



ALUMNI NEWSLETTER SPRING 2021



A Note From the Director...



In this time of hyper-partisanship, the *Maddy Institute's Legislative Intern Scholarship Program* continues to distinguish itself in the way it encourages college students from the Valley to learn the “art of politics” by learning the “art of compromise.” In short, we encourage civility and effectiveness in politics.

Since the inception of the *Maddy Institute Legislative Intern Scholarship Program*, we have attracted some of the best and the brightest students the Valley has to offer. Not surprisingly, many have already distinguished themselves professionally. The

following pages provide a small sample of what our past and current Maddy interns are doing to make our region, state and nation a better place. As you read about their accomplishments, please consider supporting future Valley students so that, they too, can have the opportunity to learn “the Maddy Way” and acquire the skills necessary to make a positive impact.

We hope you will join us as we work to create the next generation of Valley political, civic and business leaders.

With Appreciation,

Mark Keppler
Executive Director



Maddy Alumni: Where Are They Now?



Tal Eslick

Currently: Owner, Vista Consulting

Tal interned in the Washington, D.C. office of Congressman Devin Nunes in Summer 2005. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Fresno State in 2007, and earned his Master of Business Administration from Fresno State in 2016.

"The Jim Costa Federal Internship through The Maddy Institute provided me with the unique opportunity to experience government firsthand. During my ten fast-paced weeks in our nation's Capital I received a priceless education in politics and policy. My internship in Washington, DC also served as a jumping off point to a career in public service and later the private sector. I am proud of my time as a Chief of Staff in the California Assembly and United States Congress followed by senior leadership roles with a Fortune 200 company. I still draw upon the experience from my first internship as I serve corporate clients throughout the state of California with Vista Consulting."

Tal Eslick has been active in the public service and advocacy world for more than 15 years, bringing discipline and a focus on problem solving to his clients. He specializes in developing and executing public affairs and advocacy campaigns as well as association management services.

Before starting Vista Consulting, Tal held various senior external affairs roles with the largest energy provider in the United States. He is a veteran of numerous high-profile political and advocacy campaigns.

Prior to joining the private sector, Tal served in senior state and federal government roles including as a Chief of Staff in the United States Congress and California Assembly.

Tal lives in Clovis, California with his wife Rachel and their daughter Mary.

*Thank you to our
Maddy Associates:*

President's Circle



Governor's Circle



E. & J. Gallo Winery





Melissa Frank

*Currently: Vice President,
Assistant Senior Counsel -
Government Affairs for The
Wonderful Company*

Melissa interned for the Senate Agriculture and Water Resources Committee under the Chair of the Committee, Senator Jim Costa, in the State Capitol in Sacramento, California in the summer of 2001. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Fresno State in 2001. Melissa earned her J.D.

from the University of California Los Angeles School of Law in 2004.

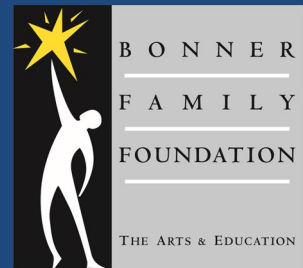
"My experience as a Maddy Intern was a life-changing experience, resulting in relationships that continue almost 20 years later and an education on the legislative process that I continue to utilize in my role with Wonderful today."

Melissa Frank is Vice President, Assistant Senior Counsel for Government Affairs for The Wonderful Company. In that role, Melissa Frank manages government relations for The Wonderful Company and its related affiliates, including Wonderful Citrus, Wonderful Orchards, Wonderful Pistachios & Almonds, POM Wonderful, Fiji Water, and Justin Vineyards.

Before joining The Wonderful Company in 2009, Melissa was an associate at Nossaman LLP advising clients on water and land use matters.

Melissa is also an adjunct member of the faculty at California State University Bakersfield, teaching environmental law. In addition, Melissa serves as President of the Board of Directors for the Maddy Institute of Public Policy at California State University Fresno and is a member of the Board of Directors for the Bakersfield Museum of Art, JJ's Legacy, Agricultural Council of California, and the California Fresh Fruit Association.

Senator's Circle





Mark Torres

Currently: Senior Director and Head of Office for the West Coast practice of DSPolitical, a political media consultancy.

Mark interned in the Fresno District Office of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein in Fall 2009. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Studies from Fresno State in 2008, and earned his Masters in Public Administration from Fresno State in 2011.

"The Maddy Institute allowed me to have experiences in politics that I would not otherwise have had. Being a part of the program lowered the barrier of entry for me to enter into the world of politics and helped me make unique connections that I still hold to this day. The Maddy Institute is a great program for students who want to get better visibility and understand the legislative process at the local, state, and federal levels."

Following his time in Senator Feinstein's office, Mark went to work for Congressman Jim Costa where he gained an understanding of the legislative process and constituent caseload management. While working for Rep. Costa, Mark earned his Master's in Public Administration. He then went on to work for UC Merced, a Fortune 500 company, and some successful Silicon Valley startups before coming back to the world of politics.

Mark Torres is the Senior Director and Head of Office for the West Coast practice of DSPolitical, a political media consultancy. He is involved in several community based organizations in the Central Valley and the Bay Area including the Fresno State Alumni Board, Year Up Bay Area, and the Evan Archer Sharp Foundation. Currently, Mark is enrolled in the Executive Program at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy & Practice.

Mark and his wife, Sarah, live in the San Francisco Bay Area with their Goldendoodle.

Assemblymember's Circle

Central Valley Community Foundation

Kern County Taxpayers Association

Arnold & Dianne Gazarian

Henry Barkett

Jeff Cowan

Jo-Ann Slinkard

Miles, Sears, and Eanni

Wawona Frozen Foods

University Partners



CSU Bakersfield



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
Stanislaus



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
MERCED



Introducing our San Joaquin Valley Maddy Institute Legislative Scholar Interns Spring 2021



Julissa Ayon Gamboa – *Modesto Office of Congressman Josh Harder* – is a junior at the University of California, Davis, double majoring in Political Science and Sociology Law. Julissa is a Central Valley native and proudly calls Delano, California her home. She is a first generation college student and has gained leadership skills through her positions as a lead summer intern and UC Davis peer mentor with the Wonderful Education company. As a result, Julissa has not only become a trailblazer for her family but other Central Valley children, who like herself, come from underserved low income communities.

After graduation, Julissa plans to continue her education at a law school and eventually become a practicing attorney. Julissa intends to return to the Central Valley and give back to the community that has helped her thrive.

Julissa is both privileged and excited to represent the Central Valley through her involvement with both the Maddy Institute and Congressman Josh Harder's Office.

McKay Duran – *Office of Fresno City Councilmember Tyler Maxwell* – is a senior at California State University, Fresno, majoring in Political Science. He has worked on political campaigns at the local and federal levels while learning about public policy in the classroom.

McKay has seen community issues and solutions at the city level while serving as the Mayor of Fresno's appointee to the Youth Commission. While working in higher education, he has seen the opportunities education can bring, as well as where improving access is needed.

McKay is determined to follow the example of Senator Ken Maddy by working towards unity and finding agreeable solutions to common problems. With his education in government and exposure to local issues, McKay is confident that this internship opportunity will better prepare him to continue serving the Central Valley.





Gabriel Gaeta – *Office of Assemblymember Devon Mathis* – is a graduate student at California State University, Bakersfield, pursuing a Master's degree in Public Administration. Prior to enrolling in graduate school, he obtained his undergraduate degree in Geology. He hopes to combine the two disciplines and work toward a career in public policy relating to the oil, water, or agriculture industries, and he expects this Legislative Internship to help him gain a better understanding of those relationships.

Outside of the classroom, Gabriel has served as an intern for Congressman Kevin McCarthy in both his Bakersfield and Washington, D.C. offices, as well as for the Water Resources Department at Wonderful Orchards. Additionally, Gabriel was a member of the CSUB Track and Field team for four years where he served as team captain for two years and was named to the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches

Association Division 1 All-American Academic Team in 2019. He currently officiates high school and college basketball, and coaches high school track and field, which allow him to further develop his leadership, management, and communication skills.

Jennifer Garcia Ruiz – *Fresno Office of Congressman Jim Costa* – is currently attending California State University, Fresno, where she is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Business Administration with an option in International Business and a minor in Jewish Studies. She is currently involved with the Hispanic Business Student Association, the Study Abroad Club, and she tutors students in the Athletics Department on campus. Jennifer grew up in Paso Robles and was raised by her two hardworking parents along with her two younger brothers. In the Spring of 2022, she will be the first in her family to attend and graduate from a University.

Jennifer spent two semesters abroad in Haifa, Israel during her second year of college. She was a recipient of the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. This experience allowed her to explore her interests in cultures, languages, and foreign policy. While abroad, she met two Foreign Service Officers and one U.S. Ambassador who inspired her to pursue a career as a Foreign Service Officer. Jennifer hopes to travel the world, help those around her, and give her parents everything they deserve.

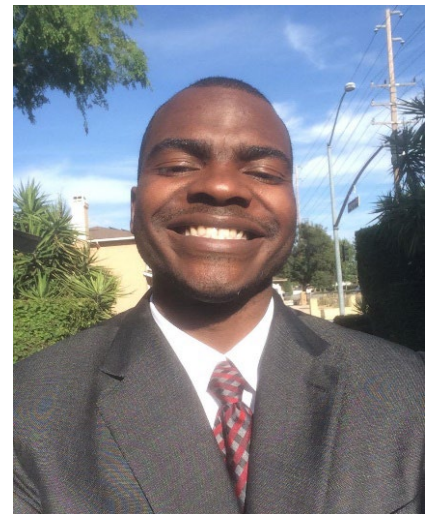




Alison Garibay – *City of Madera* – is a junior at Fresno State, studying in the Social Work program. Alison hopes to become a Medical Social Worker in the Central Valley. She wants to serve children and their families by helping them navigate the complexity of medical issues and the resources available to them. As a first generation student college, attending Fresno State has been one of Alison's greatest achievements.

Alison is a part of ASI student government at Fresno State. She serves as the Senator for the College of Health and Human Services. Outside of school, Alison loves being with her family and her dog, Snowflake. Alison would like to thank to the Maddy Institute for operating this internship program and giving her the opportunity to serve the City of Madera.

Steven Kemp – *Bakersfield Office of Assemblymember Vince Fong* – was born and raised in Simi Valley, California, and spent most of his upbringing in Ventura County. Upon graduating from Simi Valley High School, Steven attended Moorpark College and transferred to California State University, Bakersfield in 2018. In Fall of 2020, he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Public Administration, acquiring skills to manage public agencies at all levels of government and strategies for facilitating change through government systems. In 2020, Steven was selected by CSUB alumni to participate in the Runner Alumni Mentorship Program (RAMP). He hopes to work as a Legislative Director or Chief of Staff for a California State Senator or Assemblymember. Steven enjoys going to sports games, visiting museums, and trying new food.



Steven began his public service career as a case manager's assistant for the Samaritan Center, a nonprofit in Simi Valley, California. His experience at the Samaritan Center helped him develop the necessary skills for navigating the bureaucratic process when requesting services to benefit people in need. Currently, Steven is a Field Representative for Fourth District Kern County Supervisor David Couch, where his responsibilities include responding to constituent inquiries, conducting constituent casework, representing the Supervisor at government and community meetings, developing relationships with key stakeholders, conducting research on policy issues pertaining to the district, and cultivating relationships with business organizations. Notably, Steven has collaborated with the California Department of Transportation and the Bakersfield Homeless Center to draft the Deferred Maintenance Agreement approved by the Kern County Board of Supervisors to start the Kern Litter Removal Project spearheaded by Supervisor Couch.





Kendalyn Mack-Franklin – *Fresno Office of Governor Gavin Newsom* – is a Master of Public Health student at California State University, Fresno, where she is composing a thesis on how Black Reparations can reduce preterm birth rates in the African American working women.

Kendalyn served as the inaugural Presidential Intern in the Office of the President at California State University, Fresno, as well as the Community Engagement Specialist for the Fresno County Preterm Birth Initiative. She has been working in the field of public health for four years, specifically focused on preterm birth and infant mortality. Kendalyn is interested in community engagement, program planning, and implementation and facilitation of race and equity consultancy. Kendalyn is a proud member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated.

Originally from Compton, California, Kendalyn is a wife, sister, daughter, and friend. She shares the Governor's sentiment of a California for All, where every person can achieve a better life, regardless of where they start out. After graduation, Kendalyn is hoping to join the Governor in supporting AB 3121, a bill signed into law in 2020 to develop a task force to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans. She is looking forward to exploring policy through the lens of External Affairs while serving as a Maddy Intern in the Governor's office.

Kendalyn is honored to have been selected as the Spring 2021 intern for the Fresno Office of Governor Gavin Newsom and expresses great gratitude for this prestigious opportunity.

Elizabeth Morales-Castillo – *Office of Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula* – is a first generation college student, born and raised in Fresno, California. Elizabeth is a second-year student at California State University, Fresno pursuing a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Chicano Studies along with a Legal Studies Certificate.

Elizabeth has been involved with ASI Lobby Corps, Phi Alpha Delta, the USU Board of Directors, Mock Trial, and many other organizations. She enjoys being involved on campus and helping student voices be heard.

Elizabeth's career goal is to be an immigration attorney. She plans to attend law school in the Fall of 2022 and graduate with a law degree to serve the immigrant population in the Valley.





Stephanie Ocampo – *Office of Fresno City Councilmember Miguel Arias* – is a third-year student attending California State University, Fresno. She is double majoring in Broadcast Journalism and Political Science. Stephanie has always had a strong passion for education reform, which has led her to many professional opportunities including internships with political offices and non-profits. Stephanie is a first-year member of the California School-Based Health Alliance Youth Board. She plans to use this experience to further understand the needs of her community.

Upon graduation, Stephanie plans to further her education and obtain a law degree to pursue education policy. Stephanie believes in a better vision for education in California that will create protection for every student. She wants to help create a strong foundation for academic success by implementing a higher quality of instruction and expanding opportunities for students.

Stephine Ramos Alcantar – *Office of State Senator Melissa Hurtado* – was born and raised in the south Valley in the town of Porterville, California. Stephine is a proud first generation college student in her fourth year at Fresno State. She plans to obtain a degree in Communications with a minor in Spanish and a certificate in legal studies. During her years at Fresno State, Stephine has participated in various organizations including Fresno State ASI, Fresno State Outreach and Special Programs, Teaching Fellows, Fresno State Mock Trial Team, The United Sorority and Fraternity Council, Lambda Theta Nu Sorority, Inc., The Catholic Student Association, and various other organizations in the community.

Throughout her college experience, Stephine has wanted to participate in an internship such as this one to better her knowledge of advocacy and public administration. After she completes her degree at Fresno State, Stephine wants to further her education by applying for a graduate program in public administration. While working towards a Masters Degree, Stephine plans to continue studying for the LSAT in hopes of applying for law school. It has always been Stephine's passion to help others, and her goal is to prepare herself to make an impact in her community.





Hailey Raught – *Office of Congressman Jerry McNerney* – is currently a student at California State University, Stanislaus, where she is pursuing a double major in Political Science and English, with a concentration in Teaching English as a Second Language. As a first generation college student, she is looking forward to the opportunities that a bachelor's degree can offer her once she graduates.

Hailey is excited to begin her journey of involvement in public policy this semester, and is interested in the valuable experience she can gain from a Maddy Institute Legislative Scholar Internship. Upon graduation, she plans to pursue a career in state or federal government. Hailey hopes to advocate for her community using the experience she will gain from this internship.

Lisa Vu – *Merced Office of Congressman Jim Costa* – is a senior at UC Merced, majoring in Public Health and minoring in Political Science. Born and raised in San Jose, California, she chose to move to the Central Valley to attend UC Merced. She is pursuing various opportunities to aid in her personal and professional development, such as being part of the Maddy Institute Legislative Intern Scholar Program.

Lisa's interests include health policy, healthcare disparities, and supporting students in low income communities who want to pursue higher education. She is currently President of Alpha Phi Omega, a national co-ed service fraternity on her college campus, and works as a Learning Assistant for UC Merced's Center for Educational Partnerships. During her free time, she volunteers for Merced County's Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) as a Medicare Counselor.



After graduating, Lisa hopes to attend graduate school to pursue a Master's in Healthcare Administration.



Ali Whitlach – *Office of Assemblymember Rudy Salas* – has called the Central Valley home for most of her life and currently resides in Tehachapi, California, a small mountain town. She is currently in her first year as a Masters of Public Policy and Administration student at California State University, Bakersfield. Ali recently graduated with a B.A. in Political Science, with an emphasis in Power and Justice and Global Politics.

During her time at CSU Bakersfield, Ali was elected to lead as President of Global Affairs club, a parent organization to the Model United Nations. She continues to serve as President of Global Affairs as a graduate student. Ali thanks the Maddy Institute for the opportunity to expand her leadership skills and understand public policy through state and local government. Her commitment to effective leadership commands her commitment to the Valley, and she hopes to serve as a legislator in the future.

Candi Zarate – *Office of Fresno City Councilmember Esmeralda Soria* – is a sophomore at the University of California, Los Angeles, double majoring in English and Education and Social Transformation Studies. She is currently on the Pride Admit Weekend (PAW) committee at her university. Candi was raised by her two hardworking parents in Avenal, California.

Upon graduation, Candi is hoping to return to UCLA as a grad student and receive a Master's in Education. Candi is excited to be a Maddy Legislative Intern Scholar, and hopes that her internship will bring her new knowledge of the communities she serves.



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