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# STEM ADVANTAGE

ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH EDUCATION

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## April 2022 Newsletter

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Los Angeles Business Journal "Nonprofit Team of the Year" Finalist



Los Angeles Business Journal honored our Mentorship program leads as a "Nonprofit Team of the Year" Finalist during their Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship 2022 Awards.

Tania Velazquez (Program Manager for Mentorships and Talent Development, STEM Advantage), Raquel Marquez (Board member and Director of IT Strategy, Execution and Professional Development, Farmers), and Maben Jimenez (Board member and Associate Principal Director, The Aerospace Corporation), lead the STEM Advantage Mentorship program that includes 200 STEM professionals who volunteer as one-to-one mentors for STEM Advantage Scholars.

Each STEM Advantage Scholar is paired with a mentor who is a STEM professional who serves as a role model and offers one-to-one social-emotional support, personal and career guidance, and coaching. Working together, Tania, Raquel, and Maben are strengthening the mentoring program to be a best practice for supporting low-income first-generation college students.

Congratulations Tania, Raquel, and Maben! A special thank you to our amazing mentors who generously give their time and share their experiences to make a difference. To be a mentor, please contact Tania at [tania@stemadvantage.org](mailto:tania@stemadvantage.org)

Photo: (L to R) Tania, Raquel, and Maben. Mentee Ashley with mentor Shawna Gale. Mentor Kevin Gray with mentee Charles.

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### Hire Summer Interns & New Graduates

If your company can provide paid summer internships for STEM talent and/or hire new graduates, please reach out to Lee Ann at [leeann@stemadvantage.org](mailto:leeann@stemadvantage.org).

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Los Angeles Business Journal DEI "Executive of the Year" Finalist



Christina Shareef, Head of Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging at Reddit and STEM Advantage Board member, was honored by the Los Angeles Business Journal during their Diversity, Equity + Inclusion 2022 Awards as an "Executive of the Year" Finalist.

Congratulations Christina!

We are honored to have Christina serve on our Board. She has spent her career helping companies and individuals reach their potential as a global HR leader who specializes in building inclusive workplaces and corporate value through market advantage, leveraging employees' unique skills and perspectives, employee engagement, and workplace culture. Throughout her 15 years in the HR and legal fields, both internationally and domestically, Christina has developed purposeful people strategies, while serving as an advisor, consultant, and trusted business partner.

Christina approaches her work with the understanding that each of us - "every one of us" - has ample opportunities to learn from, engage with, and support someone who is different from ourselves. She found ways to make diversity, inclusion and belonging part of Reddit's DNA early in her tenure with the company, increasing representation of Black and Latinx employees within her first year.

#### Scot Over: Making Room for First Gen Professionals to Thrive



Did you know... 72% of STEM Advantage Scholars are first-generation college students from low-income families.

Bernice Maldonado, founder of First Gen Talent, presented a webinar on April 28th to discuss her intersectional research and share her expertise of the first-generation professional experience. She presented solutions, tools, and resources for individuals to create more inclusive, productive, and engaged workplaces.

Bernice's recommendations to build a class inclusive organization include:

1. Be transparent about employee programs and resources. Communicate using employee-centric channels and create a "First-Gen" employee resource group (ERG).
2. Make inclusive communication a core competency for everyone. Reduce corporate jargon and acronyms and create an internal glossary of terms.
3. Assess your current workplace culture and norms. Ensure awareness of the "unwritten rules" and include First-Gen as a diversity dimension.

#### Invest in Diverse STEM Talent

Talent is equally distributed, but opportunity is not. STEM Advantage mentors, prepares, and inspires women and underserved communities to pursue STEM careers. We provide economic and social mobility to underserved groups, while providing a vetted pipeline of diverse talent to businesses to fill their workforce needs. In 2021, Los Angeles Business Journal honored STEM Advantage as Diversity, Inclusion + Equity Nonprofit of the Year.

100% of your tax-deductible gift supports STEM Advantage Scholars Thank you for making an investment that is changing lives.

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For more information, please contact Lee Ann at [leeann@stemadvantage.org](mailto:leeann@stemadvantage.org), visit our website <http://www.stemadvantage.org>, and follow us on social media.



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