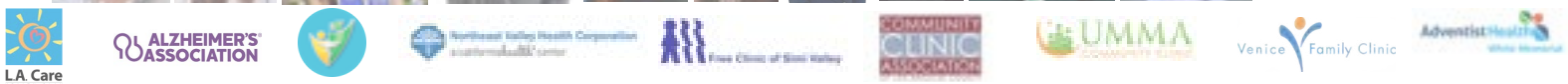
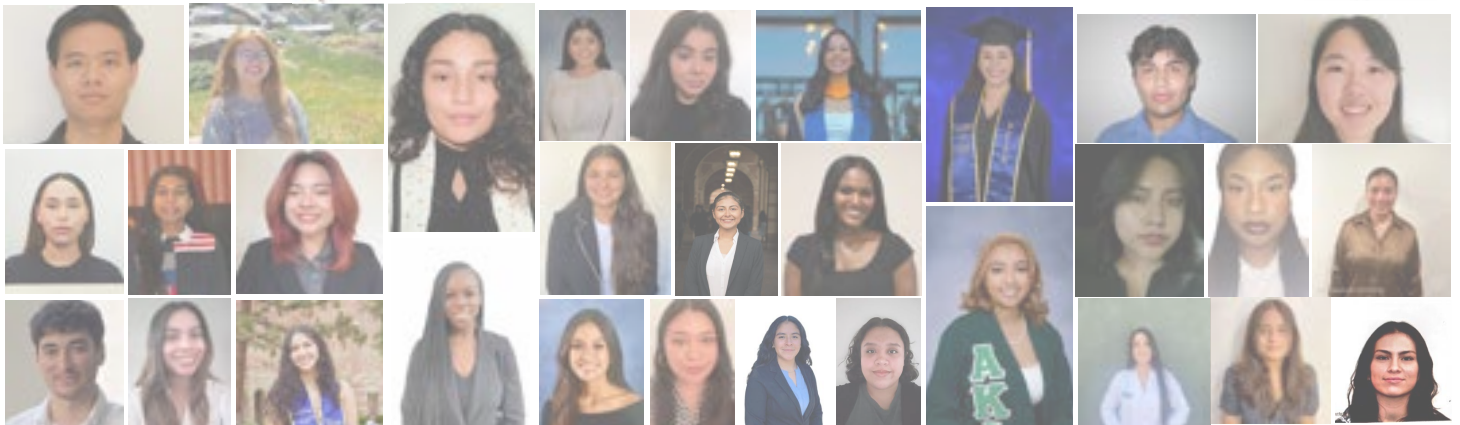


# Summer '23 LA Care Health Plan Report



Health Career Connection, supported by LA Care Health Plan and our partner host sites is devoted to increasing the diversity of, and mentoring excellent talent into health professions schools, programs, and the health care SafetyNet workforce. HCC provides this 2022 internship report to our superlative internship partners, LA Care Health Plan, and host sites: AltaMed Alzheimer's Association, Antelope Valley Partners for Health, Black Women for Wellness, CurableMed, Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County, Free Clinic of Simi Valley, Harbor-UCLA Summer Urban Health Fellowship, Health Career Connection, Healthcare Integrated Services, LA Care Health Plan, Northeast Valley Health Corporation, UMMA Community Clinic, and White Memorial Medical Center. Video links conclude this report.



**Connecting You to Talent**



**Proven Track Record**



**33 Years of Impact**

# AltaMed

## ELIZABETH CARLOS

Preceptor: Rosa Alcalá

My host organization gave me the opportunity to grow personally and professionally. I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to interact with Hispanic Latino communities by working in the AltaMed Mobile Clinic. Actively providing health education information and access to care helped me hone my communication and translation skills in a clinical setting. I shadowed a physician which reassured me of my place in medicine, and helped contribute to my medical school preparation. AltaMed and HCC provided Health Education workshops that have been crucial in helping me understand how to best communicate with underrepresented communities that the AltaMed Mobile Clinic serves. Interacting with different communities allowed me hands-on experience in offering proper education on a wide range of health topics. HCC has offered a tremendous amount of support and has inspired me to continue my dedication towards healthcare and health equity. AltaMed has now hired me as a long-term paid internship following my HCC summer, in the AltaMed Community Affairs Department! Thank you.



# AltaMed

## JASMINE GONZALEZ

Preceptor: Rosa Alcalá

My internship has illuminated the profound strength that resides within community resilience and interconnectedness. It has underscored the need for medical personnel to actively engage with community-centered events which fostered a two-way dialogue to ensure that care aligns with real-world needs. During my time at AltaMed, I completed 32 community events in the LA and OC counties and provided hundreds of free healthcare screenings. Additionally, I presented health topics about nutrition and hypertension at senior care and re-entry rehabilitation centers in English and Spanish to educate community members about the importance of preventative health topics that disproportionately affect Latino populations. Finally, I shadowed healthcare physicians, nurses, community health educators, researchers, and medical assistants at AltaMed's Health and Wellness department and clinic sites observing the impact that compassionate and culturally sensitive care can have on individuals and communities.





## FATIMA LOPEZ

Preceptor: Justin Miller



My experience working with Healthcare Integrated Services (HCIS) has reinforced my future career goals of becoming a physician assistant and working with underserved communities. During this internship, I learned that I could adapt to the unexpected by being consistent in what I do. I have also learned how to be both empathetic and professional in a healthcare workspace since working with patients requires one to display both, in order for them to feel safe and comfortable telling you about their health. I really enjoyed my time with Healthcare Integrated Services. They do a wonderful job fulfilling their mission and vision in communities that need it the most. I was so honored to get to know the staff and appreciated how welcoming they were to all the interns. I would like to say thank you for the amazing opportunity and experience to support ACES aware (adverse childhood experiences) education.



## LEAH SMITH

Preceptor: Justin Miller

Throughout my internship, I gained experience with patient charting, coding, referrals, and electronic medical record keeping (EHR) as well as insurance billing and coding with Medi-Cal and CHDP. This strengthened my professional skills, specifically paying attention to fine details. Additionally, I benefited significantly from having in person hands-on experience with patients. It has encouraged me to move further in the direction of Behavioral and Mental Health services. During my time here, I have gained a clear understanding of the clinic's mission statement, "Bridging the gap between health treatment systems by blending together treatment modalities and concepts that meet very specific needs of underserved populations." At the clinic, we advanced this mission by providing free of charge services to uninsured families and we often would sign them up for Medi-Cal on the spot.





## REYNA EDISS

Preceptor: Justin Miller

My time at Healthcare Integrated Services (HCIS) allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the universal health screeners process and how they provide health care services for the student population in Inglewood USD. My main project was to obtain the results from all the universal screeners to see the number of students who are currently affected by depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, gang violence, and other factors. Unfortunately, there were many students who were affected by these factors; however, this organization provides mental health services for students in need. In addition, I was exposed to the administration process of running a nonprofit clinic. I learned about the screening and medical resources low-income families within Inglewood USD have access to. I enjoyed interning for Healthcare Integrated Services because I developed a passion for serving underserved populations and was able to gain more clinical experience. I am grateful for the impact I made in some of the students and families lives by contributing to their health and I will always cherish this experience. Thank you, Healthcare Integrated Services and HCC!



## BLANDINA MENDEZ

Preceptor: Linda Loera

I met with underserved/underrepresented community members in Los Angeles who have been diagnosed with, are caregivers of, or know someone with Alzheimer's. Through these meetings, I learned about the impact Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia has had on communities. I had the opportunity to assist in bringing awareness to the community by providing information about the prevention of dementia, treatment, and current research conducted for those in the early stages of their diagnosis. This experience has reassured me about my career path and encouraged me to continue putting in the effort to provide underserved communities with adequate healthcare. Working with a non-profit organization, has helped me understand the operational logistics and has strengthened my choice of wanting to work in the non-profit world.





**Northeast Valley Health Corporation**  
a californiah<sup>+</sup>center

## VICTORIA SANDOVAL

Preceptor: Theresa Nitescu

I am grateful for the opportunity to work at Northeast Valley Health Corporation before starting graduate school. I am now motivated to pursue a dual degree in public health and pharmacy. NEVHC is my provider, and before starting this internship I had never been to one of its clinics. I recognize firsthand the demand for more providers but also the demand for more public health officials to tackle the high demands for quality healthcare. I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the newest NEVHC women's health and reproductive clinic in Van Nuys. This event was particularly exciting because several legislators were in attendance, including U.S. Representative Tony Cardenas. His speech inspired me because he spoke about giving back to his community. He mentioned that Northeast Valley Health corporation was there for his family when they had only a few dollars to give and announced he was very proud to still support them because NEVHC has always upheld those values even to this day. Thank you LA Care, for this internship opportunity.



## NAYELY ORTEGA

Preceptor: Jacqueline Johnson

My objective was to help the Antelope Valley community with services that will benefit the people and the community as a whole. I worked with AVPH on conducting a survey, which provided data on smoking and dispensed helpful educational resources and education to the community. Additionally, I was involved with the Healthy Smoothie and Preventing Type 2 Diabetes classes at L.A. Care. These classes were a great way to provide free information on making healthy smoothies to aid with any health problem. As an aspiring Physician Assistant, I plan to take what I learned from this internship and help my Honduran community overseas by providing helpful services to those in need. Additionally, I want to continue to fulfill the mission of my Antelope Valley Partners for Health Community, which is to educate, strengthen and advocate for communities through services and partnerships to achieve optimal health and quality of life for all people. Thank you LA Care Health Plan.





## **BYANCA ZAVALETA**

Preceptor: Carmen Perez



Throughout my internship I worked alongside Carmen Perez, Project Manager for Mental Health Integration at White Memorial Medical Center, to support and enhance partnerships with Family Care Specialist (FCS) clinics and Wellness services. I documented online meeting minutes and attended weekly in-person "Café Con Pan" wellbeing sessions that took place at a nearby community garden. I also coordinated, designed, and promoted monthly "Café con Pan" flyers at three FCS clinics. The goal was to increase patient attendance at "Café con Pan", so that patients can gain mental health education and get involved in mindfulness activities to cope with their mental health. Towards the end of my internship, there was an increase in patient attendance. Additionally, I collected data at three FCS clinic sites and created graphics documents to develop better workflow strategies to improve health provider collaboration and communication between the clinics and hospitals.

## **CurableMed** **SAMANTHA SIORDIA**

Preceptor: Dr. Young-Mercado

As an intern with CurableMed, I spent time researching health disparities in SPA 6 and 8 in LA county. I created a presentation that will be used to educate donors about CurableMed and their mission. I had the opportunity to present this presentation to the Compton Coalition along with my co-interns. Additionally, I created 1-minute scripts based on the information from the presentation to create Tik Tok videos and YouTube Shorts to spread awareness about the health disparities in Los Angeles. Throughout my internship I've gained insight on the work that non-profit organizations do and how they are funded through donations and grants. I've had the opportunity to learn how use the website, "Instrumental", to search non-profit organization specific grants. I am proud of how much I learned about the healthcare system in South LA and to have been a part of a non-profit that will truly make a difference in increasing the healthcare access in South LA.





## STEPHANI CLARK

Preceptor: Adrienne Spires

I absolutely loved my host site, Black Women for Wellness. Since the first day, they made me feel like a member of their family. The experiences gained through this internship will be extremely beneficial for me when I begin my career in Forensic psychology, especially since the criminal justice system affects black and brown communities the most. The best part of working with Black Women for Wellness are the connections I made and all the information I learned about Black women, the healthcare system, and environmental and reproductive health initiatives. Two proud accomplishments are that I was able to present at the Restorative Justice 2023 Youth conference and share an African News segment. I am also proud of myself for creating a resource guide that will be sent out to the underserved communities in LA.



## KAREN MENDEZ

Preceptor: Constance Biteye

This internship was an extremely rewarding experience. I had the opportunity to help people feel welcomed and heard when speaking about their specific condition. Many patients would express how happy they were that I spoke Spanish, as it makes the eye screening process easier for them. Over the course of my internship, I managed to provide exceptional customer service to Spanish speaking UMMA patients and scheduled more than 70 appointments weekly with an average of 94% attendance through daily outreach to diabetic patients. I loved being able to work alongside people who are passionate about making a difference in their own community and who help people to the best of their ability. I learned the importance of being able balance between helping others and taking care of yourself so you can continue to help in the long run. With the help of HCC, as it was a paid internship, I was able to finish paying off my undergraduate loans. Thank you HCC, UMMA, and LA Care!



**Harbor-UCLA Summer Urban Health Fellowship**

## **DANIELA FUENTES**

Preceptors: Dr. Granados & Dr. Puuvula

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I feel very fortunate that I had the opportunity to be part of this year's SUHF because I have learned how to advocate for vulnerable communities. My most memorable experience of this internship was volunteering for the Harbor UCLA-led Refugee Health Alliance in Tijuana. This experience was like no other. The people I encountered are people that I hope to help in the near future. I was able to see the tents these people were living in and since I was helping with triage, I feel very lucky that I was able to interact with many of the patients. My interest in medicine has been further reinforced. This experience motivates me to keep on going strong. One of my proud accomplishments was giving a presentation in Spanish about the importance of diet and exercise to the community of Wilmington. Being able to overcome the language barrier and educate these individuals was impactful because I know they left with a better understanding of the issue. I would definitely recommend HCC and Harbor UCLA internships to anyone because I loved it so much!



**Harbor-UCLA Summer Urban Health Fellowship**

## **SAMIA RAHMAN**

Preceptors: Dr. Granados & Dr. Puuvula

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This summer, I gained many friends and mentors. I acquired hands-on and knowledge-based skills at my sites. I am grateful for the valuable experiences afforded me, including shadowing, volunteering, mentoring, presenting public health topics at events, and being involved in the community fair and homeless services. I had the honor to work with so many patients and increase their awareness about their health. My experience with SUHF has been life-changing, as I witnessed my dream career up close and learned the value of mentorship. I learned clinical skills, including how to take vitals and many other screenings, and acquired certifications such as Stop the Bleed and CPR. Special thanks to my preceptor Dr. Granados and of course, thank you, HCC, for supporting my internship for an added 4-weeks. I am proud to be part of the HCC and Harbor-UCLA families, including the HCC Alumni Medical Careers Coalition.







Free Clinic of Simi Valley

## KAYLEE OKA

Preceptor: Venezia Garcia

I have been able to gain a thorough understanding of the mission of my organization and that has strengthened my desire to serve underserved communities in the future. Furthermore, I have gained immense insight into the health field and the importance of having programs such as the free clinic to aid in providing healthcare to patients, regardless of their ability to pay. I have been able to shadow physicians with various specialties, such as family medicine, neurology, cardiology ophthalmology, and general surgery, as well as work alongside those in administration. This experience has allowed me to have a better idea of the type of field I want to go into in the future and understand what goes on in a clinic to function. I am proud of completing my major project, which consisted of creating an educational PowerPoint of health-related topics, clinic program information, and photos to be played on the waiting room TV. I am happy knowing that I strengthened my professional presentation skills and helped make patients feel more comfortable and informed.



Free Clinic of Simi Valley

## JOSE SALVATIERRA

Preceptor: Venezia Garcia



The exposure I got at the Free Clinic of Simi Valley confirmed my desire to become a physician and serve the underserved. I was able to practice my Spanish as I interpreted for patients and physicians. Translating has allowed me to learn new English medical terms. I enjoyed connecting with doctors and listening to the individual stories of their journeys. I also enjoyed connecting with my preceptor and the other intern, as we would have weekly meetings to discuss our accomplishments and struggles during the week. In addition, I enjoyed all the hands-on work that is allowed at the clinic, including scribing, scheduling, using Narcan pens, and even operating on oranges! After finishing my ten-week internship, I will continue to go to the clinic every Thursday after my classes to help the surgeon. She enjoyed my help, and I appreciate the opportunity to shadow her since I am interested in a career in medicine or pursuing a JD/MD dual degree.



## JACQUELINE ROSAS TORRES

Preceptor: Candace Rowland

My internship was centered around creating a Cyber Security Toolkit (CSTK) that will be used by CCALAC providers and members. Reflecting on the first few weeks of my internship, I can say that I have grown so much. I feel incredibly lucky to have been placed with an organization that takes my time with them very seriously and wants to ensure I am satisfied as one of their team players. As I am beginning a new journey in pursuing an MPH, I will undoubtedly carry all my learnings in cybersecurity with me, because it is important that health organizations recognize the vitality of cybersecurity--protecting patient data is quality care. I believe my time with CCALAC will help me become a better professional and provider asset for under-resourced communities in the future. While I am still committed to pursuing a career in behavioral health, my acquired cybersecurity knowledge will allow me to empower healthcare professionals to actively contribute to the security and safety of the healthcare environment, fostering a culture of vigilance and responsibility towards cybersecurity. Thank you CCALAC and LA Care!

### In-Person HCC Networking NAMI Urban LA 20 Years of Mental Health Advocacy & Education Event

*Interns (left to right): Alexis Cortez,  
Daniela Fuentes, Tamara Masri,  
Destiny Clark, Kasope Olumide-  
Fusika, Byanca Zavaleta, Emely  
Cardenas. Not pictured:  
Sumaita Iqbal*





## KATHERINE KUSSLER

Preceptor: Bettsy Santana

I have always been passionate about healthcare and health equity, though I have admittedly felt overwhelmed while trying to navigate such a vast and complex field. Health Career Connection removed the burden of navigating it alone. They gave me the tools I need to make informed professional decisions, as well as access to a talented network of public health professionals, students, and HCC alumni. This summer, I served as a Health Equity Intern at L.A. Care Health Plan in its Quality Improvement department. I specifically worked with the Chronic and Preventive Care teams, helping support and evaluate clinical initiatives to reduce chronic health conditions including hypertension, diabetes, and breast cancer. In congruence with the health plan's mission statement, these initiatives aim to support Los Angeles County's vulnerable and low income communities. I want to acknowledge Patricia Etem, Jeff Oxendine, and my preceptors Bettsy Santana, Alison Patsy, and Xin Lee for their ongoing support.



L.A. Care  
HEALTH PLAN

## EMELY CARDENAS

Preceptor: Sharon Parker-Martin

I am grateful to L.A. Care for further developing my understanding and knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion. They have given me the opportunity to participate in the Health Equity Intern Orientation and complete online trainings like the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) online training course. For my main project I created a research paper and presentation on how to successfully implement employee affinity groups within L.A. Care. I was able to provide actionable strategies, tools, and suggestions based on the L.A. Care Interest Survey and other organizations. I also delivered the presentation to the Team Equity Council. I am honored to have learned from LA Care leadership, I gained skills and experiences through projects, Training and Learning, and building personal branding. A special thanks goes to John Baackes, Alexander Li, Liliana Lopez, Deborah Decker, and David Zanduetta.





L.A. Care  
HEALTH PLAN

## KEVIN QUACH

Preceptor: Marina Acosta & Alexander Li

In my application to Health Career Connections, I emphasized my passion for serving my community through advocacy and direct work. I cannot thank HCC enough for recognizing that passion and connecting me with L.A. Care Health Plan. L.A. Care's focus on health equity and my subsequent projects perfectly aligned with some of the most significant work experiences in my life. This internship has given me insights into provider resources, and public health practice aspect of healthcare. These insights have already paid dividends for my current medical school applications and will be relevant as I continue to work toward becoming a community-oriented physician. I would like to thank my preceptor, Marina Acosta, for guiding and mentoring me through my internship. I also want to express my appreciation to Dr. Alexander Li for his feedback on my earlier drafts of the SDOH provider reference sheet. Finally, I cannot thank everyone at Health Career Connections and L.A. Care Health Plan for providing this amazing opportunity, and my new job at LA Care Health Plan!



## BRIANNA CLAVERIE

Preceptor: Bettsy Santana

I learned a tremendous amount in managed care during my time at L.A. Care. I was able to work alongside registered nurses and individuals with backgrounds in public health, health education, and public policy. I also learned more about the mission of L.A. Care and how they implement their goals through practices such as their Elevating the Safety Net Scholarship for medical students interested in serving vulnerable communities. One of my objectives was to establish a network of connections with individuals with different healthcare backgrounds. I built many connections with L.A. Care staff through Coffee Talks and workshops. I had a conversation with L.A. Care's CEO, John Baackes, and he offered amazing words of encouragement as I plan to apply for medical school. Another conversation with the Chief of Health Equity, Dr. Li, showed me the possibilities of a physician beyond patient care. This proved to me that I can still be a public health advocate while treating patients on a micro level as a doctor. **Thank you HCC, LA Care Health Plan & Black Women for Wellness!** Brianna completed two PT internships!





***Andrea Pulido-Varagnolo***



## **HEALTH EQUITY SCHOLAR, HCC**

Preceptor: Patricia Etem

I was matched with LA Care Health Plan as an HCC equity intern focusing on women's and children's education and health in the Antelope Valley. My goal was to pave the way for low-income student mothers and their children. I had the honor of making an active contribution to the community of women-shelter resident and low-income student mothers through peer mentorships, community outreach, and creating an effective community college-based program that will actively assist and benefit this population. This experience has allowed me to hone my professional and technical skills in preparation for a future career as a gynecologist. I will be able to use the skills I gained from this internship to aid in women's health and wellness in future job opportunities and academic pursuits. This internship provided fundamental community outreach and research experiences that helped me broaden my understanding of many health and well-being concerns affecting women, as well as the solutions that emerge to address them. Thank you HCC and LA Care Health Plan.

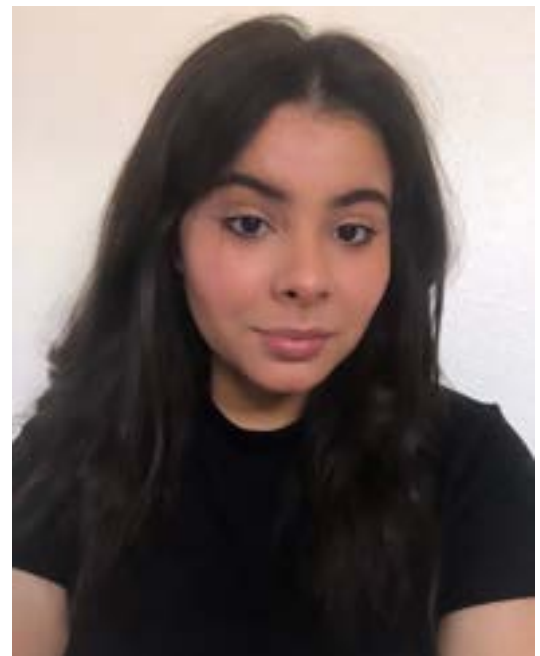


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## **HEALTH EQUITY SCHOLAR, HCC**

Preceptor: Patricia Etem

I feel extremely grateful to have worked under HCC and for all the progress I made on my project. For my project, I ran a comparative analysis of the physicians, specialties, treatments, and services provided in a student-run free clinic in San Diego, and JWCH in Antelope Valley. I had informational interviews with staff in both locations to aid in understanding common needs amongst patients and how they were met. I learned a lot from the physicians and various healthcare workers within these clinics. I also learned more about how health insurance works and how clinics use it. The most important educational experience I acquired was seeing the great provider effort and needs that the Latino population faces when trying to acquire quality healthcare services. I'm compelled to continue on with my project to help the Latino population as an aspiring physician..



***Irma (Ariana) Chavez***



**Jessica Ramirez**



**HEALTH EQUITY SCHOLAR, HCC**

Preceptor: Patricia Etem

One of my main objectives was to gain a better understanding of the operations and systems set in place that sustain a free clinic. I made my first visit to the Orange Lestonnac Free Clinic and after visiting the location and interacting with the staff, I felt connected to them. During this and LA visits, I learned more about the patient experience in accessing Lestonnac’s healthcare, and the demographics of patients that make up LA County and OC Lestonnac Free Clinics. When researching the history of Lestonnac, I discovered that it is fully funded by “local and national grants, foundations, and private donors.” I think being a first-time navigator of community-based participatory research has come with a lot of growth and learning. If I could describe my journey in five words/phrase it would be the following: 1. Embracing the Unfamiliar: Conquering First-Time Fears 2. Adopting a Growth Mindset 3. Taking the Leap 4. Learning from the Experience 5. Understanding.



L.A. Care HEALTH PLAN

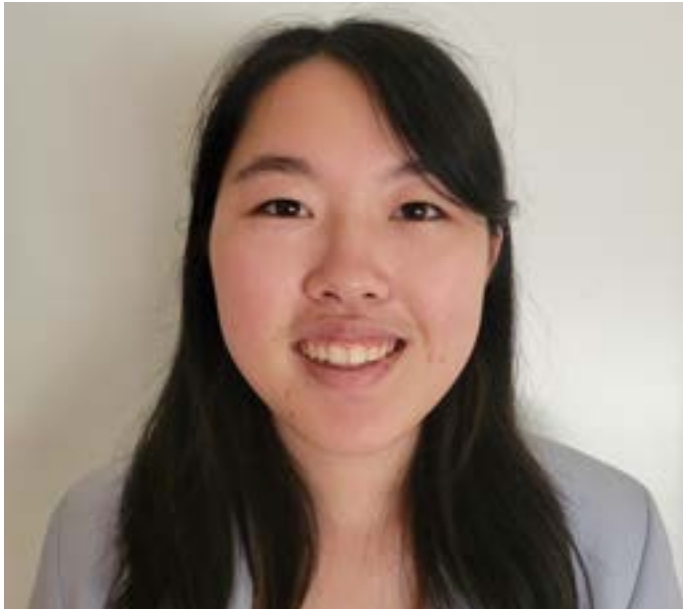
**HEALTH EQUITY SCHOLAR**

Preceptor: Patricia Etem

I formulated a report on Adverse Childhood Experiences and their link to food insecurity for L.A. Care to review. From this experience, I was able to grow as a researcher and community member. Supported by Needs Assessment data, I dove deep into my topic. I was able to truly understand all the things that go into formulating change. My meetings with Dr. Edna Miller, from Healthcare Integrated Services, allowed me to refine my project and make it more condensed. The work her organization is doing inspired me to alter my project idea and work towards something I am passionate about. Doing an internship centered around health equity allowed me to see the public policy side of my research interests and broadened my perspective. I leave this internship knowing that I have a strong foundation in ACES and food insecurity, and I'm more confident in the skills I've acquired in health research. HCC has prepared me for a career in public health research.



**Jonathan Morales**



**Julie Ye**



## HEALTH EQUITY SCHOLAR, HCC

Preceptor: Patricia Etem

Throughout the ten weeks of my HCC internship, I was able to complete my intern project. I conducted research on the social support services that are available to my target population (Chinese American immigrants). I was also able to learn more about LA Care Health Plan and its role in mitigating the barriers that underserved populations face. I compiled data reports and conducted informational interviews to investigate my research topic. Later, I synthesized the information into a final presentation which has been recorded and shared with LA Care Health Plan. Finally, I was able to consistently attend the HCC workshops that were held each week, which allowed me to learn more about the potential paths I could pursue in the realm of public health, research, and medicine moving forward. I gained more clarity regarding my vocational identity and was also able to confirm my interest in pursuing cancer and health disparities research.



L.A. Care  
HEALTH PLAN

## HEALTH EQUITY SCHOLAR, HCC

Preceptor: Patricia Etem

My educational experience as an L.A. Care Health Plan Health Equity intern was truly eye-opening. Through online research and informational interviews, I learned to apply critical thinking to identify health disparities, evaluate health policies and health services, and understand what barriers and stressors older Asian immigrants experience. In addition, working on my research project solidified my interest in working with the senior population as I pursue a future career in healthcare. Being able to connect with senior residents showed me that intergenerational relationships are the key to decreasing the disparities experienced by seniors. I feel that this internship was truly transformative, and I have positively grown as a person throughout the summer. This internship was an amazing experience I am forever thankful, and hope I will have the chance to work with HCC again in the future.



**Kaleigh Lien**



***Melissa Herrera***



**HEALTH EQUITY SCHOLAR, HCC**

Preceptor: Patricia Etem

I am proud to say that I successfully completed my comprehensive research project on the recognition and socio-economic well-being of the Little Bangladesh community in Koreatown. I got to connect with the vice president of the neighborhood council for Koreatown, who was also Bengali. Additionally, I attended and actively contributed to neighborhood meetings, gaining insightful community perspectives. My educational experience during this internship has been immensely rewarding. Through this program, I've acquired a plethora of valuable career skills that I believe have greatly contributed to my professional growth. Furthermore, my interaction with HCC has left me with a strong sense of optimism for my future. Knowing that the resources and support offered by HCC will persist beyond the internship has instilled confidence in the trajectory of my career development.



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**HEALTH EQUITY SCHOLAR, HCC**

Preceptor: Patricia Etem

My experience as an intern with HCC has been nothing but positive. My objectives for this internship were to learn, network, and grow professionally. However, I gained much more than I expected! I was able to gain a wide range of perspectives on health professions. Increasing my exposure to these careers has allowed me to understand the wide scope that health care encompasses. For my main project, I conducted a research project to unveil the health disparities that service workers experience in Southern California. I analyzed data and reached out to the local community to obtain holistic information on the topic. I created a podcast called "Work Without Wellness" which showcases perspectives and insights on service industry health. I had the opportunity to amplify the narratives of two service workers, a former city official and a union representative. I also participated in strikes, community planning with OC equity, and learned about local communities.



***Sumaita Iqbal***



# THANK YOU TO OUR PRECEPTORS



Dr. Sheila Young Mecado

Carmen Perez

Gabriel Loreda

Dr. Gilberto Granados

Dr. Jyoti Puuvula

Rosa Alcala

Sharon Parker-Martin

Justin Miller

Candace Rowland

Venezia Garcia

Constance Biteye

Bettsy Santana

Dr. Alexander Li

Marina Acosta

Jacqueline Johnson

Adrienne Spires

Missy Nitescu

Patricia Etem

# Preceptor Quotes

“

I am happy to hear that the experiences have been positive and enjoyable. Thank you again for making these opportunities available to our young people as well as our organizations.

”

“

HCC has helped our clinics complete important summer and longer term initiatives. As an inaugural preceptor with HCC we have launched over two decades of diverse health professionals into the Safety-Net.

”

“

I am a long-time preceptor within the HCC program, and an HCC alumni. I encourage our interns to embrace this opportunity, not 'just as an internship' but as a true springboard to career excellence and mentorship of others.

”



L.A. Care HEALTH PLAN

## 2023 LA Care Health Plan Fellow

B.A. Public Policy

Preceptor: Patricia Etem, MPH

It has been an absolute pleasure to take on the role as the Elevating the Safety Net Fellow, in partnership with LA Care. HCC has given me the opportunity to complete two incredible internships over the last two years. Those internships and this fellowship have been instrumental in developing me both professionally and personally. I have had the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of HCC's mission while simultaneously learning more about LA Care's Elevating the Safety Net initiative. I look forward to performance excellence in my role to advance both the missions of HCC and LA Care.

Since June, I have provided support and mentorship to the Southern CA & LA Care interns over the course of their 10-week internships. My duties have consisted of scheduling check-ins with interns, fulfilling internal operational tasks, and coordinating meetings for the Medical Career Coalition (MCC), which is for HCC alumni who identify as a pre-med. MCC provides additional resources and support for members during their application process for any professional school such as MD, PA, PharmD, Podiatry or DDS/DMD.

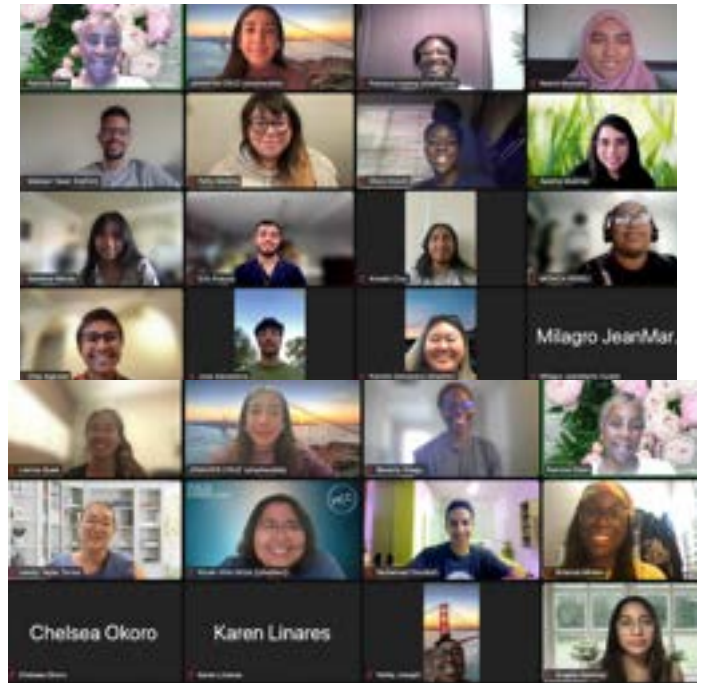
As I strive to diversify the future health workforce, I have begun to work on a research project that aims to explore the scarcity of Black men in medicine. Through my research, I hope to discover and recreate successful programs and initiatives that can be integrated into HCC's outreach efforts to increase the demographic of Black male interns. With this increase of Black male interns, I optimistically anticipate the growing presence of Black males in the healthcare sector.

I am extremely grateful for the relationships I have built with interns over the summer and I look forward to maintaining those relationships as they transition into becoming HCC alumni. I am enthusiastic about the future work I will be doing to support future healthcare and public health professionals that will serve SafetyNet communities.

Thank you HCC and LA Care.



**OLORE IMOOSHI**



***Pictured: HCC Medical Careers Coalition***

# MEDICAL SCHOOL ACCEPTANCES

*Celebrating our HCC and MCC Alumni*



## MAKEEN YASAR

Makeen will be a part of the inaugural class of Charles R. Drew University! Makeen is a HCC Alum from Summer 2019 where he interned at his now employer, Kaiser Permanente SOM! He presented at our May MCC meeting, as one of the first MCC members to be matriculating into medical school! Thank you, Makeen!



## ALIYYAT AFOLABI

Aliyyat, HCC 2021 Alum, was accepted into multiple medical schools all over the country, and has decided to attend University of Pittsburgh SOM. She is excited to be able to move for medical school. Aliyyat presented at our May MCC meeting, as one of the first MCC members to be matriculating into medical school! Thank you, Aliyyat!



## VALERIA GOMEZ

Valeria Gomez was an HCC intern this past year in the summer/fall 2022! She will be attending California Health Sciences University in their DO program. Valeria's preceptor and mentor, Dr. Young-Mercado have reviewed concepts to prepare for medical school. Valeria also provided input in Pre-Med Hustle webinars with Dr. Young-Mercado. Thank you, Valeria!



## MILAGRO JEANMARIE-TUCKER

Milagro was at the forefront of the pandemic when completing her internship at the Charles R. Drew COVID-19 testing sites in 2020. Due to her stellar performance in her early assurance postbaccalaureate program, she will be attending the University of California San Diego SOM this fall. Thank you, Milagro!



# MEDICAL CAREER COALITION MEETINGS

**HEALTH CAREER CONNECTION**  
 MEDICAL CAREER COALITION

## ALL ABOUT RESIDENCY

**WEDNESDAY**  
26 JULY

**TIME**  
5:30 PM



**AISA IYAWÉ-PARSONS, MD, MPH**  
 RESIDENCY: LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER  
 SPECIALITY: NEUROLOGY

For more information please contact Olore Inoochi at [oinoochi@healthcareers.org](mailto:oinoochi@healthcareers.org)

**HEALTH CAREER CONNECTION**  
 MEDICAL CAREER COALITION

## FINANCIAL PLANNING: CHASE COMMUNITY BANKING WORKSHOPS

April-August 2023

1. Savings & Budgeting
2. Let's Talk About Credit
3. Managing Debt

Presented by **Darneisha Beeler**, Chase Vice President Community Manager



**HEALTH CAREER CONNECTION**  
 MEDICAL CAREER COALITION

## SAVINGS & BUDGETING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2023  
 at 10:00pm and 5:00pm on Zoom

- Your Financial Roadmap
- Setting Financial Goals
- Budget Builder

Presented by **Darneisha Beeler**, Chase Vice President Community Manager



**HEALTH CAREER CONNECTION**  
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## LET'S TALK ABOUT CREDIT

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2023  
 at 10:00pm and 5:00pm on Zoom

- Learn about your Credit Score
- Credit Check-up
- Work on your Financial Journal

Presented by **Darneisha Beeler**, Chase Vice President Community Manager



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## MANAGING DEBT

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2023  
 at 10:00pm and 5:00pm on Zoom

- Dealing with Student Loan Debt
- Strategies for Reducing Debt
- Understanding High Cost Debt

Presented by **Darneisha Beeler**, Chase Vice President Community Manager



**HEALTH CAREER CONNECTION**  
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## Q&A Session with Incoming Medical Students




**ALIYYAT AFOLABI**

- Rising MS1
- HCC Summer 2021
- Undergrad Institution: California State University Long Beach

**MAKEEN YASAR**

- Rising MS1
- HCC Summer 2019
- Undergrad Institution: Loyola Marymount University

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24TH NOON AND 5:30PM ON ZOOM



# CELEBRATING 26 YEARS OF LA CARE



***Pictured: LA Care's 26th Anniversary Celebration***

L.A. Care Health Plan's 26th Anniversary Celebration in Los Angeles on Tuesday, July 11, 2023  
 LA Care's sixth group of Elevating the Safety Net medical school scholarship awardees (from left to right):  
 Alexander Afewerki, Berenice Elizarraraz, Rick Rios, Daisy Hernandez-Casas, Itzel Melgoza,  
 Lule DeShields, Sigry Ortiz Flores, and Victor Arechiga (not pictured).

L.A. Care's Elevating the Safety Net Scholarship Program provides eight students up to \$375,000 each in full medical school scholarships. This program takes away a huge debt for community-minded physicians that can force them to choose high-profit positions over service in low-income areas.



*Pictured (left to right): Jennifer Cruz, Leslie Nunez, Jeff Oxedine, Olore Imoohi*

*Pictured (left to right): Jennifer Cruz, Patricia Etem, and Olore Imoohi*

# SUMMER 2023 INTERN DEMOGRAPHICS

HCC is a national non-profit that inspires and empowers undergraduate students, recent graduates, and HCC alumni, particularly those from **under-represented or disadvantaged backgrounds**, to choose and successfully pursue authentic healthcare and public health careers.

HCC's ultimate goal is to improve the health of populations by motivating and developing greater numbers of value-driven, capable and **diverse** leaders and health professionals.

**67%** Hispanic/LatinX

**22%** Asian

**10%** Black/  
African-American

**0.3%** Native Hawaiian



**3** SPA 1  
Antelope Valley

**1** SPA 5  
West Los Angeles

**3** SPA 2  
San Fernando Valley

**7** SPA 6  
South Los Angeles

**2** SPA 3  
San Gabriel Valley

**2** SPA 7  
East Los Angeles

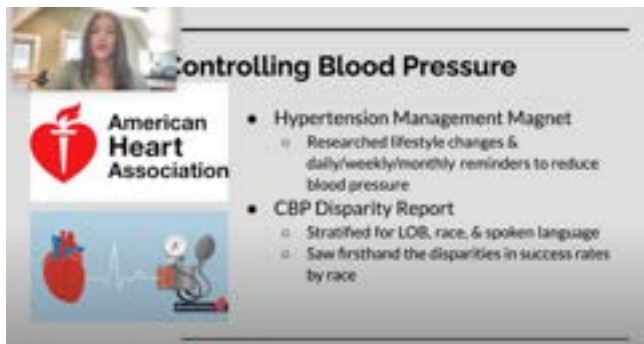
**7** SPA 4  
Metro LA

**4** SPA 8  
South Bay



Representing Interns' Areas of Service

Thank you LA Care Health Plan, and all our 2023 Partners for supporting our talented, diverse interns as they support your projects, identify their authentic health careers, and gain competencies in health equity. We look forward to continuing our partnership in developing our nation's, & LA County's next health profession leaders. We thank all of the preceptors and virtual workshop presenters for their expertise, and look forward to meeting in-person in 2024!



**Pictured: LA Care Interns' Final Project Videos**  
Katherine Kussler (left) and Kevin Quach (right)

# HCC SUMMER 2024 TIMELINE

**2023/24 Sept - March**  
**Host Site Recruitment**

*Host sites submit interests in hosting summer 2023 intern.*

**2024, Jan - Feb**  
**Candidate Selection**

*HCC interviews candidates for host site matching. Contracts & Agreements are completed*

**2024, April - May**  
**Matching & Onboarding**

*Host sites & Intern matches are finalized. Interns complete host site background checks*

**2023/24, Sept - Jan**  
**Host Project Submissions**

*Host sites submit project scopes of work. Submissions reviewed, candidates recruited & screened*

**2024 March - April**  
**Host Site Interviews**

*Host sites interview candidates matched by HCC*

**2024 May - September**  
**10-Week Internships**

*Summer internship program active & completed*

**Contact us:**

**Patricia Etem, MPH**

VP, Southern California & Coachella Valley  
Health Career Connection  
Email: [petem@healthcareers.org](mailto:petem@healthcareers.org)  
Mobile: (562) 208-3508





# Intern Quotes

As an intern, I strongly appreciate the chance to work with a mission-driven organization focused on improving healthcare access and outcomes for underserved populations.

The best parts of my experience in the HCC program were the opportunity to learn about the disparities in communities around me, the informative zoom meetings, and the resources provided by preceptors.

The advice I would give is to connect with those around you, you will meet some of the best people that you would want to keep in contact with in the long run

I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience and feel as though I got a holistic, yet detailed, view of the myriad of opportunities within the healthcare field. I have considered many new career paths and am excited to see what else I am able to learn during my time here.

This program really opened my eyes to important topics relating to racism in society (environmental and institutional). I was given the opportunity to take a more proactive stance helping the communities around me and gained a better understanding of my role as a voice for communities of color.

My experience as a Health Equity Intern has shown me that research can be fun, intellectually challenging, and rewarding. HCC has given me the self-assurance and motivation I need to continue to pursue the next best steps for my career as a future health professional.

**INTERN NAME**

**VIDEO LINKS**

**Andrea Pulido-Varagnolo**

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9b3jx9>

**Blandina Mendez**

[Inactive Video](#)

**Brianna Claverie**

<https://tinyurl.com/yhxtth64>

**Byanca Zavaleta**

<https://tinyurl.com/2fxsu5mb>

**Daniela Fuentes**

<https://tinyurl.com/4euhbb5e>

**Elizabeth Carlos**

<https://tinyurl.com/bdf8fdrz>

**Emely Cardenas**

<https://tinyurl.com/bxutpjtj>

**Fatima Lopez**

<https://tinyurl.com/3bub9w7h>

**Irma (Ariana) Chavez**

<https://tinyurl.com/mr3pe5vt>

**Jacqueline Rosas Torres**

<https://tinyurl.com/yab6j75u>

**Jasmine Gonzalez**

<https://tinyurl.com/djcpaxmp>

**Jessica Ramirez**

<https://tinyurl.com/47dzertr>

**Jonathan Morales**

<https://tinyurl.com/49xk7n29>

**Jose Salvatierra**

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8rdx54>

**Julie Ye**

<https://tinyurl.com/yckjmm4d>



**INTERN NAME**

**VIDEO LINKS**

**Kaleigh Lien**

<https://tinyurl.com/3jx4p7er>

**Karen Mendez**

<https://tinyurl.com/3jx4p7er>

**Katherine Kussler**

<https://tinyurl.com/3bxcx4ny>

**Kaylee Oka**

<https://tinyurl.com/2xch2tz8>

**Kevin Quach**

<https://tinyurl.com/mrydb8s2>

**Leah Smith**

<https://tinyurl.com/y4vh2r7x>

**Melissa Herrera**

<https://tinyurl.com/mu3z95v3>

**Nayely Ortega**

<https://tinyurl.com/pvdrz5jv>

**Reyna Ediss**

<https://tinyurl.com/bddjkj6b>

**Samantha Siordia**

<https://tinyurl.com/yukka4ab>

**Samia Rahman**

<https://tinyurl.com/mpm7k39v>

**Stephani Clarke**

<https://tinyurl.com/f7r8faux>

**Sumaita Iqbal**

<https://tinyurl.com/mr3uhka4>

**Victoria Sandoval**

<https://tinyurl.com/tenwafr2>

