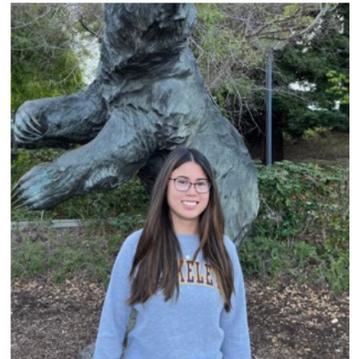
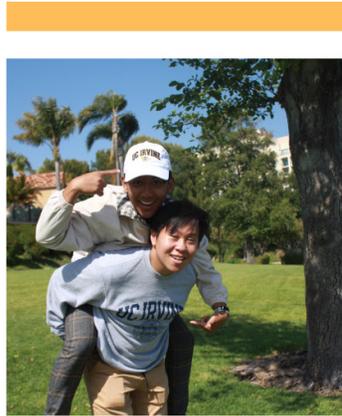


# Pace HAREBRAIN



Long Beach Poly High School PACE Parent Group Newsletter

Spring 2023



## PACE Parent Group scholarship application process underway

Attention all PACE seniors: The PACE Parent Group is currently accepting scholarship applications.

The application, in the form of a Google Doc, was sent to all seniors via email on Feb. 16. Applications must be completed and turned in by March 2.

PACE Parent Group scholarships are primarily merit-based and awarded on academic, extracurricular, artistic and community achievements.

PACE teachers review all the applications and select 20 finalists. Those applications

are sent to a team of independent reviewers, who score each applicant on a rubric. The independent reviewers also conduct one-on-one interviews with each finalist.

Based on the interviews and rubric scores, the reviewers choose 10 applicants to receive the scholarships.

Recipients of the scholarships will be asked to contribute an article to the PACE Harebrain newsletter in the fall of their first year in college. Turn the page to read submissions from all 10 of last year's recipients.

### PACE PPG Scholarship Process

**March 2:** Applications due

**March 7-14:** Teachers review applications and choose 20 finalists

**March 17-31:** Independent reviewers use rubric to evaluate finalists

**April 1:** Independent reviewers conduct interviews with finalists

# Scholarship Recipients Take Every Opportunity in College

The 10 PACE students who received PPG scholarships in 2022 have hit the ground running in college, acing their classes while participating in sports and activities.



Inanna Khansa at  
University of Chicago

Greetings from UChicago! My first quarter has been a true roller coaster, but unlike UChicago's epithet of "where fun goes to die," I had a great time in Chicago while exploring my various academic interests. From my first taste of proof-based math to writing papers, college has been a whirlwind that allowed me to learn things I never touched on in high school, such as medieval Islamic History and pure mathematics. The work was difficult in the beginning as I wasn't used to the level of writing or taking a proof-based math class, but my experience in PACE helped me with time management and developing good study techniques, so now, a quarter later, I'm thriving! Furthermore, after taking many AP classes with PACE, I met a lot of my core requirements and now am looking at the possibility of a triple major of math, economics, and public policy (thanks UChicago for the flexibility to do that!).

Outside of my studies, I am interning with the League of Women Voters in hosting aldermanic candidate debates for Chicago elections. After working at a few forums, I got to interact with the various candidates and will also be a moderator for one of the forums myself. Being in clubs such as speech and debate and MUN prepared me for college debate and joining the UChicago Undergraduate Moot Court Team, where because of that background (and awesome advisors like Mr. Gillogly and Mr. A), my partner and I were in the top 16 teams in the nation.

Outside of work and copious hours at the library, I've been enjoying playing in the chamber orchestra, continuing what I learned from playing in the Poly Orchestra and Marching Unit. I've also been doing a variety of intramural sports such as broom ball and midnight soccer. Even though you're at college to get a degree, you should also enjoy your years there, take care of your mental health, and make connections with the people around you. Ultimately, PACE is great preparation for all aspects of college, and even though it's a steep learning curve at first, PACE helped me to quickly overcome it.

—Inanna Khansa, University of Chicago

Greetings from the Bay Area! My name is Linda Tran, and I am currently a freshman at Stanford University, potentially majoring in symbolic systems. Since arriving here, I have been keeping myself busy with a lot of different activities. The well-rounded Stanford curriculum has allowed me to take a vast variety of classes ranging from computer science to lifestyle medicine. Besides school, I am on the club golf team, on the core leadership team of the Stanford Vietnamese Student Association, and a member of the surf club.

This first quarter has been more than I could ever have dreamed of, and I owe a lot of the thanks to everything I learned while in the Poly PACE program. The college quarter system can seem very fast-paced and daunting at times, but with the rigorous courses and abundance of AP choices offered for PACE students, I have been well prepared for what lies ahead for me. The effective reading and test-taking skills I learned in Mr. Gillogly's and Mr. Meckna's classes and the strong chemistry foundation I built in Mr. Gillette's class have been a huge asset to have in college.

Overall, I am excited for what the future has in store for me. I know that the next four years might not always be a walk in the park, but with the preparation I have received from PACE and the support from many PACE alumni here, anything is possible. And to the current PACE students, best of luck on your college applications! Everything happens for a reason, so it'll all work itself out in the end.

—Linda Tran,  
Stanford University

Greetings from Providence, Rhode Island, Jackrabbits! My name is Hamid Torabzadeh and I'm a first-year at Brown University studying public health. As I write this, I am preparing for



Linda Tran at  
Stanford University

my final exams and wrapping up my first semester in college. Despite the quick transition to college, I vividly remember the marching band performing on the rally stage and Mr. Gillogly's beloved Room 415!

At Brown, I am taking advantage of the open curriculum and taking introductory courses in general chemistry and public health while also exploring other topics like the economic effects of COVID-19 and global disparities in my first-year seminar. PACE core courses like AP U.S. History and the English sequence were key in preparing me for my college workload: I identified how to find the best ways to learn for me, how to study, and the best methods for asking questions to make connections between content. PACE particularly helped me build strong time management and organizational skills—balancing school, clubs, and time with friends. At Brown, I am more comfortable managing my assignments in classes, making time for clubs like the Brown Healthcare Investment Group and Iranian Student Association, and hanging out with friends in the random college moments like playing ping pong in the dorm hallway or going to the WaterFire shows in downtown Providence. With the PACE emphasis on overall wellness (physical, mental, social), I am confident to pursue any of my interests and take on any challenges at Brown.

In the classroom, PACE made me a better listener, collaborator,



**Hamid Torabzadeh**  
at Brown University

and learner. Whether through Mr. Montooth's environmental business plan competition, Ms. Schol's schema assignment, or Mrs. Baca's final calculus project, PACE provided me with a supportive and diverse environment to grow and learn from others with very different interests, skills, and talents. PACE taught me the importance of actively seeking out knowledge and not being afraid to put myself out there.

I look forward to all my PACE experience continues to offer me at Brown and beyond! —*Hamid Torabzadeh, Brown University*

Going into college I was always told that it was tough and that no matter what, I wasn't going to be ready for the workload. I can tell you firsthand that my first quarter at UCLA was a breeze thanks to the preparation from PACE. After the readings from AP Euro, daily quizzes from AP U.S. History, and timed essays from English, you will be prepared for all the workload at college. AP Seminar and Research with Mrs. Lawrence has especially prepared me for the research projects that come with being a part of a research institution. PACE also helped me gain the skill set of balancing numerous assignments and extracurriculars at once.

Being in a program full of intelligent PACE students has helped me as well. Surrounded by clever and bright students in my classes

always kept me on my feet. I also was able to seek guidance and help from my peers on numerous occasions when I may have struggled with the content in class.

Being in an intense program like PACE, I was always faced with a challenge. There was never an easy class, each class was its own challenge, and sometimes even each unit was a challenge

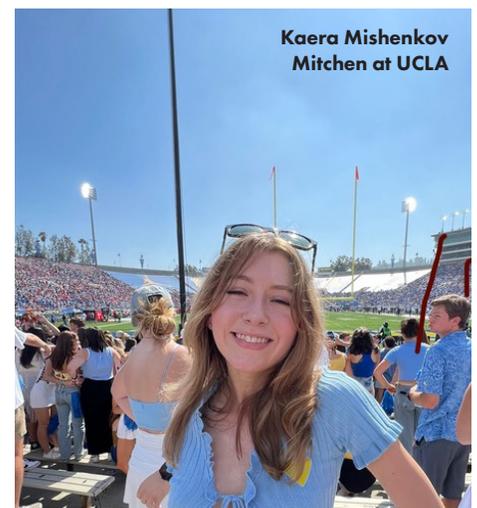
of its own. This not only kept me on my feet, but also made sure I was always engaged. In return, it has challenged me to be the best student and as attentive as I could be and as prepared as I could be for university. —*Hebah Halibi, UCLA*



**Hebah Halibi**  
at UCLA

Greetings from the Rose Bowl! I recently finished my first quarter at UCLA as a pre-data theory major. I'm so happy to be in SoCal and on our beautiful campus! There are always events happening on campus and in Westwood, from being in one of the 1,000-plus clubs to seeing movie premieres to attending sporting events (coming from Poly, it's great to be at a college that also has such a prominent sports tradition!). Plus, the food here is amazing; I get to eat restaurant-quality food for every meal. My favorite dining hall is Epicuria, which has Mediterranean-style cuisine and always serves delicious pasta and desserts such as tiramisu!

Academics-wise, our professors are top-notch, and both my major-related and my general education classes are intriguing; I feel that PACE prepared me well thanks to its flexibility for advanced study in my subjects of interest—which for me were math and computer science—and its diverse core curriculum that ensured I was well-rounded in other subjects like English, history, and science. In college, your classes come with the assumption that your motivation for learning comes from within, and thus require a strong work ethic for success. The study habits I've acquired over my years in PACE have stuck with me and allow me to thrive in the independent environment



**Kaera Mishenkov**  
Mitchen at UCLA

of college classes while allowing me to have a social life and pursue other interests. Alongside my college work, I've been self-studying so I can take online data analyst and data scientist certifications, giving me a head start in my professional career.

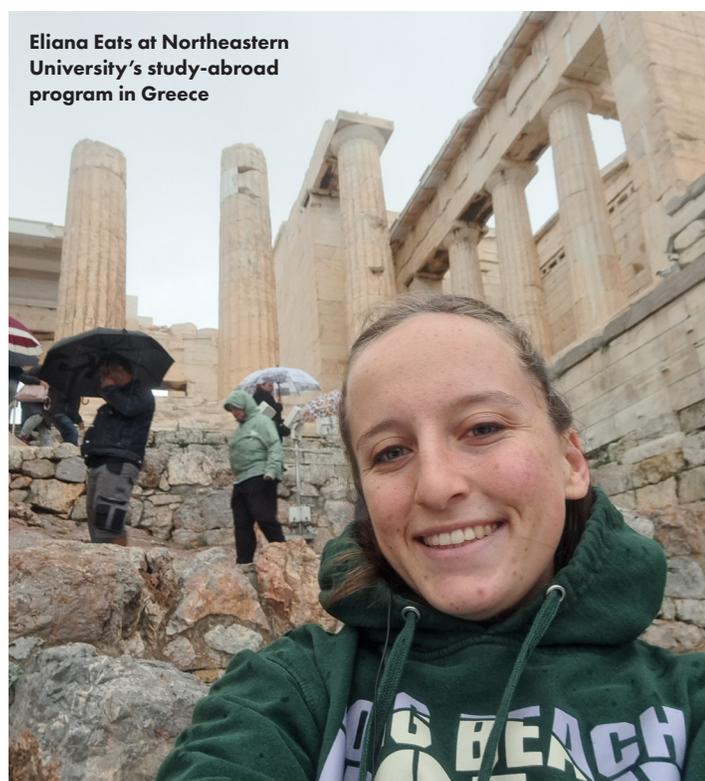
As difficult as it was at the time, I am so glad I went through the PACE program. I miss my amazing teachers and peers/friends, and I urge everyone to make the most of their remaining years at Poly!

—Kaera Mishenkov Mitchen, UCLA

Hello from the Parthenon of Ancient Greece. My journey post-high school has been pretty untraditional. Most people get accepted to their university and arrive on campus in the fall. Not me. I ended up studying abroad during my first semester, in Greece. In those three months, I was a college student, but also a member of the world. I hiked Mt. Olympus, went scuba diving in the Aegean, spent three days sailing on a boat, cooked traditional Greek meals, and learned to appreciate Greek culture and language. During the weekends I continued to explore, traveling to other countries such as Germany, the Czech Republic, Italy, and France.

I can't say it wasn't an adjustment, adapting to a new country, new culture, and new school all at the same time. However, now that I am back stateside in Boston, I'm having a much more traditional college experience here at Northeastern University.

The PACE curriculum has definitely helped in the adjustment back to a rigorous learning environment. I am an environmental and sustainability science and economics combined major, and two of the classes I am taking this year fit right in with what I learned in PACE my freshman year. I believe that the fact I can still remember the teachings of Mr. Manack and Mr. Montooth attests to the fact that what you learn at Poly will always stick with you in the back of your mind, even if you never thought you would use it again. PACE was a great chapter in my life, and I owe the school and program a lot for who I am today. Make use of your opportunities as they appear, and GO JAXX! —Eliana Eats, Northeastern University



**Eliana Eats at Northeastern University's study-abroad program in Greece**

Time went by so fast that my first quarter at UC Davis as a biomedical engineering student ended! I was warned about the fast pace of the UC quarter system, where after the first two weeks, I had to start studying for my midterms (it's not even the middle of the term!). However, PACE prepared me to not procrastinate, unlike one of my friends at Davis, who did 10 math assignments straight in the last two days before finals.

I finished off my first quarter strong because of the work ethic PACE provided me. Throughout high school, along with the PACE workload, I was involved in orchestra, varsity tennis, and community service. At Davis, my friends called me crazy because along with my first-quarter classes, I joined the tennis traveling team, biomedical engineering clubs, and a Christian fellowship club (all while getting eight hours of sleep like in high school!). The time management I learned in PACE carried over into my college life.

Some of the most important words imparted to me in high school came from my tennis coach, who said, "College is what you make of it." PACE gave me the ability to work more and gain more experience in a short amount of time. So right now, I'm getting out of my comfort zone and exploring new opportunities at Davis, making the most of my college experiences.

One of the most memorable moments from my quarter was Poly-related. Traveling to Stanford for a tennis tournament, I met an old friend from Poly. While I played against his teammates, he cheered me on with a "Gooooo Jackrabbits!" Of course, no one else understood, but as Jackrabbits, we know the saying, once a Jackrabbit, always a Jackrabbit. —Julia Sutedjo, UC Davis

When I experienced the first year of the PACE program back in high school, I had a hate relationship with it. There was just so much work in my classes compared to the ones back in middle school. I thought I would never have any free time to myself. I had thoughts of transferring to a different program.

However, I stayed, which was for the best. I made so many great relationships with classmates and the instructors who guided all of the PACE students. The fun and laughs throughout the program most definitely got me to stay in PACE and to actually treasure it. Most important, the program undoubtedly prepared me for the quick pace at UC Irvine. Coming into the first week of school, I really felt the bombardment of the courses and the work that came along with it. Stress was beginning to build up. However, after the first week, I realized that the course load was not at all different, if not less, than that of PACE. I was overwhelmed for practically nothing. After that realization, the first quarter of the school year went pretty smoothly, and I ended finals with all A's.

During the quarter, not only was I able to handle the course load and do well on my exams, I also had the time to do anything



**Julia Sutedjo at UC Davis**

I dreamed about when going to college. Some of these include not having a curfew, having my own freedom away from my parents, and learning new hobbies like dancing for a team. All of this was thanks to the PACE program. The thing that I at first believed would hold me back actually helped me expand as an individual.

—*Vietduke Thai, UC Irvine*

**H**i Jackrabbits! I've just finished my first semester at UC Berkeley, and it has been an amazing experience. I've been able to meet new people, experience Northern California, and excel in my classes thanks to PACE! PACE is known to be academically rigorous and challenging and I believe that prepared me both mentally and physically for the work that college threw at me. As a double major in two completely unrelated subjects, microbial biology and music, I need to take more classes than the average student. PACE taught me how to balance certain aspects of my life, such as studying, practicing, and having fun. Along with this, I developed good study habits, which transferred over to how I study in college.



**Elizabeth Richards**  
at UC Berkeley

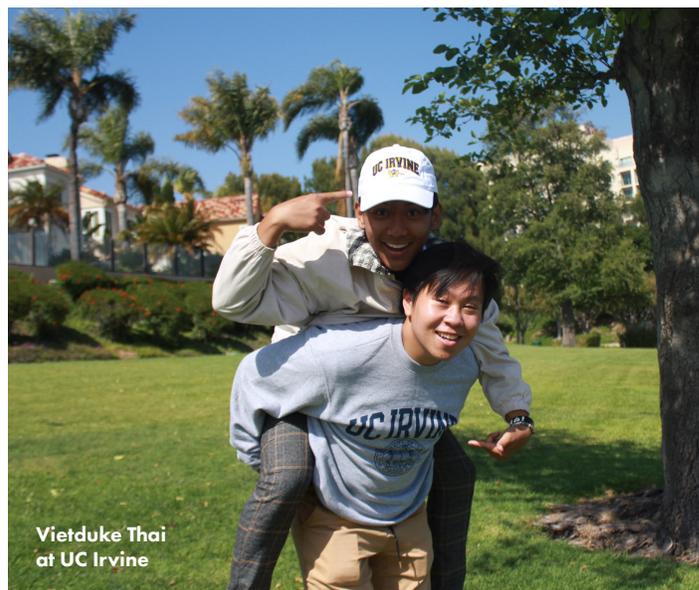
Here in Berkeley there are plenty of nice libraries and coffee shops to study in, and I'm glad PACE taught me how to be productive with my studying. Berkeley has been such a nice change from Southern California, and the school undoubtedly has a "work hard, play hard" mindset. I've been able to maintain both good grades and an active social life, and I owe it to PACE for preparing me to

go to such an amazing school!

While going to college can be overwhelming and intimidating at times, it is truly one of the most fun times I've had in my life. While I love being a Bear (Go Bears!), I'm still a Jackrabbit and am so glad I am. Go Jackrabbits! —*Elizabeth Richards, UC Berkeley*

**H**ey Jackrabbits! My name is Lauren Boysen, and I'm currently attending UCLA as a cognitive science major. I'm happy to report that I have had an amazing first quarter here and am super excited for what's to come. I've enjoyed the beautiful campus, electrifying football games, and incredible food (it really does hold up to its reputation as No. 1 public university dining in the country), and have already made lasting memories with my friends exploring the area.

It may not seem like much of a change moving 40 minutes away from Long Beach to L.A., but the shift from high school to college is quite jarring, in both good and bad ways. The quarter system allows



**Vietduke Thai**  
at UC Irvine

you to take so many fun and unconventional classes, such as the History of the Beatles, or Aliens, Psychics and Ghosts, without setting you off track for major or GE requirements, but it also makes classes extremely fast-paced and dense with information. Luckily, being in PACE and several AP classes simultaneously prepared me for heavier workloads and shorter deadlines, as well as the stress of big tests. High school also taught me how to keep my academics organized and avoid too much procrastination, which has been integral in maintaining a work/life balance this quarter. With much more free time, but also more work and studying, finding and establishing a good balance between staying on task and relaxing is important.

While leaving all of your friends and family behind may seem scary, the experience of making new friends and memories at college is something I wouldn't give up for the world. The freedom and independence that comes along with this new chapter of life are so exciting to navigate, and I hope all seniors this year are looking forward to this experience! —*Lauren Boysen, UCLA*



**Lauren Boysen**  
at UCLA



A group of PACE and CIC students joined forces to answer questions from Long Beach eighth graders and their families at the second of two Info Nights hosted by the PACE Parent Group.

## Info Nights Spread the Word About PACE

Over the past few months, eighth graders across Long Beach had to make a big decision: which high school to rank No. 1 on their LBUSD School of Choice form.

Although some students know immediately what school and pathway they will choose, we have found that many spend weeks and even months mulling over their choices. Adding to the challenge, quite a few students and their families have general misconceptions and questions about PACE and Poly.

For that reason, the PACE Parent Group teamed up with CIC volunteer parents this year to host two information sessions for incoming ninth graders and their families, featuring the people who know it best – our students.

The first session was held in November

at Urban Americana, and the second was in January at the EXPO Center in Bixby Knolls. Both venues generously donated their space for our events.

The sessions featured panels of diverse, eloquent student representatives who impressed attendees with their passion and dedication to PACE and their love of being Jackrabbits. With close to 200 attendees over both sessions, we made considerable strides in advocacy for PACE. We got to show off the well-rounded, inspirational individuals a program like this can produce.

A video of the second panel is available to the public on the PACE Parent Group YouTube channel, @paceparentgroup. If you know anyone looking to learn more about the program, we encourage you to share the recording with them.

## Spot the Stickers!

You might have noticed something new on your PACE student's water bottle or laptop: a brightly colored PACE-themed sticker! Right before the winter break, we gave every student a goody bag of treats and PACE swag designed by our parent volunteers.

We're working with the student-run PACE Club to develop more merchandise this spring and hope to have it available by the end of the school year!



PACE Parent Group (PPG) is a non-profit board consisting of PACE parent volunteers who raise and manage donations in order to provide additional support to the PACE academic and scholarship program.

- |                         |                        |
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