

My name is Junsei Megill and I am an intern at CMIL from San Diego Mesa College. I worked with Jessica Patzlaff this summer who is working on getting her masters through SDSU in ecology. Hana Koyama was also part of the pod and we worked together. I am a marine biology major and am finishing up at Mesa college and transferring to UCSD in the fall of 2024. At first I was nervous to apply for this internship but after the first few days of working here I realized it was a very chill and relaxed environment. Everyone was friendly and I felt welcomed.

In our pod we worked on two different experiments, one was assessing the remains of tethered abalone after a predator had consumed it and figuring out patterns associated with the predator present. The second experiment was watching abalone behavior with a present predator and watching their movements and reaction to the octopus. Every day we would clean the tanks and feed the octopus and abalone. Sometimes we would go out and collect shore crabs and kelp to feed to the animals at the lab. We also spent time in the workshop creating enclosures for the experiments using power tools and troubleshooting issues with our enclosure designs.

Working alongside octopi was probably the most interesting part for me. I observed them lift up the enclosure walls and crawl into adjacent enclosures and even try to escape during trials. They are definitely very intelligent animals and I didn't realize how smart they were. They always feel with their tentacles and when feeding them crabs they would attack without getting pinched and they would consume all the meat out of the crabs without any damage to the shell. Some even laid eggs and we were able to see them develop slowly.

Overall it was a fun and informative experience. I learned how to care for animals, set up experiments, and collect data. I really enjoyed working alongside Hana and Jessica at CMIL and am thankful for the opportunity. It was nice to get an insight into what actually happens at a marine lab and am happy I participated in this internship.





