Scholarship boosts student’s graduate research on cyberbullying

Hatchel is one of 10 CSULA students to be named a Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholar

With today’s teens frequent use of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social media, there have been an increasing number of reports of electronic peer victimization.

Cal State L.A.’s psychology major Tyler Hatchel—one of 10 Cal State L.A. students recently selected by the California State University (CSU) as a Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholar—hopes to conduct research that will ultimately help prevent school-aged children from being victims of cyber stalking, cyberbullying, and cyber abuse.

“Peer victimization and social networking sites are correlated with depression and psychosocial adjustment, which can be particularly detrimental to youths at risk,” said Hatchel, whose goal is to become a university professor as well as a scientist-practitioner.

According to a Cyberbullying Research Center sample report, approximately 20 percent of the students experience cyberbullying in their lifetimes. When asked about specific types of cyberbullying they experienced in the previous 30 days, mean or hurtful comments (13.7 percent) and rumors spread online (12.9 percent) continue to be among the most commonly-cited.

“Thanks to this scholarship, I can further my research and pursue a Ph.D. in child clinical psychology,” Hatchel added.

Hatchel’s research interests also include gender and sexuality related issues as they relate to mental health and well-being. He has been working as a digital crisis services coordinator at The Trevor Project in Los Angeles, an organization that provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to
lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning young people ages 13-24.

At CSULA, Hatchel serves as a campus liaison for the Psi Chi honor society and is a member of the Media and Language Lab housed under the auspices of the Department of Psychology.

“Tyler’s work on peer victimization has important implications as he will be looking at the role of offline and online support in helping youth deal with victimization. He has been working on the Digital Communication Study in my lab and I am very confident that with the support of the Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholarship, he will achieve his dream of pursuing a doctorate degree,” said Professor Kaveri Subrahmanyam, director of the University’s Media and Language Lab.

The Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholarship program supports the doctoral pursuits of CSU students who are economically or socially disadvantaged. Each scholar is awarded a $3,000 scholarship, covering travel expenses to doctoral-granting institutions and to attend professional conferences as well as to pay fees for college applications and graduate exams.

Other CSULA scholarship recipients for this year include Suzy Cruz, anthropology major; Anthony Elowsky, anthropology major; Krystina Engleman, English major; Yessica Garcia-Hernandez, Chicano studies major; Jaime Guzman, communication studies major; Breanna Luna, microbiology major; Giovanna Pozuelos, biological sciences major; Arpan Roy, anthropology major; and Ayana Younge, psychology major.

Since 1998, more than 175 students from CSULA have been recognized as Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholars. Fifty percent of the CSULA students have entered top-ranking doctoral programs throughout the United States and in several foreign countries. CSULA continues to be one of the largest contingents in the CSU system to receive the prestigious awards.

The award honors the late Sally Casanova, who launched the program in 1989. A member of the CSU Office of the Chancellor staff during the 1960s, Casanova also served as associate vice president for academic affairs and dean of graduate studies at CSU Dominguez Hills, from 1991 until her death in 1994. She was married to CSULA chemistry professor (now emeritus) Joseph Casanova.

Additionally, the scholarship is specifically helping Roy to attain a Ph.D. and become a professor or researcher. His research is focused on social movements, dissidence, Israel/Palestine and identity. He is also interested in the study of Israeli solidarity activists in the West Bank.

For Cruz, the scholarship will help her pursue a doctorate in physical anthropology with a focus on forensic anthropology. Her current study is focused on the modern use of human skeletal remains in ritualistic practices. She is also interested in the areas of human decomposition, human osteology, and estimation of ancestry.

“After graduation, I would like to begin a career in teaching at the university level as well as work in the medical legal field,” said Cruz.

Find out more by clicking the links below:

- CSU Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholarship: [http://www.calstate.edu/predoc/scholars/](http://www.calstate.edu/predoc/scholars/)
- Department of Psychology at CSULA: [http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/psych/](http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/psych/)
- Department of Anthropology at CSULA: [http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/anthro/index.htm](http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/anthro/index.htm)
- College of Natural and Social Sciences at CSULA: [http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/nssd/](http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/nssd/)
- Office of Graduate Studies and Research at CSULA: [http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/aa/gsr/](http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/aa/gsr/)