



ALUMNI NEWSLETTER FALL 2020

A Note From the Director...

It seems what's old is new again.

Polls show overwhelming support for more problem-solving by our political leaders and less political posturing. Americans want to see their leaders begin to work together to solve our problems. In short, they want to see the very problem-solving approach that Senator Ken Maddy was so well known for when he was a State legislative leader in Sacramento in the 1980s and 1990s.

Since the Maddy Institute was established in 1999, we have encouraged students to see politics and the political process as a problem-solving exercise. In the following pages, you will see the results--an impressive group of Maddy intern alums and current Maddy interns who are working to make our nation a more perfect union.

And while the pandemic has posed some unique challenges, the Maddy Institute's Legislative Scholar Intern Program continues Sen. Maddy's vision of providing college students from the Valley with the unique opportunity of learning first-hand how the political process works.

Of course, your generous support makes this all possible. Without that support, there would be fewer opportunities for these students and others. And in these times when fewer internship opportunities are available, and even fewer are paid, the fact that we are able to continue to offer Maddy Institute Legislative Intern Scholarships becomes that much more important.

Thank you again for supporting this important work. We hope you enjoy reading about the next generation of Valley political, civic and business leaders.

With Appreciation,

Mark Keppler
Executive Director



Maddy Alumni: Where Are They Now?



Vanessa Chicaiza

Currently: Master of Public Administration student at California State University, Bakersfield; Associated Students, Inc. President

Vanessa interned in the Bakersfield office of Assemblymember Rudy Salas in the Spring of 2020.

"My time as a Maddy Legislative Intern Scholar was rewarding. I am grateful to have been able to sharpen my skills while interacting with the members of my community in an effort to improve their lives. My experience in a legislative office will continue to guide me through my educational and professional career as I apply the lessons I learned to real-world situations. Engaging with my community was a priority as I entered the internship. My most memorable experiences during my Maddy internship were those when I was actively involved in community events. I walked away from the internship having deepened my understanding of legislation, legislators and the Central Valley."

After her internship and graduation from California State University, Bakersfield with a bachelor's degree in public policy and administration, she was accepted into their Master of Public Administration in Fall 2020. Upon graduation, Vanessa plans to work for city or county government in a position where she can best serve her community.



Ian Wieland

Currently: Founding and managing partner at Sagaser, Watkins & Wieland, President of the Fresno Chamber of Commerce

Ian interned in the Sacramento office of Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula in the summer of 2005, and the Washington D.C. office of Congressman Jim Costa in the summer of 2006. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from California State University, Fresno in 2007.

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Ian then went on to work with several California State Assembly and U.S. House of Representatives members where he gained a unique understanding of the legislative process, strategic planning, outreach, and analysis. He also managed campaigns for several local elected officials and spent two years as a member consultant with the California State Assembly Speaker's Office of Member Services. He then attended the San Joaquin College of Law where he received his Juris Doctor degree. While in law school, Ian worked as the Program Coordinator for the Maddy Institute.

"The Maddy Institute allowed me to have experiences in politics which I otherwise wouldn't have had. It was great because I was able to work for a member of Congress and two Speakers of the Assembly, as well as manage campaigns for local and state government offices. The Maddy Institute offers a great program that allows Central Valley students to get involved in local, state and federal offices. I think it is the best program for San Joaquin Valley students who want a better understanding of politics, public policy and leadership."

Ian Wieland is a founding shareholder of Sagaser, Watkins & Wieland PC and currently serves as the firm's managing shareholder. He is involved in several community organizations including Fresno County Young Lawyers, Madera County Farm Bureau, The Fresno Business Council. In 2013, Ian was selected as a member of the 40 under 40 class of 2013 by Business Street Online. He is also currently serving on The Maddy Institute Board of Directors.

Ian and his wife, Allie, live in Fresno with their two children.



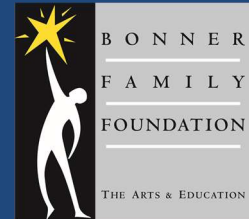
Devon Mathis

Currently: California State Assemblymember, District 26

Assemblymember Mathis interned in the office of the Clovis City Manager in the summer of 2012.

"My internship with the Maddy Institute provided real world experience and knowledge to assist me with my future goals. I appreciate the dedication and hard work of Maddy Institute interns who are working to achieve their own goals."

Senator's Circle



I am truly honored that I am now able to provide current Maddy interns that same experience in my office."

Devon Mathis has represented California's 26th Assembly District since 2014. Before joining the Assembly, Devon served his country for 10 years as a Sergeant in the Army National Guard, including two tours in Iraq. During his second tour in Iraq, Devon was severely injured in a roadside bomb attack, for which he was awarded the Purple Heart. He holds a bachelor's degree in public administration from Fresno State, and an associate degree in social sciences from Porterville College.

Devon and his wife, Aubrey live in Visalia with their five children.



Jaron Brandon

Currently: Supervisor – Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors, District 5

Jaron served as a Maddy Intern in the Merced office of Assemblymember Cathleen Gagliani in the Fall of 2011, and the Sacramento office of Senator Andy Vidak in Summer 2014. In 2015, he graduated from UC Merced with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and Government.

"I can't say enough about my experiences as a Maddy intern which gave me the opportunity to work for a Blue Dog congressman, a Democratic Assemblywoman, a Republican State Senator in Sacramento, and continuing learning through their speaker series.

My experiences helped me grow as a citizen and public servant to meet the challenges of our divided times — to lead a bold, bipartisan, independent campaign that allowed me, as a 28-year-old, to defeat a two-term incumbent Tuolumne County Supervisor by 19 points. What I've learned is that, be it county or country, there can be no bystanders. Step up. Reach across the aisle with courage. And utilize great opportunities like the Maddy Institute."

As a County Supervisor, Jaron hopes to increase opportunity in his district, restore trust in elected leadership, and spread the message of citizen responsibility among his constituents.

Assemblymember's Circle

Henry Barkett

Arnold & Dianne Gazarian

Kern County Taxpayers
Association

The Bill Lyles Fund

Miles, Sears and Eanni

Wawona Frozen Foods

Christopher Woolf



Celida Garcia-Lopez

Currently: District 1 Council Assistant, Office of Fresno City Councilmember Esmeralda Soria

Celida served as an intern with Fresno City Councilmember Esmeralda Soria's office in Spring 2019.

"My experience as a Maddy Institute Legislative Intern was definitely one of the highlights of my college career. As an intern in Councilmember Esmeralda Soria's Office I was able to gain knowledge beyond the classroom by working directly with constituents, organizing events and engaging with our communities. I had the opportunity to connect with policy-makers in Fresno and learn all about what it means to be a public servant. In short, it was an invaluable experience that made me realize the importance of local government in the lives of everyday citizens."

Celida earned her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from California State University, Fresno and enjoyed her time as a Maddy Intern so much that she continued working in Councilmember Soria's office after her Maddy Internship as a Council Aide. She is now a Council Assistant in that office.

Introducing our San Joaquin Valley Maddy Legislative Scholar Interns Fall 2020



Josefina Baltazar Baltazar – *Office of Assemblymember Rudy Salas*
– Josefina graduated *cum laude* from California State University, Bakersfield with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. She is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Public Administration at CSUB.

Josefina was raised in Los Angeles and will be the first in her family to obtain a master's degree. While it has not been easy, she has persevered and continues to make a difference in her community. Josefina has developed strong ties to the Central Valley and dedicates her time during the summer to volunteer for Chicano Latino Youth Leadership Project (CLYLP), which aims to strengthen high school students' knowledge of state and local politics and encourages them to continue their education.

Josefina has previously interned with the City of Arvin where she worked closely with the Director of Administrative Services on compiling a culminating Compensation Study, examining how the city's compensation plan compared to the external market. Upon graduation, Josefina plans to continue her career in the public sector and hopes to make a lasting impact on her community.

Italia Benitez – *Office of Fresno Council Member Esmerelda Soria* – is a senior at California State University, Fresno majoring in Political Science with a minor in Spanish. She will be the first in her family to graduate college. She grew up in the Central Valley, primarily in the Fresno/Clovis area. Italia became interested in public policy and policymaking in college when she first began taking political science and public policy courses. She is now a member of Fresno State's Political Science Honor Association, Pi Sigma Alpha, where she serves as Secretary.



Italia's love and appreciation for the Valley has grown in her work as a real estate agent, where she continues to invest time helping members of her Latino community achieve their dream of owning a home. After completing her Maddy Institute internship, Italia hopes to be able to give back to the community through future work in public policy.



Guadalupe Cruz – *Office of Congressman TJ Cox* – is a senior at California State University, Fresno pursuing a double major in Political Science and Sociology. Born and raised in Kings County, she has developed a strong devotion to the Central Valley. During her time at Fresno State, she has focused her studies in American politics. In the Spring of 2020, Guadalupe successfully completed a Maddy Institute Legislative internship in the office of Assemblyman Devon J. Mathis.

Guadalupe is currently serving as President of Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society.

Guadalupe will be the first in her family to graduate college. Upon graduation, she is interested in working for an elected official as a district representative and plans on ultimately pursuing a master's degree in Public Policy.

Brenda Espitia-Martinez – *Office of Congressman Josh Harder* – is currently attending California State University, Stanislaus where she is pursuing a Bachelor's in Political Science and minoring in Philosophy. She was born and raised in Modesto and will become the first member of her family to graduate from a University.

Brenda has gained leadership skills from different positions she has acquired in the past as a youth group coordinator for her local church where she helped run fundraisers and also as a Recreation Leader for Stanislaus County Police Activities League, a nonprofit organization who takes pride in leading children down the right path. During her time in this position she was head of the Art and Engineering Club at Empire Elementary School.



Upon graduation, Brenda's goal is to attend Law school to become an immigration lawyer. She plans to stay in the Central Valley area to give back to her community.



Julisa Gomez – *Office of Assemblymember Adam Gray* – is a junior at the University of California Merced majoring in Cognitive Science with a minor in Psychology and Political Science. She is currently in UC Merced's Fiat Lux Scholars program.

Julisa was raised by her two hardworking parents in Fresno. Her parents have been her greatest support system in the difficult journey of being a first generation college student. Vanessa extends her gratitude and appreciation to all of the individuals who have supported her along her journey.

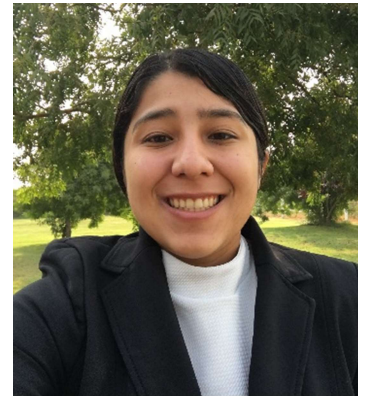
Upon graduation, Julisa is hoping to research prison reform and ways to reduce health disparities among minorities. Ultimately, Vanessa plans to pursue her passion for community engagement through a career in government.

Julisa understands that legislation is essential for any change and will use her experience as a Maddy Institute Intern to create solutions for these issues.

Sabrina Magallanes – *Office of Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula* – proudly attends California State University, Fresno where she is currently a senior pursuing a degree in Political Science. Sabrina is a member of the National Political Science Honor Society, Pi Sigma Alpha and is particularly interested in constitutional law and local politics.

As a native of the Central Valley, her life has revolved around the agricultural prosperity of the Valley. Her family grows pistachios and almonds.

This will be her second semester as a Maddy Intern. Previously she has interned in the Office of Senator Kamala Harris.



Patricia Maldonado – *Office of Fresno City Council President Miguel Arias* – is a junior at California State University, Fresno majoring in Sociology and minoring in Spanish, with certificates in Humanics, Applied Research, and Social Change and Social Justice. She is a first-generation student. Patricia is the Treasurer of Movimiento of Oaxaqueño Leaders in Education.

Upon graduation, she plans to continue her education and obtain a Master's degree in Public Policy. Patricia hopes to work for the local, state, or federal government, or for a community-based organization.



Kenneth O'Leary – *Tulare County Board of Supervisors* – is a junior at California State University, Fresno pursuing a bachelor's degree in Political Science. He recently transferred to Fresno State from College of the Sequoias in Visalia, where he served as the Vice President for the Student Senate and was involved with the President's Scholars program. Kenneth is a Central Valley native and he enjoys all that his community has to offer.

After graduation, Kenneth plans on working in local government or being a high school educator or administrator. He also plans on obtaining a master's degree in Public Policy or Public Administration. He hopes to use his intern experience at the Tulare County Board of Supervisors and his education at Fresno State to bring about positive change within the Central Valley and beyond.

Elizabeth Rocha Zuñiga – *Office of Governor Gavin Newsom, Fresno Office* – is a senior at California State University, Fresno pursuing a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Chicano Latin American Studies, with two certificates in Legal Studies and Social Justice and Social Change. Additionally, she has held leadership positions in the student body government, Phi Alpha Delta, IGNITE National and more. As a result, she is involved with local, state, and federal organizations amongst campus organizations that seek to innovate constituent engagement for many aspects of advocacy.

After graduation, Elizabeth hopes to work with the California legislature, obtain a law degree and, one day, serve her constituents in elective office. She cannot wait to see the Valley thrive, and to be a part of change her peers are making.



Josette Soto – *Office of U.S. Senator Kamala Harris* – is currently a second year student majoring in Political Science and a minoring in Professional Writing at the University of California, Merced. During her initial collegiate year, she worked at UC Merced's Law Clinic assisting students with legal concerns. She is currently involved in the Merced Pre-Law Society, IGNITE, an organization for women seeking a career in politics, and serves as Vice President of Communications in her sorority Delta Gamma.

After earning her undergraduate degree, she plans on attending law school. She is enthusiastic to be a Maddy Legislative Intern and she plans to use the knowledge she gains to aid her future career to advocate on behalf of her community and the Central Valley.



John Winkler – *Office of State Senator Melissa Hurtado, Bakersfield office* – John is a junior at California State University, Bakersfield pursuing a degree in Political Science. John's initial interest in politics began in high school where he was a four-year member of the Frontier High School debate team. He obtained his Associates degree in Political Science, Communication Studies, and Liberal Arts from Bakersfield College.

John's goal is to become an attorney. To that end, John continues to involve himself in the CSUB and Bakersfield community as a member of the CSUB Model United Nations team, Secretary of the CSUB Political Science Club, and a participant in the second cohort of the Norman L. Epstein Court Mentorship Program. He has also been a Legal Intern with State Compensation Insurance Fund. After graduating from law school, John's goal is to become a staff attorney for a congressional committee.

For more information about these and other Maddy Institute programs, visit
www.maddyinstitute.org

**If you are interested in supporting future interns by becoming a
Maddy Associate, please contact Mark Keppler at**
mkeppler@csufresno.edu

