



# THE HAREBRAIN

Long Beach Poly High School PACE Parent Support Group

Spring 2020

## Dear PACE Families,

We are always eager to share valuable information from our PACE program leaders and highlight the PACE happenings around campus. In this edition, in particular, we hear from the last 4 of our 2019 PACE Scholarship recipients who share their thoughts on their new college experience from the fall. When the COVID-19 pandemic slowed our world to a near standstill, this issue of our Harebrain was near ready for press. We have not attempted to modify any articles, but we trust you'll enjoy this edition in light of all that has changed in these past few weeks. As always, if there is something you'd like to see in future Harebrain publications, don't hesitate to share your thoughts at [www.paceparent.org](http://www.paceparent.org). Stay Safe.

## Welcome to the Class of 2024



**Samantha Lawrence,**  
**PACE Facilitator**

Welcome to Long Beach Polytechnic High School, the home of Scholars, Champions, and Musicians. Welcome to PACE. As an incoming freshman, you will be challenged intellectually; you will be encouraged to develop and define your individuality. You will be inspired to explore and embrace your school community. The next four years will go by very quickly. Get involved early and take advantage of the support systems that are here for you. Use the resources that Long Beach Poly and PACE have to offer. We will continue to develop programs and supports that serve you, but only through participation in the community can we understand and work to serve you effectively. If you do so, there is no doubt in my mind that you will enjoy the process.

Poly has many positive traditions and there is much school pride. As you enter the campus, you will notice an engraved motto that reads, "Enter to learn, go forth to serve". Remember, you have been admitted to one of the most prestigious high schools in the country. Poly is known nationwide for its impressive student college acceptances, Advanced Placement pass rate,

outstanding sports, excellent music programs and more. It is not by accident that you have been invited to join this dynasty and I look forward to your future contributions.

Please keep an eye out for emails and mailings from LB Poly, the PACE office, and the PACE Parent Support Group in the coming months. We are very excited to have you as our newest crop of Jackrabbits!

## Congratulations CLASS OF 2020!

As I reflect upon the past four years, I am reminded of the many triumphs and trials you have encountered. My journey with you has been a very enriching and rewarding one, especially as I have observed the individuals you have become. You are extraordinary as a class. As individuals, you consistently forged ahead and eventually succeeded in overcoming the challenges that were presented to each of you in different ways; for this, truly you are to be commended.

Traditionally, as PACE classes before you, you set and kept your standards high. Many of you will be relocating to different states and countries. You persevered and have earned your way into amazing colleges and universities. I am confident that you will continue to set records and forge new trails. Stay confident, caring, enthusiastic about learning and excited about preparing for your future. Know that you are capable of accomplishing anything that you put your mind to do and will one day succeed in making even greater contributions to your chosen environment, future professions and society. I have observed you model the Poly motto: "Enter to learn and go forth to serve." As you transition into your new college environment, hold fast to the Long Beach Polytechnic motto, it will serve you well.

I wish the very best for all of you.

*Thank you to our recent PACE Donors!*

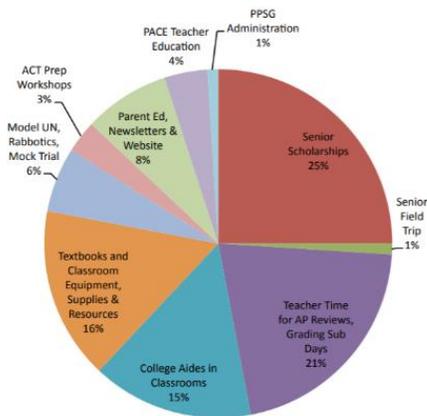
It's easy at [www.paceparent.org](http://www.paceparent.org)

## PACE Fundraising

Faraneh Chamran, PPG Board Member

On behalf of the PACE Parent Group (PPG), teachers, counselors, and administrators, I'd like to extend our sincere gratitude for your ongoing participation and support of this excellent academic program that is PACE. Your contributions are critical for PACE to maintain its momentum and expand its supplementary support of our PACE students so they can excel in their academic and professional goals.

Do you sometimes ask: "Why PAY for PACE? Isn't Poly a public school supported by my taxes?" LBUSD and our tax dollars do not cover the added support our students receive in PACE. The benefits of your donations to PACE make SAT and ACT prep possible, provide extensive AP test prep, enhance



2019-20 Distribution of PPG Funds

Model UN and Robotics programs, provide classroom college aides and supplemental classroom materials, parent education, and merit-based scholarships, just to name a few. It adds up to about \$150 per student each year to fund these services.

On a Personal Note: as a mother of a freshman in PACE and as a new PPG Board member, I'm ever so confident that my daughter is on the receiving end of a top notch academic program and I'm witnessing first-hand the work of the PPG Board to ensure our kids receive the best tools, resources, and experience possible. It is my pleasure and honor to be part of this unique program.

We welcome your donation by check in the enclosed envelope or visit [www.paceparent.org](http://www.paceparent.org) and click the donate button. Also, PACE program support is often eligible for corporate matching if your company encourages charitable community support by matching employee contributions to educational institutions. Does your employer match?

## In the Works.....

**PACE BREWHANA Mixer**  
@ Dutch's Brewhouse in Long Beach

Enjoy *exclusive* PACE Pilsner on tap

Great food, drinks and prizes to benefit PACE.



## C-SPAN STUDENTCAM 2020

C-SPAN announced the winners of the StudentCam competition and this year is one of, if not Poly's most successful year ever. We had a first prize, a second prize, a third prize and three honorable mention winners. That's over \$5,500 for our students and tons of recognition.

In documentary submissions from over 5,300 students representing 44 states and Washington, DC. students addressed the theme, "What's Your Vision in 2020?" and were tasked with creating a 5-6 minute-long video on the issue they most want the presidential candidates to address.

### Congratulations to our C-SPAN winning teams:

*First Prize (\$3,000)*

**Hamid Torabzadeh, Katherine Padilla & Pia Hao** - 10<sup>th</sup>

*Second Prize (\$1,500)*

**Kyra Kawamura & Alexa Bryson** - 9th

*Third Prize (\$750)*

**Maya Randolph** - 9th

*Honorable Mention (\$250)*

**President Morgan-Barnes** - 9th

**Solene Millsap & Lillian Dailey** - 9th

**Diana Michaelson & Visud Chang** - 9th

Watch all the winning videos at

<http://www.studentcam.org/winners20.htm>

## PACE Parent Education



Thank you **Nicole Gracie**, for sharing your expertise with our PACE families in your presentation "Helping Students Find a College Match" on Feb 25th. It was well attended and informative with new advice relevant to today a-

bout navigating a college application process unique to each student. Thank you for sharing your helpful go-to websites to keep us moving forward.

### The Double Positive

A linguistics professor was lecturing his class.

"In English," he said, "a double negative forms a positive.

However, in some languages, such as Russian, a double negative remains a negative. But there isn't a single language, not one, in which a double positive can express a negative."

A voice from the back of the room retorted, "Yeah, right."



Patrick J. Gillogly,  
PACE AP United States History & Model UN

Long Beach Poly's Model United Nations (MUN) program is a class and on-campus club dedicated to teaching students about international issues and diplomacy through simulations. As an organization, Poly MUN facilitates student attendance at both local and national MUN Conferences where students debate international and historical issues while representing the interests of an assigned country or historical figure. This year, the program has already attended five conferences and was lucky enough to be able to take two trips to conferences run by colleges, including UC San Diego in October and the largest high school conference in the South at the historic University of Virginia. At the University of Virginia, delegates debated for three days in both pairs, where teamwork and planning were essential, and individually, where one must rely on quick thinking, networking, creative problem-solving, and consensus-building.



Audrey Moor, Jadyne Myers, Audrey Lotspeich

Looking into the future, the program plans to attend three more conferences before the year is up and hosting one of our own at the end of the school year. As you read this, our delegates will have likely just returned from New York for the National High School Model United Nations Conference sponsored by the United Nations in New York. The delegates will have debated with other students from around the world on issues ranging from global security, human rights, sustainable development, and many more. The delegates will have met with the permanent delegations to the UN for the country they represent giving them insider insight on what statecraft and international relations at the UN are truly like. There are opportunities to meet with NGOs and other UN agency representatives involved in the actual implementation of UN policies and resolutions around the world. This New York conference ends in the General

Assembly Chamber on the United Nations campus and delegates have a chance to qualify to speak themselves in that chamber.

Besides the New York trip, the other big event for this year will be Poly's second annual Jackrabbit MUN, a Model United Nations conference held at LB Poly and run entirely by Poly students. The program's first ever conference was held last year and was a smashing hit in the local MUN circuit. This year, the conference has expanded and is designing eight different committee rooms ranging from regulating surveillance technology to



Bayo Collins  
Tomas Hertzog, Kyle Widmark, Henry Pryor, Trevor Wilford, Alana Snyder, Jack Schwartz '19, Jonah Gaeta  
Leana Geather, PJ Gough, Ben Rodriguez, Georgia Buffington, Mari Shinozaki, Jane Acuff,  
Aurelius Cummings, Gracie Brounstein, Adriana Esposito, Kathleen Caton, Angelica Gonzalez, Danny Nguyen  
Vasco Gucev, Justin Lim, Tammy Pham, Kris Bergajo, Tikva Cohen, Kate Cassiano, Emily Hardesty, Kaelyn Moses, Juliana Covarrubias, Hamid Torabzadeh,  
Chloe Itoh

an emergency crisis response to a solar flare, as well as availability of contraception in developing nations and a historical crisis committee set in the 1920s Chicago. We will be hosting students from schools in Ventura County to San Diego County and hopefully a school from Tijuana. You'll agree that the Poly Model United Nations program is an extraordinary and authentic immersive educational opportunity for students to experience problem-solving on a global scale as well as introduce other perspectives on global issues. This rich experience is made available to many students who otherwise would not be able to attend through very **generous donations from the PACE Parent Support Group** and Superintendent Chris Steinhauer among others. This generous assistance provided scholarships to 17 of the 38 attendees to New York. Thank you to the entire PACE Parents Support Group and Poly family for all your support!

Visit our conference website at  
<https://www.jackrabbitmun.com>

If you are interested in donating to LB Poly MUN to offset the high costs of future conferences and events, please contact me at [pgillogly@lbschools.net](mailto:pgillogly@lbschools.net) or by phone or text at (562) 833-3149.

## More from our celebrated 2019 PACE Scholarship recipients on their new college experience



### ***Cybele Wong, UC Berkeley***

Hi all! I haven't even been through my first semester of college and so many things have happened academically and personally! I've already slept in a sleeping pod, had around 20 interviews, and a 3am sprint back to my dorm from studying at Moffitt Library. Before entering Cal, I'd never been rejected so much and so quickly before. But trust me, it's all worth it when you get that one letter of congratulations. Though there is more competition, the opportunities in college are boundless, and that is what I love about Cal. Being in PACE has definitely prepared me in terms of studying, skim reading, and surviving on a schedule of 4 hours of sleep. Also, the intense competition in PACE has really prepared me for the diversity College has been a wonderfully gratifying experience so far, but let me just say that I really cherish my years in high school now (yes, even senior year second semester). Right now, you guys might feel like you're stuck in a rut, repeating the same motions again and again just to get into college. In college, the freedom is nearly endless, which also means that you need to carve your own path. You

will get the chance to do that. Just enjoy the stage of life you're in right now, because as soon as you graduate there's no going back. I've had to learn how to do my own laundry, cook, and to navigate the transportation system. Time actually passes much quicker than I expected, because of those miscellaneous chores that are now solely my responsibility. I think what I miss most is being close to my besties and having home-cooked food.

College is certainly a transformative experience, allowing me to meet a diverse set of people and beliefs. Everyone is super supportive and kind at Cal, despite what our reputation says. I've had so many exciting new experiences, like meeting Steve Wozniack and participating in a real case with BBDO x Wells Fargo. College will expand your horizons and help you build yourself professionally while giving you a welcoming community. Just make sure to reach out and look for it!

And finally, let me leave you with: Be excited for college, but cherish the time you have now with your friends and family. Go Jackrabbits!



### ***Brittney Hun, UCLA***

I can't believe I'm writing this the night after my last fall quarter final at UCLA! Saying the quarter system goes fast is such an understatement—it sort of went like this: move in day, first day of classes, midterms, finals. I'm constantly applying and diving deeper into the topics that I learned in PACE, from reading Machiavelli and Erasmus to learning how to code Euler's method in calculus (this was when my hatred for coding developed).

PACE was a blessing in disguise for me. I found a community of people that built me up and learned that it's okay to ask for help. I was surrounded by teachers and students alike that had a love for learning, and I'm lucky that UCLA's atmosphere is the same. I'm experiencing this newfound sense of independence as I am shaping my own world here at UCLA, and realize that doing those calculus FRQs and daily APUSH readings built an internal drive that's still burning. I find myself applying the experiences I had in

PACE to my everyday life without even thinking about it. I feel as if I can speak for most PACE graduates but it really does prepare you for college, even if not in the ways you would expect. Sure, learning how to balance chemical equations and finding the limiting reagent is easier when it's the third time you've heard it (thank you Dr. Aberle and Mr. Gillet), but learning how to pick yourself up from a not so hot midterm grade is the greater victory.

It's funny how less busy I feel in college. I think I made it a point to slow myself down after being in such a fast paced, extracurricular filled environment for four years. This quarter, I wanted to find my identity outside of my grades, so I cut myself some slack when I fell short. Sometimes I'll walk the longer, scenic route to class to put it all back into perspective. I'm taking the time to build friendships, eat too much ice cream, and sit on the grass by Janss steps. It was hard for me to understand this a year ago, but college isn't just the bow on top of the PACE experience, it's the start of the transition into adulthood (cliché, I know). It's been such a bittersweet experience going from the safety net of the PACE faculty to daunting 300 student lecture halls, which is why a part of my heart will always be at Poly. Go jackrabbits & Go bruins!



### ***Naveed Torabzadeh, UCLA***

Greetings from Westwood, Jackrabbits! My name is Naveed Torabzadeh and I'm in my first year at UCLA studying Mechanical Engineering. I've now completed my first quarter in college, and, let me say, it went by really fast! Graduating high school and entering a college campus environment has been a huge but exciting adjustment!

At UCLA, I'm currently taking math, chemistry, and physics classes in preparation for the engineering classes I'll be taking later on. Thanks to my outstanding teachers in PACE and the high level of rigor that was offered in my classes, especially AP classes, at Poly, I've felt very prepared to tackle the material, pace, and workload of all of my classes at UCLA. I have already realized that a big part of doing well academically in college, and, truthfully, doing well in any aspect of life (physically, socially, emotionally, etc.), is having good, healthy habits. Academically, my time in PACE allowed me to learn in a rigorous academic environment where I improved my work ethic, time management skills, and study habits. More importantly, being surrounded by dedicated and motivated

peers and teachers in PACE provided me a supportive environment for me to grow and gain confidence in myself as a student. In PACE, I was constantly reminded of the importance and benefits of asking questions, working with others, and seeking out more information and knowledge.

Besides my classes at UCLA, I have joined Rocket Project and already driven out to the Mojave Desert to launch rockets 3,000 ft in the air. At Poly, I was very involved in the robotics team, and I'm thankful for PACE's support of Poly's robotics team because I have realized hands-on learning opportunities like robotics and rocketry are crucial elements of my education. In college, I've also been playing ultimate frisbee and soccer, and I've visited the MakerSpace several times to make some cool 3D prints. Much like Poly, UCLA is a large, vibrant campus with so much going on in terms of activities, clubs, and special events every single day. I've learned it never hurts to strike up a conversation with someone on campus or attend an event like a speaker panel or a meeting for a club you are interested in, there's just so much to learn about and experience in the mini city that is UCLA.

Overall, I am enjoying my time at UCLA and I am very grateful for the support I received in PACE. My PACE experience helped me develop habits and confidence in myself as a student that I will carry with me on my educational journey at UCLA and beyond.



### ***Lindsey Chou, Stanford***

As I lie in the midst of my winter quarter at Stanford, I've learned two things: one, that biking uphill is extremely difficult for one with calves as weak as mine, and two, that trees make for an excellent background to any sort of activity. While my classes have been lovely, and I've deepened my love for English and Psychology (while simultaneously discovering my absolute inability to code), one of my most significant adventures has been learning to fall in love with a new environment. There are so many new experiences to cherish — like being constantly surrounded by incredible people, the highs and lows of dining hall food, choosing from a wide assortment of unique classes, and mapping 8,180 acres of uncharted territory. In addition to the newness, though, I felt an immediate familiarity in the people I encountered at Stanford. Despite the still-mind-blowing fact that many of my classmates are Olympic athletes or have

conducted groundbreaking research, I nonetheless find myself laughing over nothing and struggling together with them just like with anyone else.

What I've found in both Stanford and PACE students is the drive to succeed and the perseverance to do so — the genuine curiosity that propels each of us forward, despite setbacks. The PACE program has granted me an invaluable resilience that I could not be more grateful for throughout my time at Stanford. While the PACE curriculum has fostered my work ethic, there is a steep learning curve when it comes to navigating responsibilities on a college campus. Thus, despite the work ethic I thought I had built up throughout high school, I still found myself slightly overwhelmed by the workload of college classes, the massive campus, applying to clubs, and trying to figure out how to do everything without clear instructions. Yet, if there's anything that taking Calculus with Ms. Amici or Euro with Mr. Meckna has taught me, it's that everyone is meant to fail sometimes. I completed my autumn quarter with my fair share of I-could-have-done-better's, but each and every failure has only served as an opportunity to improve in the future. The growth mindset I developed throughout my time in PACE has taught me to savor the good and learn from the bad, something I look forward to doing more as I figure out the person I want to be throughout the next four years.



## Food For Thought: Finding The Best Fit College

**Dana Zapanta, PACE Counselor**

As I continue to work with your students, guiding them along their college exploration, it is important to remember to avoid the “perfect” college pitfall. The work I do with your students aims to help them discover the best colleges for them based on numerous factors that fit their values and needs. Students should be able to truly connect to their college choices, and feel confident that the schools they ultimately decide to apply to will be ones where they thrive. As you and I work alongside the students during their college discovery, it is vital for them to keep an open mind, not limit their search, and learn as much as they can. They may learn about schools they have previously heard of or learn about schools that are brand new to them. I have included an interesting article I came across that highlights things to consider when searching for colleges to apply to.

### The Myth of the Perfect College

<https://www.cappex.com/articles/match-fit/myth-perfect-college>

*One of the most common high school rumors is the myth that there is only one perfect school for each student. So it is not uncommon for students to feel as though their life is ruined if they don't get into their first-choice college or university. Or, worse, they get into their favorite school but can't afford to enroll. This can taint their experience at the school they ultimately attend.*

*So don't worry, there are many places that are right for you! You can get a great quality education at thousands of colleges. The elite colleges graduate more PhDs in a year than they hire as faculty. All of those PhDs have to go somewhere else to teach.*

Ultimately, the work your students do to create a balanced college application list of dream, target, and safety schools should be one filled with best fit options. Every one of the three categories should consist of colleges they have researched, that support their values and meet the needs they are hoping to fill from a postsecondary institution. Please know the article above is not intended to alarm you but to encourage you and your student to explore all options and avoid the “perfect” college pitfall. The “best fit” school may not even necessarily be in state. According to the Los Angeles Times, “...colleges outside the state are increasingly flocking here to bolster their enrollment, offering less expensive in-state tuition, attractive financial aid and other lures.” I hope this helps you and your student make better informed decisions during this exciting time.

## UGH! College Admission Essays

While the extra free time of summer offers for some a myriad of options for rejuvenation and the mental respite from school, it's worthwhile to consider a mental activity that keeps your academic advances in tact, while helping you prepare for what's ahead. You've often heard that the best time to start your college essays is during the summer when you don't have the urgent demands of the classroom. This isn't just true for Juniors staring down their senior year. All students can benefit from considering the early stages of pulling together a winning essay. Start collecting thoughts on paper, an essay that has time to percolate, and mature over months and years. There are many online sources for past admission essay prompts and examples of winning essays, but the most important element of the essay is truly not the topic, but your own authentic voice. How do you develop that voice? Practice and specificity - decide on one significant memory or focus and write about what that moment is for you, how it felt, what lead up to it, and what transpired after it. Allow your freer mind to settle in and enjoy the process.

Summarized from many sources, here are thoughts for getting started:

1. The essay isn't meant to be your entire life autobiography. Consider a meaningful activity or experience that made an impression on you even if it didn't change your life. Start writing and get all your thoughts on paper. This is an exercise about finding the genuine “you” for Colleges to see.
2. An ordinary topic is not off limits and can be memorable and engaging.
3. It's about revealing who you are apart from everything colleges already have in your application.
4. It's not about being humorous. If you aren't naturally funny, your essay isn't the time to try to entertain. Use caution.
5. Think about your hook. Your first sentence is likely one of the most important. Try some on.
6. Consider bookending your essay – where an element from the beginning (theme, item, phrase, thought, etc) gets revisited at the end, most effectively done when the ending element reveals some gained insight.

## PACE Parent Support Group Board

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