

Serving the
UCLA
community

CATHOLIC BRUIN

August 2014

Volume 11, Issue 1

From our Director

From a parent: "Dear Fr. Peter & Staff: We visited our daughter recently and came to a lovely Mass at the UCC. Keep doing what you do." From a student: "Thank you so much for all the things that you and the UCC have done for me over the past four years. College would have been vastly different if I hadn't found a home here. Thank you!"

"Three dreams to hold on to," I encouraged nearly 40 of our 2014 UCLA graduates at June's Baccalaureate Mass. The first!—Our own idealistic hopes, an enduring sense of what we each want to do in life, perhaps tempered or focused by our collegiate education and experience. The second we inherit or receive in faith—call it "the dream of the reign of God," as enfolded in the life, teachings, and mission of Jesus. Think of how Pope Francis has captivated us by his focus on the poor, his embrace of outcasts, his bringing together embattled leaders to pray for peace. The third arises when we come together and allow our hopes and dreams to rub up against those of others—sharing and tussling with, learning from, and forgiving each other—so as to be sculpted into a community of faith by a loving God. I'm brash enough to believe that at the UCC, with the Holy Spirit's gracious help, we nurture all three! The quotes above, plus this issue's sparkling articles and reflections, testify that I am not alone in this belief! Let me give you a taste of what's been happening here recently.

Winter Quarter began with a visit to L.A.'s Museum of Tolerance on the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend. "Gather"—Music Ministry's concert to jumpstart our fundraising for new *Gather* hymnals—packed our chapel. We inaugurated "listening sessions" to hear various student perspectives on their faith, plus we heard from the Jesuit Volunteer Corps on ways of serving the needy. "Catholic Olympics"—hosted at USC—gathered student "friendly competitors" from UCLA and other nearby universities. In March, Fr. John Cusick, founder-director of young adult ministry in Chicago for 35 years and "Theology on Tap"-creator, preached here and captivated us with talks on "Is There Room for Faith in an Increasingly Secular World?" and "Called to Lead: How Do We Pass the Torch to the Next Generation?" The UCC led campus efforts to bring "*Tattoos on the Heart*" author and founder of *Homeboy Industries* Fr. Greg Boyle, S.J., back to UCLA on April 8th, where he spoke to 200 folks about his ministry with the gangs of L.A.



Students gather after Catholic Olympics hosted by the USC Catholic Center.

Student-prepared dinners draw 35-45 students weekly. Bible studies, "Catholic basics & more" discussions, Taizé prayer or adoration evenings, St. Vincent de Paul's serving lunch to the downtown homeless—all remain popular. We again joined UCLA's Dance Marathon to help fund pediatric AIDS research. Over 50 students were newly inspired by Christ's "7 Last Words" on our Palm Sunday Spring Retreat weekend, "*Passion*." Our "Catholics Against Cancer" team walked at UCLA's *Relay for Life* in April. We held a 5th annual UCC Prom, *Under the Sea*, in May. We welcomed five young adults into the Church at Easter Vigil—to mark a vibrant Holy Week. Bishop Edward Clark confirmed 19 here in June. Alleluia!!!

I'm ever conscious of the UCC's financial needs. Besides our normal bills, we will repay (for two more years) L.A.'s Department of Water and Power an annual back assessment of more than \$2,000, arising from four years of incorrectly-rated bills! Moreover, while our archdiocese is remarkable for the level of funding (i.e., all the staff salaries and benefits!) it provides, there are no guarantees that such generosity will be endless. So, even as we apply for grants to fund a much-needed development director position, your help is critical!

Many thanks for helping us keep these "dreams" alive for so many Catholic students at UCLA! Without your prayers and financial assistance, few of the events and activities mentioned in this issue would be possible. Indeed, why not take advantage of our ParishPay credit card donation plan? Just click on "Support the UCC" at www.ucccla.org. And if you haven't made us one of your investments, please consider adding us to your charities. Your gift to the UCC will reap invaluable rewards as we strive to form and empower our students to be future church and civic leaders.

Inside this issue

Parting Thoughts	2
Alumni News	3
Spring Retreat	3
UCC Statistics	4
Fr. Greg Boyle at UCLA	5
Confirmation at the UCC	5
UCC Happenings	6
Bible Beach Day	7
Meet the new SLT	8

May our Gracious God continue to bless you always!

—Fr. Peter Abdella, CSP



PARTING THOUGHTS

Quotes from our 2014 Graduates



I enjoy seeing friends and classmates at the UCC as well as seeing friends made at the UCC on campus; it really makes for a tight, Catholic community. It's inspiring to see students continuing to grow in their faith on their own accord, despite our busy lives.

Kate Misogas, B.S. Psychobiology

The UCC community was truly a home away from home, helping my faith stay vibrant, and making my journey through UCLA more special than I could've ever anticipated.

Rita Andrade, B.S. Biology

I'm thankful for the staff members at the UCC, and all of their encouragement and guidance, as well as all the friends I've met along this journey.

Alex Aguilera, B.S. Physiological Science

My top memory of the UCC was being able to have a place to come when I encountered hard times throughout my life at UCLA. Every undergraduate knows how hard being a college student can be, and attending Mass would help me clear my head and have some moments of inner peace.

Karen Cazares, B.A. International Development Studies

There are SO many people I am thankful for here at the UCC. Thank you for all the faith-sharing, laughs, and adventures that we've shared these past few years; such wonderful memories to reminisce on!

Job Sy, B.A. Geography

I'm so thankful for the UCC for being a community I could always count on through stressful times.

Fabiola Perez, B.A. Communication Studies

I have way too many favorite memories; asking me to just name one is crazy! I am thankful for everyone at the UCC for giving me a home away from home.

Zoe Bader, B.A. Theatre

Attention Alumni!

The UCC wants to stay connected with its dear alumni. That's where you come in. We would like to update you on the plans we have for our ministry, as well as any special events or fundraisers. We want to hear your news, too! We intend to reach out to as many of you as we can. We deeply appreciate your love and care for this Center, and together, old and new members, we will make the University Catholic Center a great place for all future Catholic Bruins!

Keep in touch with us by:

- **EMAIL:**
staff@uccla.org
- **INTERNET:**
www.uccla.org
- **PHONE:**
310.208.5015
- **IN PERSON/BY SNAIL MAIL:**
633 Gayley Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Congratulations, Graduates! We will miss you!

UCC Alumni News

Kassandra Reyes (B.A. '10) & Gabriel Mantaring (B.S. '07) are engaged

Vivienne Gonzalez, daughter of José & Araceli Gonzalez (B.A. '03), was baptized on January 26

Edmund, son of Dustin (M.A. '08, UCC Secy '08-'10) & Anthea Ancalade (RCIA '11), was born on May 5

Ngoc Le (B.A. '07, UCC Secy '07-'08) and John Paul Chong were married on May 31

Elizabeth, daughter of Nelson (M.S. '99, Ph.D. '03) & Stephanie Tang (B.A. '00, M.A. '01), was baptized on May 31

Kristen Torres (B.A. '09) & Sean Pawling (B.A. '08) were married on June 21

Jowilyn Estrada (B.S. '13) & Charlie Underhill (B.A. '11) were married on July 12

Joshua, son of Suzanne (M.S. '07, RCIA '08) & William Parra, was born on July 23

Samantha Filiciotto (B.S. '12) & Emmanuel Soriano (M.A. '10) will be married on September 27

Myla Leigh Bagano (B.S. '04) and Nathanael Bryant will be married on October 17

Congratulations to all!

SPRING RETREAT

Passion

pas·sion [**noun**] any powerful and barely controllable emotion or feeling.

“Andy possessed a true passion for music.” “Dorian delivered her speech with so much passion.” “The fire flickered feebly, its passion curbed by time as well.” We hear the word “passion” used so freely that we must ask ourselves, “What does ‘passion’ really mean?” For our Spring Retreat 2014: “Passion,” we challenged ourselves to discover the importance of passion in our faith and lives.

Our retreat was over Palm Sunday weekend, and we went to El Camino Pines in Frazier Park. The retreat presented Jesus' passion through his seven last words, which are words of forgiveness, salvation, relationship, abandonment, distress, triumph, and reunion. We grew in communion through activities such as: retreat leaders sharing personal reflections based on the seven last words, prayer time, hiking with Stations of the Cross, and of course, celebrating Mass in observance of Palm Sunday. There was a spectacular balance of fun, shenanigans, and joy to keep the retreat lively. By the end of the weekend, we discovered that Jesus' passion was an intense selfless act of love and grace. Subsequently we are called to share that experience and passion when we love God, each other, and ourselves.



The Spring Retreat members gather in the cabin for a group photo.

I was blessed to experience “Passion” with fellow UCC retreatants and my retreat teammates: Itzel Alvarez, Megan Beck, Amanda Brodell, Leiza Castillo,

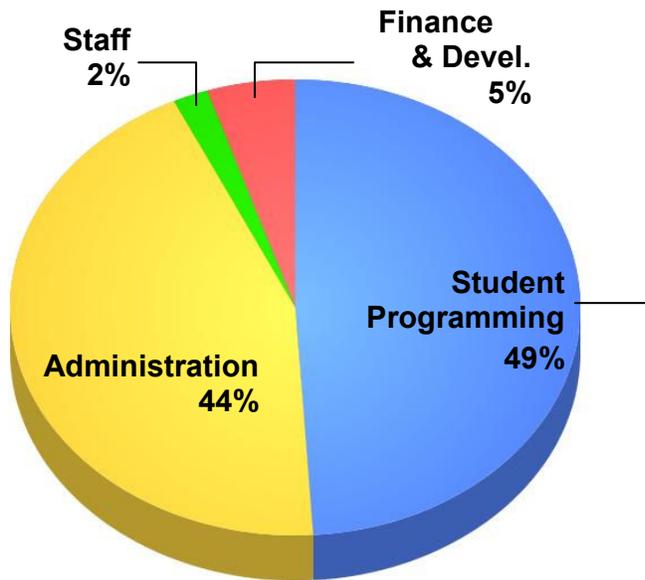
Gerard Convento, Shen Heckel, Chelsy Sanchez, and Fr. Paul Rospond. Personally, I feel it providential to have experienced this faith journey with others and to have been immersed in fellowship. As Jesus said, “Where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.” Together with my fellow retreatants, I deepened old friendships and kindled new relationships.

Every retreat generates a different experience, but it doesn't take away from how essential retreats are. No matter where we are in our faith journey, we need to take a step back, “retreat” to see the big picture of God's handiwork, and experience our spiritual tune-up.

—Eugene del Valle, Ph.D. candidate in Structural Engineering

UCC STATISTICS

Who Makes Up the UCC & Where Our Money Goes



Total Expenses—\$128,521.21*

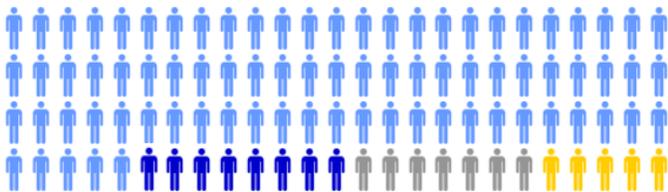
Registration Stats: 653 Registered

80% Undergraduates

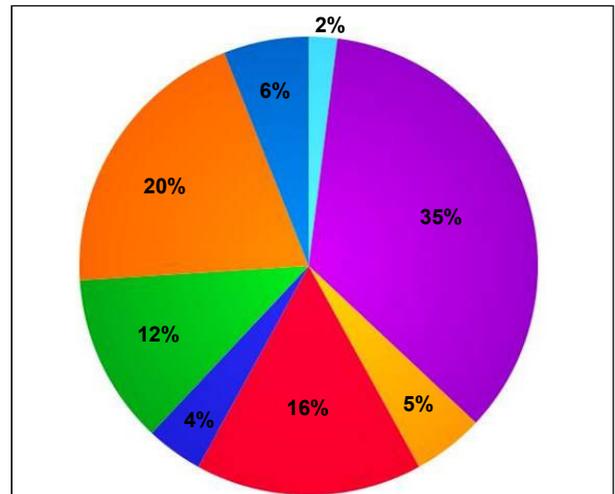
8% Grad Students

7% Faculty & Alumni

5% Resident Community Members



*Staff salaries are provided by the Archdiocese of LA and are not included here.



Student Programming accounts for

\$62,643.88

- Sacramento Prep—\$1,196.01
- Retreats—\$21,632.08
- Outreach—\$3,107.83
- Education & Faith Dev.—\$10,070.57 (incl. ESTEEM & LA Religious Ed Congress)
- Community Life—\$2,828.02
- Social Justice—\$7,433.51
- Liturgy—\$12,335.61 (including Music Ministry & New Hymnals)
- Student Leadership Team—\$3,860.25



Our ministry to UCLA students depends upon students' donations, and more importantly, the generosity of alumni, parents, and friends of the UCC. With your pledge, the academic year 2014-2015 will bring even more formation, fellowship, and social justice activities to the Center. Prayerfully consider joining us as we empower the Catholic leaders of tomorrow. We need your support!

Please use the enclosed envelope, or use ParishPay, which you can find by clicking "Support" on the top menu bar of our website, www.ucccla.org.

** Please note that our donation envelopes have changed. In order to cut down on costs, we've switched to making our own donation envelopes. Please fill out & return the card with your donation. Thank you! **

Please let us know if you would like to receive future *Catholic Bruin* issues electronically by e-mailing our Secretary at staff@uccla.org.

“BARKING TO THE CHOIR”

Homeboy Industries' Fr. Greg Boyle speaks at UCLA

In April the UCC community had the opportunity to host an event on campus featuring Fr. Greg Boyle, the founder of the non-profit organization *Homeboy Industries*. Established in 1988, *Homeboy Industries* helps provide former gang members and previously incarcerated individuals with employment and other services, such as therapy, tattoo removal, and education. The goal of the organization is to redirect the lives of the people served and transform them into contributing members of their families and society.

The two-day event first featured a screening of the movie “G-Dog,” which tells the story of the organization’s beginnings. A few days later, Fr. Greg Boyle gave a talk in De Neve Auditorium about *Homeboy Industries’* mission entitled “Barking to the Choir: Now Entering the Kinship of God,” and closed with a Q & A session with the 200 attendees. The event, which was open to all students and staff, was a joint effort between the UCC and several other organizations, including UCLA’s Office of Residential Life, the University Religious Conference, and the Community Service Commission of UCLA’s student government.

During his talk, Fr. Greg told anecdotes about some of the individuals the organization has served, conveying the power of teamwork and forgiveness. For example, he shared the story of two men who were previously from rival gangs and had trouble being in the same room with one another. Months after both men had begun working together at *Homeboy Industries*, one of them was savagely beaten by a rival gang after work. Fr. Greg said the other man, the former enemy, called him, desperately asking for a way he could help his now-friend. Through stories like these, Fr. Greg showed attendees the importance of establishing “kinship” and second chances. In his words, former gang members, or “homies,” who used to shoot bullets at each other now sit in the same car and shoot playful insults back and forth instead.

A month later, the Social Justice and Outreach Committees hosted a follow-up event. They took a trip to Homegirl Café, the restaurant of *Homeboy Industries* that provides former female gang members with jobs and services. The group had a brunch consisting of chilaquiles, omelets, waffles, and other good food!

Through these events, students experienced God’s work first hand through *Homeboy Industries’* inspiring efforts and outreach to those in need.

—Ariana Ricarte, 4th year Psychobiology



A group of UCCers poses outside Homegirl Café.

A CONFIRMATION EXPERIENCE

Nineteen students confirmed at the UCC

Most kids go through Confirmation classes when they're beginning high school or even during their middle school years. My friends certainly did, though I had a choice growing up.

“Believe what you want to believe in,” my parents told me as I was entering my awkward teenage years. I took their advice very seriously; carving a path of my own through heavy-handed philosophy and literature and cold-winter rationalism to get to the city of atheism where I proudly settled in for most of my punk-ish high school years.

Freedom can be exhilarating; but it comes at a cost. I spent many a sleepless night contemplating the existence of God, arguing in my head (which then led to arguing with other people) that no possible deity could be living in the sky writing the stories of our lives. By the time I reached college, I had a good grasp on why God couldn't exist in the world and how he didn't exist in the world.

But as my head grew more full of itself with rational arguments, my heart felt strangely empty. I felt (rather than thought) that life in the city of atheism was going nowhere. I kept circling its blocks only to arrive where I started: a run-down home of an angry child who was desperate to rebel against the world for a lost cause.

So, I left atheism because I didn't feel satisfied under its principles of the world. I wandered again onto the roads, overwhelmingly free to choose wherever I wanted to go.

And by the grace of the God I rejected, I arrived at His cross. I had finally come back home.

Confirmation class at the University Catholic Center was a homecoming of sorts for me. Under Ceci Gray's ex-
(continued on page 7)

THE UCC EXPERIENCE—Snapshots of the Year!

Student Leadership Team (SLT)

- UCC Activities Fair
- Welcome Night
- UCC Registration
- First Student Dinner (85 people)
- Finals Study Nights each quarter
- Community Appreciation Banquet: “Fiesta”
- Mass on the Grass & BBQ

Social Justice

- Alabama Mission Trip
- Dance Marathon
- Relay for Life / Luminaria Sales
- Museum of Tolerance Trip
- SVdP Weekly Skid Row Service
- SVdP Christmas Toy Drive
- Reading to Kids
- Catholic Relief Services “Operation Rice Bowl”
- “Free Rice” Game Night
- Jesuit Volunteer Corps infosession
- Brunch at Homegirl Café
- Learn “S’More” about Social Justice Night

Outreach

- New UCC Website
- UCC on Bruinwalk
- New UCC T-Shirts
- Blood Drive
- Catholic Olympics with Catholic student groups from other universities (hosted at USC)
- USAC Funding
- “What’s on Your Mind” Listening Sessions
- Interfaith Shabbat Dinner
- “Operation Gratitude” letter-writing

Education and Faith Development

- RCIA (2 Catechumens, 3 Candidates)
- Confirmation with Bishop Clark (19 people)
- Bible Beach Day
- Saint of the Month
- Bible Study
- Eucharistic Adoration (with Liturgy Committee)
- Catholicism WOW discussions
- Stations of the Cross during Lent
- Movie Night: *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*
- ESTEEM (Development of Future Church Leaders)

Community Life

- Weekly Student Dinners
- UCC Prom: “Under the Sea”
- Disney Movie Nights
- Pre-Dance Marathon Mardi Gras Dance
- Weekly “Cornerstone” LGBT Meetings
 - Halloween Social
 - Trip to the Getty
 - Thanksgiving Potluck

Liturgy

- Taizé Prayer Service (Twice a Quarter)
- Eucharistic Adoration (with Education & Faith Devel.)
- Bread Baking for Sunday Mass
- Liturgical Minister Training & speaker Fr. Bazyouros
- Ash Wednesday Masses in Kerckhoff & Ackerman
- Ecumenical Ash Wednesday Service in Schoenberg Quad
- Holy Day Masses
- Advent & Lenten Planning/Bookmarks
- “Walking Buddies” between Dorms and UCC
- Multicultural Mass on Pentecost
- Baccalaureate Mass

Music Ministry

- Music Ministry Coffeehouse (Fall & Spring)
- January Concert: “Gather”
- Cantor/Psalmist Training
- Choir Beach Day
- End-of-the-Year Choir Dinner
- UCC Choral Festival in Hollywood

Retreats

- Freshman/Transfer Student Retreat: “Finding Your Tune”
- Fall Weekend Retreat: “Seeking Balance, Finding Grace”
- Spring Weekend Retreat: “Passion”

Other

- UCC at LA Religious Education Congress
- UCC at University Catholic Conference of California
- Talks by Fr. John Cusick:
 - “Is there Room for Faith in an Increasingly Secular World?”
 - “Called to Lead: How do We Pass the Torch to the Next Generation?”
- Talk by Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ: “Barking to the Choir: Now Entering the Kinship of God”



A BIG Thank You to our 2013-2014 Student Leadership Team!

(back to front)

Ana Hernandez, Meg
Koerber, Andrea Chau,
Robert Gammariello,
Daniel Ojeda, Ariana
Rodriguez, Gaby Dela
Pena, Alyssa Crowley,
Zoe Bader, Catherine
Collins, Abby Johnson,
Diane Villaroman

(continued from page 5)

perienced tutelage and her welcoming embrace of all, I felt I could settle in the city of God and have some kind of a future (guided by the loving hand of God, of course). In our class, the people I arrived with were on the same faith journey, trying to carve out for themselves a road back to the cross. Remembering their faces as we sat in a circle every Tuesday evening reminds me that we all had to choose to continue our relationship with God. Some of us were like me who went the opposite direction, while others were close to the beaten path but had now finally decided to plant their feet on that holy ground. We all drew on our personal experiences to make sense of the Sacrament of Confirmation, the tenets of the church, and the all-loving embrace of God. Our class was colored by our decisions and our life experience like a stain-glassed window with God providing the outside light to make it shine.



The newly-Confirmed students with Bishop Clark.

For me and for our class, Confirmation class was a place and a time where we finally decided what we wanted to believe in – where were we going to place our treasures. We all came from places of pain and happiness as well as experienced times where we felt God was guiding us onto a better path. But we didn't just forget where we came from or what path we took to come to where we were. We let those experiences strengthen our choice to claim our God in our hearts.

“Believe what you want to believe,” my Catholic parents told me. Well, Mom and Dad, I've come back home, and I know now what I believe in.

—Leiza Castillo, 4th year English

BEACH, BARBEQUE, AND BIBLES

Bible Study at the Beach

Beach, Barbeque, and Bibles: what more could a Catholic Bruin ask for? Spring quarter's Bible Beach Day offered UCC community members a day-long retreat to play and pray while growing in faith alongside peers. Organized by the Education & Faith Development Committee, 25 community members packed swimsuits and sunscreen, and ventured to the Paulist Production Studios in the Pacific Palisades for our semi-annual Bible Beach Day! Owned and operated by the Paulist Fathers, the facility, which is located along the Pacific Coast Highway across the street from the ocean, has been home to the UCC's Bible Beach Days for the past two years. This year's festivities included an interactive Rosary led by KC Collins and Joby Joseph, which allowed participants to pray the glorious mysteries while enjoying friendly competition. Each decade was followed by a beach game including building human pyramids to see who could get the closest to heaven, constructing sand castles fit for our Queen, and a Sacrament Relay. Beyond the enjoyment of the games, each emphasized the importance of incorporating prayer into one's daily life. For when we make our lives God-centered, we work better with others, the quality of our work improves, and we receive more joy from our actions.

Beach time was followed by a delicious communal dinner barbecued by our very own Fr. Paul, and the night concluded with a Bible Study from Chapter 16 of John's Gospel, led by the Education & Faith Development Student Leaders.

The passage expressed the difficulties and joy that come by persevering in our Catholic faith. As Catholic students at a secular school, it is often challenging to live out a spiritually wholesome life, counterbalancing the temptations of the environment that surrounds us. Studying for tests can take away from prayer time, and social obligations may keep us from attending Mass. However, by choosing God over these enticements, Jesus Christ assures us that our joy will multiply. So many of us find the determination to seek such true happiness from the support of fellow Catholic Bruins at the UCC.

The study was presented in a *Lectio Divina* style, which allowed participants hear from the scripture what they needed to hear at that time. Words such as “rejoice,” “mourn,” “labor,” and “joy” stood out to students who voluntarily shared personal stories. Many had found the joy that comes from grief and were able to share words of support and encouragement for those still in labor. For all of us, often living a Catholic life is tribulation enough, but Jesus assures us that from this pain will come eternal happiness. Bible Beach Day allowed members of the UCC community to experience and share their faith in an exciting, interactive way. Students returned to campus with a greater sense of support from their fellow UCC Bruins, and stronger than ever to carry our crosses. By bridging spirituality and fun, Bible Beach Day was the perfect end to a faith-filled school year.



Students take time out of their schedules to have faith-filled fun in Malibu.

—Abby Johnson, 3rd year Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology



UNIVERSITY CATHOLIC CENTER
633 GAYLEY AVE.
LOS ANGELES, CA 90024

Phone: 310.208.5015
Fax: 310.208.6077
Email: staff@uccla.org
www.uccla.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Support the UCC electronically with Parish Pay!
Just go to www.uccla.org and click on
"Support the UCC"
located in the top menu bar.

MEET THE 2014-2015 STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM!



OLOLADE AIGORO
2nd year, Pre-Math / Applied Science



MARIA PEDRAZA
5th year, Biochemistry



MEGAN BECK
4th year, English



GABE RELICH
4th year, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology



LEIZA CASTILLO
4th year, English



CHELSEY SANCHEZ
2nd year, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology



TAYLOR FREITAS
2nd year, Political Science / Russian



JENNIFER TRUONG
4th year, Environmental Science



ALLISON GRENDA
2nd Year, Anthropology



LISANDRA URIBE
3rd year, Psychobiology