SUMMER INSTITUTE 2016
ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

SI 2016 AT-A-GLANCE

This year we were able to welcome 61 students to the Summer Institute family. At the conclusion of SI, 100% of the participants reported that they were glad to have attended SI and would recommend it to a friend.

The program was held from July 30—August 23, 2016 and consisted of 6 units of baccalaureate credit with a General Psychology course instructed by Dr. Don Ryujin, a Writing Seminar instructed by graduate students, and a Psychology Discussion Group facilitated by 8 Learning Assistants. The students also received an extensive orientation to campus and its’ resources, as well as 10 special events; Orientation Weekend, Farmer’s Market, BBQ & Trek to the Arboretum, Academic Life 101, SLO Days/EOP Meeting, Sports Fest, Hearst Castle, Alumni Banquet, Closing Luncheon, and Closing Breakfast.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Alumni Banquet: This year we celebrated Summer Institute’s 32nd anniversary and had the pleasure of having 9 Cal Poly Alumni as panelists at the banquet. The Alumni were from various majors and varying graduating classes. They provided different points of view to the students, and they shared their experiences and words of advice to be successful at Cal Poly.

Hearst Castle: SI 2016 was the year of surprises! In collaborating with Hearst Castle staff, we were able to get free admission for all students, staff, and some volunteers. While this event was optional, it was a great Saturday get-away for students to learn about the Central Coast and its’ hidden treasures. We also had the opportunity to visit San Simeon Beach, where students enjoyed watching the elephant seals.
Star Farms: We partnered with Orientation for United Raza (OUR) to expand our yearly SI Reunion to students from 2012 to 2016, in addition to the OUR participants. Over 200 students participated in this event. We had the ideal location, perfect weather, great food, including tacos and shaved ice! Star Farms provided many opportunities for students to network with one another and activities such as swimming in the man-made lake, kayaking, sunbathing, and playing soccer, volleyball, or football. 100% of the attendees were satisfied with the event, and 97% reported that they would attend a similar event in the future.

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

While we have had several students recognized at Cal Poly in previous years, two former Summer Institute participants were recently recognized university-wide.

Mayra Mejia, a fourth-year Graphic Communication major, was highlighted by President Jeffrey Armstrong at the 2016 Cal Poly Fall Conference, attended by faculty and staff! Mayra has been involved in Summer Institute as a participant in 2013 and as a Learning Assistant in 2014, 2015, and 2016. These SI opportunities have allowed her to give back to students with motivation and support like she received from the program and its staff. During Fall Conference, a video was presented about Mayra’s story as a first-generation college student and how she has overcome academic and economic barriers to succeed during her time at Cal Poly.

Alicia Cruz, a fourth-year Sociology major, was recognized in the Cal Poly Magazine and website as she shared her story as a first-generation EOP student. Alicia was a Summer Institute 2013 participant and has been involved as the Program Assistant in 2015 and 2016 in support of planning and coordinating Summer Institute, working closely with the Program Coordinator. Alicia’s story showcased a video sharing her struggles as a first-generation student and how she hopes to give back to this community in the future.

MARIA’S RETIREMENT

After working with Student Academic Services as an EOP Academic Advisor and Summer Institute Coordinator for over 19 years, Maria Arvizu-Rodriguez retired from her position in May 2016. She currently works at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria, California as a counselor in the University Transfer Center. Although we deeply miss her, we know she continues impacting the lives of other students and empowers them to fulfill their academic and personal potential. Join us in wishing Maria the best in her new role!

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Throughout the existence of Summer Institute at Cal Poly, alumni have played a vital role in the support of Summer Institute students and the program, and have had the opportunity to participate in the Alumni Banquet. In the future, we are considering implementing an Alumni Mentorship Program for students to connect with alumni in their field of study and be able to receive one-on-one advice, words of encouragement, and internship opportunities to get a head-start on their career. We would love to connect alumni who can host industry visits with EOP students providing a first-hand view of what their future careers may be like.

If you are interested in receiving more information on how to get involved with Summer Institute, please select the link below to update your personal information.