



NEW LEADER SCHOLAR BIOS 2003

SUSAN EAR graduated from U.C., Berkeley, with majors in Political Science and Interdisciplinary Studies. Her parents are survivors of the Cambodian genocide and were granted political asylum in the United States in 1982. Susan has earned numerous awards and honors for both her scholarship and community service. She is a co-founder of an after-school tutoring and mentoring program in Oakland, similar to the one that her own mentor founded. While at Berkeley, Susan engaged in significant research on the atrocities committed against ethnic minorities by governments. In spring, 2005, she published two articles, respectively, in the California Legal Studies Journal and the Berkeley McNair Research Journal on the atrocities in Darfur and Cambodia. Susan studied at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and took the opportunity to travel during the spring. She is currently living in Texas, working in a family-owned business. (not updated).

SVETLANA LUNSKAYA – (See 2005 entry, awarded a third New Leader Scholarship).

TIFFANY MONTGOMERY (See 2012 entry, awarded a Second New Leader Scholarship).

DIANA OLIVA received her B.A. from U.C., Berkeley, with majors in Ethnic and Chicano Studies and an MPH from San Francisco State University. Growing up in a poor Salvadoran household, with parents who were war victims and political refugees, she was inspired by their activism. . She has initiated and conducted research on environmentally caused illnesses in poor Latino communities in Oakland while simultaneously working with a number of youth groups to promote their interest in higher education. For two years, Diana worked with a variety of organizations throughout the Bay Area, focusing on high risk youth in health centers; she recently worked with a Native American Health Center in Oakland. Diana hopes to go on to obtain a doctorate in public health with an emphasis in clinical management. (not updated).

JULIZA PEREZ obtained her B.A. from U.C., Berkeley with majors in Mass Communications and Sociology. As a foster child who became emancipated, she continues to be involved with all of the programs that supported her own development. Having experienced considerable tragedy in her own family, Juliza has made a special point of reaching out to others who have faced difficult circumstances. She continues to work with Extended Opportunities and Program Services, volunteering as a motivational speaker. In June 2004, Juliza was honored by the Department of Children and Family Services of Los Angeles County as a “Foster Care Hero”. Juliza plans to acquire a law degree and specialize in child advocacy within the foster care system. She has returned to Los Angeles in order to find a relevant position and continue to mentor children in the foster care system. (Not updated)

SHAHIN SHAMSABADI received his B.A. from U.C., Berkeley, with a major in Middle Eastern Studies. Shahin describes himself as the “product of four cultural backgrounds, two races, two religions and five languages “ between himself and his parents, both of whom emigrated from Iran due to religious and social persecution. In a post 9/11 world, Shahin became an active spokesperson for Middle Eastern, Muslim and Sikh students on campus who face a variety of prejudicial behaviors directed at them. While at Berkeley, he was the recipient of numerous awards and honors in International Studies. He received his Master’s Degree from Georgetown University majoring in Arab Studies at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies. Last, but not least, he married three years ago and plans a career in the diplomatic sector. He and his wife are living and working in Dubai, where he holds a position in the Risk Advisory Group, heading their casework in the Middle East.

MICHAEL TSIA - See 2005 entry (awarded a second New Leader Scholarship).

NGAN TRAN, 29, was born in Vietnam, emigrating here with her mother, brother and grandmother in 1994. She graduated from U.C., Berkeley with a degree in Sociology, spending the fall semester of her senior year, studying and undertaking sociological research in Vietnam. She has been given numerous awards and honors for her scholarship, but a summer internship with NOW, particularly inspired her to be an advocate for issues affecting women and disadvantaged groups. Along with two other Berkeley students, she co-founded a mentoring program for low income, inner city youth in the Oakland public school system. Ngan was a recipient of The Achievement Award Program sponsored by alumni of UCB and currently is the chair of the Sacramento scholarship committee of UCB. She works as a program and research analyst for the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, helping to coordinate research for evidence-based practice and is planning to return to school for an advanced degree. She is in her second year of graduate work in the Master’s Degree Program in Public Policy at California State University, Sacramento.

RICARDO VALENCIA - See 2005 entry (awarded a second New Leader Scholarship).

AREZO YAZD - See 2008 entry (awarded a fifth New Leader Scholarship)