

Dear Maxine and NTEF,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to receive the Bill Williams Scholarship this past year. We had talked a lot about a law pathway, and I'm happy to say I've been able to explore this option thanks to UCSD and the scholarship that helped me get here! I attended a law school conference in the spring where I got to meet lots of legal professionals who shared their law school experiences, and I attended an attorney networking night as well which allowed me to explore the different careers that I hadn't heard of before. I've taken a couple of classes such as constitutional law and gender and the law which have given me the chance to understand the implications of different cases, especially in our current political climate. My public policy course was one of my favorite classes that I've taken through UCSD so far, and I was able to go on a three-day trip to Sacramento to lobby for education funding and affordable housing for students. I met my closest friend Zhenee while at school, and she became my mentor for everything relating to the pre-law pathway available at UCSD. She introduced me to political science research on campus for undergraduate students, and she has shown me the process of writing for the school's undergraduate law review she was published in.

Overall, my time at UCSD this past year has helped me understand where my true passions are and how I can go about expanding my horizons. Next year, I will become further involved in the campus community through a programming internship at the Women's Center, where I will integrate lessons on political advocacy into the events and activities I help plan. I have also been hired as a resident assistant for the upcoming year, and I am excited to connect with my residents and fellow coworkers as we learn from each other. I will be taking another constitutional law class fall quarter as well as a class on global civil society, both with professors I had a great time with in the past! Without this scholarship, it wouldn't have been nearly as realistic for me to attend UCSD, and I am grateful for this support more than I can possibly express. I know this scholarship will continue to support more students like me who want to take an educational leap out of state, and I am forever grateful that you believed in me and what I hope to achieve. Thank you again for everything, and thank you for believing in scholarship and being such an impactful member of our community!

Sincerely,

Vanessa Leavitt

2024 NTEF Bill Williams Memorial Scholarship Recipient