

UC San Diego

PATHWAYS TO STEM (PATHS) PROGRAM

2023-24 IMPACT REPORT





PATHS PROGRAM

Our mission is to foster excellence in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) through enhanced access and mentorship. Our integrated approach leverages dynamic, multilateral partnerships to systematically address challenges facing first-generation and lower socioeconomic status students.

GOAL 1

Provide a robust student support package that addresses each individual scholar's holistic needs.

GOAL 2

Deliver ongoing, high-touch mentorship, advocacy, and academic support and advising via a team of dedicated graduate and faculty advocates.

GOAL 3

Support the development of scholars' individual personal identities through programming, interactions with leaders in social justice, and cultivation of their vision for impact.

GOAL 4

Nurture scholars' professional development through access, training and research opportunities, conference attendance and interactions with Stem leaders.



A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR



UC San Diego is committed to access and success through educational equity for all our students. The PATHways to STEM through Enhanced Access and Mentorship (PATHS) Program offers comprehensive student support infrastructure to counteract social inequities that impede the persistence and success of students.

Since the program's inception in 2017, PATHS has provided undergraduate scholars pursuing degrees in STEM fields with resources to ensure their success. We are deeply grateful for donor support. In partnership with support from other committed donors and partners, your generosity fuels our efforts to address the systemic hurdles students often face.

With gratitude,

Becky R. Petitt
Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

A MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR



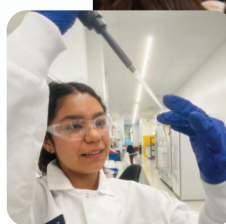
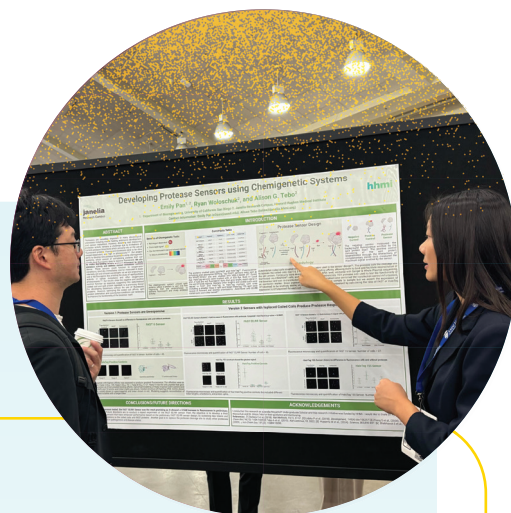
Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, the PATHS Program offers scholars a comprehensive support system tailored to their individual needs. It provides a scholarship; offers personalized mentorship, advocacy and academic guidance; fosters the development of personal identity; and enhances professional growth through hands-on learning experiences.

The results speak volumes: 85% of PATHS scholars have secured a research or internship placement by their third year, and 83% of alumni have advanced to graduate school or meaningful STEM careers. In June 2024, we proudly celebrated a milestone — the graduation of our third cohort, which grows our alumni network to 31 and marks 111 scholars who have been transformed by PATHS. Along the way, scholars are earning Provost Honors, publishing scholarly articles as undergraduates, winning prestigious leadership and service awards, and contributing to groundbreaking research in labs across UC San Diego and the nation. Together, these accomplishments show the transformative power of the PATHS Program and the potential of our scholars to shape the future of STEM.

Your generosity is creating ripples of change. Our vision of a more inclusive, equitable STEM future comes closer to reality with every scholar who launches their career, mentors the next generation, and leads with purpose.

Thank you,

Guadalupe Cruz Fernandez
Director, PATHS Scholars Program



1st in the nation

Among peer institutions for enrolling the most low-income students (*New York Times*)

67%

PATHS scholars are women in STEM

94%

of PATHS scholars have persisted in college or graduated

75 PATHS scholars

in 2024–25

79%

PATHS scholars are first-generation college students



SCHOLAR PROFILES



LUIS VELEDIAZ '25

Luis Velediaz '25 is a first-generation Mexican American student at UC San Diego. Inspired by his family's values and his passion for technology, Luis is majoring in electrical and computer engineering. He loves working with software and engaging in hands-on projects that solve everyday problems. Having grown up in southeast San Diego, Luis rarely saw people like himself in tech leadership roles, which motivated him to change this narrative for others in his community.

Luis is currently a software test engineering intern at Tandem Diabetes Care and has accepted the role of youth outreach chair for UC San Diego's Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers chapter. He is committed to empowering underrepresented minority groups in STEM through outreach events and tutoring. Luis aspires to start his own tech company or join a major firm to help advance new technological developments. He also plans to establish a nonprofit to provide low-income students with technology access to help them succeed.

"The PATHS Program has given me the chance to fully concentrate on my education without the stress of financial concerns. It has opened doors for me to take on leadership roles in outreach and land an internship that aligns with my goals."

LUIS VELEDIAZ '25



DIANA OLIVA NAJARRO '25

Diana Oliva Najarro '25 is an environmental systems major who hopes to pursue a doctoral degree in environmental studies to help solve issues on climate change and make sustainability more accessible to all communities. Diana and her family immigrated to California from Central America when she was ten years old. She comes from a single-parent household and will be the first in her family to earn a college degree. She became interested in STEM during her first year of high school. Diana plans to share her knowledge and experience, encouraging everyone, especially girls, to follow their passion for STEM.

"Seventeen-year-old me was nervous about starting college, mainly as a first-generation student. However, PATHS made it easy to transition to this new chapter in my life by being a support system. They have always given me the space to ask questions and build a community with my peers through different events. The PATHS Program has been key to my success in college, and I am grateful to be part of it."

DIANA OLIVA NAJARRO '25

SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH

The PATHS Program ensures the success of our scholars and equips them with the resources they need to succeed — at UC San Diego and far beyond. Through outreach to campus and community partners, we continue to increase opportunities and access for STEM scholars. Partners and donors can make the difference in the lives of our students. To date, we have:

- Received more than \$2.5 million from individual donors and family foundations
- Received more than \$4.8 million in grants from institutional partners
- Provided summer research internships to our scholars

Our campus partners include:

- Biology Undergraduate and Master's Mentorship Program (BUMMP)
- Inclusion, Diversity, Excellence and Achievement (IDEA) Student Center
- Jacobs School of Engineering
- School of Biological Sciences

With continued support from donors and institutional partners, we will be able to expand the annual number of PATHS scholars to 150, which will fuel our program's momentum and help build STEM leadership for years to come.

“Academic excellence and inclusion are not divergent but convergent, contributing new perspectives and valuable ideas. The PATHS Program ensures those voices become integral to STEM practice and advances.”

GENTRY PATRICK

Faculty Director, PATHS

Director, Mentorship and Diversity

Kavli and Dr. William and Marisa Rastetter Chancellor's Endowed Chair in Neurobiology



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Thanks to donors like you, we will continue to help our PATHS scholars as they pursue exciting opportunities in STEM fields. Your ongoing support allows us to provide the educational access these students need to achieve their dreams.

- Scholarships help us increase the number of first-generation scholars in STEM. Help us reach our goal of admitting 50 scholars each year.
- Stipends for summer research opportunities allow scholars to develop professional experience, grow their network, and expand their career knowledge and preparedness.
- Funds to build program capacity allow us to increase hands-on training, cohort-building activities, and our ability to support and advise more scholars each year.
- Endowed support will ensure the long-term sustainability of the PATHS program, while also driving institutional transformation and bolstering support for a greater number of scholars pursuing STEM degrees.

To make a gift online, please visit giveto.ucsd.edu. (Enter "E3432" in the search bar for PATHways to STEM: Scholarships or "E3431" for PATHS Program Support.)

For more information about making a gift, please contact:
John Duca | (858) 534-8305 | jduca@ucsd.edu

At UC San Diego, we believe that what we don't know today will forever change our tomorrows. Empowered by generosity and fueled by curiosity, we are unafraid to chase the unknown — to ask the questions no one has asked before and to push the boundaries of possibility.

Together with your support for the PATHS Program, we will unite diverse people and unconventional perspectives to propel limitless impact. Because we know that when we come together, nothing is beyond us.

UC San Diego