



The Maddy Institute

The San Joaquin Valley – Inspiring Public Leadership

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER 2023

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As alumni of The Maddy Institute Legislative Intern Scholar Program, your impact on our region, state, and nation—whether establishing yourself in your government, business or non-profit career, working as legislative staff or running for office—is increasingly noteworthy.

You are now one of over 450 former Maddy Institute Legislative Intern Scholars who have benefited from this opportunity. While the Maddy Institute Alumni Newsletter provides a small sample of our alumni, you can see just how impactful the program has been on creating the next generation of leaders for the San Joaquin Valley.

On this National Intern Day, we hope you will join us in celebrating the next generations of Valley leaders by supporting the Maddy Institute's Legislative Intern Scholar Program with our first-time-ever 100 day challenge!

Starting today and over the course of the next 100 days, we are on a mission to recruit 100 people to contribute \$1,000 to help us raise \$100,000—effectively DOUBLING our scholarships funding for 2024.

How can you do this, you may ask? Well, there are lots of ways you can help:

- You can make a \$1,000 tax-deductible contribution
- Encourage others to invest in the next generations of Valley leaders
- Share your experience as a Maddy Intern on social media and tag us

We appreciate that you choose us to be a part of your professional journeys, as well as your continued support over the years. We look forward to continue to hear and share your future endeavors. And thank you for your support over the next 100 days!

With appreciation,



Mark Keppler

Executive Director

[Click here to contribute \\$1,000 to help us double scholarships for 2024](#)

MADDY ALUMNI: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

"My internship through The Maddy Institute provided me insight on where I wanted to take my professional career. I started my internship while earning my B.A. in Psychology, not knowing what I wanted to do after graduation. The Maddy Internship helped take me out of my comfort zone and explore my interest in public service. During my time in Congressman Harder's office, I had the opportunity to attend community events, learn about the public policy process, and assist the casework manager in helping constituents. Most of all, the internship helped me learn how to network and build confidence in myself as a professional. Because of the internship, I decided to change my career trajectory and earn a master's in public administration. I will forever be grateful for the Maddy Institute for providing me with the opportunity to explore my interest in public service, and I encourage any student with a similar interest to apply."



Brooke Nawrocki

CareerReadyU Recruiting Coordinator, Stanislaus State

Brooke interned for U.S. Representative Josh Harder in 2019 and then went back after her Maddy internship and interned for another 3 months as a casework intern. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from California State University, State in 2020. She is going to be graduating with a Master in Public Administration in the Summer of 2023.

Brooke currently works for the Career and Professional Development Center at Stanislaus State as the Career Ready Recruiting Coordinator. She provides administrative support to the Center, and assists with department events such as career fairs, and supports employers in utilizing the Career Ready program, as well as helps support program initiatives. Brooke also manages the on-campus interviewing program and collects and analyzes data on department programming.

"My time at the Bakersfield District Office of Assemblymember Rudy Salas was filled with wonderful learning experiences. I got to learn from passionate upstanding staffers that have continued to give back and serve the community of Bakersfield in different roles as their careers have progressed."



Paula Reynal

Research Assistant & Internship Manager, The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Paula interned in the Bakersfield Office of Assemblymember Rudy Salas Jr. in the Spring of 2019. She received a double Bachelor's degree in History and Political Science from California State University, Bakersfield, graduating *magna cum laude* in 2020.

Paula received a Masters in International Affairs, with a double concentration in US Foreign Policy and International Security, from the George Washington University. She now works in Washington D.C. as a Research Assistant and Internship Manager for the Project for Prosperity and Development at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), where she supports the project's research agenda and coordinates events. She recently published a report on Ukraine's Science, Technology, and Innovation Ecosystem as an Engine of Economic Growth.

MADDY ALUMNI: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

"My Maddy Internship laid the foundation for my current work, equipping me with vital skills to advocate for marginalized communities, bridge the gap between their needs and those in power, and leverage government resources for positive change. Former Councilmember Soria's representation as a Latina with a humble background resonated deeply with me, instilling a powerful sense of representation and possibility. Now, inspired by the spirit of the Maddy Institute, I strive to share my journey, encouraging and mentoring others, as I believe that when individuals like us rise to lead, we can pave the way for more inclusive and compassionate change in our communities."



Claudia Salinas

Staff Attorney, California Innocence Project

Claudia interned for Former Fresno Councilmember Esmeralda Soria during Soria's first 100 days in office. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Criminology from California State University, Fresno and received her Juris Doctorate from California Western School of Law. After her Maddy Internship, Claudia later went on to accept a position as a District Representative in the office of Former California State Senator Andy Vidak for three years.

Now as a staff attorney at the California Innocence Project, Claudia oversees the office's intake system, supervises clinical students, assists in litigating cases, works on creating systematic changes through policy work, and educates the community on topics of wrongful convictions. Claudia also serves on the Innocence Network's Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee where she assists in developing guides to support in the representation of clients throughout the United States, but also encourages change within each individual project to elevate staff from different backgrounds. On a personal note, she can be found at the poker tables playing with some of the biggest players in the world.

MEET OUR LEGISLATIVE SCHOLAR INTERNS SPRING 2023



Brianna Anderson, Merced Office of Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria

Brianna is a student at the University of California, Merced, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in English. Brianna is originally from Folsom, California, and has always been passionate about public policy, foreign affairs, and government reform. In the past, Brianna had the opportunity to intern for one of the largest nonpartisan political newspapers in the Sacramento area, Capitol Weekly. During her time at Capitol Weekly, she learned about public policy, local public figures, and state governance. After graduating from UC Merced, Brianna plans on attending law school to obtain her Juris Doctor degree. By assisting in a local government office she hopes to better the community around her. Brianna is excited to be interning for Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria and looks forward to learning more about her community, as well as gaining more experience in the local government system.

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Amneek Chalotra, Fresno Office of U.S. Representative Jim Costa

Amneek is a first-year student attending California State University, Fresno in the process of obtaining his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Computer Science. Since high school, he has worked at a local car wash, learning more about what community involvement entails. This is evident in his continued dedication to helping others: volunteer hours in a law firm, various non-profits, and city events held through the local rotary organization. Through this, he has developed an interest in environmental and immigration rights, one he hopes to further explore within a legislative office. His educational goal is to work as a public defender in the Valley after attending law school. Through this internship, he hopes to learn more about local politics, meet like-minded people, and explore resources that will one day allow him to give back to the same clients he met at that car wash as an aspiring attorney.



Maria Esmeralda Espinoza, Kern County District 4 Supervisor David Couch

Maria is currently enrolled at California State University, Bakersfield. She received her Bachelor's degree in Child Adolescent and Family Studies in Fall 2021 and is currently in the last semester of the Masters of Public Administration Program. Maria was born and raised in Los Angeles, California but moved to the Central Valley for CSUB and has fell in love with it and now is there to stay. She has dedicated a lot of my school experience to advocating for students by working at their campus food pantry and serving on ASI as a director and executive. Maria is the current Vice President and loves what she does. She has a huge passion for helping so she loves going to school and knowing that she can connect students with the the resources necessary to succeed. Although Maria spends a lot of time on campus, a lot of her identity comes from being an oldest sister, a mother, and a first-generation college student.



Ahmed Metwally, Fresno City Council President Tyler Maxwell

Ahmed is an emerging professional in the fields of Political Science and Public Administration, with a passion for creating positive change in society. Ahmed graduated *magna cum laude* from Arizona State University with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science. He is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration at California State University, Fresno. He has professional experience including working as an office assistant in the MBA Office at Fresno State. Ahmed has previously interned at the office of the Mayor of Lake Havasu City, where he shadowed the mayor and attended city council meetings. Outside of his professional experience, Ahmed has served as the General Secretary of Changemaker at ASU and volunteered with Go Lake Havasu, supporting the basic needs of locals in Lake Havasu City, Arizona.



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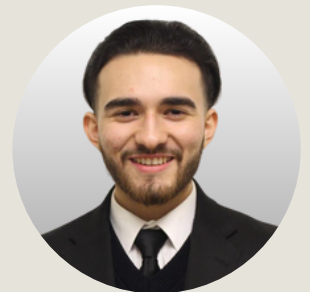


Chelsy Librado, *External Affairs Office of Governor Gavin Newsom*

Chelsy is a rising third year at the University of California, Merced majoring in Political Science and double minoring in Spanish and Writing. She is a first-generation college student from Los Angeles. Chelsy is currently the Lead Student Coordinator at Services for Undocumented Students, a center that provides financial, academic, and legal resources for undocumented and mixed-status students on campus. She is also President of the Professional Pre-Law Fraternity which provides professional development and academic support for all students interested in law. After graduation, Chelsy plans to take a gap year before law school and plans to become an employment or immigration attorney. After canvassing with Assemblywoman Esmeralda Soria, Chelsy discovered her passion for constituent work. Interning in the External Affairs Office of Governor Gavin Newsom will allow Chelsy to take a different perspective to learn about the daily operation of the office and the policy priorities of the Central Valley. She is eager to learn and have the opportunity to be a Maddy Intern.

Alexis Rodriguez, *Visalia Office of Assemblymember Devon Mathis*

Alexis is a student at West Hills College Lemoore, where he recently graduated with a degree in political science. Alexis is transferring to Fresno State to pursue a bachelor's degree in Philosophy, Pre-Law. His goal is to attend law school and become a lawyer and use that experience to one day run for the presidency of the country. He plans to use his experiences and education to make a positive impact on society. Alexis is passionate about using the law to fight for justice and equality, and he is committed to making a difference in the world. With the support of the Kenneth L. Maddy Institute Scholarship and the knowledge and skills he has gained through his education, Alexis is confident that he can achieve his goals and help to make our country a better place for all.



Michael Schubert, *Stockton Office of U.S. Representative Josh Harder*

Michael is a senior at California State University, Stanislaus, who will be graduating in the spring of 2023 and obtaining his bachelor's degree in political science. He moved to Turlock from Stockton in the summer of 2021 to finish getting his degree. While he may not live in his hometown of Stockton anymore, it will always hold a special place in his heart. His diverse hometown is what helped shape him into who he is today. Stockton exposed Michael to many different cultures from a very young age which helped him become more social and open-minded. It also helped him to develop his work ethic. Michael has worked nearly full-time at multiple locations developing his problem-solving and customer service skills while at the same time attending university. He also worked closely with his mother throughout her teaching career by doing volunteer work in her classrooms. After he graduates, he would love to apply the skills he has acquired over the years to constituent casework and policymaking.

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Celeste Guirola, Fresno Office of Assemblymember Dr. Joaquin Arambula

Celeste is a first-generation graduate student at Fresno State majoring in Rhetoric and Composition. She was born and raised in Fresno and has always been passionate about social justice in and beyond her local communities. Some of her research interests are voter rights and education, community advocacy in the classroom, LGBTQ+ rights, and how underserved populations are represented. During her time at Fresno State, she has served as secretary and then as co-president of the Students of English Studies Association. Celeste has created curriculums that integrate social justice studies and community advocacy in college classrooms so that students can learn how to address issues that affect their communities through writing and research. She has also done work with the Write to Vote Project, an initiative dedicated to encouraging the teaching of civic engagement topics in classrooms across the United States. In her local community, she completed an internship for Fresno Filmworks, a nonprofit organization that makes multicultural, international cinema accessible to the Central San Joaquin Valley. Having grown up in downtown Fresno, she is aware of the disparities that face her community in education, housing, and nutrition. Celeste's goal after graduating is to work for a nonprofit organization that addresses these issues and to continue learning about how to make social justice work and community advocacy accessible to other people.



Meghna Das, Fresno Office of U.S. Senator Alex Padilla

Meghna is currently a junior at California State University, Fresno as a Public Health Administration major. She grew up in Fresno, California and has Indian heritage. Meghna has recently had a career change from healthcare to law and legislation. She is hoping to gain insight on California legislation, as well as gain more skills and experience within an office establishment. In her free time, she enjoys going on hikes with her Doberman, traveling, and experiencing new cultures and foods.



Eduardo Gonzalez, Fresno City Councilmember Nelson Esparza

Eduardo is a second year at Fresno State and a scholar with the Smittcamp Family Honors College. He is currently pursuing a degree in Criminology and a minor in Political Science. Eduardo is a first-generation Latino student who grew up in the small rural town of Riverdale, CA. After graduating, he plans on pursuing law school or a master degree in public policy. Eduardo is interested in working on the intersection of criminal justice and education reform.



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Alan Pompa Aguayo, Fresno Office of U.S. Representative Costa

Alan is a rising fourth year at San Jose State University obtaining his degree in Psychology and a minor in Spanish. Alan is a first-generation Mexican-American student from Fresno, California. In his time away from home at San Jose State, he has cultivated experiences that have exposed him to the world of social work and the importance of legal representation for the public. He is currently an Anti-Human Trafficking Casework Intern at the International Rescue Committee. He provides essential services to survivors of human trafficking in integrating into life here in the United States. Alan is also a legal intern at the Record Clearance Project at San Jose State, where he helps clear people's criminal records. Alan will also be serving as the Director of Public Relations for the San Jose State Mock Trial Team. In his local community, he helps his parents run their locally-owned family restaurant, Robles Mexican Grill and Taqueria. As a son of Mexican immigrants, Alan has seen the firsthand disparities that underrepresented communities face on a daily basis. He has also seen the hard work and determination that it takes to overcome these obstacles. Alan hopes to go to law school or obtain a master's degree so he can one day be involved in shaping society to amplify the voices of those in need of change.

Amneek Chalotra, Fresno Office of U.S. Senator Alex Padilla

Amneek is a first-year student attending California State University, Fresno in the process of obtaining his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Computer Science. Since high school, he has worked at a local car wash, learning more about what community involvement entails. This is evident in his continued dedication to helping others: volunteer hours in a law firm, various non-profits, and city events held through the local rotary organization. Through this, he has developed an interest in environmental and immigration rights, one he hopes to further explore within a legislative office. His educational goal is to work as a public defender in the Valley after attending law school. Through this internship, he hopes to learn more about local politics, meet like-minded people, and explore resources that will one day allow him to give back to the same clients he met at that car wash as an aspiring attorney.



Brianna Anderson, Governor Gavin Newsom - Strategic Growth Council

Brianna is a fourth-year student at the University of California, Merced, pursuing a degree in Political Science with a minor in English. Brianna is originally from Folsom, California, and has always been passionate about public policy, foreign affairs, and government reform. In the past, she had the opportunity to intern for one of the largest non-partisan political newspapers in the Sacramento area, Capitol Weekly. During her time at Capitol Weekly, she learned about public policy, local public figures, and state governance. In addition, Brianna recently has had the privilege to intern under Assemblywoman Esmeralda Soria through the Maddy Institute. Interning for Assemblywoman Soria taught Brianna a lot about state agencies, the legislative process, and local government. She was also able to become more involved in her community through this internship. After graduating from UC Merced, Brianna plans on attending law school to obtain her Juris Doctor degree.

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Athena Eliza Sanchez, *Office of Governor Gavin Newsom*

Athena is a rising fourth-year student at the University of California, Merced majoring in Sociology with a Political Science Minor. Athena was raised in Pittsburg, California where she developed a passion for community service, public policy and urban planning. Throughout her time spent at UC Merced, Athena actively engaged in various campus organizations, honoring her leadership skills and contributing to her community. She currently holds two student jobs: one as a Communications Student Technology Consultant for the Office of Information Technology and the second as a Student Graphic Designer for the Athletics & Recreation Department. Just recently for the Spring 2023 semester, Athena took on the role of Head Elections Commissioner for her student body government, Associated Students of UC Merced. Following her graduation from UC Merced, Athena plans to pursue a Master's degree in urban planning. Her goal is to develop programs in urban areas that will enhance and improve the lives of others. She is thrilled about her upcoming summer internship at the Office of Governor Gavin Newsom, where she anticipates gaining valuable insights into the daily operations of government and public administration.

Chelsy Librado, *Merced Office of Assemblymember Soria*

Chelsy is currently a rising senior at the University of California, Merced. For the summer, she will be joining Assemblywoman Esmeralda Soria as a legislative intern and will be working for the constituents of Merced, Fresno, and Madera Counties. In Fall 2023, she will also be interning in Washington, DC before graduating in Spring 2024. Chelsy plans to pursue a career in public service in the Central Valley. She is passionate about accessibility to health care in the Central Valley, water equity, immigration, agriculture, and social justice. She will use this time to determine whether she will pursue a master's in public policy or law school.



Danielle Morgart, *Modesto Office of Assemblymember Alanis*

Danielle is a first-generation student from Modesto, CA. She currently is a Junior at California State University, Stanislaus with a major in General Business, a minor in Pre-law, and a minor in Economics. Danielle is an honors student and the Vice President of the club The Outlet at Stanislaus State. She hopes to take this exciting opportunity and apply it to pursue a degree in Business Law.

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Eidan Shahbaz, D.C. Office of U.S. Representative Harder

Eidan is a third-year political science student at the University of California, Davis. Eidan comes from an Assyrian family and learned Assyrian as his first language. He was born in Iran, where he lived for several years, before immigrating to the United States at a very young age. Eidan has lived in the Central Valley ever since and it's been a pleasure to call Turlock his home. His passions for history, government, debate, and the law have followed him his entire life which naturally led him to pursue a degree in political science. Eidan plans on pursuing his passion for law and government by becoming an attorney. He knows what it means to be an immigrant, and has seen firsthand how difficult it can be for a family to navigate the complex and confusing channels of government. Eidan's goal is to help immigrant families like his own or those who aspire to immigrate to the United States, whether he does so as an immigration lawyer or as a public servant. He hopes this internship can give him crucial experience and the tools he needs to better help his community.



Emmanuel Agraz-Torres, Fresno Office of Assemblymember Arambula

Emmanuel is a senior at Fresno State majoring in Sociology and minoring in Peace and Conflict Studies. Furthermore, he is pursuing certificates in: Social Justice and Social Change, Cross-Cultural Competency, Applied Sociological Research, and Peace Building and Mediation. He learned the value of community engagement and equal representation through Fresno State's Service-learning Program. His experience influenced his decision to become a Community Advocate in the Central Valley and participate with multiple Community Benefit organizations, like California Environmental Voters Ed Fund and Leadership Counsel of Justice and Accountability while attending Fresno State full-time. Emmanuel was a United Student Pride Club member, Vice-President of the College of Social Sciences Leadership Council, and Senator of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from the 2022-2023 academic year. Following graduation, he plans to continue his passion in a graduate program that allows him to incorporate the principles of justice, empathy, and equity to promote community empowerment.

Gurmanna Chalotra, D.C. Office of U.S. Representative Costa

Gurmanna is a first-year student attending California State University, Fresno as part of the Smittcamp Family Honors College. She is currently pursuing a major in Biochemistry with a minor in Creative Writing and is passionate about the impact of healthcare policy and environmental legislation in her community. She has had the chance to develop this interest as a member of the winning team for Fresno State's Destination Decarbonization Challenge, in which she worked with others to develop a solution for reducing local carbon emissions. On campus, Gurmanna is committed to volunteerism as a member of Kesem at Fresno State, an organization that supports children whose parents have been affected by cancer. With this internship, she hopes to learn more about the legislative process and strengthen her policy research skills. As an aspiring physician, Gurmanna is excited to explore how she can use these skills and experiences to better understand the impact of policy on community health disparities.



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Raveena Bola, *Office of Governor Gavin Newsom*

Raveena is a third-year student at California State University, Stanislaus, where she is double majoring in Criminal Justice (Legal Studies) and Sociology. While Raveena was born in Modesto, California, she spent her childhood in Vancouver, Canada, before returning to California to pursue her academic and career goals. Her passion for social justice and desire to make a positive impact in the legal field have led her to attend law school after graduation and pursue a Juris Doctor degree. Raveena is excited about the opportunities that the Maddy Institute internship program has to offer. She believes that this experience will provide her with valuable skills and knowledge that will prepare her for a successful career in law and help her learn more about the legislative system.

Hollee Hercik, *D.C. Office U.S. Representative Valadao*

Hollee is a third-year student at California State University, Bakersfield, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Public Policy. Hollee is originally from Baroda, Michigan, and has been passionate about government, foreign policy, and diplomatic relations. In the past years, she has had the opportunity to be a student assistant for financial aid and student-athlete scholarships. By doing this she has learned essential skills of budgeting, internal affairs within the university, and interactions within the community. After graduating from California State University, Bakersfield she hopes to pursue her master's degree in international security or attend law school to obtain her Juris Doctor degree. While pursuing this, she will attempt to play professional soccer at the same time. Through this internship, she hopes to learn more about domestic and international politics while pursuing an interest in diplomatic relations and foreign policy. These resources will allow her to participate in government affairs when she is older.



Alyssa Brooks, *External Affairs Office of Governor Gavin Newsom*

Alyssa is a rising senior at CSU Fresno. As a Political Science major and Sociology minor, Alyssa desires to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in her every pursuit. Her professional background as a community advocate with AmeriCorps reflects exactly this. Born and raised in Fresno, Alyssa's upbringing allows her to easily create connections with others and extend great empathy and compassion for others. After graduation, she plans on earning her master's degree in public administration and entering municipal government. She hopes to pursue a life-long career in politics and the non-profit sector in order to bring real change to the Central Valley.



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President's Circle - \$10,000+

BNSF Railway
California Emerging Technology Fund
Harris Ranch
The Wonderful Company

Senator's Circle - \$2,500

Aera Energy LLC
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Nossaman, LLC
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Governor's Circle - \$5,000

E & J Gallo Winery
Fresno State Associated Students, Inc.

Assemblymember's Circle - \$1,000

California Fresh Fruit Association
Jeffrey Cowan
The Gualco Group Inc.
The Mr. & Mrs. William M. Lyles Fund
Phillip Maroot
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Montoy Law Corporation
Ralph Simoni
Jo-Ann Slinkard
Woolf Farming

WAYS YOU CAN DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT

Over **450** Legislative Intern Scholars have had the opportunity to learn about the legislative process and many have gone on to become leaders in politics, law, business and non-profit organizations. We have been able to grow this program and increase opportunities for Valley students due, in large part, to the donations of those who realize the importance of "paying it forward."

As an Alum, you can help us continue our goal of inspiring public leadership. Ways you can help:

- Give back to the areas of the Institute that mean the most to you
- Make a *lasting* impact by becoming a Maddy Associate before the end of the year
- Connect with fellow Alumni and our current interns to foster long-term relationships
- Hire fellow alumni in professional development opportunities when possible

Not only are you contributing to a life-changing experience for these Valley students, you also planting the seeds of the next generation of Valley leaders.

Click here to contribute \$1,000 to help us double scholarships for 2024

The Maddy Institute
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