

# 2022 MANRRS REGION VI CLUSTER

OSU MANRRS takes first in person cluster since 2019 by storm



## Guiding the Next Generation of Leaders

BY JOHANNAH HAMILTON

The 2022 MANRRS Region VI Cluster was the first in person regional workshop since fall of 2019, taking place on the University of California – Davis campus. OSU MANRRS took the cluster by storm with 23 students, 22 undergraduates and 1 graduate student attendee. The two-day signature event began with a tour of UC Davis’ student farms and agriculture that can be found throughout the campus. Students were able to see the energetic baby calves at the cow stables which were smack dab in the middle of campus. The student farm was equally as exciting. Katherina, the director of student farms, taught us a little of the history of the 23-acre organic farm. In the 1970’s the university donated 23 acres for students to cultivate their own crops and now all students involved are either student farmers or interns. Every spring their students host K-12 youth to come out and learn about farming. The farm was beautiful and had a diversity of plants from yucca, teosinte (ancestor of corn), tomatoes, berries,



Students tasting fresh persimmon from the UC Davis Student Farm



Students at the UC Davis Student Farm



sugar cane, medicinal herbs, and a variety of gardens dedicated to crops from different ethnic backgrounds like an indigenous garden and African diaspora garden. These gardens are a testament to the diversity of people and knowledge that allow them to grow those plants. After the tour, we headed to Woodstock pizza for a night of networking and getting to know students from other chapters and professionals.

On Saturday the event started out with breakfast and a business meeting where we voted on the location of our 2023 Region VI workshop and gave a presentation on our chapter's activities from the last year. The professional development workshops began shortly after, covering subjects from financial literacy, salary negotiations, mental health and well-being, setting boundaries, how to be a leader, and Latinx, Native, Asian Americas excellence in ag. We had the honor of having the undersecretary of agriculture for the state of California, Christine Birdsong, as our keynote speak for the Lunch & Learn. After lunch, students were able to attend the opportunity fair with partners and sponsors



like John Deere, Land O' Lakes, Farm Credit West, Valent Group of Companies, Syngenta, American AgCredit, USDA ARS, Peace Corps, US Forest Service and more. Students had the opportunity to meet and give their resumes to representatives from all of these organizations for internship and job opportunities. After the opportunity fair, students competed in impromptu, elevator speech and interview contests. We had 7 students compete across 3 competitions. The cluster came to an end with the closing dinner and new member pinning ceremony. During the dinner, the winners of the competitions were announced, and new members received their new member MANRRS pins and were officially welcomed into the national society. We were ecstatic to learn that 3 OSU students placed in their competitions! In the interview contest, Diana Galicia placed second and Quetza Juarez placed first. Venecia Rollins placed second in the impromptu competition. For many of these students, this was their first conference and their first time stepping out of their comfort zone by engaging in public speaking. This conference was a great opportunity for students to see first hand the many benefits, personal and professional, that MANRRS has to offer.

