



Santa Barbara  
Botanic Garden

Jessica Fernandez

**Attn: Brenda Lanini**

California Department of Food and Agriculture Pest Exclusion Branch  
1220 N Street, Room 344  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Lanini,

My name is Jessica Fernandez and I am interested in joining the advisory board for the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Pest Exclusion Branch. I would be representing the Horticulture Nursery for the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden.

At the Garden, I am responsible for growing California native plants for our Living Collections, rare/endangered species for our Conservation and Research team, and for restoration/mitigation contracts. My colleague that manages the Retail nursery is on my team and I have been working closely to implement Best Management Practices (BMP) as well as other biosecurity measures throughout the Garden.

Before the Garden, I was at the Presidio Native Plant Nursery and attended the Sudden Oak Death Science and Management Symposium. I have had folks from the National Ornamental Research Site at Dominican University CA (NORS-DUC) do a BMP Training with me back in 2020 and we determined Critical Control Points (CCPs). We seek to become a Phytioptora free nursery! I am also signed up to the California Oak Mortality Task Force and Phytioptoras in Native Habitats newsletter. I am constantly trying to bring feasible solutions to concerns that surround California native plants and their natural habitats,

As I continue to problem solve and develop my nursery industry skills, I believe I have an essential perspective and experience to support the mission of growing and maintaining a strong relationship between CDFA and the nursery industry.

I have included my resume as requested. I appreciate the time and consideration for my candidacy and look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully yours,



**RELEVANT EXPERIENCE:**

**Santa Barbara Botanic Garden**

*Propagator*

May 2020- Present

- Manage Horticulture Nursery; growing for Living Collections, Conservation and Research teams, and for restoration/mitigation contracts
- Create and maintain accurate records for processing and storing seeds and/or cuttings
- Implementing Best Management Practices for nursery sanitation
- Identify plant diseases, weeds, and insect pests
- Recruit, hire, train, and oversee propagation assistant and volunteers

*Plant Sales Associate*

Jan 2020-May 2020

- Perform plant care and propagation for Garden Growers Nursery
- Provide customer service to visitors
- Delegate tasks and train daily volunteers

**Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy**

Jan 2019- Dec 2019

*Presidio Nursery Intern*

Plant and Nursery Work

- Propagated and maintained 70,000 plants of 140 CA native species
- Conducted daily monitoring and maintenance of plants and facilities according to the direction of Nursery Manager
- Collected and treated seeds and/or cuttings from identified native plants in the field
- Ensured correct stock of propagules for each project by maintaining accurate records, coordinating with Nursery Manager and Seed Ecologist to utilize proper techniques to process and store seeds
- Followed Best Management Practices for nursery sanitation
- Coordinated seed collection and project fulfillment of San Francisco *Lessingia* (Federally endangered) with Park Ecologists

Volunteer Programs

- Trained volunteers how to sow, germinate, and transplant seedlings
- Supervised and mentored summer youth interns
- Led large volunteer programs and youth groups in nursery activities
- Coordinated and scheduled tasks with staff for the volunteer programs

Youth Education

- Co-led in classroom presentations and field trips at the nursery

**Pie Ranch Educational Farm**

Summer 2017

*Organic Farmer Intern*

- Sowed, planted, cultivated, irrigated, and harvested a variety of crops; cared for goats, pigs, and a cow
- Assisted with weekly Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) boxes and newsletters

**Storke Ranch Habitat Restoration**

Oct 2016- Dec 2016

*Intern*

- Managed invasive species control of vernal pool and greater wetland; propagated and transplanted shrubs and grasses

**Our City Forest, AmeriCorps**

Summer 2016

*Urban Forestry/ Nursery Intern*

- Propagated, cultivated and transplanted shrubs, grasses, and trees; planned and executed best watering techniques
- Provided customer service to visitors and led volunteer groups on projects

## ADDITIONAL RELEVANT EXPERIENCE:

### **Wildlands Studies, Peru**

Fall 2018

#### *Field Research*

- Designed field research project "Frog Diversity in Inundated vs. Terra Firme Microhabitats of Cocha Cashu"
- Collected, managed, synthesized, and presented interpretations of field data to peers and faculty orally and in writing
- Performed species counts, natural history sketching, and narrative writing through daily field journal entries
- Conducted vegetation plot and transect surveys to study carbon storage capacity of Andean and Amazon forest habitats

### **San Francisco International Airport**

Summer 2018

#### *Wildlife College Intern*

- Assisted with implementation of airfield Wildlife Hazard Management Plan and Recovery Action Plan of endangered San Francisco garter snake
- Monitored restoration projects for permit compliance, conducted surveys for listed species (California red-legged frog), and identified future habitat restoration projects
- Conducted bird point count surveys, data entry and analysis, and observation of management strategy development
- Developed and conducted an independent research project on SFO's wetland water quality

### **Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration**

Oct 2017-March 2018

#### *Hydrology and Water Quality Monitoring Research Intern*

- Installed level loggers in North Campus Open Space and Devereux Slough
- Collecting and analyzing data from water quality monitoring sensors; calibrated monitoring sensors

#### *Arthropod Collection Research Intern*

Oct 2017-Dec 2017

- Sorted and identified arthropods; imaged and placed collection into database for historic local baseline of insect diversity

### **Chapala Gardens**

Oct 2016- Dec 2016

#### *Intern*

- Maintained Towers (urban rooftop aeroponic farms); assisted with seed selection, propagation, and planting strategies; tested water quality

### **Santa Barbara Zoo**

Feb 2015- Sept 2016

#### *Keeper Aide*

- Cared for and maintained zoo exhibit for elephants and assisted Keepers with various projects

## CERTIFICATIONS:

- Wilderness First Aid 2019
- CPR, First Aid, and AED Certification 2019
- Understanding the Behavior of Children and Youth 2019
- Developing Problem Solving Skills in Youth 2019

## SKILLS AND VOLUNTEERING:

- Bilingual in Spanish and English
- **Wilderness Youth Project:** led nature education afterschool program to open spaces in Santa Barbara; fostered child-centered exploration, awareness, and naturalist skills through nature-based mentoring curriculum
- **El Congreso's "Raza College Day":** Planned and organized our student-run conference that brings at-risk youth to UCSB; responsible for handling funds, creating and maintaining the budget, as well as processing financial documents.
- **"El Centro" Renovation:** Year long fight against administration's demolition of historically significant building; researched and utilized the California Building Code to plan and work with consultants, handled and processed documents to create a library of records.

## EDUCATION:

### **University of California, Santa Barbara**

B.S. in Environmental Studies, December 2018

- Relevant Courses: Conservation Planning, Terrestrial Ecosystems, Groundwater Hydrology, Air Quality, Toxics in the Environment, Waste Management, Energy and the Environment, Ocean-Atmosphere Processes,
- Scholarships: MVLA Scholars, Mountain View Chamber of Commerce, Burwen Education Foundation