

When I applied to this internship I had no idea what to expect. Quite frankly, I did not think that I would be accepted into this volunteer program. I would like to thank Alyssa Duenas and Lily McIntire for accepting me, looking past my hardships that I went through in my fourth year at San Diego State, and giving me the opportunity of a lifetime. Writing this blog post about my experience feels dreamlike, but I could not be more grateful. I want to extend my gratitude to Lily Jorrick and Kevin Hovel for their support and guidance over the summer. Being able to contribute to their experiments was a wonderful opportunity to grow my laboratory skills. Lily was a great mentor for me and Eli, and I hope I get to stay in contact and work on more projects with her.

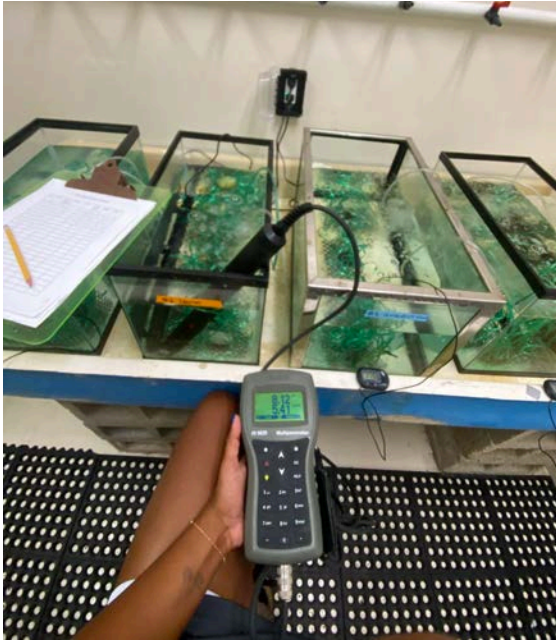
CMIL provided me with much needed information that I need to move forward in my marine biology career. Our workshops taught me things that I didn't think were going to be beneficial. Learning about the language of science was extremely helpful. I thought that learning about these terms was basic knowledge, but after attending just one workshop, I learned that these terms are ever changing.

During my experience I made it one of my SMART goals to go out into the field at least three times. I actually ended up making it out five times and even got to get into the water with Lily and Kevin. I got to learn some field skills that I am hoping to use in the future. We used dip nets to catch some pipefish that we eventually used in our experiment.

One of my favorite moments in the field was when we found a baby octopus in a holdfast. I was not expecting it to be so tiny, so it is definitely a moment I will remember forever.



Conducting our experiment also taught me how to take care of a fish husbandry which was also one of my SMART goals over the summer. It was very hands on and it felt like it was my own experiment.



During the experiment we took pipefish from Shelter Island and were testing the effects of global stressors on their predation. During our trials, I had to clean and siphon the tanks, when I noticed one of the males had given birth. I have never seen a baby pipefish before and I honestly got a little nervous and thought I was hurting them. At the end of our trials three pipefish had given birth so Lily tried to get in contact with Birch to see what we should feed them because of how small they were compared to the amphipods we feed to adults.



Finishing up on our scientific poster made this whole experiment seem real finally. I feel extremely lucky to work with such amazing people who are supportive and understanding. I hope I get to continue with CMIL.

