

## NEWSLETTER

Office of First Generation  
&  
Peer Mentoring Programs

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Today is National First-Generation Day. Knowing we have a national day to recognize our first-generation students is great, yet I ask, what do we do daily to ensure this student demographic knows and feels recognized? How do we create space for our students? Through the last year, our office developed six tips for working with first-generation students, creating space is one of the tips, and it states the following: 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. Can we commit to doing this on a regular basis? I invite you to find ways to create this space, our students will thrive, and I assure you, they will be grateful. If you are unsure as to how to create this space, let's talk! I'm here for you. #iamfirst

*Aracely Torres*

*Director, Title III Grant and First Generation & Peer Mentoring Programs*

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Creating space is one of the most important things we can provide to our students because it is essential to building community. One way we create space is by empowering our students to share their experiences during our Real Talk Tuesday Sessions, and Mentee/Mentor Check ins. Having students share their accomplishments, or challenges amongst each other in a space where they feel supported has helped elevate all our connections, and truly build community and belonging.

*-Cassie Godinez, STEM Pathway Peer Mentoring Coordinator*

Creating Space has definitely looked a little different during this pandemic. This has meant also creating spaces virtually for students. One small detail I do is allow students to choose whether they want to meet virtually or in person. I have found that this helps me build rapport with students from the beginning by allowing them to choose based on personal comfort levels. During my encounters with students, I also try to ask about life outside of the classroom. I make an effort to get to know them for who they are, the whole individual, not just the student. I make an effort to remember the hobbies, interest and passions in their life. When I feel the relationship has grown to a certain level of comfort, I create opportunities for us to engage in these things together. For example, this may be getting Granny's, Cactus Coffee or attending CAB events together. This allows my office to not only be a safe space but a place to also engage in experiences together.

*-Tiffany De Leon, Title III & Access Programs Program Coordinator*

# Faculty Spotlight

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## Raul Perez

### WHAT SCHOOLS DID YOU ATTEND?

I received my AA degree from Cerritos Community College in 2004 and I finished my BA at the University of California, Irvine in 2007. I got into the PhD Program at UC Irvine during my last year as an undergrad while I was studying abroad in Rome, and I got my PhD in Sociology in 2015.



### WHAT DEPARTMENT DO YOU WORK IN?

I started teaching in the Department of Sociology and Criminology at ULV in Fall of 2019 as an Assistant Professor of Sociology. Prior to starting at ULV, I was an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Denver from 2015-2019 and a Visiting Scholar at UCLA during 2018-2019.

### FAVORITE SONG?

Too many to chose from! I like to listen to many different things and I like to find new music. Some that come to mind—"Sinnerman" and "Backlash Blues" by Nina Simone, "Freedom is Free" by Chicano Batman, "This Land is Your Land" by Sharon Jones and the Dap Kings; "Beautiful Bueati" by Brainstory; "Strange" by Patsy Cline; "The End of the World" by Skeeter Davis; "World Upside Down" by Jimmy Cliff; "Todo Cambia" by Mercedes Sosa; "Clandestino" by Manu Chao; "1977" by Ana Tijoux; "Fire for the People" by Blue Scholars; "A Change is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke; "My Favorite Mutiny" by the Coup; "This is My Country" by The Impressions; "Y En Eso Llego Fidel" by Carlos Puebla; "Black Man in a White World" by Michael Kiwanuka; "Fuck These Fuckin Fascists" by The Muslims

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO FOR FUN?

I like to spend time with family and friends, eat new, interesting, and delicious foods, tacos, discover new music, travel, engage in political discussions, watch documentaries, and Netflix and chill.

### RANDOM FACT:

I like to play music. I've played in a few different bands over the years. I used to skateboard until I got too old and now my bones hurt. I make amazing guacamole.

### ARE YOU FIRST GEN? IF SO, WHAT PEARLS OF WISDOM WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH FIRST GEN STUDENTS?

Yes, I am first gen and first in my family to attend college. Get to know your professors. Go to office hours. They will be your biggest advocate. Study abroad, you won't regret it!! College can be challenging, but also a life changing experience. Study hard, have some fun, make new friends, and engage the world as if it's possible to change it for the better. Because together we can.

# Student Spotlight

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## Stephanie Khatchadourian

### YEAR IN SCHOOL

Fourth year Senior

### MAJORS/MINORS

Biology and Chemistry



### EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENTS

Peer Mentor, biology lab ta, Iota Delta, Phi Epsilon Kappa, President of CPH, ASULV Cas senator

### WHAT IS YOUR GOAL AFTER GRADUATING FROM LA VERNE?

I want to go to medical school, however I most likely will first go and get an MBA

### FAVORITE THING TO DO ON CAMPUS OR FAVORITE MEMORY ON CAMPUS?

Going to miss donuts after every super early morning lab.

### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER FIRST GEN STUDENTS AT LA VERNE?

Honestly, college is like a roller coaster, there are times where it is the best and other times you will be struggling. With this being said, try and enjoy each and every moment since the four years you have create the best memories.

# First Gen Month Calendar

## Week 1

NOV. 2ND	NOV. 3RD	NOV. 4TH	NOV. 5TH
<p><b>Real Talk Tuesday: Cultural Wealth</b> 4pm-5pm ACC 206</p> <p>Cultural wealth is the array of knowledge, skills, strengths and experiences that are learned and shared by people of color and marginalized groups. Let's get real about how you can capitalize on this.</p>	<p><b>Connect with us on Instagram: "Why I am First"</b></p> <p>Share with us, why YOU decided to go to college. Why are you first?</p>	<p><b>Connect with us on Instagram: Words of Wisdom</b></p> <p>Check out the words of wisdom shared by ULV First Generation Faculty and Staff!</p>	<p><b>First Friday's: "We're Glad You're Here!"</b> 9am-10:30am Johnson Family Plaza</p> <p>Grab some breakfast goodies, share words of encouragement to First Generation Students, and grab some #IBelong Buttons!</p> <p><b>Resume &amp; Cover Letter Development With The Career Center</b> 12pm-1pm Online RSVP on Handshake</p> <p>Learn the fundamentals of creating a competitive resume to reflect professional skills and generate interviews in today's labor market. A professionally written cover letter will open countless opportunities. This workshop will provide an overview of resume and cover letter resources.</p>

## Week 2

NOV. 8TH	NOV. 9TH	NOV. 10TH	NOV. 11TH	NOV. 12TH
<p><b>National First Generation Day!</b></p> <p><b>Our Stories: Dr. Pablo Alvarez</b> 4pm-5pm Executive Dining Room</p> <p>Come and Celebrate National First Generation Day with guest speaker Dr. Pablo Alvarez as he reads his short story "La Carcacha" which commemorates the resilience and roots of First Generation Students.</p>	<p><b>Social Media Presence &amp; Maximizing LinkedIn:</b> 12pm-1pm Online RSVP on Handshake!</p> <p>What's your digital footprint? In this workshop, you will learn how to develop a professional social media presence to build your personal brand. Learn the ins and outs of having an inviting LinkedIn profile and how to use the system to best represent your personal and professional goals.</p> <p><b>Self-Compassion meditation and Practice With Dr. Zandra Wagoner:</b> 4pm online</p>	<p><b>Breath Work With Dr. Nikki Elliot:</b> 12pm Online</p> <p><b>First Generation Empowerment: Student Leader Mixer</b> 5pm-6pm Executive Boarding Room</p> <p>Looking to get involved but have no idea where to begin? Speak to some First Generation Student leaders who can lead you in the right direction.</p>	<p><b>Veterans Day!</b></p>	<p><b>Connect with us on Instagram: Words of Wisdom</b></p> <p>Check out the words of wisdom shared by ULV First Generation Alumni!</p>



# First Gen Month Calendar

## Week 3

NOV. 15TH	NOV. 16TH	NOV. 17TH	NOV. 18TH	NOV. 19TH
<p><b>Life After College: Alumni Discussion</b> 5pm-6pm Executive Boarding Room</p> <p>Hear from loyal Leo Alumni, as they share their experiences after La Verne, tips on building your network, tapping into the Leo Connection and challenges they faced.</p>	<p><b>Graduate School Prep:</b> 12pm online RSVP on Handshake!</p> <p><b>Self-Compassion meditation and Practice With Dr. Zandra Wagoner:</b> 4pm online</p> <p><b>Affirmation Rocks with Psi Chi</b> 5:30pm-7pm TBD</p> <p>Come and decorate affirmation rocks! These rocks will be placed around campus in hopes of lifting someones spirits!</p>	<p><b>Breath Work With Dr. Zandra Wagoner:</b> 12pm Online</p>	<p><b>Graduate School: Financial Literacy</b> 12pm online RSVP on Handshake</p> <p>Join representatives from Claremont Graduate University to learn how to be proactive in creating a financial plan for your graduate education. We discuss the types of aid available to graduate students and provide useful financial aid tools and insider tips.</p> <p><b>Covid Blues</b> 3pm online</p> <p>This session is part of a series on grief and loss led by CAPS and sponsored by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life</p>	<p><b>First Generation Soiree</b></p> <p>This celebration brings together First-Gen undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff, alumni, and First-Gen allies in one big culminating event. This event wraps up our month with a key-note speaker and participants can expect, small bites, giveaways, and more!</p> <p>The winner of the textbook raffle will also be announced!</p>

## Week 4

NOV. 22ND	NOV. 30TH
<p><b>Connect with us on instagram: "Give Thanks!"</b></p> <p>They say it takes a village...Who do you thank for supporting you along the way? Share with us on instagram!</p>	<p><b>Your Story!</b></p> <p><b>Johnson Family Plaza</b> 12pm-1pm</p> <p>Stop by grab a goodie and share your first gen story and why you are proud to be first gen!</p>

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# Office of First Generation & Peer Mentoring Programs

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For general questions email us at [firstgen@laverne.edu](mailto:firstgen@laverne.edu)  
For more specific questions about our office feel free to email our staff!



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University of  
**La Verne**

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