

EDUCATION

University of California Berkeley | *PhD. Environmental Science, Policy, and Management* | 2026 - Present
University of California Santa Barbara | *B.A. Marine Science* | 2021-2025 | GPA: 3.96 | Highest Honors, Top 2.5%

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Paua Marine Research Group: Long Beach, CA

Dive and Research Technician (January 2026 - Present)

- Assist the diving and data analysis objectives of eelgrass and abalone restoration

Bren School of Environmental Science & Management: Santa Barbara, CA

Researcher (January 2025 - April 2026)

- Compile fin measurements for 522 shark species to design finning vulnerability models

UCSB Ocean Recoveries Lab: Santa Barbara, CA

Undergraduate Researcher (January 2022 - April 2026)

- Led a project to characterize predation on coral reefs in French Polynesia
- Led a project to study the effect of fish-coral mutualisms on coral physiology in French Polynesia
- Led a project to predict ecosystem functions of California seaweeds using herbarium specimens

Bren School of Environmental Science & Management: Santa Barbara, CA

Data Research and Communication Outreach Intern (June 2022 - September 2022)

- Mapped whale entanglements and potential fishing exclusion zones in California
- Drafted media and communication materials to inform non-profits about marine debris

UCSB Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration: Santa Barbara, CA

Student Coordinator (August 2021 - March 2023)

- Trained and supervised volunteer invertebrate monitoring in Devereaux Slough
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PUBLICATIONS

Vega, H., & Feitosa, L. M. (2026). *Fin Atlas, a comprehensive dataset of shark fin morphometrics for conservation and eco-evolutionary analyses* (Version 1.0) [Computer software]. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19334680>

Vega, H., & Feitosa, L. M. (2025). *Fin Atlas, a comprehensive dataset of shark fin morphometrics for conservation and eco-evolutionary analyses*. (Version 1.0) [Dataset]. <https://doi.org/10.5061/dryad.7h44j1081>

(In Review) **Vega, H., & Feitosa, L. M.** (2026). *Fin Atlas, a comprehensive dataset of shark fin morphometrics for conservation and eco-evolutionary analyses* [Scientific Data]

(In Review) **Vega, H., Osenberg, C., Seifert, A., Munk, N., Stier, A.** Coral-Associated Fishes Accelerate Coral Wound Healing and Photosynthetic Recovery [Biology Letters]

(In prep) **Vega, H., Stier, A.** Data for Coral-Associated Fishes Accelerate Coral Wound Healing and Photosynthetic Recovery

PRESENTATIONS

Vega H. (2025). *Fish are friends and so are you!* Worster Symposium, Goleta, CA.

- Fifteen minute talk on work funded by the Worster Foundation and its impact on DEIJ

Vega H. (2025). *Coral-Associated Fishes Accelerate Coral Wound Healing and Photosynthetic Recovery*. UCSB Undergraduate Research Symposium, Goleta, CA.

- Fifteen minute talk on the role of coral-associated fish in coral lesion healing and recovery

Vega H. (2024). *Coral-Associated Fishes Accelerate Tissue Regeneration and Photosynthesis*. Western Society of Naturalists Conference, Portland, OR

- Fifteen minute talk on the role of coral-associated fishes in coral lesion healing and recovery

Vega H. (2022). *Approaches to DEIJ in environmental science*. Bren Mantell Symposium, Goleta, CA

- Panelist speaker about BIPOC experience and outreach in marine and environmental science

Vega H. (2022). *A Whale of a Problem: Mapping Fishing Debris*. Bren Mantell Symposium, Goleta, CA

- Poster on the locations of Southern California whale entanglements and marine debris

Vega H. (2021). *Invert Monitoring at COPR*. UC Undergraduate Research Symposium, Goleta, CA

- A fifteen minute talk on macroinvertebrate populations within brackish wetlands

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Marine Science Department, College of Creative Studies: Santa Barbara, CA

Teaching Assistant: MARINCS 101 (January 2025 - June 2025)

- Assist instruction of an introductory data science course in R

MEDIA & OUTREACH

Artist, [Coal Oil Point: A Seaweed Mosaic](#), *UC Reserve System*, 2025

Featured, [Real-world coral studies spark future in ocean conservation](#), *The Current*, 2025

Featured, [Hayden Vega: A First Generation, Triple Major Undergraduate](#), *UC Santa Barbara*, 2025

Featured, [Extraordinary Paths: Celebrating CCS Class of 2025](#), *UCSB Creative Studies*, 2025

Featured, [Blue Future: Citizen Science and Activism](#), *Patagonia*, 2024

Co-author, [Diving in to REEF Safe Sunscreen: Meet the Scientists](#), *Avasol*, 2023

Author, [ODA: Twenty Years of Debris Free Seas](#), *Ocean Defenders Alliance*, 2022

Author, [Safe Boating and Fishing Practices](#), *OC Coastkeeper*, 2020

Author, [How our Intern Brought Fishing Line Recycling to Seal Beach](#), *OC Coastkeeper*, 2020

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

UC Berkeley Chancellor's Fellowship (2026)

Princeton EEB Scholar (2025)

STEMSEAS Oceanographic Fellow (2025)

UCSB Environmental Studies Academic Achievement Award (2025)

Honorable Mention: Best Fifteen Minute Talk, *UC Undergraduate Research Symposium* (2025)

Arnhold Climate Collaborative Fellow (\$6000) (2025)

Schmidt Foundation Mentorship Award (\$4500) (2025)

Worster Foundation Research Grant (\$4500) (2024)

UCSB Career Catalyst Award (\$2000) (2024)

College of Creative Studies Travel Grant (\$1500) (2024)

UCSB Environmental Studies Research Grant (\$1000) (2024)

Tom Rogers Scholar (\$4500) (2024)

SACNAS - California Sea Grant Pathways to Inclusive Research Fellow (2023)

Shoreliner Scholar (\$2500) (2023)

Tom Rogers Scholar (\$4500) (2023)

Coastal Fund Research Grant (\$12739) (2023)

DIVERsity in Diving Fellow (2022)

Bentson Scholar (\$15000) (2022)

Bren Environmental Diversity Leaders Fellowship (\$5000) (2022)

FUERTE Undergraduate Fellow (2022)

Hispanic Scholarship Scholar (\$5000) (2021)

SERVICE

UCSB FUERTE Mentor *Santa Barbara, CA* (January 2024 - Present)

- Mentor undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds during field research experiences

UCSB Diversity in Diving Mentor *Santa Barbara, CA* (January 2023 - Present)

- Chaperone and support new divers as they complete their scientific diving certifications

Goleta Surfrider Foundation *Santa Barbara, CA* (October 2021 - June 2025)

- Sample and publish bacteria content of Santa Barbara beaches

Orange County Coastkeeper *Costa Mesa, CA* (August 2020 - September 2021)

- Draft blog reports about safe boating and angling practices

Seal Beach Fishing Line Recycling Program Founder, *Seal Beach, CA* (August 2020 - Present)

SKILLS

AAUS Diver, Rescue Diver, Nitrox Diver, CPR & First Aid, RStudio, ArcGIS, ImageJ, eDNA, French bilteracy