

UC SANTA BARBARA

# UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship Impact Report for the 2024-2025 Academic Year





## A Message of Gratitude

### From the Sr. Director of Development, Student Affairs

I am honored to share with you an update on the impact of The UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship. Thanks to the generosity of your members, this scholarship continues to provide crucial support to our hardworking Promise Scholars, many of whom face significant financial barriers in their pursuit of higher education. Your dedication to this program is truly inspiring and serves as a beacon of hope and encouragement to our students.

We are delighted to highlight the following student recipients of The UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship:

**Kimberlly Baldwin '26** - Communication | Environmental Studies

**Maxwell Barrueta '25** - Physics

**Qien Feng '27** - Pre-Biology

**Perla Flores '28** - Pre-Psychological and Brain Sciences

**Heath Milton '25** - Earth Science

Your ongoing support empowers these students to focus on their academic and career aspirations without the overwhelming burden of financial stress. Their journeys are a testament to the incredible impact of your generosity. We sincerely hope that their stories reflect the profound difference you are making in shaping their futures both academically and professionally.

On behalf of UC Santa Barbara and the Promise Scholars program, thank you for your steadfast commitment to our students. Your generosity is transforming lives, and we are eternally grateful.

With appreciation,

Delene Bliss  
Senior Director of Development  
Division of Student Affairs



**Kimberly Baldwin**

**Class of 2026**

**Major: Communication |**

**Major: Environmental Studies**

**"The sense of community that first drew me to UCSB has grown stronger through the Promise Scholars program, and I am grateful to be a part of it."**

Thank you for your generous support through the UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship. Your contributions have played an invaluable role in my academic journey without the overwhelming burden of financial stress.

Your generosity has made an immeasurable difference in my life. I have been able to dedicate myself fully to my education and take advantage of the many opportunities UCSB has to offer. Three years ago, I was anxious and uncertain about my ability to afford college. Today, I am proud to say that I am the first in my family to pursue a degree, and that is thanks to amazing donors like you.

I chose UCSB because of the immediate sense of community I felt when I first visited campus. I knew this was where I was going to thrive. I entered as a Communication major because of my love for connecting with people. This field will allow me to form meaningful relationships in various ways, whether through marketing, journalism, or interpersonal communication. Over time, I also discovered my passion for the environment, leading me to add Environmental Studies as a second major.

My Communication courses have been my absolute favorite. Conflict resolution, marketing strategies, research methods, and the various roles of society are all incredible topics I have found myself fascinated with. The professors bring an incredible depth of knowledge and creativity to their teaching, making every lecture a unique and enriching experience.

Being a part of the Promise Scholars program has provided me with an incredible support system. With access to an abundance of resources, I have never felt alone when facing challenges, whether academic, financial, or personal. The sense of community that first drew me to UCSB has grown stronger through the Promise Scholars program, and I am grateful to be a part of it.

As I look ahead to the future, I plan to apply for a position as an Assistant Resident Director at UCSB. Having served as a Resident Assistant, I have discovered that many of my strengths lie in fostering connections with fellow students and creating a supportive learning environment. Upon completing that role, I intend to pursue a graduate degree in Communication, with interests in human resources or marketing.

Please know that you have a profound impact on my life. Thank you for believing in students like me and helping make our dreams a reality.



**Maxwell Barrueta**  
Class of 2025  
Major: Physics

**“Without the support of donors like you, pursuing higher education would be much more difficult, and I’m thankful for the opportunity to learn at UC Santa Barbara.”**

I am honored to be a recipient of the UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship. I cannot express my gratitude enough for your generosity. Without the support of donors like you, pursuing higher education would be much more difficult, and I’m thankful for the opportunity to learn at UC Santa Barbara.

One of the biggest reasons I chose UCSB was because of the incredible financial support that was offered through the Promise Scholars program. Knowing that I could pursue my education without putting financial stress on my family was exactly what I needed to give me the confidence to take this journey toward my future. The breathtaking campus and strong academic programs made it the perfect place for me to challenge myself and explore new opportunities.

I chose to major in Physics because it excites me to study in a field that will enhance my understanding of the world. Some of my favorite classes that I have taken so far have been ME 153: Junior Design Class, ME 125: Machine Shop, and PHYS 119A: Thermodynamics. They provide hands on experiences that bring concepts to life and show how engineering can be applied in real-world scenarios.

Being a part of the Promise Scholars has been life-changing. It has provided me with a sense of belonging and has become a support system that feels like a second family. Through this program, I have had the opportunity to connect with faculty, staff, and fellow students who have encouraged and inspired me. I don’t know where I would be without my fellow scholars or the amazing staff. Because of them, I also have the confidence to continue pursuing my goals and make the most of my time at UCSB. They lifted me up when I had my doubts and may have needed a pep talk or two.

Looking ahead, I have several aspirations that I am eager to pursue. I hope to one day start my own business, applying the skills and knowledge I’ve gained at UCSB to build something meaningful. I hope to travel and explore Central America in the future. I am eager to experience a new culture and broaden my perspectives. After graduation, I plan to utilize my Physics degree and work where I can continue learning and grow while contributing to innovative projects.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of donors like you. Your support is my encouragement and motivation to succeed. Thank you for your belief in me and your commitment to making higher education accessible. Your contributions make a difference every day, and I am grateful to be where I am because of your kindness.





**Qien Feng**

**Class of 2027**

**Major: Pre-Biology**

**“My journey would be significantly more challenging without the support I receive through this program”**

My name is Qien Feng and I would like to say thank you for allowing me to be a recipient of this scholarship through the UCSB Emeriti Association.

UC Santa Barbara has a beautifully unique environment - being right next to the ocean and offering extensive resources for students interested in biomedical research. From the bioengineering faculty to the Materials Research Laboratory and many other incredible programs, UCSB provides countless opportunities that I aspire to take part in. I initially chose to major in Biology because of the vast unknowns in the field and the flexibility to explore different directions. However, as I progressed in my coursework, I developed a strong passion for Chemistry and am currently in the process of switching into the Biochemistry major through the College of Creative Studies.

Outside of the classroom, I work part-time on campus with the Campus Advocacy Resources & Education Center (CARE) office, which has been an incredible experience. My supervisor and coworkers are wonderful and so inspiring. I feel fortunate to be part of such a supportive team.

The Promise Scholars program has been one of my biggest support systems in college. It provides a dependable foundation that helps relieve stress and anxiety, knowing I always have someone to turn to. Whether it's academic guidance or personal challenges, I can count on the program's director and staff to offer support. For example, last spring I made a mistake on my FAFSA and I was able to turn to Holly for reassurance. Even though the issue was not going to be resolved immediately, her encouragement helped me stay calm through the process.

I plan to continue my education immediately after undergrad, as a master's or Ph.D. degree is essential for making a meaningful impact in biological research and development. Since joining a research lab on campus in early October, I have been learning about the research process and different laboratory protocols. My short-term goal is to conduct independent research under my professor's supervision by my third year.

I cannot thank you, the donors, enough. I have expressed my gratitude in previous times, but I want to emphasize just how much your generosity has impacted my life. My journey would be significantly more challenging without the support I receive through this program. What truly motivates me is knowing that people - some whom I have met and others who remain strangers - believe in me and my future. That trust and encouragement inspire me to keep pushing forward, and for that, I am forever grateful.



Perla Flores

Class of 2028

Major: Pre-Psychological  
and Brain Sciences

“Knowing  
that I have a  
network of  
people who  
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has made all  
the difference  
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and  
motivation.”

Thank you to the UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship for choosing me to be a recipient. I feel incredibly honored to be given this award.

I wanted to study at UC Santa Barbara from the moment I stepped foot on campus. The connection I felt here was immediate, and my time here has only strengthened that feeling. As I continue my academic journey in psychological and brain sciences, I am grateful for the opportunities that have shaped my education and my personal growth.

The Promise Scholars program has been such an invaluable part of my UCSB experience. Beyond financial assistance, I have been given a strong sense of community and support. The connections I have made with staff members who truly care about my success have been transformative. My program director, in particular, has been an incredible mentor. Holly offers advice and guidance that has helped me navigate not only academic but professional challenges as well. I have learned essential strategies that have improved my study habits, as well as professional skills that will be crucial in my future career. Knowing that I have a network of people who genuinely want to see me succeed has made all the difference in my confidence and motivation.

My goal is not only to graduate with outstanding grades but also to ensure that my academic achievements truly reflect my understanding and mastery of the subject. I plan to pursue graduate school, and I want to be fully prepared to take on the challenges ahead. Beyond academics, I aspire to grow as an individual—to gain wisdom, strengthen my ability to connect with others, and develop skills that will help me both professionally and personally.

Coming from a background that was not always ideal for learning, I cannot express enough how much your generosity means to me. I am able to see that with your support, you believe in my potential and are willing to invest in my future. To me, that is the biggest motivation I could ever be given.

The opportunity to be a student here at UCSB is one of the greatest feelings. Knowing that I have someone in my corner who cares about my success is incredible, and I will never be able to thank you enough.





**Gohan Huynh**

**Class of 2026**

**Major: Communication**

**"Because of your support, I have the chance to pursue my dreams and build a future that I once thought was beyond my reach."**

I want to express my gratitude for your generous support of the UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship. I am truly honored to be a recipient, and this has made an incredible impact on my educational journey.

UC Santa Barbara is recognized as one of the top campuses for the field of communication, and learning from the incredible faculty has been an enlightening and rewarding experience. Growing up near the ocean, I have always felt at home by the beach, and UCSB's location made it the perfect place for me to continue my higher education. Communication is such a vital aspect of our world, and I am passionate about studying it because I believe it is an essential way we connect, understand, and grow as a society.

I enjoy roaming around campus and seeing all the beauty that it has to offer. It is calming for me at times. One of my favorite traditions is grabbing a London Fog latte from the Buchanan Coffee Cart with my debate partner before practice. These small moments of connection make my time at UCSB truly special.

Becoming a part of the Promise Scholars program has transformed my college experience. In high school, I wasn't sure if higher education would be possible for me due to financial challenges and concerns about my academic standing. Because of the support I have received through this incredible program, I have been fortunate to explore the most amazing opportunities, including studying abroad - something I never imagined would be within my reach. More importantly, I have found a strong and encouraging community of faculty and peers who inspire and uplift me.

Looking ahead, I plan to earn my B.A. in Communication and continue my education by pursuing a Master's degree with a focus on Interpersonal Communication. My ultimate goal is to teach at the college level and give back to the institutions that have shaped me. Additionally, I hope to become a Speech and Debate Forensics coach, helping students discover their voices just as I found mine through this very activity.

To the incredible donors, your patronage has made an immeasurable impact on my life, and I cannot thank you enough. Because of your support, I have the chance to pursue my dreams and build a future that I once thought was beyond my reach. I will carry this gratitude with me always and strive to make the most of every opportunity that comes my way. Your gesture of kindness means the absolute world.



Heath Milton

Class of 2025

Major: Pre-Earth Science

"Because of the Promise Scholars program, I feel reassurance knowing that I have a strong support system to help me make the best decisions for my future."

It is truly an honor to be a recipient of the UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship. As I prepare to graduate from UC Santa Barbara this year, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey that has brought me to this point. The support I have received through the Promise Scholars program has been life-changing, and I am eternally grateful for the generosity of the donors who make this opportunity possible.

Ultimately, I chose UCSB because it is an amazing school for both its academic reputation and culture within the earth science department. The dynamic interactions between the ocean and land creates endless opportunities for fieldwork to allow students such as myself to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings. Getting to explore tide pools along the beach to analyzing rock formations in the hills, it has been an incredible experience learning here.

Being a Promise Scholar has been incredibly life-changing in so many ways. The friends that I have met through this program, whether it has been students, faculty, or staff, has been amazing. Everyone is genuinely nice and has made me feel like I am not alone.

Working alongside the staff, especially Holly, has been an amazing part of my experience. Her guidance and encouragement has helped me navigate the challenges of college life, and I always know that I have someone to turn to when I need advice. Because of the Promise Scholars program, I feel reassurance knowing that I have a strong support system to help me make the best decisions for my future.

As a earth science major, my passion for understanding our planet and its complexities has only grown stronger throughout my time here at UCSB. Knowing that there are generous individuals who believe in my potential and are willing to invest in my education is both humbling and inspiring. This support has not only taken financial burdens away immensely but I am given the confidence boost necessary to pursue my dreams wholeheartedly.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for your kindness, generosity, and belief in myself and students just like me. Your support has shaped my college experience in ways I never could have imagined, and I will carry this gratitude with me as I step into the next chapter of my life.



Your generosity through the UCSB Emeriti Association Promise Scholarship transforms the lives of deserving students while strengthening the legacy of excellence and opportunity at UC Santa Barbara.

**Thank You**

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