

## About the Awardees

JULIA HANSEN (UEP Major, Music Minor) grew up on an island in Maine. Having grown up surrounded by nature and a tight-knit community, she is committed to integrating these two elements into her life. While at Occidental, she has worked to enhance community access to green space through working with UEPI to develop 'green schoolyards'. She is passionate about the fundamental right of food justice and has worked to address food insecurity in Los Angeles. Along with this, Julia is a dedicated mental health activist and is the founder of The Yellow Tulip Project, ([www.theyellowtulipproject.org](http://www.theyellowtulipproject.org)), a national non-profit that focuses on de-stigmatizing mental illness, building community and spreading hope. During her time at Occidental, she has been able to intersect her interests in urban green spaces, food justice and mental health activism through creating a nature-, art- and wellness-based curriculum for elementary school students. She is currently working with local teachers to integrate these practices into their classrooms in order to enhance students' wellness.

JUSTIN MARTINEZ (Politics Major) is originally from Eagle Rock, just a few steps away from Occidental's campus. The Politics department and Oxy's socially driven curriculum enabled him to explore his passion to assist the communities in which he was brought up. Throughout these past 4 years, Justin played Football as an Oxy Tiger and semi-pro player, became a tattoo artist, barber, trainer, dog dad, and most importantly founded and leads Leg Up Los Angeles. Leg Up LA is a non-profit organization that has served 16,000+ persons from economically marginalized and houseless communities throughout Los Angeles County, through advocacy, mobilization, coalition building, and direct assistance. It also spreads awareness about their conditions and helps lift up their voices. Justin's plans for post graduation include furthering his ventures with Football, Tattooing, and continued work on Leg Up Los Angeles and its platforms. In acceptance of this award, Justin is very grateful to his parents, siblings, the folks from the BY common room, the guys at OMA, his teammates, his professors, and his coaches, for providing the support that had enabled him to give his 100% effort to the many things that he is passionate about.

INA MORTON'S (UEP Major, Art History and Politics Minors) experience growing up in Los Angeles as a diasporic Filipina motivated her to study urban policy and commit to abolitionist and anti-imperialist community organizing. In 2020, she co-founded direct action collective People's City Council and through this work has worked in the People's Budget LA, Stop LAPD Spying, and Services Not Sweeps coalitions. In 2021, she co-founded the Robinson School for Public Awareness and Community Engagement in Historic Filipinotown, which provides space for local organizations fighting for equity and liberation to work in community with each other. Through UEP, she has interned with the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment and the Los Angeles Community Action Network, and has also served as the QTPOC Liaison for the Sexuality and Gender Acceptance club, advocating for the needs of other queer BIPOC students on campus. Most recently, she has worked as a Research Assistant for Professor Seva Rodnyansky and as a Mellon Arts and Technology Fellow with Las Fotos Project. She looks forward to attending UCLA's Master in Urban and Regional Planning program this fall, and hopes to eventually enter a PhD program in Urban Planning to study military urbanism and anti-imperialist urban planning frameworks. She is grateful to UEP, and especially to Professors Martha Matsuoka and Seva Rodnyansky, for supporting her growth as a researcher, organizer, and student throughout her four years at Oxy.

At Oxy, LAUREN UY (American Studies Major) has been able to further develop her environmental and food justice praxes through her leadership at the Food, Energy, & Sustainability Team (FEAST). Lauren has tirelessly worked to make FEAST a more inclusive space, advocating for marginalized voices and using her educational background in settler-colonial studies to strengthen the FEAST mission. As a founding member of the BIPOC Gut Health Support Group, Lauren brought her passion for indigenous foodways to Oxy via teach-ins on the power of reclaiming pre-colonial diets as means of optimizing gut and soil microbiomes. Lauren held down garden operations at FEAST all throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and played a key role in the launch of the LA Compost hub in 2020. Furthermore, Lauren worked with the Center for Community Based Learning (CCBL) as an educator-in-action for courses UEP 247 and UEP 306, allowing her to extend her work in

sustainability beyond Oxy's campus. Lauren is grateful for the solidarity and support of Rosa Romero, Sharon Cech, Martha Matsuoka, the American Studies department, and friends and family.

MIA VILLEGAS (she/her) is an English major from Santa Ana, CA. During her time at Oxy, she has been an active member of the music and theater communities as a member of the Occidental Glee Club for all four years, and Soprano Section leader for the past two years, as well as being a cast member of the school musicals *Urinetown* and *Into the Woods*. She has served the Occidental community in a variety of positions during her time here, including as a Programming Assistant for the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life during the 2019-2020 school year and as a teaching assistant for the Multicultural Summer Institute, mentoring first-year students, during the summer of 2021. Her passion lies in working in the field of gender-based violence, and accordingly, she has served as a Project SAFE Programming Assistant for the past two years and is a core member of the Sexual Misconduct Education and Training Working Group. In the fall, Mia will be attending USC Gould Law School as an Honors Scholar and hopes to become a legal advocate for survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence.

MIYA WOO (UEP Major) is originally from Seattle, WA. She was originally interested in Occidental for the UEP Department's engagement in the community. In Seattle, she worked with various community organizations with focuses on public health and environmental justice. At Occidental, she participated in the affordable housing summer internship with Los Angeles Community Action Network and learned the importance of wellness in community building. This past year, she centered her research on garment workers, specifically worker cooperative models. Through this she engaged with the Garment Worker Center. She found further engagement in LA's labor movement when she began working on a political campaign with Unite HERE local 11. This campaign advocates for legal protections for hotel workers, written by hotel workers, and continues to work with the union. She would like to thank Professors Martha Matsuoka, Seva Rodnyansky, Mijin Cha and Sylvia Chico for their constant support and commitment to the students.

# 2022 Community Action Award Recipients



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