

## NEWSLETTER

# Office of First Generation & Peer Mentoring Programs

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The Holiday season is going to be different and difficult this year. To slow the spread of the pandemic, many of us will not be able to spend time with loved ones. This is typically a season for community, gatherings, celebrations, traveling, and sharing of food. Instead, this year, we are being asked to stay close to home, refrain from travel unless needed, limit food sharing, protect others, wear masks and stay 6 feet apart.

This is counter-intuitive! We are being asked to refrain from community for the sake of our community. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., in one of his last writings, talked about his vision for a "World House." One of his dreams was that we would build something that we could truly call a World House where people are working together across our differences to heal our social ills of poverty, injustice and inequality. This was Dr. King's hope for a "Beloved Community," a healthy and all-inclusive society of people committed to justice and love as a response to their intrinsic connections. The Coronavirus pandemic is inviting us to pay attention to our World House, to care for one another by honoring our intrinsic connections – which in this case means maintaining physical distance. For now, care, love and empathy – some of our most important values of connection – are also what's helping us stay apart to protect our Beloved Community. What a time of contradictions!

Fortunately, we are also a creative community. We can still have and create community without physically sharing space. We can intentionally activate our care, love and empathy to nurture a sense of connection. This is a season for using our phones, computers, mail carrier services, doorstep packages, outside spaces, and videos in spectacular ways. Things will be different this year and I feel some sadness about this. I'm also strengthened by my commitment to community. May you also find strength as you activate your own love, care and empathy this season for the sake of your loved ones and the World House we all share.

Zandra Wagoner

## NEWSLETTER

# Student Spotlight

## Savannah Arceo



### WHAT MAJOR AND YEAR ARE YOU?

I am a 4th year Biology major

### EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENTS?

At school I have the privilege to be a Peer Mentor and the Student Office Assistant for the Office of First Generation and Peer Mentoring Programs. I am also a Student Learning Assistant for the ASC. I am currently a volunteer for the Claremont school district as a 3rd grade tutor and I just started an internship with Ruth Health as a Research Intern.

### WHAT IS YOUR GOAL AFTER GRADUATION?

After graduation I plan to pursue a masters in Public Health with a concentration in Biostatistics and Epidemiology. After receiving my MPH I plan to pursue a career as an Epidemiology Investigator. My goal is to conduct assessments in populations with chronic disease problems and their disproportionate impact in certain groups.

### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER FIRST GEN STUDENTS?

Being a first-generation student means that you are always taking risks, stepping out of your comfort zone, and doing something you've never seen your family do. It is okay not to have everything figured when you come to college, that is what the rest of your 4 years are for. College is your time to grow and discover what you're truly interested in. Remember that sometimes, "our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure." - Marianne Williamsom

## NEWSLETTER

# Tips for working with 1st gen students

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Last month we celebrated National First-Generation Student Day by hosting a series of speakers and panels for our community. We learned about our first-generation populations and the importance of staying informed, educating ourselves, and validating the first gen experience. We put together a “Tips for working with First Gen Students” list, we hope you will find it useful, perhaps you might even print it out and keep it nearby!

**BE INTRUSIVE**

Find ways to encourage students to engage in programming and experiences. Embed requirements into your already existing programs (when appropriate). Be an active participant in student success by calling, emailing, or texting when necessary (i.e.: when a student is at risk or is close to it, reach out!).

**DECODE THE SYSTEM**

Help students “decode” our system; by showing them and explaining how to navigate the institution’s politics and demands. A student doesn’t know what they don’t know, help them fill in those gaps.

**PROVIDE ACCESS TO GATEKEEPERS**

Connect students with key figures and resources so they can build their own networks, i.e.: develop programs (formal and informal) where students can meet deans, department chairs, program directors etc., who can act as ally’s and advocates for students.

**DISMANTLE DEFICIT PERSPECTIVE**

Challenge deficit-minded perspectives about our students. Find opportunities to incorporate students’ family and validate their lived experiences. [Learn more about deficit perspective](#)

**CREATE SPACE**

Actively look for students to support; develop your office as a safe space for students to share their experiences, i.e.: invite students for informal meetings or coffee/tea, use this time to build rapport and convey to students that your office is an open/safe space for them.

**STAY CURRENT**

Learn about the underlaying inequities and resources that affect students’ experience. [Know ULV’s data.](#)

## NEWSLETTER

# Resource Corner

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In the spirit of the holiday season we wanted to provide some opportunities that are still available for you to volunteer during these times.

## BRETHREN VOLUNTEER SERVICE

B.V.S. works to place volunteers in a project where their skills are used and the need is greatest.

## JUSTSERVE

Volunteering opportunities that you can do from home

## L.A. WORKS

Volunteer action center that creates hands-on community service projects throughout the greater L.A. area

## CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEERS:

Help your community safely with COVID-19

## CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Catholic Relief Services carries out the commitment of the Bishops of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas

# December Calendar

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\*To learn more or RSVP please visit [Campus Labs](#) located under Quick Links of your La Verne Portal\*

### DECEMBER 7TH

#### Group Meditation

12pm-12:30 pm (Every M, T, TH)

#### Mental Health Monday: Prep for Finals

4pm-5pm

#### Virtual Yoga

7pm-8pm (Every M, W, F)

### DECEMBER 8TH

#### Virtual Pilates

12:15pm-12:45pm (Every T/ TH)

#### Group Meditation

5:30pm-6:30pm

### DECEMBER 9TH

#### Energy Balancing Through Breathwork

12pm-12:30pm

### DECEMBER 10TH

#### Healing Circle

3pm-4pm

### DECEMBER 14TH- 18TH

#### Finals Week

### DECEMBER 20TH-JANUARY 2ND

#### Winter break