

Climate Resilient Monterey Bay



CREATING GENERATIONAL CAPACITY IN COASTAL CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND RISK REDUCTION

SUMMARY

CSUMB, together with regional partners and through participation in MBCAAN, is strengthening the Monterey Bay region's response to climate change by building generational workforce capacity in coastal climate resilience and risk reduction. The initiative prepares undergraduate and graduate students for leadership roles in the rapidly growing climate adaptation sector, while intentionally advancing participation in alignment with the U.S. Department of Commerce Workforce Development Strategy. The program funds and places undergraduates in paid internships and supports master's students through graduate fellowships embedded in regional climate agencies.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project is building and sustaining a regional pipeline into climate adaptation careers across undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels by embedding students in climate resilience work throughout the Monterey Bay region. It is increasing participation in the climate workforce by leveraging CSUMB's Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)/Minority Serving Institution (MSI) designation and reducing financial barriers through funded placements, fellowships, and training. Training is intentionally aligned with regional employer needs through CSUMB's participation in the MBCAAN Workforce Development Committee, ensuring that coursework and credentials reflect real hiring demands. Students are embedded into active climate adaptation projects with partner organizations in order to increase institutional capacity and generate tangible, place-based climate resilience outcomes. To ensure workforce readiness upon graduation, all funded students complete advanced, applied science- and policy-based workforce training designed to build in-demand technical competencies before they enter the profession.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

In addition to expanded climate workforce training and curriculum, the program management team coordinates internships and research experiences for undergraduate students, placing up to five interns each year in summer and academic-year roles. Two graduate students per year are supported through Climate Adaptation & Resilience (CARe) Fellowships that include tuition support and a stipend for their 400-hour professional internships with regional partners.

ADAPTATION STRATEGY

Workforce Development



PARTNERS

Cal State
Monterey Bay

California State University, Monterey Bay

Cabrillo College
Cabrillo College



This work is part of Climate Resilient Monterey Bay (CRMB), an initiative through the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation. CRMB is federally funded as part of the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge through the Inflation Reduction Act and administered by the Office for Coastal Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



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To further align curriculum with employer needs, CSUMB faculty receive grants to design and pilot new skills-based courses and certifications informed by MBCAAN workforce advisory committees. Teaching assistantships are provided to graduate students to support the delivery of these high-intensity courses. The effort also provides facilitated professional development and industry engagement through career fairs, seminar series, and a regional internship celebration co-hosted with UC Santa Cruz and Hartnell College. Cohort-based student development courses and wrap-around student support services ensure retention, belonging, and workforce readiness. Continuous accountability is maintained through application and placement tracking, student and employer surveys, and job outcome monitoring.

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