OFFICE OF
Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities

2026 Student Symposium on Research, Scholarship & Creative Activities

Phi Kappa Phi
Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Awards

First Overall Oral Presentation

Hector Gardea and Alonso Torres $750 ($375 each)
B.S. Electrical Engineering
Continuous Parkinsonian tremor detection dual-threshold during daily living activities and its clinical relevance
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Deborah Won

Second Overall Oral Presentation

Yahan Lin $500
B.S. Biochemistry and Biology, Microbiology option
Coordination of Circadian Rhythms and Cell Division by TlyA and FtsZ Interactions in Cyanobacteria
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Cohen

Third Overall Oral Presentation

Gabriel Bejar $250
B.A. Psychology
Coffee with a Cadet or a Cop: Examining Officer Rank Across Two Samples
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Alma Olaguez

California State University, Los Angeles
State Delegates for the 40th CSU Student Research Competition at San José State University

Campus Delegates

Behavioral and Social Sciences

Gabriel Bejar
B.A. Psychology
Coffee with a Cadet or a Cop: Examining Officer Rank Across Two Samples
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Alma Olaguez

Mia Hagooli Bolanos
B.A. Psychology
Loving in Vain: The Prevalence of Unrequited Romantic Love in Cal State LA Students
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Pamela Regan

Biological and Agricultural Sciences

Yahan Lin
B.S. Biochemistry and Biology, Microbiology option
Coordination of Circadian Rhythms and Cell Division by TlyA and FtsZ Interactions in Cyanobacteri
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Cohen

Emily Zempel
B.S. Biochemistry, minor in Bioinformatics
Computational Analysis of Antifreeze Protein–Mediated Enzyme Cryoprotection and Trypsin Resistance
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Caitlin Scott

Humanities, Liberal Arts, and Health

Natalie Sanchez
B.A. Liberal Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies in Culture and Society option
Challenging Human and Rat Narratives through Multispecies Education
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jeannette Vaught

Matthew Minor
M.S. Kinesiology
Kinesiology is Political
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Saemi Lee

Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology

Arthur Espinosa
B.S. Mechanical Engineering
A Two-Stage Workflow for Cooling Plate Geometry Optimization in EV Battery Packs
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Chris Bachman

Hector Gardea and Alonso Torres
B.S. Electrical Engineering
Continuous Parkinsonian tremor detection dual-threshold during daily living activities and its clinical relevance
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Deborah Won

Physical and Mathematical Sciences

Nathan Venegas
B.S. Biochemistry
Analysis of Microplastics and Their Organic Contaminants in Southern California Beaches Using HT-TD/Py-GCxGC-TOFMS
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Petr Vozka

Kenneth Stebbing Cabrera
M.S. Physics
How Shocks Influence Organic Chemistry in Young Planetary Systems: Insights from the Protostar L1527
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Terebey

Oral Presentations

The following students received an outstanding oral presentation award at the 2026 Student Research Symposium

Behavioral and Social Sciences I

Izalina Bittencourt
M.A. Psychology
Academic Self-Efficacy Buffers Against Math Anxiety's Negative Association with Math Performance
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Corinne Bower

Mary Gars
B.S. Nursing
Interventional Study on Mental Wellness Among Undergraduate Nursing Students
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Stacey A. Warmer

Behavioral and Social Sciences II

Rebecca Aguilar
M.A. Psychology
Physical Activity as a Moderator in the Relationship Between Age and Well-Being
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Robert Kennison

Gabriel Bejar
B.A. Psychology
Coffee with a Cadet or a Cop: Examining Officer Rank Across Two Samples
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Alma Olaguez

Biological and Agricultural Sciences

Morgana Morris
M.S. Biological Sciences
Comparative kleptoplastic capabilities of Elysia hedgpethi on two algal species.
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Patrick Krug

Yahan Lin
B.S. Biochemistry and Biology, Microbiology option
Coordination of Circadian Rhythms and Cell Division by TlyA and FtsZ Interactions in Cyanobacteri
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Cohen

Humanities, Liberal Arts, and Health

Matthew Minor
M.S. Kinesiology
Kinesiology is Political
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Saemi Lee

Natalie Sanchez
B.A. Liberal Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies in Culture and Society option
Challenging Human and Rat Narratives through Multispecies Education
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jeannette Vaught

Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology I

Charlie Sanches
M.S. Mechanical Engineering
Humidity-Induced Natural Convection Currents
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jeffrey Santner

Arthur Espinosa
B.S. Mechanical Engineering
A Two-Stage Workflow for Cooling Plate Geometry Optimization in EV Battery Packs
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Chris Bachman

Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology II

Akash Saraf
M.S. Computer Science
Machine Learning Automates Protein-Ligand Docking in Virtual Reality
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Negin Forouzesh

Hector Gardea and Alonso Torres
B.S. Electrical Engineering
Continuous Parkinsonian tremor detection dual-threshold during daily living activities and its clinical relevance
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Deborah Won

Physical and Mathematical Sciences I

Eric Gutierrez
M.S. Physics, Research option
Magnetic Properties of Ferrocene in Various Carbon Matrices Synthesized via Co-Pyrolysis with Nanodiamond
Faculty Mentors: Dr. Armen Kocharian and Dr. Oscar Bernal

Nathan Venegas
B.S. Biochemistry
Analysis of Microplastics and Their Organic Contaminants in Southern California Beaches Using HT-TD/Py-GCxGC-TOFMS
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Petr Vozka

Physical and Mathematical Sciences II

Kenneth Stebbing Cabrera
M.S. Physics
How Shocks Influence Organic Chemistry in Young Planetary Systems: Insights from the Protostar L1527
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Terebey

Laura Fredericks
B.S. Physics
The Solar System Before the Planets Formed: Investigating Physical Processes in Young Star System L1527
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Terebey

Poster Presentations

The following students received an outstanding poster presentation award at the 2026 Student Research Symposium

Behavioral and Social Sciences 1

Noemi Alanis and Jessica Vegas
B.A. Psychology
Understanding Adult Math Anxiety Through Childhood Math Experiences at Home and School
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Corinne Bower

Behavioral and Social Sciences 2

Fiona Baker, Diego Orozco, and Ruth Uribe -Kirby
B.A. Psychology
Associations Between Early Stressful Life Events, Dimensions of Emotion Dysregulation, and Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Yvette Z. Szabo

Behavioral and Social Sciences 3

Talia Leano
M.A. Psychology
The Relationship Between Mental Health Symptoms and Help-Seeking Intentions Amongst Muslim Americans
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Dana Saifan

Biological and Agricultural Sciences 1

Robert Ponce
M.S. Biology
International and Citizen Collaboration Reveals Unexpected Biodiversity of Sea Slug genus Ercolania Trinchese, 1872
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Patrick Krug

Biological and Agricultural Sciences 2

Rachelle Lucille Soriano
B.S. Biochemistry
Determination of single cell bacterial viability using surface plasmon resonance microscopy (SPRm)
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Yixian Wang

Biological and Agricultural Sciences 3

Parker Saikley
B.S. Biology Option Microbiology
Examining the Role of Rbp2 in Circadian Clock Regulation in Cyanobacteria
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Cohen

Biological and Agricultural Sciences 4

Jafet E. Canales
B.S. Biology Option Microbiology
Functional Analysis of Planar Cell Polarity Proteins in Zebrafish Development
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Andrew J. Aman

Education, Learning, and Letters

Violet Brianna Tirado

M.A. Communicative Disorders, Speech-Language Pathology Emphasis

The Effect of Visual Feedback on Identifying Dialect-Based Speech Sound Production Differences From Production Errors

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ian D. Morton

Engineering and Computer Science 1

Frida Melgar and Elizabeth Miranda

B.S. Civil Engineering

Toward the Incorporation of Microclimate Influences in Hydrologic Design

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Joseph Lucey-Renteria and Dr. Pouya Vahmani

Engineering and Computer Science 2

Tommy Taing

M.S. Material Science and Engineering

Utilizing Zr-based MOFs as Separators for Sodium Ion Batteries

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Yangyang Liu

Engineering and Computer Science 3

Alyssa Madewell

B.S. Mechanical Engineering

Effects of Nanoconfinement Geometry on Water Structure and Dynamics in Carbon Nanotube Systems

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Travis Hu

Engineering and Computer Science 4

Dervin Lopez and Je Beatriz

B.S. Mechanical Engineering

Origami-inspired/Bioinspired Jellyfish

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Salvador Rojas

Health, Nutrition, and Clinical Sciences 1

Adrienne Limqueco and Beth Santana

M.S. Nutritional Science

Fear, Food, and Federal Policy Change: How Los Angeles County Food Pantries Navigate New Landscapes

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Kathryn Hillstrom

Health, Nutrition, and Clinical Sciences 2

Vanessa Avelino, Inca Stienhans, and C. Kenobi Donart

M.A. Psychology, B.A. Psychology

Understanding associations between trauma and gynecological symptoms: The contributions of trauma type and mental health

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Yvette Z. Szabo

Physical and Mathematical Sciences 1
Elise Hastie
B.S. Chemistry
Development of Cyclodextrin-Based Nanosponges (CDNSs) For Molecular Sequestration in Complex Environments
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Brenda Andrade Rounds

Physical and Mathematical Sciences 2
Joshua Pool
M.S. Environmental Science
Flood Susceptibility Mapping in the Los Angeles River Watershed Using Random Forest
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Alireza Farahmand

Physical and Mathematical Sciences 3
Madison Ngo
B.S. Biochemistry
Modified Plasmonic Electrochemical Sensors for the Sensitive Detection of Dopamine
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Yixian Wang

Physical and Mathematical Sciences 4
Amanda Miloserny
M.S. Physics
Examining and Simulating Protostar IRAS-15398-3359 to Provide Clues to the Origin of Life
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Susan Terebey

Physical and Mathematical Sciences 5
Yabo Ogunduyile
B.S. Physics
Into the Thick of It: Searching for Heavily Obscured Supermassive Black Holes with Chandra
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Margaret Lazzarini