*"Tatiana consistently goes above and beyond when it comes to assisting and uplifting her fellow students. Her hard work and determination when it comes to her own activities and responsibilities are an inspiration to all who have the pleasure of knowing her. She will stop at no end to exceed expectations."*

## **Excellence in Data and/or Research-Driven Student Services**

**Jacqueline Chang & Elizabeth Olin**, Office of Undergraduate Advising, College of Letters and Science

*"The L&S OUA Analyst team of Jacqueline Chang and Elizabeth Olin have been instrumental in creating a burgeoning culture of assessment within L&S OUA. Their work is critical in supporting L&S's ability to make progress toward strategic goals, through consulting with staff on assessment strategy and helping our staff better understand the importance and power of meaningful program assessment, and providing data to the management team to inform decisions around how best to leverage our resources to align with student needs, ranging from planning appointment availability to deciding which programs to continue investing in and which areas to scale back."*

**Mikaela Auerbach**, Berkeley International Office

*"Mikaela's performance is described as exceptional because of her pioneering efforts. Beyond her primary duties, she has engaged in additional efforts that have benefitted BIO and the campus. Recently, she engaged in groundbreaking work producing reports about the enrollment status of international students not only by visa status but also by location both in the US and outside. She also made available data to BIO and to the campus during Fall 2021 semester planning about the need for online classes. Through the data that she was able to mine, she was able to demonstrate that we were likely to have a high rate of students who were going to be on campus for the fall which eventually turned out to be accurate."*

## **Service to the Advising and Student Services Community**

**Classroom Technology & Support Services, UC Berkeley Extension (UNEX):** Patty O'Donoghue, Michael Pham, Christopher Washington, Fifi Agenhu, Kaleb Tsemru, Edwin Solis, Patrick Yu.

*"The UC Berkeley Extension Classroom Technology & Support Services staff has an ability to "get to the root of the matter" very quickly, works well with the public and well as campus entities. They are kind, level headed individuals who under pressure remain highly personable, punctual, and easy to talk to. While their charge is to maintain the physical space, they make sure the students, advisors, and instructors in the space are equally well-cared for. Students stay in the building to study, rejuvenate, and socialize with each other because the atmosphere is so welcoming. Their support for the Fall Program for Freshman has been invaluable."*

**Diana Lizarraga, Cal NERDS, Division of Equity and Inclusion**

*"Di has been a consistent resource for students and staff for almost two decades on our campus and has always had a keen eye for emerging needs and the skills and foresight to offer innovative solutions. The creation of the star.berkeley.edu database and further innovations planned with the tool that include geomapping of faculty to aid in student navigation are two recent examples of her drive to make this campus easier and more intuitive to navigate for our community. Di consistently goes the extra mile for students and campus colleagues in an effort to foster belonging and equity."*

**Ken Mahru, Department of History, College of Letters and Science**

*"The most current and relevant is Ken's work on the GSAO coordinating Committee as onboarding subcommittee chair. In this role, he is working with other GSAO to develop best practices and resources for onboarding people in this complex role. Ken has been recognized individually 9 times via the SPOT award for his roles in his department but I believe this work extends beyond department support. Ken is part of a community of practice on campus for Graduate Diversity. I have witnessed, Ken support other GSAO's who were down staff, in transition, and even his outgoing department in answer questions and problem solving complex funding, academic, and Grad Div policies."*

**Laura Vogt, College of Engineering**

*"Laura Vogt brings great depth and breadth of skills to student communications at Berkeley Engineering and is vital to keeping students informed and connected. When the campus shifted to remote learning, for example, she quickly conveyed important details about public health guidelines, academic accommodations, emergency funds and more. With students' emotional well-being top of mind, she highlighted counseling resources available at the college through web, email and podcast channels. Laura contributes to a shared sense of community in all she does, and she does so with a model work ethic. An Award for Excellence in Service to the Advising and Student Services Community would be due recognition for her sustained excellence in service."*

**Transfer Student Success Group:** Amanda Dillon, Christine Mullarkey, Cassandra Dunn, Tiffany Reardon, Clara Ng-Quinn, Lorena Valdez, Nicole McIntyre, Lydia Raya; cross-department/division team

*"Recognizing that there is room for improvement in the transfer student experience at Berkeley, these advisors and student service professionals created a new Community of Practice, the Transfer Student Success Group, and began building a campus-wide professional network to share ideas and best practices. Over the last year, they held a public forum, established a list-serve, sponsored a webinar on*

*"Building Transfer Student Community in an Online Environment" and advocated with the administration to be more responsive to transfer student concerns during COVID response. Given our growing transfer population, TSSG is a timely and important contribution to making Berkeley inclusive of and supportive to all students."*

## **Advising Champion (Faculty/Administrator)**

**Professor Lynn Huntsinger**, Rausser College of Natural Resources Dean's Office

*"Lynn has been a champion of undergraduate education and advising at Rausser College for multiple decades, one of which she has dedicated her career as Associate Dean."*

**Professor Martha Olney**, Department of Economics, College of Letters and Science

*"Amidst one of the most challenging times in recent history, Professor Martha Olney continues to be the strongest ally and advocate of undergraduate advising and students in the Economics department. More specifically, her work during this remote learning period has been paramount. She works tirelessly to adjust policies and minimize the negative impacts of the pandemic on students' pursuit of the Economics major. Martha's empathetic and proactive approach to supporting students and advisors is not unique to the remote learning period; this is simply how she works. She is a true 'Advising Champion.'"*

## **Outstanding New Advisor or Student Services Staff**

**Claire-Marie Kooi**, Engineering Student Services, College of Engineering

*"As the student engagement programs manager in the College of Engineering, Claire has a driven passion for improving diversity and inclusion in STEM fields. In her current role, she piloted the Berkeley Mentorship Cohort which connects incoming students to carefully selected mentors who assist their transition to Berkeley. She also runs Engineering Scholars as Engaged Scholars which is a year-long program that teaches students how to apply their engineering background to address issues of social and environmental justice. With her innovative spirit for program design and management, as well as her student-centered mentorship, Claire has left a lasting mark on the college experience of her scholars."*

**Grayson Johnston**, Department of Rhetoric and Film & New Media, College of Letters and Science

*"Under these extraordinary circumstances, Grayson served our students with unwavering academic and basic needs support, sustaining our diverse student body with compassion and steadiness. The extraordinary care that Grayson demonstrated throughout the pandemic has made him our frontline staff member to coordinate the drastically changing needs of students and instructors. As a direct result of Grayson's extraordinary work, all our 2020 Rhetoric seniors graduated on time. All our Honors Program students completed their Honor's Theses on time. The Rhetoric undergraduate student community exudes with positive energy and collegiality, in no small part due to Grayson's unrivaled dedication to them."*

**Heather Yaden**, Disabled Students Program



*"Heather supports DSP TRiO SSS Students who are often low-income, first-gen, or URM students with disabilities. She provides academic coaching, consultation, training, and support which is available to 4000+ DSP students. She has directly advised 400+ students. To advance DSP students' success & belonging, she supervises and advises a team of 6 undergrad academic coaches and tutors to serve 250 TRIO students each semester. In her advising and programs, she has provided strategies & access to networks that help students thrive academically, personally, and professionally. She serves on the teaching team for the Equity-Oriented Advising and Coaching program that equips advisors with practices that have increased student success & belonging."*

**Jessie Rosales**, Office of Undergraduate Advising, College of Letters and Science

*"Jessie's impact reaches far beyond the 23,000+ students we serve & will have a lasting effect for years to come. In his seemingly endless roles and responsibilities, what stands out is how he makes students feel cared for, capable and seen. Among peers, he's known for being student-centered, organized, knowledgeable, innovative, a resource to colleagues, and generous with his gifts. He's created manuals, transition guides, and streamlined process in every aspect he's ever had a hand in at L&S Advising. Students say he's 'kind and caring' and makes them feel 'hopeful and capable.'"*

**Kyle Kate Dudley**, UC Berkeley School of Law

*"Kyle Kate Dudley embodies the principles and vision of Berkeley advising in the following ways. Kyle's advising centers the lived experience of her students. She is proactive in learning her advisees' needs and tailoring her advising method to these stated needs. Kyle's innovative solutions to inaccessibility reflect a deep respect for disabled scholars and their place in the university. While the rest of the university struggled to adapt its pedagogy to distance learning, Kyle's efforts ensured that deaf students had access to live captions in the Zoom classroom. Finally, as liaison between her advisees and both professors and DSP, Kyle shoulders the burden of navigating ableism and inaccessibility on behalf of her advisees. She goes to bat for us, and I will never forget it."*

**Monica Albe**, Department of Integrative Biology, College of Letters and Science

*"Grad school is hard, and sometimes it feels like you're wandering alone through a dark tunnel. Monica is like a light that guides you out and helps get you back on your feet. She is always supportive and goes out of her way to ensure grad students have a positive experience and the support they need."*

## **Outstanding Advisor or Student Services Staff**

**Amy Louise Azuma**, Office of Undergraduate Advising, College of Letters and Science

*"Amy Azuma is known for her ability to deeply engage students through a developmentally tiered advising approach, and for her dedication to her own continuous learning and growth. She has been nominated in recognition of her exemplary one on one advising and her pioneering work in engaging the campus in support of sophomore students, a traditionally overlooked population. Among the supports she has spearheaded is a unit bearing, strengths-based course for sophomore students that engages a cultural wealth model and fosters self-reflection and connection to the campus community."*

**Bobby Thompson**, Cal Athletics

*"Bobby Thompson has been one of the best, if not the best, advisors on Cal Berkeleys campus. He has been a great resource and has provided an endless amount of support for student athletes. He has dedicated his time to make sure students are growing as individuals. A great person to be around and has a very unique personality that can attract anybody's energy towards him. He always encourages your ideas and does whatever he can to make them a reality. I fully believe that he should win this award because of how outstanding of an advisor he is."*

**Hannah Bloom**, Department of Molecular & Cell Biology, College of Letters and Science

*"Hannah has made an indelible impact on the MCB graduate program in her time as Graduate Student Services Advisor and is considered by many to be the cornerstone of the program. She is a genuinely caring person dedicated to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for students. She can deftly manage the many complexities of her role, and she has become the expert on matters critical to student and faculty needs. While this is all a testament to the high caliber of her work, what sets her apart is her passion for helping students and for making the student experience as positive and rewarding as she is able. She imbues empathy and compassion in all that she does and is widely respected and trusted for the integrity of her work."*

**Heidi Yu**, Career Center

*"Heidi Yu has made significant contributions to Berkeley while displaying a warm, inclusive demeanor that has allowed her to foster meaningful relationships with students and staff. She has excelled in providing transformational student counseling sessions; partnering with L&S faculty, advisors and EOP staff on career education initiatives; implementing programs that support first gen and underrepresented students with their career exploration; and supporting staff and students in their professional development through campus committee involvement and student staff supervision. It is a distinct pleasure to nominate Heidi Yu for the Outstanding Advisor Award given her student centered, equity-focused work and commitment to quality service."*

**Mario Eusebio**, Biology Scholars Program, Department of Integrative Biology, College of Letters and Science

*"Mario embodies all the characteristics of an ideal staff advisor and public recognition for his investment in students is long overdue. He is kind, empathetic, and genuine towards anyone who comes to him for help. He is generous with his time, resources, and advice. Without a doubt, he has played an impactful role in supporting numerous students, especially the underrepresented and minority, and helped them achieve success at Berkeley and beyond."*

**Nithya Raghunathan**, Interdisciplinary Social Science Programs, College of Letters and Science

*"Nithya supports students in the Political Economy and Global Studies programs by providing personalized, comprehensive, caring advising. She has a positive impact on student learning, engagement, belonging, and success through her special initiatives in developing a Peer Advising Program; launching Undergraduate Research Opportunities Information Sessions; and regularly communicating with all our students through coordinating and editing the weekly electronic newsletter that includes a wealth of useful information and opportunities. Nithya's advising is consistently student-centered and she approaches her work in an ethical and equity-oriented manner."*

**Sarah Rhoades**, Office of Instruction and Student Affairs, Rausser College of Natural Resources

*"Sarah Rhoades is an inspiring mentor who demonstrates genuine care and interest in everyone she interacts with. I remember feeling uncertain when I learned that my major was getting a new advisor, but Sarah has provided so much support since the first time we met. She helped me navigate my journey in CNR through a period when I was uncertain about my academic aspiration. I am so grateful for the opportunity to work closely with her as a peer advisor and continue supporting the CNR community."*

**Shelley Okimoto**, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, College of Engineering

*"Shelley is the go-to source for information, creative problem-solving, and general support for graduate students. Shelley's office is a space in which students can get help, re-strategize, or just rest and recharge. From the healthy snacks she offers to the wall of postcards students have sent her from around the world, Shelley provides a nurturing environment while helping students navigate some of the trickiest issues at Cal: stipends and payment, classes and research groups, visas and dissertations. Shelley knows how to work within the rules without letting the rules be obstacles for students' growth. With this skill, she helps students forge a path to success that feels authentic to them, thereby supporting equity and inclusion."*

**Zachary Chestnut**, Department of Integrative Biology, College of Letters and Science

*"Zac goes above and beyond the role of an advisor in many ways. He uses his biology background to evaluate transfer students' biology courses and suggest improvements to the IB curriculum. He uses innovative technology skills to improve our processes and the student experience by continually improving the website and our internal database, implementing new tools, like our drop-in sign-in form, and assessing data gathered by our office. But above all, he is an excellent mentor and advocates for IB students."*

**Outstanding Advising or Student Services Team**

**Berkeley International Office:** Erin Skelly, Jessica Sharp, Alison Leurele, Wanya Panyapoemtaweesakul, Amy Chin Pokhrel, Anna McCreedy, Katherine Greco, Alethea Stoltzfus, Tatiana Djordjevic, Erin Skelly Mimi Ghosh, Mikaela Auerbach, Patrick Bradley, Krista Holobar, Victoria Thompson, Kassidy Adams, Sidney Ji, Dan May, Baradwaj Vavilikolanu

*"It is hard to capture in a few words the real story of a department that was not only affected by the pandemic but also by enormous challenges placed on it as they sought to aid students around the ambiguity of which country they should choose to conduct their study, the risks of international travel accompanied by uncertainty about proper documentation or even if they will be permitted to enter the country - all amid an unfriendly US government. Indeed it took all hands on deck for the Berkeley International Office (BIO) student team to achieve a gallant effort - one that was focused on students' success. That effort centered around a high volume face paced environment that entailed data driven, technologically supported and a highly collaborate team work to achieve."*

**College of Chemistry Undergraduate Student Services:** Maura Daly, Jahzeel Flores Morales, Shamaya Pllum, Korshid Tarin, Onisha Barham

*"The CoCUSS advising team used the challenges and opportunities posed by the COVID pandemic to enhance advising and other student support services in significant ways, with increased attention to supporting low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students of color. The group continued to grow & enhance our Peer Tutoring, Chemistry Scholars, and Peer Advising/Mentoring programs, they significantly expanded our Yield efforts for F21 (April-May, 2021), and the team established an effective hybrid advising paradigm while offering full-time, in-person advising."*

**College of Letters and Science Office of Undergraduate Advising:** Roseanne Fong, Christina Teller, Maria De Palma, Mecca Shakoor-Cook, Isela Pena-Rager, Elizabeth Olin, Philaine Seher, Greg Cera, Mark Gotvald, Brittany Kulusich, Rachel Remillard, Michelle Logarta, Marisol Silva, Charles Williams, Heidi Church, Jane Paris, Joanna Morales Fernandez, Jessie Rosales, Devi Swamy, Megan Braverman, Darshani Alahan, Amy Azuma, Tim Cahill, Anthea Yugawa, Torey Bookstein, Ramona Askew, Angela Archuleta, Jesús Arciniega, Maire Lanigan, Brenaia Blue, Floriberto Javier García, Ulises Serrano, Phuong Tang, Kendra Van Nyhuis, Silvia Guzmán, Brandilyn Gilbert, Anay Martínez, Sonya Scott, Lauren Ash, Briana Chávez, Magalí Mercado, Anna Sanderson, Emilio Alvarado, Luís González, Wendy Hernández, Jacqueline Chang. Graduate Mentors: Mathilde Andrews, Alyssa Bormann, Patrícia Gomes, Bridget Martin, Lesdi Robledo, Jasmine Sanders. Undergraduate Student Workers: Joanne Van, Julia Zhu, Gracie Balistreri, Sophanit Getahoun, Mellisa Mulia, Landon Shea, Berenice Barajas, Christopher Bledsoe Tice-Raskin, Aeri Hong, Elan Barnett, Kristen Clure, Jocelyn X. Li, Maggie Tsao, Monica Gao, Tiffany Tian, Elysa F. Dombro, Saffanat Sumra, Candice Lee, Lauren H. Zane, Quest Dibley, Ananya Narayanan.

*"Compassionate, innovative, collaborative, tremendously knowledgeable, and love-centered. These are words that merely begin to describe the most inspiring advising team of 2020. L&S Advising has taken a data-driven and theory-informed approach to student services thanks to re-energized leadership who hired a second full-time analyst and a number of advisers and other staff of color who expertly balance the nuance of being dean's representatives and student advocates. L&S Advising boasts a large team of diverse leaders, which comprises knowledgeable and skilled student workers, graduate mentors, analysts, administrative staff, advising assistants, managers, and both intake and college advisers who work tirelessly in service of 23,000+ undergraduates."*

**Disabled Students TRiO SSS Program:** Rochelle Brown & Heather Yaden

*"Rochelle and Heather provide active and tangible support and build a community for program participants. Programming includes academic coaching, financial literacy programming, and a class for new students to help them have a successful transition to Cal. Student participants have expressed a great deal of appreciation for the dependable support of both Rochelle and Heather as TRiO advisors. We are seeing a rise in student retention among student participants as a result of their excellent work with our students. [This web page \(https://dsp.berkeley.edu/support-services/cal-trio-dsp-sss/what-students-are-saying-about-trio-dsp-sss\)](https://dsp.berkeley.edu/support-services/cal-trio-dsp-sss/what-students-are-saying-about-trio-dsp-sss) includes some comments from students about their experience with DSP TRiO."*

**Social Welfare Office of Student Services:** Nicole Rucinski, Adriana Llauradi, Cassandra Castillo, Dezalyn DeVera, Sara McCarthy

*"The student services team in SOCWEL has gone above and beyond to support students through a challenging, traumatic, and often isolating academic experience during the pandemic. Our team was able to bring mental health resources directly to our grad students by spear-heading a CAPS satellite counseling office as well as monthly community support circles. The team initiated an overhaul of administrative processes to best fit the new virtual landscape, ease the burden on students, and ensure clear, consistent, and accessible information. In addition, the team has developed comprehensive academic resources to address student advising needs, and responds in real time to student concerns and issues in innovative and creative ways."*

## **Outstanding Advising or Student Services Administrator, Director, or Manager**

**Antoine Davis**, Department of Electrical Engineering & Computer Sciences, College of Engineering

*"Antoine Davis has supported both the seven members of the EECS undergraduate advising team and all of the undergraduates in the EECS and the L&S CS programs throughout the pandemic by maintaining a positive and calm attitude. While he remains fully informed about our work, he never seems to be upset or stressed about the situations that we are confronted with. His relaxed approach fosters an environment where we are able to engage in self-reflection and open-mindedness toward each other and our students. Finally, Antoine's humor is a wonderful force that binds us together as a group. I can think of no better candidate for the Outstanding Advising Manager Award than Antoine."*

**Becca Lopez**, Center for Student Conduct

*"Becca Lopez, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of the Center for Student Conduct, epitomizes the criteria outlined for this award. Through her work leading innovative, solutions-oriented, student-centered initiatives for the office and modeling an office culture that fosters staff engagement and belonging, Becca has shaped an amazing workplace resulting in countless successes. She demonstrates authentic, vulnerable, and humble leadership that creates a workplace where her staff thrive personally and professionally to provide the best service to our students. Becca's work in the Center for Student Conduct is truly remarkable."*

**Joshua Dullaghan**, Office Of Instruction & Student Affairs, Rausser College of Natural Resources

*"Joshua Dullaghan has done so much for the Office of Instruction & Student Affairs at Rausser College within a short period of time. He reassessed our systems, increasing clarity and efficiency. He improved equity and increased office morale. All despite a year with incredible challenges from COVID-19 and office turnover. He approaches each interaction with students and staff with compassion and empathy, and inspires us all to do the same. I am very grateful for his leadership."*

**Laura Imai**, Data Science Undergraduate Studies

*"Laura Imai has made a remarkable impact on the UC Berkeley community by creating, leading, and nurturing a supportive, inclusive, and highly effective advising team for undergraduate Data Science, a major that began in 2018 and now has over 1,000 declared students. She finds ways to connect with the whole population of Data Science majors, for example by moderating an online forum with over 14,000 questions and answers, nearly 1,000 of which were written by Laura herself. She also cares*

*deeply about equity and has overseen an array of focused initiatives to ensure that Berkeley Data Science is accessible and supportive for all students. As Ani Adhikari says, 'She is the heart of the Data Science undergraduate program.'*"

**Mariana Matthews, PATH to Care Center**

*"Mariana directs the PATH to Care Center peer educator program and her supervision of the undergraduate student employees embodies a deep commitment to their development, learning, belonging, and success. She pivoted the entire peer education program to virtual during pandemic and re-envisioned the program to include more leadership roles for returning student employees, creating positions for consultations and social media coordinators, increased professional development opportunities, as well as trauma-release activities to prevent burnout. Mariana brings her student-centered approach to every aspect of the work, has demonstrated strong leadership, and modeled resilience during budget cuts, staff transitions and Covid."*

**Rebecca Andersen, School of Information**

*"Rebecca Andersen is an outstanding career advising director who actively demonstrates strong, supportive, and empathetic leadership to both her team and the students in our department. Her self-description says it all: 'I build engaged communities and help people connect to meaningful work. Certified Design Your Life Career Coach, UC Berkeley Educator, Doctoral Candidate, and Soccer Mom.' If you asked anyone of our I School students or alumni how they feel about Rebecca, they would easily say she is an incredibly caring and supportive person and they owe so much of their career development and post-graduate school job placements to her and her team."*

**Vanina Granell, Summer Sessions, Study Abroad, Lifelong Learning, and Extension (SSALLEX)**

*"Vanina Granell has been a transformative leader and supervisor, going above and beyond to serve as a mentor and tireless advocate for her staff during turbulent times and creating a culture of growth and excellence everywhere she goes. Amid several major organizational changes, Vanina responded in stride, anticipating future challenges and opportunities and eliciting staff input on major organizational issues. With a penchant for bringing out the best in her team, Vanina has endeavored to provide the highest level of student service at a time when our students need it the most and she should be recognized for her contributions."*

## **The Mary Slakey Howell Excellence in Advising & Student Services Award**

**Kasra Sotudeh, Athletic Study Center**

*"Kasra advanced 500+ students' success and belonging. Kasra created transition courses for student athletes that strengthened the student athlete community. Through his 1-on-1 attention with students and leadership initiative of creating supportive networks, he reminded students that they are not just an athlete but a member of a community. The courses engage student athletes across a range of sports in a developmental setting to enhance their consciousness of self, others, and context. He*

*achieved course outcomes of helping college athletes thrive, not just survive: Students in his class have learned how to engage with the campus, thrive on campus beyond the demands of being a student athlete, and not silo themselves into only one identity."*

**Leah Carroll**, Office of Undergraduate Research & Scholarships, College of Letters and Science

*"For 20 years, Leah has been an exemplary advocate for undergraduate research. As the manager of the Haas Scholars Program, she mentors high-achieving, low-income students. Over 80% of the program's alumni have gone on to pursue advanced degrees. A recent graduate wrote, 'Educators like Leah are the reason UC Berkeley shines brightly as an institution of higher learning.' Her impact can be measured in the workshops she leads and in the research opportunities database she created—both of which serve thousands of students every semester. In observing Leah's advising practice, a colleague commented, 'Leah does not make assumptions, is inclusive in every way, and is selfless in sharing opportunities.'"*

Powered by Open Berkeley (<https://open.berkeley.edu>)

Accessibility (<https://dac.berkeley.edu/web-accessibility>)

Nondiscrimination (<https://ophd.berkeley.edu/policies-and-procedures/nondiscrimination-policy-statement>)

Privacy (<https://open.berkeley.edu/privacy-statement>)

Copyright © 2021 UC Regents; all rights reserved

[Back to Top](#)