

RAMP Ed

Reading, Advising, & Mentoring Program

TRIO Student Support Services

In this Issue

Book Club Reads *In the Midst of Winter*

Student Spotlight:
Sarah Yoa

Tutor Spotlight:
Cheyenne Romero

Off-Campus Event:
Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre

Graduate Recognition Luncheon

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o. Library, Room 2919

h. M-F, 8am-5pm

Director's Message

The impending semester conversion seems to have made this year go by unusually fast. In preparation for the change, we have revised our services, forms, and fall return date. We have prepared our calendar of events, revamped our one-unit course, and selected new tutors for next year. The reality, however, is that no matter how much we prepare, plan, and revise, this is the first time the program will function in the semester system and we will find that we were not fully prepared and will need to assess what needs to be adjusted or revised even more. While we are acclimating to the semester system, 2018-19 also happens to mark RAMP's 30th anniversary at Cal Poly Pomona! We hope you will join us in celebrating this milestone. Look out for announcements and invitations!

While this year kept us extra busy, we were fortunate that Jasmine Martinez reduced the stress by serving as interim advisor twice this year—fall and spring! We thank Jasmine for her extraordinary service this year! Jasmine has a great work ethic and smoothly transitioned into the advisor role. Jasmine will be pursuing a job in the agricultural field and plans to complete her masters and doctorate after gaining experience in the field. Thank you, Jasmine! We will miss you and we wish you continued success!

Annual Performance Report

As a TRIO program, RAMP is mandated to serve low-income, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities. RAMP is also mandated to submit an annual performance report to the U.S. Department of Education demonstrating that it met funding criteria and standard objectives. Our 2016-17 report was submitted this past March and RAMP met the funding criteria and objectives.

In 2016-17, RAMP served 250 students with 110 of these students being new participants. 2/3 of the 250 students served must be first-generation and low-income, and/or disabled. RAMP exceeded this requirement by serving 78% from this population. The standard objectives pertain to persistence, academic standing, and graduation.

The Department of Education defines **persistence** as “participants served by the SSS project will persist from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate with a bachelor’s degree during the academic year.” RAMP set its persistence rate at 90% and exceeded it by attaining 93% for the 2016-17 cohort.

Good academic standing is defined as “all enrolled participants served by the SSS project will meet the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at the institution.” RAMP set its rate at 90% and exceeded it by attaining a 94% rate.

Graduation is defined as “new participants will graduate with a bachelor’s degree or equivalent within six years.” RAMP set its rate at 60%. Using the 2011-12 cohort, 75% of new participants graduated within six years. This rate is comprised of students who were served by RAMP for the first in 2011-12 including students from all grade levels.

Student quotes from spring 2018 program evaluations

“

THE PROGRAM HAS HELPED ME SO MUCH THROUGHOUT THIS QUARTER WITH THE RESOURCES THEY PROVIDE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE IN MY CLASSES. EVERYONE HAS A POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND I FEEL WELCOMED EVERY TIME I ENTERED IN THE OFFICE.

“

SOME OF THE MATERIALS I FOUND USEFUL WERE THE READING ACTIVITIES THAT GAVE ME TIPS ON HOW TO HAVE USEFUL READING SKILLS. EVERY ACTIVITY THAT WE DID, I FOUND USEFUL.

“

I FOUND THE VOCABULARY ASSIGNMENTS VERY HELPFUL. I FOUND THAT MY VOCABULARY HAS INCREASED. I ENJOYED USING MY OWN READINGS FOR THE RAMP ASSIGNMENTS. ALL ACTIVITIES HELPED ME IN IMPROVING MY COMPREHENSION AND VOCABULARY SKILLS.

Spring Book Club Reads In the Midst of Winter

In *In the Midst of Winter*, the latest novel from the acclaimed Chilean novelist Isabel Allende, is a story of three people brought together by a car accident and intertwined in an intriguing exploration of exile, murder, and love. Allende uses a horrible winter storm and a catastrophic event as the backdrop for exploring the tragic lives of the three protagonists Richard, Lucia, and Evelyn. In the midst of a snow storm, all three characters come to find that they are all exiles from their former lives.

Allende explores the harsh realities of the overthrow of democratically elected Chilean president Salvador Allende on September 11, 1973 and the brutal aftermath of disappearances and murders of political opponents of General Augusto Pinochet. According to Allende, the violent transfer of power happened abruptly when the television went off air only to resume with military generals announcing the end of communism. Allende writes, “Martial law was declared; Congress was indefinitely suspended, as were civil rights, until the honorable Armed Forces restored law, order, and the values of Western, Christian Civilization” (63).

Unfortunately, civil rights never returned and neoliberal economic shock policies left the economy in a tailspin. Amidst the political turmoil, Lucia flees to Canada and ultimately to Brooklyn.

Evelyn’s traumatic history is a story of the violence and murder that has engulfed Guatemalan society and is a result of the stranglehold that the MS-13 street gang has on the country. Allende describes the horrific experiences of child immigrants by detailing Evelyn’s treacherous journey through Central America and Mexico to reach “the North” as a young child. She also describes the litany of coyotes, conmen, and police that take their cut of exploitation from immigrants at different stages of their journey. Allende writes that the state of Chiapas was, “the most dangerous area for migrants not protected by a coyote because they were at the mercy of bandits, robbers and police who could strip them of all they possessed, from their money to their sneakers” (136).

Richard emigrates from Brazil and is fleeing phantoms of his past rather than political or gang violence. When Richard crashes into Evelyn, the lives of the three main characters are forever changed. A body is in the trunk of Evelyn’s car and her undocumented status makes going to the

Spring Book Club *cont.*

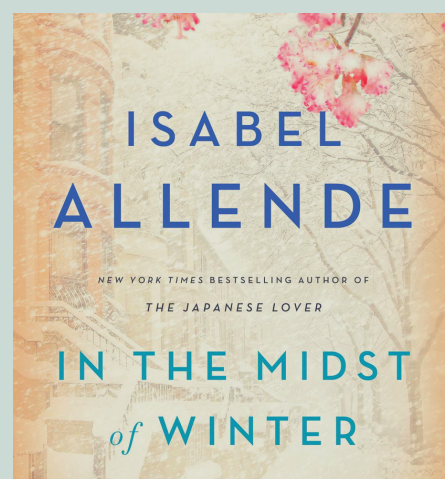
police impossible. The novel explores how three people find understanding and love in the midst of crisis.

During the first book club meeting, we explored the historical underpinnings of U.S. intervention in Chile and Guatemala, the homelands of two of the main characters. Both Evelyn and Lucia were forced to flee their countries of origin due to political and economic turmoil. This book club meeting provided historical context and complexity to the immigration debate. Often times, Americans look at the immigration debate without analyzing how U.S. intervention into Latin American countries has actually created situations where immigration is a necessity.

Many book club members were surprised to hear of the support that the U.S. provided to overthrow the democratically elected leaders Salvador Allende of Chile and Jacobo Arbenz of Guatemala. As a result of both juntas, military dictatorships ruled both countries for many years. The new governments instituted mass surveillance, the widespread jailing of political dissidents, and neoliberal economies that opened up fragile Latin American markets to unfettered competition from other more powerful economies.

Although the novel evoked important discussions of immigration, exile, and the millions of undocumented workers that toil honorably without proper recompense, many book club members thought the book fell far short of the eloquent, provocative prose of Allende's past novels.

Allende's writing is at its best when weaving the tapestry of tragedy into the histories of characters. However, the subplot of the murder, inserted into the novel to provide plot cohesion and intrigue, only served to detract from what was an otherwise nuanced, sweeping exploration of the misfortune of exile. Allende's foray into the genre of mystery at times just did not seem realistic. Unlike other literary styles, mystery must above all else be a slave to reality and logic. This genre may have been a bit unforgiving-in that it did not lend itself to the realm of the fantastic like many of her novels grounded in the mysticism of magical realism.



Student Spotlight: Sarah Yoa

Sarah Yoa has been a RAMP participant since fall 2016. She is a sophomore majoring in International Business & Marketing Management with a minor in Fashion Merchandising. Sarah chose her major and minor because she wanted to merge her interests in business, travel, and fashion. She hoped to gain insight and demonstrate her deep appreciation for culture through traveling.

Sarah is involved in the Fashion Society and held the Social Chair position. As Social Chair, she curated content and executed weekly club meetings. She helped plan the 7th and 8th Annual Fashion Shows, which is the Fashion Society's biggest event of the year. Sarah is also a part of Pi Sigma Epsilon, a professional co-ed business fraternity on campus.

Sarah is proud of the fact that she moved to SoCal on her own, has put herself through school, and has managed to take over 16 units per quarter, which allows her to graduate in three and a half years if she so chooses. Sarah has planned so well that she is able to study abroad without delaying her graduation date. This

fall, Sarah will be traveling to Thailand and studying at Mahidol University.

When asked what RAMP has done for her as a college student, Sarah stated that RAMP provided her with a safe zone upon entering college. "RAMP is a place of growth and self-reflection, and I loved how it gave me a zone to avoid procrastination." She feels that RAMP allows her to unwind and read her materials in peace, as well as showing her how valuable it is to read and do work in a distraction-free environment.

Sarah has learned that who you know is extremely important. She thinks that this vast network will never be as abundant in the future. If she had to



SARAH YOA

Student Spotlight

Sarah Yoa Contd.

change anything from her college experience, it would be the way she interacted with her peers and teachers, mainly that she would introduce herself to them first. She suggests that students stop looking at their phones on the first day of class as a defense mechanism.

Additionally, she wishes that she spoke to her previous professors on a deeper and more personal level.

In 10 years, Sarah hopes that she will have established a stable position for a sustainable fashion company, or that she will be working in the importing/exporting industry. She also hopes that her job will allow her to travel often. Additionally, she sees herself volunteering more and participating in global projects that will combat poverty and address the lack of education in lesser-developed nations.

She hopes that by then, the term, “third world,” no longer exists.

Sarah was asked to define a “good” or “successful” life. It turns out this was a concept that she has contemplated many times over. She believes that a successful life is one filled with love and positivity. To her, to be successful, it is crucial that one remains curious, active, hungry, and

spiritual. Though you may not change the course of history or morph the future, you are in control of the NOW and the world around YOU. By being the positive catalyst in your own life, you serve a purpose to influence the world around you by emitting good energy only.

Just for fun, we asked Sarah which historical figure/celebrity, living or dead, would she most like to interview. She chose Barack Obama. She would ask him what it felt like to be in a position of responsibility and scrutiny, and what it felt like to have him and his family under the spotlight. Additionally, she'd want to ask him what his unfinished business or plans were for the nation.

We wish Sarah bon voyage on her upcoming study abroad trip to Thailand.



Tutor Spotlight: Cheyenne Romero

Cheyenne Romero became a RAMP Tutor/Peer Mentor fall 2017. She graduated from Cal Poly in December 2017 and received her bachelors degrees in English and Psychology.

Initially, Cheyenne was undecided about what career she wanted to pursue. She felt that studying English would provide her with a range of useful skills, such as writing and analyzing, which would make her a marketable candidate for a variety of jobs (and it didn't hurt that she loved reading and writing!). However, during her first year of college, she took an introduction to Psychology course and fell in love with the subject. She decided to minor in it, but it didn't take long for her to realize that she wanted a career in that field. Yet, she didn't want to drop English as her major because it would mean she could no longer study English Literature. Instead, Cheyenne double majored. Although it required she delay graduation by a quarter, Cheyenne is made the right decision because she was able to study two subjects she loves.

When Cheyenne saw the hiring ad for RAMP, she immediately knew she wanted



CHEYENNE ROMERO

to work here. She is no stranger to tutoring, and it is a job she enjoys. She also liked that she would be tutoring an area so close to her majors. Additionally, she feels that working on campus is very convenient because she was able to take classes and work around her class schedule.

Cheyenne has enrolled in the Masters in Social Work at CSU Fullerton and will begin this fall. RAMP has benefitted greatly from Cheyenne's expertise, especially in developing the GRE curriculum. Her influence on our program was so impactful that she was selected as the Outstanding RAMP Tutor for 2017/18 at the LRC Awards Ceremony.

ALVIN AILEY

AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Segerstrom Center for the Arts



Top Row L to R: Adriana Gonzalez, Dustin Johnson, Ahmed Ahmed, Sandra Perez-Cruz, Kristine Nguyen, Tracy Moronatty, Sarah Yoa, Karen Segura, Laura Ayon, Kayla Williams, Denise Guevara, Amira Chambers, Jessica Ramirez; Bottom Row L to R: Haili Ayala, Alejandra Rivera, Mireya Ocampo, Melissa Villanueva, Nayelli Garcia-Delgado

Alvin Ailey, A Class Act

The Alvin Ailey Dance Theater was an incredible opportunity for RAMP, ARCHES, and McNair students and staff to experience African Americans in the arena of high culture. Traditionally, we might guess, most of our participants have engaged the black cultural aesthetic in areas of popular forms of music and dance. Unfortunately, most Americans interface with black culture in realms of popular music that are not particularly flattering or enlightening. If your only experience with black culture is through music that reinforces misogyny, materialism, and violence, your perceptions of black people may be limited and skewed towards the negative. Similarly, within the black community, lack of exposure to the the myriad of black cultural art forms can limit the broad spectrum of who they can become, who to emulate, and as bell hooks describes, what is deemed "cool". It was refreshing to see a black dance company performing what is traditionally seen as "high" culture to such a diverse audience, breaking the stereotypical mold of what blackness is and expanding the scope of the African American cultural repertoire.

ALVIN AILEY

AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

TESTIMONIALS

Alvin Alley was a great performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts. For me, it was something original since it was my first time experiencing these types of performances. I was amazed by how enormous the theater was. The beginning of the presentation was a little boring, but as it escalated, it got me interested. I liked the second act the most because it had rhythm added and the dancers had colorful attires. Also, I kind of felt goose bumps in the third or fourth act because the music that was playing was kind of sinister. Then, the way the dancers interpreted the music through dance was amusing but dramatic at the same time. I think the combination of music, dancing, and all the drama was based in the dancer's character. I was impressed how each individual in the performance was confident and dramatic. At the same time, I thought I was watching a soap-opera. The entire experience was wonderful since I also got to spend quality time meeting new people.

- Nayeli Delgado Garcia

I enjoyed the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performance. It was my first time I had attended a dance performance like that. I had originally thought the dance performance was going to be more of like a hip hop dance or some other type of dance, but after seeing the performance It changed my perspective and it was much more interesting. The dancers were trying to tell a story incorporated into their dances. I liked the first dance performance with the two main dancers. I liked the music that went along with the dances. Although I don't know much about music or dancing, watching the performance really made me interested in learning more about it and want to go see performances like this in the future.

- Kristine Nguyen

ALVIN AILEY

TESTIMONIALS

The dance, "Revelations," featuring Alvin Ailey, was truly a wonderful experience. I have been exposed to the world of dance or realized (just like any other art) how dance have limitless ways to present themes to the audience. This play was my first modern dance I have ever attended. I was so enraptured by how each dancer communicated through expressive movements, similar to actors. Arguably, I felt like I (the audience) had more of an obligation to participate in the dance through more purposeful thinking. It took me a while to realize that each musical number felt like a new story. Each number had different styles of music, choice of colors, and choreographer. It was like each number was only a small taste of the cultures that inspired the movement, significant enough to hold their own original world and story.

- Kayla Williams

Prior to attending the Alvin Ailey performance, I had never attended a ballet performance in my life. This experience was eye opening and very valuable to me since I got to experience this alongside my best friends. Attending the performance, also allowed me to give myself a break from my heavy academic schedule, which is something I hardly do, but should definitely do more often. This experience also allowed me to interact with one of my tutees in a non-academic setting. This was new to me, but I enjoyed it because I was able to introduce her to my friends as well as share another experience with her that I would normally not share in a tutorial session. Most importantly, I'd like to thank RAMP for allowing me to experience these performances and give myself a break from my academic rigor.

- Karen Segura



RUDY'S READING TIPS

We asked RAMP Tutor, Rudy Alvarez to provide his favorite reading tip, helpful links, and a book recommendation. Here is what he came back with:

Reading Tip: When reading a textbook for an upcoming exam or quiz, read the material ahead of time. Also, try to break up the material into short sections that are more digestible. Don't try to cram the night before because it won't be fun nor as effective.

Link to a helpful resource on campus: Career Center – Interviewing
<https://www.cpp.edu/~career/student/job-search/interviewing.shtml>

(Provides multiple tips in order to succeed at your next interview)

Link to a current useful article: “How To Ace The 50 Most Common Interview Questions”
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/01/11/how-to-ace-the-50-most-common-interview-questions/#1365dc654624>

(Provides a comprehensive list of some of the most common interview questions as well as a detailed explanations on how to properly answer them)

Rudy's recommended book from the RAMP library: *World War Z* by Max Brooks is a fantastic book set in an alternate earth where a zombie outbreak has decimated a majority of the human population and forced the surviving humans to adapt to the new world. The story is told through a diverse set of personal accounts that describe the ensuing changes to human civilization.

Spring Peer Mentoring: Networking & Building Social Capital

Spring quarter's group peer mentoring topic was "Networking & Building Social Capital." RAMP Tutors, Milca Ramos and Cheyenne Romero, were the leads on this topic and described it as follows: The group peer mentoring session is aimed to help students understand the importance of establishing relationships and building social media presence. The session discusses a series of key steps that can be taken to overcome an aversion to networking, as well as locations on campus that can further expand their network. Today, the majority of employers depend on social media platforms to make hiring decisions. Therefore, our goal is also to share the benefits of social capital, the “do's and don'ts,” and the functions of social media platforms.



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Once you learn to
read, you'll be forever
free.

- Frederick Douglass

Spring 2018 RAMP Tutors

RUDY ALVAREZ
LUNA ARMAS
SARAH DEAGUERO
RAYMUNDO GONZALEZ

ABBEY IBARRA
BRANDON JOHNSON
WAYNE PAGE
MILCA RAMOS

ALFREDO RAYGOZA
CHEYENNE ROMERO
KAREN SEGURA



CRLA Level 2 Tutors

All tutors are required to complete training to become CRLA Level 1 certified. This year, all but two tutors became Level 2 Certified.

RAMP Advisor, Dustin Johnson is pictured with this year's CRLA Level 2 Tutors. L to R: Wayne Page, Cheyenne Ramos, Alfredo Raygoza, Karen Segura, Milca Ramos, Sarah DeAgüero, & Rudy Alvarez (not pictured Luna Armas)

SPRING WORKSHOPS

**FINANCIAL AID
 & LITERACY**

EXPLORING SCHOLARSHIPS

**SEMESTER CONVERSION:
 FINANCIAL AID & BUDGETING**

**HOW TO MANAGE YOUR
 FINANCIAL AID**

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

**MANAGING YOUR TIME
 EFFECTIVELY**

**TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS
 TOWARD GRADUATION**

**BRING IT ON:
 TEST TAKING STRATEGIES**

**STUDY ABROAD:
 YOU CAN AFFORD IT!**

Reading, Advising, & Mentoring Program



2018 RAMP CHALLENGE GRANT

Forty students were awarded the 2017-18 RAMP Challenge Grant. In order to qualify to apply, students had to be freshmen or sophomores at the beginning of the academic year, receiving a Pell grant, and complete a number of required activities and attend specific RAMP events, and submit an anonymous letter. The students also had to be in good academic standing at the end of winter quarter and enrolled at Cal Poly full time.

In addition to completing a minimum of twelve reading tutorials, applicants had to attend four RAMP events including a Professional Spotlight, a financial aid or financial literacy workshop, a library workshop or First-Year Transition Student Panel, and a group peer mentoring session. Finally, applicants submitted an anonymous letter to someone who was instrumental in their decision to attend college. A draft of their letter had to be reviewed by a Writing Center or EOP tutor and revised and submitted with the application. In their letter, several students shared some of the hardships and obstacles they endured prior to coming to Cal Poly. They also demonstrated an appreciation for the guidance and hope provided by those who had confidence in them to succeed. The letters provided insight to the students' resilience and perseverance.

Congratulations to all the applicants and recipients of this year's RAMP Challenge Grant for completing all the requirements to apply for the grant! The following is a list of recipients:

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Rocio Antonio-Martinez | Ashley Duran | Jocelyn Perales |
| Maria Avalos | Dominique Frazier | Jessica Peralta Carrion |
| Haili Ayala | Nayeli Garcia Delgado | Sandra Perez Cruz |
| Armeni Azilazian | Ana Garcia Lima | Ashley Perez-Rodriguez |
| Ciara Bell | Misael Iniguez | Jessica Ramirez |
| Briana Beno | Polynese Johnson | Navid Ramirez |
| Ruth Blas | Meri Krier | Alejandra RiveraBrenda |
| Odalys Chavez | Nicholas Lam | Santana |
| Jin Feng Chen | Cristian Martinez | Erin Sewell |
| Diana Cervantes | Carla Meza | Martin Su |
| Amira Chambers | Stefanie Norberto | Noorhan Swendah |
| Kelly Dang | Nhan Nguyen | Andrew Uzueta |
| Xuan Duong | Mireya Ocampo | Bianca Victorino Onofre |
| | | Sarah Yoa |

2018 GRADUATE RECOGNITION LUNCHEON

On May 17, the Reading, Advising, & Mentoring Program recognized twenty-two graduates at its annual Graduate Recognition Luncheon. Graduates, their guests, and several campus partners, enjoyed the service at Kellogg West. After listening to the keynote speaker, graduates were recognized with a brief bio, certificate, and graduation cord. Graduates were then given the opportunity to approach the podium to express their sentiments.

Some students shared that RAMP provided a safe and comfortable environment. Many expressed their appreciation for the reading tutoring and their tutors' patience and assistance. Students also thanked their families and RAMP staff for support and guidance.

RAMP was honored to have former participant and tutor, Dr. Michael Zhou as the keynote speaker. His speech was an inspirational story of initial failure and ultimate redemption.

Michael is the son of Chinese immigrants and was born in the Chinatown hospital of Los Angeles. Michael shared that he grew up in poverty. To provide for him as a youth, his mother worked cutting strings off of garments in a downtown factory and his dad labored in a Chinese restaurant. Growing up ensnared in poverty, with parents concerned mainly with survival as opposed to academic support, Michael amazingly was accepted to UCLA after high school.



Jesus Fimbres



Adam Orozco



Maria Dolde



Elizabeth Zangenberg

GRADUATE RECOGNITION LUNCHEON

When Michael got to UCLA, he did not feel welcome or as if he was deserving of being a university student. In a matter of months, Michael dropped out of college. However, Michael refused to let this first set back deter him and he applied to Cal Poly Pomona. His experience at Cal Poly seemed markedly different upon attending classes. He felt that Cal Poly was a much more accepting environment dedicated to the success of low-income, first-generation college students. He acknowledged how programs like RAMP offered him a safe space where he could truly flourish and be accepted.

Michael changed majors five times before settling on Biochemistry. The core of Michael's message was that there are always going to be obstacles. However, what proved to be his savior was the ability to be resilient and bounce back from difficulties. His perseverance and resilience served him well in applying to medical school. He had to

deal with rejection from schools that felt he may not be the right fit for their programs. The following year, Michael applied to as many programs as he could, spending a large amount of money on applications and test prep courses.

Michael's persistence paid off and four years after he left to Ohio for medical school, he graduated with his MD. He will be doing his residency at Kaiser in Fontana.

Michael's parting message was to never take any day or moment in life for granted. Working in the emergency room has taught him about the fragility of human life. He implored those in attendance to treat every occasion and interaction as the precious gifts that they are.

Congratulations to all the participants and tutors who are graduating this year! It has been our pleasure and honor to work with each one of you.



Mirtha Lopez



Cecilia Lopez



Mathew Potes



Mimi Tom

GRADUATE RECOGNITION LUNCHEON



Joseph Wolf



Alan Ruiz



Carissa Tang



Danielle Labrado



Alfredo Raygoza



Wayne Page



Cheyenne Romero



Sarah DeAguiro



Misa Do



Francisco Almaraz Pinon



Gloria Vanegas



Karen Ortegon



Danielle Prioleau



Daniela Zurita

A special "Thank You" to RAMP Tutor Abbey Ibarra for taking the pictures at this event!



Jasmine Martinez, Amanda Riggle, Lauren Ramos, Cindy Greco, Laura Ayon, Rachel Dominguez, Michael Zhou