



achieve

...opening a world of possibilities

HELPING CHANGE THE WORLD

Growing up in Bayview Hunters Point, I always aspired to help others. I knew that there were some environmental factors at play that weighed down my childhood friends—and me. This drive to help others eventually culminated in a dream to one day become a doctor/surgeon because I could help countless people who were not only from my background, but from all walks of life. To me, that is the best kind of medicine.

Through the **achieve** Program, I had the privilege of interning at the UCSF Mission Bay campus this summer, and had the opportunity to shadow plastic surgeons. On my first day, I had no clue what to expect, as I was only informed that I needed to be at the hospital by 6:30 AM. This was later explained to me to be the “normal” time nurses and doctors arrive at the hospital because surgeries begin early, allowing for more work to get done throughout the course of the day. The surgeon whom I shadowed gave me permission to enter the operating room

with him, a privilege only registered nurses and medical students are granted. I was lucky enough to watch as he performed a cleft lip and palate repair, a common birth anomaly in children. I saw a tumor being removed from the lower back of a patient, and lastly, I witnessed a marrow transplant from an 11 year-old’s knee cap to his oral cavity to promote the growth of teeth. Being able to witness these operations firsthand actually gave me an adrenaline rush. I am now even more excited and determined to go into the medical field.



Louie Mezie
ARHS '19

I am grateful to the **achieve** Program for acknowledging my dreams and giving me an opportunity that most high schoolers are not fortunate enough to receive. I also thank UCSF Children’s Hospital, and especially Dr. Balkin, for taking me in and giving me a taste of what it is like to change the world by helping one person at a time.

LEARNING ABOUT MYSELF

I had the privilege to intern at Morton Bakar Center, a lock-down rehabilitation center for elderly adults with severe mental illness. The work was extremely challenging, particularly for someone my age. My job was to help patients deal with their depression, anxiety, changes of attitude and hallucinations. I led activities such as self-care, music therapy, community circle, and workshops on wellness and hope.

Being a 16-year-old teenage girl, working in a rehabilitation center that had patients who were verbally and physically aggressive, was at first alarming. With more practice and the skills I developed, it became something that I no longer saw as a job, but a blessing. After only two weeks of shadowing my coworkers, my boss strongly believed that I was ready to become more independent and more hands-on with the patients. I started to lead group activities by myself, and though it was at times



Kaylianna Cadena
HNHS '19

challenging, especially when it came to patients being disrespectful to one another, I was still able to manage to calm them down and get back on track. I started to go on outings with patients, which consisted of going with them to a particular store where they were interested in buying something. On my first outing, I had an amazing time getting to know my patient as a person. Though I was interested in

learning about her medical history and how she ended up at Morton Bakar, I knew that none of that mattered because there was more to her than just her mental illness. We instantly connected. Maybe it was because we shared the same birthday, or because for once someone was treating her like a human being and not a patient.

While working there, people always asked me how I managed to successfully interact and deal with the patients. I explained that within the first couple of weeks, I noticed that many of the patients’ outbursts occurred due to feeling unworthy and incapable of doing something for themselves without help. Through these patterns of outbursts, I discovered that the only way to calm them down was by treating them like adults rather than patients. Once I saw that this method was successful, I realized that a way to help those who felt incapable of doing something was by encouraging them more and more to step outside their comfort zones and to try new things. This really helped patients break out of their shells.

My time spent at Telecare Morton Bakar allowed me the opportunity to obtain hands-on experience helping people recover from mental illness. I have come to realize that mental illness is like any other medical condition, and is more common than it appears to be. Thanks to this internship, I learned so much about myself. I learned that I have a passion for advocating for others. It can be an overwhelming and nerve-wracking responsibility, but it is one that I want to be trained to be able to take on. I now know the kinds of things I want to get out of life and what I want my future to look like.

GAINING INSIGHT

This summer I had the opportunity to work at Computer Technologies Program (CTP) in Berkeley, a small nonprofit organization that helps people with disabilities prepare for professional employment. When I first got to CTP, I was not sure what to expect because I was their first **achieve** intern. Everyone in the office was extremely friendly and welcoming. After meeting everyone, I was introduced to the type of work I would be doing: working as a receptionist, performing some small side projects, and most notably, working with the mBot, a small robot.

I thought it would be easy to work with the mBot. It seemed like a small child's toy, but as I began to use the robot, I learned there was a lot to it. It had many functions, such as sensing objects, following lines, repeating code, and much more. It started to look a bit overwhelming. Luckily enough, I had plenty of time to work with the robot and learned a lot about its functions and programming. I was able to connect the remote control, make it move around objects, and play notes and parts of songs. The goal of this project was to create lessons to teach children and adults about basic robotics. I was able to create five lessons by the time I finished. Although I thought preparing lessons would be easy, as I worked on them, I realized how much work goes into making them simple enough so people do not get lost. I never knew so much time and energy could go into making a simple lesson. Creating these lessons gave me more insight and appreciation for all the work teachers do.



Saul Cuevas-Landeros
SJND '19

Working at CTP this summer, I gained insight into many things. Not only was I a receptionist, but I was able to code like a programmer, learn like a student, make lessons like a teacher, and work with Photoshop like a graphic designer. It was a really amazing experience.



Jewish Home resident with **achieve** volunteer Daniel Chan-Artiga, ARHS '21

SUMMER SCHOOL

This summer I attended summer school at Holy Names. Those four weeks were a wonderful experience. I was able to meet some of the incoming freshmen at Holy Names and other **achieve** scholars. I was also able to bond with the amazing teachers and staff at Holy Names. Summer school made it an easier transition to a new school.

I learned so much while in summer school. The classes I took were Expository and Research Writing and Geometry Readiness. Mr. Greene taught me how to break down an essay so it is easier to write, and Ms. Ibarria taught me to always show my work in case I ever need to review how I solved a problem. Both teachers guided me whenever I needed help. However, I also learned what I am capable of doing by myself. In writing, I learned that my essay was good, but that it was hard to vocally express my ideas to the class. In math, I learned that some

days I was able to finish five tasks while other days I barely finished two. In the end, I was able to identify what I was good at and what I needed to work on, thanks to the help of my teachers.

Compared to other summer schools I have attended in the past, Holy Names was unique. The students and teachers built strong relationships, and the staff who were there every day bonded with the students. In class, not only did we write independently, we also discussed with each other and had thought provoking debates. I learned new ideas and perspectives from my peers. From this summer's experience, I gained a sense of reassurance that my freshman year at Holy Names was going to be a great one.



Norzin Lhadon
HNHS '22

LEARNING IMPORTANT SKILLS

This summer I had the pleasure of interning at Zuckerberg San Francisco General in the Department of Education and Training. When I first started my job at ZSFG, I was welcomed by a team of six intelligent, kind, and very humorous people. I had the opportunity to fulfill at least one project for each member of this team, which meant I had the honor of becoming close to each of them. On my first day, I learned how to pack a wound, stop bleeding, address a head trauma, insert screws and rods into a bone, and insert an IV. A few other tasks I completed were data entry, poster making, CPR mannequin upgrading, and hospital inspections.

During my internship at ZSFG I learned a lot about perfecting both medical and people skills. As my supervisor Angelica would say, "We want to treat everyone with respect, even

if it is not returned." This quote made me realize that I have the power to change someone's day with my actions, even if they are not nice to me. My favorite part of working at ZSFG was getting to experience what it is like to work as a team. People in the office helped one another, even if it was not their job, which is the kind of relationship I hope to establish with my future coworkers.

Overall, this experience turned out to be very enriching. I learned so many important skills that will benefit me the rest of my life, and I hope to teach others what I learned at ZSFG.



KeShay Dumetz
MHS '20



Jamar Kittling
ARHS '20

Melanie Bullock
HNHS '17/Carleton '21

Sa'mya Wilson
HNHS '20

Kayla Jones
HNHS '20

achieve students at the highly selective summer CLAE program at Carleton College in Minnesota.

MY UNFORGETTABLE SUMMER

This summer I experienced my first **achieve** internship and my first official job. Through the Youth First Program! at the JFCS, I was placed in the programming department at Rhoda Goldman Plaza, an assisted living and memory care community. I spent most of my time on the fourth floor, where the Memory Care Department was located. When I walked in on my first day, I did not know what to expect, but my supervisors explained what my job would be, taught me how to interact with residents, and helped answer any questions I had.

My day consisted of assisting with activities, transferring residents, and interacting with them. In the morning I led a gentle stretching class,

and I helped my supervisors with the afternoon activities. I was able to spend one-on-one time with the residents while transferring them to lunch. Occasionally, I did paperwork and organized files. Every Thursday we had a department meeting where we shared highs and lows of the week, which were extremely helpful in teaching me how I could improve. Some of my favorite moments were playing balloon volleyball with the residents and decorating the floor for the Fourth of July.

This job taught me a number of things. I learned how to be more patient and understanding. At times the residents would become anxious and frustrated. There were residents who were less responsive than others, and it was a challenge to comfort them

when they were a bit agitated. Luckily, I had a great team that walked me through what to do. This job also helped me learn to work with different age groups and improved my social skills. In the beginning, keeping up the conversation with the residents was hard, but by the end I had grown closer to them and it was easy. I got to hear their stories, which was one of my favorite parts of the job, and many gave me life advice. One resident told me "a little trouble in life is okay." This was an unforgettable summer.



Isleen Justo
MHS '21

AN AMAZING SUMMER

This was my busiest summer ever. I had the pleasure of going to the **achieve** office to start the college process as well as working at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland through the CHORI Summer Research Institute Program.

It was both exciting and overwhelming to start the college process so early. We **achieve** seniors learned a lot of new terms such as yield, Pell Grants, and how to use the Net Price Calculator to estimate how much college will cost. We worked on and completed our personal statements, finished most of the Common Application, and did research on colleges that we are interested in attending. We also had a chance to be interviewed by colleges that partner with **achieve**. The idea of the interviews

was nerve-racking because I had no idea what I would be asked. It turned out that I had worried for no reason since the interviews went well.

My second summer experience was participating in CHORI, a science program that allows high school and college undergraduate students to do research under the guidance of a mentor. Students have the chance to work in either a laboratory or clinical setting. I worked in a clinical setting under the guidance of my mentor, Dr. Coleen Sabatini, Chief Director of the Orthopedic Center in the hospital's outpatient center. I did morning rounds with Dr. Sabatini, and during that time she mostly treated patients with clubfoot, a deformity of the foot. I was able to see how Dr. Sabatini interacted with both

the patients and their parents, and how she built a solid relationship with them.

Besides working with my mentor, I did research on stem cell clinics in California to learn whether the treatments they were advertising to the public were actually supported by scientific literature. It was interesting to learn the various procedures and protocols needed in order to do research. I attended lectures given by scientists, doctors, and nurses. Most of them discussed their research and talked about how they became the



Nicholas Nido
ARHS '19

professionals they are. I was also able to attend a vital signs clinic and learned how to put on a cast.

At the end of the summer, I presented my research at a symposium with about 100 people in attendance. I was very nervous since I was presenting a subject to people who had dedicated much of their lives to that subject. However, I managed to get through the presentation with little to no blunders, and was able to answer the questions from the audience with ease.

I had an amazing summer. It felt so surreal being able to work in an actual hospital with a doctor and meeting and interacting with patients. The summer was also a bit of a wake-up call for me since it reminded me that college is right around the corner.



COLLEGE TOUR

achieve juniors tour colleges and universities: Amherst, Hampshire, Harvard, Northeastern, Smith, Trinity and Wesleyan



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- UC Berkeley College of Letters and Science
- UC Berkeley Recreational Sports
- UCSF Volunteer & Guest Services
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ALUMNI CORNER



Rebecca Alvarez Story
 HNHS '03, UCB '08, SFSU '13

I was introduced to the **achieve** program in 7th grade. I was part of summer programming at Girls Incorporated and heard about a new scholarship that was being offered to attend Holy Names, a private all-girl high school. I always had a hardworking personality so I thought it would be a good idea to apply, and was fortunate enough to receive the scholarship. Little did I know the impact it, and the **achieve** Family, would have on me.

Growing up, I always admired my parents' ability to push through obstacles. They both emigrated here from Mexico as teenagers and taught my younger brother and me to work hard and strive for the best. For me, that meant getting into college. They encouraged me every day, but like many first-generation students, I needed lots of guidance since no one in my family had ever gone to college. This is why **achieve** made such a huge impact on my life path; **achieve** prepared me at the critical high school level and helped me get into college.

What I remember most about the **achieve** team is how their presence throughout my four years in high school was unwavering, genuine and kept me motivated. I had to work extremely hard in high school to get the A's I wanted. I knew that college was my ticket to success and I was going to take advantage of every opportunity the **achieve** scholarship and being at a prestigious high school had to offer. I took every honors class and AP course offered and graduated HNHS at the top of my class. When it was time to apply to college, the college counselors at HNHS and the **achieve** team checked-in with me often to make sure I got everything I needed. I am glad to say I was accepted to the 10 four-year universities to which I applied.

I struggled with depression after overcoming a sexual assault on the UC San Diego campus my first year. I then transferred to UC Berkeley and often struggled to stay motivated. But the **achieve** staff taught me to reach out for help and find other communities where I would feel empowered. **achieve** was very supportive during this difficult time, continued to support my college goals and ensured I received the guidance I needed. Because of this, I was able to finish college strong with a major I created called Women's Health and Sexuality. If it were not for **achieve**, I am certain I would have dropped out of college.

Post-college I have continued being a passionate women's health advocate. I went on to earn a Master's in Sexuality Studies and worked as an expert consultant for various women's health startups in the Bay Area for 10 years. Two years ago, I was inspired to start my own company, and in true **achieve** fashion, took a positive risk to start it. Early 2018, I launched my own company, The Bloomi (<https://thebloomi.com>), the first marketplace for healthy intimate care products. We are revolutionizing the way women/femmes shop for and learn about their bodies.

Equally as important to me is the fact that I have a 10 year-old daughter—and upcoming baby #2—who directly benefit from the support I received from my **achieve** family. My daughter is part of the next generation of strong leaders who is already years ahead of

where I was at her age: she loves math, has pitched business ideas, is an award-winning videographer, is learning her 4th language, and is one of the best dancers I have ever seen. To see her is to see the impact of **achieve**.



achieve alumni event speakers: Sofia Ortega-Guerrero, HNHS '18 / Yale '22, and Dijon Morrisette, ARHS '08 / USC '12

What is my advice to **achieve** students? Take advantage of this moment and of your education. Work hard to get into a University that excites you, be proud to be there and work hard to stay there. Also, seek out support. We need to help each other when life gets tough and need a reminder of our potential. Stay in touch with one another, stay in touch with **achieve**, and do not forget to give back. 