

April 21, 2022

Dear Friends of the Fullerton Arboretum,

I hope that this letter finds you, your friends and your family healthy. I want to express my deep gratitude for offering an opportunity such as the David L. Walkington Memorial Scholarship. I am very honored to be selected as a person that pushes forward the legacy of someone as great as David Walkington.

I started my undergraduate career at Long Beach City College and continued on at the University of California, Santa Barbara where I completed my degree in Environmental Studies. I excelled in both research in restoration and outreach centering marginalized communities. At California State University, Fullerton I have been playing an active role in these areas.

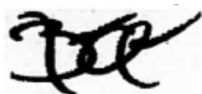
I am Co-chair of the Western Society of Naturalist Student Committee to support queer scientists and advocate for community for marginalized groups in a conference setting. I am co-chairing the Ecological Society of America Environmental Justice Section to increase more equitable perspectives within ecological research. Outside of academic spaces, I am an environmental education intern for Orange County Coastkeeper (OCCK), where I inform K-12 students and the local community on important coastal management issues and solutions. I want to contribute meaningful research while providing resources for underrepresented communities. Additionally, I want to communicate with the public about environmental issues and advocate for environmental justice.

Since Fall 2020, my thesis has significantly grown into a full project. I am working on a living shoreline project in Southern California. This restoration project aims to increase threatened species and protect coastal habitat. I will use biomass and organism health of filter feeders as proxies for deliverable ecosystem services. The goal of my thesis is to use these proxies to increase restoration benefits from living shorelines and inform their future management. In collaboration with OCCK, I will train undergraduate students and invite the local community to participate in the upkeep of the restored habitats and protection of our coast.

My goal is to become an interdisciplinary conservation biologist for a government agency. I aim to apply research to conservation efforts while simultaneously contributing to environmental education and justice.

Once again, I would like to thank you so much for making this opportunity possible. As a low-income, queer, Latino, supporting opportunities for students like me and ensuring they are funded means the world. The monetary value will be two months of rent covered, it is countless hours in the lab being paid, it is research supplies for my project being accounted for, it is presenting at conferences and networking with other ecologists, and so many other things. I hope you continue to stay safe and continue this opportunity for future potential recipients.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandon Quintana', written in a cursive style.

Brandon Quintana