



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022-2023

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## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

This has been a time of major growth and transition for CASA Pitzer. It has required us to ground even more firmly in our values and goals, while also stretching ourselves into greater depth and expansion as we manifest this work on multiple new levels.

In Fall 2022, I stepped away from the CASA program for the first time in my 17 years at Pitzer! As a result of my overload administrative duties the previous years (directing CASA while also directing the Inside-Out Program, the Community Engagement Center, and the Office for Consortial Academic Collaboration at various points over the last five years), I was granted a semester research leave. I was grateful to have this time to experience living abroad and to write my second book (*Healing and Justice in Higher Education*, as part of a new book series to be published by Johns Hopkins University Press). I was honored that Barbara Junisbai, CASA visiting faculty and Pitzer Organizational Studies faculty, accepted our invitation to act as interim director during my leave, and also grateful to our extraordinary senior program manager, Scarlett Duarte, for the beautiful way they took care of the program in my absence. I returned in January just in time to welcome on board our new administrative assistant, Paulina Gonzalez, and our new student research fellow, Eunice Kim, who have both helped in wonderful ways to further develop, organize, and promote CASA's many defining features.

Thanks to Scarlett's community organizing prowess, we have created many new partnerships and elicited greater involvement from our existing partnerships, moving us closer to the "vibrant community hub" that we envision CASA to be. I have been doing some community organizing of my own on campus, and happy to find a number of new faculty interested in beginning in-depth engagement with CASA, through the development of new courses and their taking on of teaching CASA core courses. Likewise, with the help of recent CASA alum, Aloha Cerit, and our dear colleagues in Advancement, we have also organized a new CASA alumni initiative which includes an alumni network, panel of speakers, and evaluation project.

Thank to a generous grant from a Pitzer alum, we are now able to offer Scholar in Residence awards to faculty, students and community members, advancing meaningful involvement in research and courses grounded in collaborations with our local communities and social movements. With support of this same donor gift, we have also moved along our *Know Justice, Know Peace* initiative and are grateful to have been invited to publish the findings of this work with North Atlantic Book Press and with Theory in Action academic journal.

You will see the highlights of all these efforts in greater detail in the pages of this report, along with more information about what CASA is and what it is becoming. We are grateful for the support of so many (Our students! Our community partners! Our faculty and staff colleagues! Our Pitzer campus! The beautiful land we reside on!) We will continue to try to do our best by all of you, each and every day, in our work for critical action and social advocacy.

Onward,

Tessa Hicks Peterson

# THE PROGRAM

## *Overview*

The purpose of CASA is to collaborate with students, faculty, staff, community members and partner organizations to advance knowledge, skills, and capacity-building towards personal transformation and sustainable social change in the local region.

CASA Pitzer advances critical analysis and community partnerships around the most pressing issues in Southern California's Inland Empire. CASA Pitzer is located within a spacious community space in downtown Ontario which brings local residents, organizers, activists, artists, and nonprofits together with Pitzer College faculty and students to build community and enact change. The CASA Pitzer academic program is a two-course community engagement and research program that facilitates student fellowships and community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) on issues of regional equity and justice pertaining to incarceration, immigration, education, environment, labor, art, culture, and health.

In our academic program, CASA students explore current movements, theories and narratives centered around critical social justice issues in our local communities and effective means for making social change. Courses highlight frameworks and practices of community-based participatory action research, transformative movement organizing, and healing justice, focusing on building peace, wellbeing and liberation. Students study social movement theory and strategy, regional equity and political geography, and research methodologies that are grounded in critical, feminist and decolonizing frameworks. Students apply theory to practice through interdisciplinary scholarship, in-class dialogues, writing assignments utilizing self-reflection and critical analysis, experiential learning, art activities, and direct engagement with local organizations and movements through community-based participatory action research.

The CASA academic program is informed by transdisciplinary scholarship concerned with community education and social change. While different faculty and students bring to bear their own disciplinary interests and frameworks, these typically span the fields of community studies, urban studies, American studies, ethnic studies, organizational studies, environmental studies, critical global studies, psychology, health, labor and sociology. Particular frameworks include critical pedagogy, asset-based community development, community-based participatory action research, narrative and ethnographic research methods, transformative movement organizing, healing justice, equity centered and trauma informed education, emergent strategy, psychologies of liberations, indigenous knowledge systems, abolitionism, afrofuturism, applied arts and public humanities.

Community-based participatory action research is the principle approach to our work with community partners, one that equitably involves community members, organizational representatives, and researchers. All partners participate in the process: contributing expertise, decision-making, and sharing ownership of what is produced. The aim of CBPAR is to increase knowledge and understanding but also to integrate knowledge gained with interventions for policy or social change to benefit community members. There are various CBPAR approaches that can be used to engage community members from the initial engagement of the public to the

empowerment of communities that can lead to collective goals and social change. There may also be different levels of engagement for different stakeholders, though the emphasis on collective decision-making and ownership is paramount to this process.

Course praxis (theory + action + critical reflection) plays out in large part through the program's intensive practicum (125-hour fellowship), class field trips, community co-educator speaker series, and interactive workshops that exemplify what we study. Students engage in hands-on applications of community-based education and develop greater awareness of their own positionalities and values, as well as local knowledge, assets, and approaches to social change. The CASA academic program is deliberately open to producing diverse outputs that meet community needs and assets as well as faculty and students skills and transdisciplinary methodology. As a result, many mixed methods artifacts are produced, such as traditional research reports, oral histories, spatial mapping, community resources guides, arts and media designs, policy papers, grant proposals, white papers, letters to elected officials, op eds, etc.

### **CASA Principles**

- **Disrupting & Affirming:** We aim to disrupt injustice and oppression while affirming equity, wellbeing, peace, joy, security, and connection within ourselves and within our communities.
- **Interconnection:** Both the diminishing and healing of our humanity are interlocked in a “network of mutuality” (Martin Luther King, Jr.). We see that our liberations are bound together.
- **Imagination & Creativity:** We are imagining the just world we want and creatively cultivating it together through community-based research, education, organizing, and healing justice.
- **Place-Based:** We respect and affirm local knowledge, culture, assets, and power.
- **Personal & Political:** We prioritize collaborations that are critically reflexive and generate greater personal and systemic transformation.
- **Relational:** We create and sustain long-term, meaningful community partnerships that follow the lead of those most directly impacted by injustice in the community.

### **CASA Goals**

- Work collaboratively with community partners on research, service, organizing, and action projects that confront injustice and work toward justice, equity, rights, wellbeing, and community building.
- Ensure work is responsive and accountable to the community, makes a positive impact, achieves long- and short-term goals, and generates meaningful community-building for all involved.
- Listen and respond to needs and assets of our local community and justice-oriented organizations
- Provide critical pedagogy-based teaching to our students about self, other, social problems, social movements, and effective methods for collective impact.

- Support, mentor, and critically teach our students while respecting and learning from their knowledge and experiences.
- Create a space that is inclusive, welcoming, and supportive for community-building, justice work, participatory action research, and personal and organizational development.

## ***Program Requirements***

Students must take two courses simultaneously, which include:

### **Critical Community Studies (CASA 101)**

This course examines the specific political geography, history and regional equity impacts within the Inland Empire, as well as critical approaches and theories of social change and community engagement. In particular, it highlights healing justice and racial justice, through critical texts, discussions, guest speakers and experiential activities including liberation arts, meditation, and constructive listening dyads. It includes a direct engagement with diverse scholars, activists, and practitioners who work in these areas, featuring community co-educators from our local CASA partner organizations. These leaders share how their organizations address justice issues through grassroots organizing, policy advocacy, action research, and community-building work.

### **Research Methods for Community Change (CASA 105)**

This course explores diverse approaches to critical inquiry and community-based research, focusing on participatory action and project-based research. To address current social problems, students cultivate a toolkit approach to research, utilizing a variety of relevant methods such as interviews, focus groups, archival research, surveys, geographic information systems, and more. Students are partnered with CASA community partner organizations and support them in research and direct-impact projects to address issues that directly affect communities in the Inland Empire on topics ranging from immigration, education, incarceration, environmental justice, community health, and labor rights. In collaboration with a partner organization, students design and complete their project and community-based action research, as well as study theoretical frameworks and ethics involved in critical research practice. This allows students to contribute to longitudinal research that has been cultivated over dozens of years with our core community partners.

### **Credit-Based Research Fellowship**

Students are required to complete a 125-hour research fellowship with one of our core eight-community partner organizations to produce rigorous community-based research or praxis, and to integrate classroom theory into practice through change-oriented work. They receive an additional credit for this investment of time and learning in/with our community partners.

CASA is designed for sophomores and juniors and can be used towards the following:

Majors Credited	Graduation Requirements Fulfilled
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sociology</li> <li>● Environmental Analysis</li> <li>● Organizational Studies</li> <li>● International Intercultural Studies</li> <li>● American Studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social Responsibility Praxis</li> <li>● Social Justice Theory</li> <li>● Intercultural Understanding (local)</li> </ul>

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Outcome	Skills Gained
<i>Apply Theory to Practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Has a sophisticated notion of praxis that blends academic work with community engagement</li> </ul>
<i>Community Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Awareness of community strengths &amp; the social construction of knowledge.</li> <li>● Ability to assess and critically examine community needs as determined collectively by community members.</li> <li>● Possesses leadership/teamwork skills within the community.</li> </ul>
<i>Self-Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Awareness of one’s skills &amp; can evaluate one’s experience.</li> <li>● Demonstrated awareness of own perceptions, biases, assumptions; issues of power, privilege, positionality.</li> <li>● Exhibits development in sense of self, capacity, and moral reasoning.</li> </ul>
<i>Methodological Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demonstrates a nuanced understanding and use of methods appropriate to sensitive community-based settings in the service of social change.</li> </ul>
<i>Analysis of Inequality &amp; Power Relationships in Academic Literature &amp; the Community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ability to provide in-depth analysis of inequality and power relationships at all scales, from local to global, and can apply this understanding to community-based projects.</li> </ul>

**CASA’s Alignment with Pitzer’s Strategic Plan**

**Academic Resources & Planning**

- *Create new interdisciplinary strategies, leveraging existing academic programs, both to*

*guide and respond to students' changing academic interests.* (All CASA courses and community engagement projects inherently draw on interdisciplinary theories and strategies and adapt to students' changing interests given the plethora of diverse engagement and research projects available to students.)

- *Improve student learning by using added resources to create new program offerings, enhance academic space and technology, and support existing faculty lines and majors.* (CASA helps students fulfill major requirements in five majors, trains and supports existing faculty in community-based education and research, and has an enhanced human-designed centered academic space and technology that scholars love and which inspires new ways to teach, learn, and do research.)
- *Reimagine the second year student experiences in ways that increase retention and improve academic and career advising.* (The majority of CASA students are sophomores and evaluation indicates it is a key piece in their retention as well as in their advising and support for selecting a major, inspiring career paths, and preparing them for conducting research abroad and in their major.)

### **Build a Thriving Community**

- *Facilitate the bringing together of students, faculty, and staff in both formal and informal settings by expanding the portfolio of shared experiences.* (The nature of CASA affords many opportunities for faculty, students and staff to share space, mentorship and support, in class as well as in community fellowships, fieldtrips, advising hours, and informal experiences of shared meals and check-in's.)
- *Steward campus facilities and technology to promote learning, community and engagement.* (CASA has one of Pitzer's most prized spaces, a beautiful historic building in downtown Ontario, with renovated design and technology, it promotes learning, community and engagement through myriad opportunities.)
- *Promote intercultural understanding and community trust through cross-group dialogue and other means.* (All of CASA – including intentional class reading, discussions and community building activities, as well as cross-group community engagement – result in profound increase in community trust and intercultural understanding, between and across students and community groups.)
- *Anticipate, identify, and respond to the diverse needs of all members of the College community, emphasizing inclusion and equity.* (CASA works with a cohort which allows individualized attention and, through its decades of studying and directing this work, an ability to anticipate, identify and respond thoughtfully to diverse needs, utilizing strategic educational activities to emphasize inclusion and equity, between and across students and community groups.)
- *Improve the overall student experience, using student-led dialogue as the basis for planning.* (CASA utilizes a student-led approach in teaching by allowing students to lead discussions of readings as well as in eliciting their input in surveys and focus groups so their input directs planning of subsequent CASA programs.)

### **Financial Sustainability**

- *Implement a thoughtful plan for enrollment growth to increase revenue and realize the benefits of scale.* (CASA has launched a Community Scholar in Residence program and a Faculty Fellows program that offers varying degrees of course development support, community engagement training and mentoring, and the cultivation of new classes and faculty contributing to existing CASA core classes, thus enabling an increase in revenue and scale.)
- *Build our brand, create more awareness, and capture more of our public's mind share through a concerted communications program emphasizing the accomplishments of our students, alumni, faculty, and staff; and how these reflect and reinforce the College's core values.* (CASA may be one of the only Pitzer courses that holds a public research symposium and publishes student research publicly each semester, drawing together community organizations, members, and other students, faculty and staff through this emphasis on our accomplishments, which advance our core college values; we have also greatly increased our own concerted communications in social media and in scholarly publications.)
- *Diversify revenue sources to create a more flexible foundation for the future.* (CASA has tangibly contributed not only to its own increased revenue sources but to that of the college generally, with the new donor gift of \$50k annually for 5 years as well as two large foundation grant proposals in the works.)

### Planning & Decision-Making

- *Build a flexible, collaborative infrastructure to collect, store, analyze, and share data to inform institutional planning and decisions.* (CASA elicits a collaborative form of evaluation from students and community partners to inform planning and decisions and is also launching an oral history project which will also collect, store, analyze and share data from local community members which has never been done and will offer much to inform institutional planning and decisions.)

## CASA PARTNERS

The CASA academic program is based in community-based participatory action research, organizing, service and engagement. These methodologies equitably involve community members, organizational representatives, faculty instructors and student researchers. All partners participate in the process: contributing expertise, decision-making, and sharing ownership of what is produced. The aim is to increase knowledge and understanding but also to integrate knowledge with interventions for policy or social change to benefit community members. This inherently transdisciplinary framework allows a variety of methodologies (qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, mapping, etc.), on a variety of subject matters that connect to the interests and needs of collaborating students, faculty, and community partners. The partnerships we have are intentionally long-term and deeply engaged. Here are the eight core community partner organizations that our students and faculty primarily engage with:





### THE ARTS AREA (TAA) | <https://theartsarea.org/>

The Arts Area provides professional development, civic advocacy, resource support, and fiscal sponsorship for the creative industries of the Inland Empire of Southern California, including the areas of San Bernardino, Riverside, and east Los Angeles Counties. The role of economic development includes a broad range of activities to attract, create, and retain jobs, and to foster a resilient, growing, and inclusive economy.

#### Research Focus

- Research arts education enrollment compared to access. What percentage of students actually have access/opportunity to take arts education, not just does the opportunity exist on some level.
- Research correlations: access to arts education to students' overall school performance, truancy, non-academic activities.

### HUERTA DEL VALLE COMMUNITY GARDEN (HDV) | <https://www.huertadelvalle.org/>

Huerta del Valle is an urban farm and community garden that serves 62 families, who each maintain a 20 foot by 10-foot plot of land for just \$35 a year, giving them access to fresh food at low cost. In addition, there is a weekly farmer's market on Wednesday and Saturdays. Through growing food, they work toward sustainable community empowerment and health: creating meaningful work, building lasting skills and developing strong relationships within the city of Ontario.

#### Research Focus

- Continue research by past interns: research proposal, GAP certification
- Map outreach locations

- Where HDV is among the community and analysis of the impact they have, are folks aware of community garden, what is their feedback on and critique of the garden
- Analysis of community needs and community involvement

### **INLAND COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT JUSTICE (IC4IJ) | <https://ic4ij.org/>**

The Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice, is composed of over 35 organizations that serve the immigrant community in the Inland Empire. The IC4IJ currently focuses on advocacy, changing the narrative, and capacity building. Our coalition engages in policy advocacy, community organizing and education, and rapid response to ICE and border patrol operations. We are collectively changing the narrative of the one million immigrants who live, thrive, and are a foundational part of the fabric of the IE. We are building organizational capacity through leadership development, cooperation, support networks, and shared regional strategies. Lastly, the IC4IJ provides resources such as training, technical support, and grants to coalition partners to further support their efforts and mission in the region.

#### **Research Focus**

- Continue to help identify how much street vendors contribute to the local economy in San Bernardino or Riverside
- Citations of street vendors

### **INLAND EMPIRE IMMIGRANT YOUTH COLLECTIVE (IEIYC) | <https://theieiyc.org/>**

The Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective is an undocumented youth-led grassroots organization in the Inland Empire. They are committed to creating a safe space for immigrant youth regardless of legal status, sexuality or other intersections that are crucial to the undocumented identity.

#### **Research Focus**

- Support with Undocuhealth Ambassadors program
- Undocumented Mentorship Academy planning
- Community building

### **RIVERSIDE ALL OF US OR NONE | <https://riversideallofusornone.org/>**

A local chapter of All of Us or None, is part of a national organizing initiative of prisoners, formerly incarcerated people, organized to action to end mass incarceration and the discrimination faced by formerly incarcerated people. The goal of All of Us or None is to strengthen the voices of people most affected by mass incarceration and the growth of the prison-industrial complex.

### **STARTING OVER, INC. (SOI) | <http://startingoverinc.net/>**

Starting Over, Inc. specializes in providing transitional housing and reentry services for formerly incarcerated individuals while helping to build strong communities through recovery, civic engagement, and leadership development.

#### **Research Focus**

- Create a participant handbook for those in transitional houses, based on curriculum and

handouts proposed by spring intern, creating a weekly topic agenda, dialogue prompts and worksheet responses. Add self-help/care documents and self-awareness/self-assessment (triggers, etc.) to welcome packet/manual

- Follow releases and re-entry in Riverside: what is needed in terms of tools and resources
- Research Sheriff plans for release and re-entry
- Continue research by past interns: work toward transparency in Riverside County jails, investigate the media scene of Riverside County, research conditions for early releases in Riverside County

## **WAREHOUSE WORKERS RESOURCE CENTER (WWRC) |**

<http://www.warehouseworkers.org/>

A local nonprofit, 501(c)(3), organization founded in 2011 dedicated to improving working conditions in the warehouse industry in Southern California. They focus on education, advocacy and action to change poor working conditions in the largest hub of warehousing in the country.

### **Research Focus**

- Escuelitas
- Development of Community Profile
- Acquainting fellows with WWRC, attending meetings, looking at extant data, reviewing interview protocol, revising protocol

## **YOUTH MENTORING ACTION NETWORK (YMAN) | <https://www.yman.org/>**

The Youth Mentoring Action Network was founded in 2007 with the mission of leveraging the power of mentoring to create a more equitable and just society for young people. Founded by two veteran educators who understood the importance of making solid connections with young people, they recognized that young people were at their best when their voices were heard and they felt fully supported.

### **Research Focus**

- Outreach to community members
- Quality assessment – current programs
- Data collection
- Empowering young people to become community leaders through advanced training and leadership opportunities
- Exploring YMAN's approach to youth centrism and examining the landscape of identity-based youth experiences across IE high schools (through the QuTIE and Ambassador programs)

## **MOTIVATING ACTION LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY | <https://malotongaie.org/>**

Welcome to MALO, or Motivating Action Leadership Opportunity, a nonprofit organization that serves Tongan Americans in the Inland Empire area through youth mentorship, job readiness, resource literacy, and cultural gathering events.

### **Research Focus**

- Fund/grant writing process and data collection
- Updating and managing the website for the org

## **Community-based, Participation Action Research Projects**

### **FALL 2022 | Pitzer Undergraduate**

**Stryder Rodenberg and Grace Hill**, “Radical Reconnection & Huerta del Valle”

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EdH-DSQnGZz3pmwPt05XELPyw\\_qyfHz0/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EdH-DSQnGZz3pmwPt05XELPyw_qyfHz0/view?usp=sharing)

**Cithlaly Aguilar**, “A Critical Analysis of the Efficacy and Implementation of SB 946 in the Inland Empire”

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TpwrckT5pT0uMXSTCQtcHcl7gEhqHWDG/view?usp=sharing>

**Grace Phillips**, “We Got Us: A Guide to Digital Security in the IE”

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gzNvTLp74vMOjo8HyAvWz3DY5K92CqyV/view?usp=sharing>

**Serena Mao and Jeffery Zhang**, “Not All CBPAR’s Are Created Equal: Co-Creating MALO’s Website”

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bk\\_z4eXRugZJERrRMPL7B72cSUEiYJez/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bk_z4eXRugZJERrRMPL7B72cSUEiYJez/view?usp=sharing)

**Taeya Boi-Doku**, “The Inland Empire Arts & Cultural Identity Disrupting Labor-Centered Relevancy”

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HYoiEzUWISkXL3Yk\\_bL3KUdVK-UK8tsG/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HYoiEzUWISkXL3Yk_bL3KUdVK-UK8tsG/view?usp=sharing)

**Elena Hocksensmith and Sami Gottensegen**, “Community Profile : Framework, Progress, and Next Steps

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_V\\_FIynLMAHjwrDlPk0SE06pmbDSu43z/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_V_FIynLMAHjwrDlPk0SE06pmbDSu43z/view?usp=sharing)

**Sarah Snyder**, “Voter Turnout and the Criminal Justice System: A Case for Restructuring Local Elections in the Inland Empire”

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HHErUDWwgMZxMT753u1rl\\_ZF3UIC3xrL/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HHErUDWwgMZxMT753u1rl_ZF3UIC3xrL/view?usp=sharing)

### **SPRING 2023 | Pitzer Undergraduate**

**Anjuli Turner and Martin Angelov**, “Healing Together: How to Preserve Culture Through Medicinal Herbs

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-kJaCInXmWat8UyM19hFkAsD-jGBx0QR/view?usp=sharing>

**Neha Basu**, “Geographies of Economic Violence: Mapping Street Vendor Citations in San Bernardino County”

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cS5ZAMIMZH1eqZZBkfhjOwd0cENz\\_SjR/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cS5ZAMIMZH1eqZZBkfhjOwd0cENz_SjR/view?usp=sharing)

**Ananya Maskara**, “CASA 105 Research Paper”

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oHO9HZZj-TndZ3JIyuejTRiHeyI5iRj7/view?usp=sharing>

**Solene Lux Bryant and Meagan Lesser**, “Motivating Action Leadership Opportunity: A Response to the Medical Erasure of Tongans and Tongan Americans in the Inland Empire”

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UGGjSlfWCx6UfGEKEPg\\_dVAp6CvdvQxY/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UGGjSlfWCx6UfGEKEPg_dVAp6CvdvQxY/view?usp=sharing)

**Alex Wise**, “Sheriff & Coroner Separation”

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ii9oYGaZ4-QF6ThaKHV\\_Jq45dQiAvG21/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ii9oYGaZ4-QF6ThaKHV_Jq45dQiAvG21/view?usp=sharing)

**Dylan Cleverly**, “Youth Arts Access in the Inland Empire: Exploring Alternate Routes in Arts Education Advocacy”

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/13fW8KkdPOe6j1glr9vqUcbmoK5QzGhZL/view?usp=sharing>

**Elsie Lipson**, “Beyond the Numbers: Tracking the Impact of the Pandemic on IE Communities”

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UeNX3h2LXVQYaerucAAsU3m58rghN6N1/view?usp=sharing>

**Mila Lux Bryant, Georgia Fine, and Joshua Becerra**, “Freedom Dreaming the YMAN Experience: The Future of Critical Mentoring”

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1miesNdK3G-ZUdbGdUMbtGtWul7fDUUpZ9/view?usp=sharing>

## PROGRAM IMPACT

### *Quantitative Impact*

The following information outlines community and fellowship work done by CASA Pitzer students in collaboration with CASA community partners. Students are required to spend 125 hours in their research fellowship, providing in total over 3,000 hours of volunteer time to our community partners annually.

	Fall	Spring	Total
<i>Students</i>	14	14	28
<i>Hours</i>	1,750	1,750	3,500

### *Qualitative Impact*

Students and community partners regularly assess their qualitative experience and impact through written responses throughout the semester, in addition to a survey completed by each group at the close of the semester. All student community engagement impact data (including that which occurs through the CASA program) is collected across the college through Pitzer’s Community Engagement Center, which provides comprehensive results of this upon request. Results of surveys from community partners may contain some sensitive information that

identifies respective student fellows or specific community members' negotiations of social justice issues so is not disseminated publicly, but can be shared upon direct request to CASA staff. Direct assessment of how students meet learning objectives through examination of their written work has been conducted in the past and can also be shared upon request.

## THE SPACE

CASA Pitzer is housed in the heart of downtown Ontario, California in the historic Frankish building, overseen by the San Bernardino Housing department. CASA occupies the first floor of this space, embellished with high ornate ceilings and abundant natural light. Our facilities are equipped with a smart television, charging station and projector ready to use for meetings, presentations, and workshops. CASA furniture is also easily movable in order to organize the space to fit the diverse needs of students and community partners while hosting trainings, events, and classes.



### Location

200 S. Euclid Ave., Suite B, Ontario, CA 91762

## Hours

Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Saturday through Sunday by request

## Space Usage

The space is open to all community partners and organizations within the Inland Empire, at no cost as long as there is a benefit to the community or social justice-oriented goal behind the event, for any and all programming such as:

- Retreats
- Meetings
- Catered Events
- Informational Forums
- Social Justice Organizing
- Film Screenings
- Art Workshops
- Education Workshops
- Theatrical Performances
- Communal Office Space
- Community-based Participatory Research Labs

The CASA Space has been utilized by several different organizations as we continue to grow our connections to local Inland Empire Orgs. Users of the space utilize CASA in order to host meetings, workshops, and more. These organizations include: CIYJA, LULAC, SEIU 2015, Inland Empire Equity Partnership, RSN Coalition and IE Community Voices. In addition to our newer users of the space, our core partners have continued using the space for meetings and events as well.

## Events

The ultimate goal for the CASA community center is providing a much-needed, welcoming place to gather, connect, and build community. We will collaborate with faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community partners (utilizing existing grant funding) to host more offerings of arts, policy, community-building, and education events that advance community awareness, advocacy, and collaboration among students, faculty, and local nonprofits.

This year, CASA has hosted various programming workshops and events that have centered around community justice, resilience, education, and community advancement. The CASA Spring Speaker Series topics such as: Critical Mentoring, and Healing Centered, Radical Education, Building Transformative Movements for Democracy and Beloved Community, and more. Other workshops facilitated at CASA by our community partners included: empowerment for immigrant youth, trauma informed healing for veterans, business training for community, sustainable healing justice, food justice, arts education and social and political education. CASA

aimed this year to significantly increase our program offerings after the slowdown of the pandemic and have met that goal with new and more partnerships and events that advance community and provide a space for knowledge, skills, capacity growth particularly in civic engagement and interpersonal healing. CASA also aimed to increase engagement with alumni and met that aim by developing a new alumni panel event, alumni network, and alumni evaluation survey project. Similarly, CASA aimed to begin new partnerships with organizations and community members to expand our reach, which we also met through a growing roster and expanded base of new participants.

**Regenerative Conflict Resolution:**  
 A conversation about conflict and how to change the narrative  
 Facilitated by Azucena Ortiz, Healing & Justice Center  
 NOVEMBER 9, 2022, 9 AM - 12 PM

Oftentimes conflict is inevitable, especially when we have to engage in difficult conversations. Exploring our relationship to conflict, how we deal with it, and learning or deepening communication and self-reflective skills can change the narrative from conflict that alienates us, causes disruption, and ruptures to a regenerative conflict that allows us to find solutions and stay in connection.

**THIS WORKSHOP WILL:**

- go over the skills that support regenerative conflict resolution
- go over four archetypes in conflict
- will allow time to self-reflect on how we each engage when conflict arises
- will open up a discussion on how we can change the narrative from conflict that leads to ruptures to a regenerative conflict that leads to solutions and connections

**INLAND EMPIRE IMMIGRANT YOUTH COLLECTIVE** | **HJC** | **CASA PITZER**

CASA PITZER PRESENTS  
**Research Gala**  
 Community Celebration  
 MONDAY, DEC. 12TH, 2022  
 6-7 PM

TAEYA BOI-DOKU: THE ARTS AREA  
 CRYSTAL RODRIGUEZ: THE ARTS AREA & PROTOTYPES  
 GRACE HILL: HUERTA DEL VALLE  
 STRYDER RODENBERG: HUERTA DEL VALLE  
 CITHALY AGUILAR: INLAND COALITION 4 IMMIGRANT JUSTICE  
 ANYA AYALA: INLAND EMPIRE, IMMIGRANT YOUTH COLLECTIVE  
 GRACE PHILLIPS: INLAND EMPIRE, IMMIGRANT YOUTH COLLECTIVE  
 SERENA MAO: MOTIVATING ACTION LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY  
 JEFFREY (YIJIAN) ZHANG: MOTIVATING ACTION LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY  
 PATRICIA ANNIE NUÑEZ: PROTOTYPES  
 SAMI GOTTSOEN: WAREHOUSE WORKERS RESOURCE CENTER  
 ELENA HOCKENSMITH: WAREHOUSE WORKERS RESOURCE CENTER  
 TALYA KALTMAN-KRION: STARTING OVER INC.  
 SARAH SNYDER: STARTING OVER INC.

CASA PITZER SPRING 2023 SPEAKER SERIES  
**BUILDING TRANSFORMATIVE MOVEMENTS FOR DEEP DEMOCRACY AND BELOVED COMMUNITY**  
 with Taj James

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 8TH 11:00AM**

200 S EUCLID AVE SUITE B ONTARIO, CA 91762

During this session, we will discuss what it means to build transformative movements for deep democracy and beloved community. Taj shares building community across the several questions that matter most in our lives: how can we build the relationships and systems we long for? And how do we transform our society? How do we reimagine our world? How do we transform our society? How do we reimagine our world? How do we transform our society? How do we reimagine our world?

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO JOIN IN PERSON, JOIN THROUGH ZOOM: [HTTPS://PITZER.ZOOM.US/J/81693301265](https://pitzer.zoom.us/j/81693301265)

NO MONEY IS A BARRIER FOR PARTICIPATION. TRANSPORT, BREAKFAST, AND PARKING ARE COVERED. WE'LL PROVIDE A FREE RECEIPT AND ARE PROVIDING AT THE ORIGINAL GUEST NUMBER. WE'LL ANNOTATE YOUR INSTRUCTOR AT THE INTERSECTION OF WELL-BEING AND URBAN PRACTICES. PLEASE PLAY AND ENJOY YOUR POTENTIAL AND GROWTH.

CASA PITZER SPRING 2023 SPEAKER SERIES  
**CRITICAL MENTORING, AND HEALING CENTERED, RADICAL EDUCATION**  
 with Dr. Torie Weiston-Serdan And Andre Chenfeng

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 22ND 11:00AM**

200 S EUCLID AVE SUITE B ONTARIO, CA 91762

TORIE WEISTON-SERDAN IS A SCHOLAR, PRACTITIONER, AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR FOCUSING ON YOUTH POWER BUILDING AND SHIFTING SYSTEMS. SHE IS THE FOUNDER OF THE YOUTH MENTORING ACTION NETWORK.  
 ANDRE CHENFENG IS AN ADVOCATE FOR HEALING-CENTERED EDUCATION. HE IS A PH.D. STUDENT AT CLAREMONT GRADUATE UNIVERSITY, WITH A FOCUS ON INTEGRATING CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES AND CRITICAL THEORIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION, SPECIFICALLY, AROUND LIBERATION-BASED HEALING WITH TEACHER EDUCATORS OF COLOR.

**RESEARCH GALA**  
 END OF YEAR CELEBRATION  
 mon, may 8 | 5pm - 7pm | 200 s. euclid ave, ontario

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO JOIN IN PERSON, JOIN THROUGH ZOOM:  
[HTTPS://PITZER.ZOOM.US/J/81693301265](https://pitzer.zoom.us/j/81693301265)

**mural painting**  
 saturday, april 15  
 10:00am - 3:00pm  
 casa space: suite b,  
 200 s. euclid ave, ontario

**PITZER COLLEGE ALUMNI Weekend**  
 April 28-30, 2023

**CASA Reception & Alumni Panel**  
 Thursday, April 27, 4pm  
 Learn how CASA has impacted our alumni's education and their futures after Pitzer



# CASA 2022-23 NEW INITIATIVES HIGHLIGHTS

## Community Projects

### Mural



CASA Pitzer Alum Christian Cabunag returned to CASA to design a mural representing our eight core community partners. Students and community members were invited to participate in the painting process. The aim for this mural is to capture the ways in which local grassroots organizations at CASA collaborate and utilize their assets, resources, and capacity to build strong communities, and to advocate for equity and social justice. The mural is a depiction of a landscape scene in which CASA's partners are hosting a resource fair.

The center of the mural features a brick road, symbolizing the path for the future, which is built by the community. At the top of the path is the Pitzer tree logo, symbolizing the growth of our communities as the efforts to nurture and advocate come together.

**CASA Pitzer was a perfect fit for me as a student because I've always wanted to expand the meaning behind my art and my efforts to connect it to community and advocacy efforts... There, I learned how to adapt my abilities to provide creative and logistical support for community members, artists, and local advocacy groups. It was amazing to see the synergy between social justice theory and community organizing, and I realized how everyone in the movement can contribute as individuals... This approach to community partnership has always influenced my work with advocacy groups after graduation, as I am always considering ways to support creative expression and storytelling as a way to promote self-**

**advocacy and representation in civic action.**

*— Christian Cabunag, 2017 alum*

## Alumni Reception and Stories



**The ability to explore public health with a strong sense of community, justice, ethics, and love drew me to be a part of Pitzer College and CASA. Spring Semester of 2019, I completed the CASA internship at Huerta del Valle Community Garden. Unknowingly, this internship would sow an eager seed in my journey. That seed quickly sprouted and developed. In partial fulfillment of my bachelor's in Public Health, I led and developed a community-based health program with Huerta del Valle... I am now completing my MPH in Global Health at Loma Linda University and working as the San Bernardino Jardin de Salud Community Garden Coordinator. CASA introduced me to the power of community gardens, and I continue to be in awe of the collective power that exists in a community garden to cultivate a hub for holistic health and wellness.**

*— Rosalina Ramirez, 2019 alum*

In April, CASA invited and uplifted five alumni as part of the 2023 Pitzer Alumni Weekend. CASA Director Professor Tessa Hicks Peterson moderated a panel where Christian Cabunag, Michael Griggs, Rosalina Ramirez, Mere Abrams, and Keely Nguyen spoke to how CASA impacted their education at Pitzer, and shaped their future after graduation—personally, politically, professionally. For some, their experience at CASA was what motivated them onto paths as diverse as public health, communications, education, or social work. Many spoke about the ways CASA's core values translated to their current role, such as in dismantling a white supremacy work culture, prioritizing holistic community wellness, and negotiating the identities they bring to a space. Finally, the alumni were able to connect with current Pitzer students, and our community partners, to further strengthen the relationships that had begun during their time at CASA. This event imagined what futures for community justice-oriented education could look like, while honoring and building on the institutional memory of past students.

### **CASA Student Scholar in Residence**

CASA student scholar in residence seeks to give students time and space to reflect, reimagine and/or continue building on their work, while also providing them with institutional support for their growth and engagement with other students, organizers, and organizations in the region, as well as members of the Pitzer College community. The activities of this residence are to be collaboratively conceived.

### **CASA Activist Scholar in Residence**

CASA Activist Scholar in Residence seeks to give activists time and space to reflect and reimagine their work, while also providing them with institutional support for their growth and engagement with other organizers in the region, as well as members of the Pitzer College community. The current ASIR is Esmeralda Santos who works at one of our core partners' Inland Coalition 4 Immigrant Justice.

### **CASA Community Scholar in Residence**

CASA Community Scholar in Residence seeks to give faculty time and space to reimagine their work in the context of community-based education and research and contribute to the CASA program, while also providing them with professional support for their growth and engagement with community-based pedagogies and methodologies and in partnerships with organizations in the region. The hope is that they will contribute new courses and research into the CASA Pitzer program and broader community and in so doing advance their own research and teaching approaches, outcomes, and fulfillment. Doing so might elicit more interest for long-term teaching with CASA and participation of more students and faculty from their fieldgroup in the CASA program. Steffanie Guillermo, Associate Professor of Psychology and Jemma Lorenat, Associate Professor of Mathematics were awarded the *Community Scholar in Residence*.



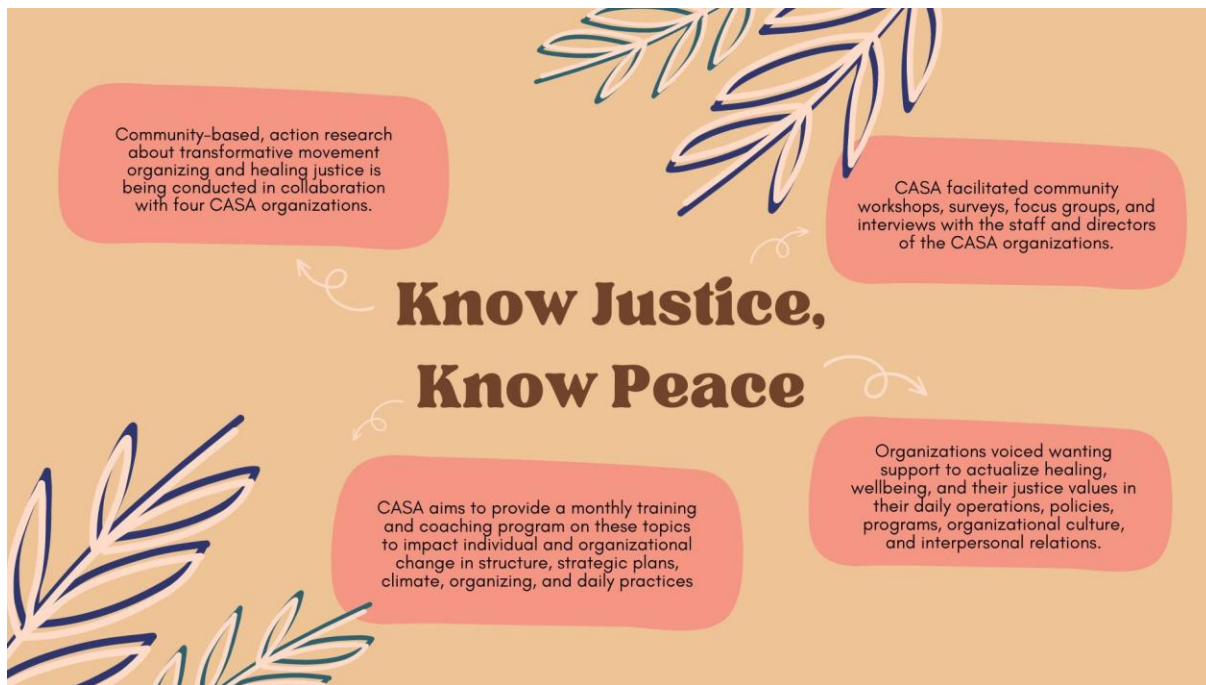
**Steffanie Guillermo**



**Jemma Lorenat**

## ***Moving community work into applied scholarship:***

### **Know Justice, Know Peace anthology, article, and workbook**



Centering wellness in justice work and justice in wellness work is both a timeless and timely issue. The impacts of COVID-19, racialized violence and economic hardship only magnify pre-existing conditions of inequity as they relate to wellbeing and to the fragility of wellness of those working at the frontlines. The Know Justice, Know Peace community collective project created tools, training workshops, scholarship and workbooks for our justice organizations and movements to use to be more trauma- and healing-informed in analysis and practice.

The first phrase of this initiative included a formal community-based action research project that was launched June, 2020 with CASA faculty director, Tessa Hicks Peterson, trauma-therapist and community leader, Hala Khouri, and community organizer, Scarlett Duarte, alongside two Pitzer students, Keely Nguyen and Dalia Paris-Saper and three Claremont Graduate University students, Vanessa Reyes, Cindy Gaytan and Therese Julia Uy. The community-based action research project first focused on exploring self/organizational reflections on if, how/where/why and where/why not wellness, healing, trauma-informed practices and transformative organizing exist in daily operations and strategic vision of organizations (on personal, interpersonal, institutional, structural/systemic levels). This took place through digital surveys, focus groups and interviews with staff of the organizations. Based on the findings, the research team then developed for these community participants an in-depth 8-month training and practice program, involving thematic explorations of trauma-informed care, mindfulness and embodied practices for regulation of trauma and stress, self and community care practices, healing resistance philosophy, alternative/restorative organizational practices and transformative movement organizing.

**My experience as a second-year at CASA organizing with the Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective under my mentor, Najayra Valdovinos Soto allowed me to engage in meaningful advocacy work with IE folks that forged my commitment to community organizing as I saw how my community and I were impacted by xenophobic policies. As my identity continued to develop at the IEIYC (as well as in academic spaces including CASA, and student clubs), I was so thankful for the opportunity to be a part of *Know Justice, Know Peace: The Transformative & Justice Collective* over the summer, working with community partners on topics of healing justice and transformative justice, which lasted for years! Being able to practice theories of justice and working to dismantle the culture of white supremacy/status quo on a personal and organizational level have allowed me to resist dominant modes of knowledge and behavior by practicing and envisioning what the world can and should look like.**

**— Keely Nguyen, 2020 alum**

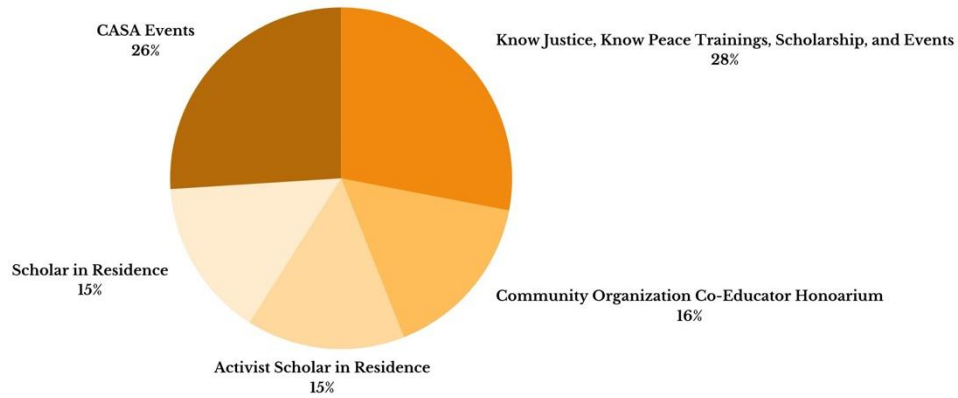
This year we continued to grow this work through our grassroots network, resulting in co-developing the Sustaining Us in the Movement Coalition and IE Community Voices. We also scaled up and spread out this work in meaningful ways, including securing the following publications:

- an anthology edited by CASA faculty director, secured summer 2023, currently titled *Know Justice, Know Peace: Transformative praxis for social justice movements, organizations, and leaders*, to be published with North Atlantic Books
- an accompanying workbook, co-edited by CASA faculty director, secured summer 2023, currently titled *Know Justice, Know Peace: Transformative praxis community workbook*, to be published with North Atlantic Books
- an academic journal article, co-written by CASA faculty director with CASA student researchers Keely Nguyen, Claudia Vanessa Reyes, Dalia Saper-Paris, and Therese-Julia Uy. to be published in [Theory in Action](#) Journal, Taylor and Francis, secured Spring 2023, entitled: *Know Justice, Know Peace: Reflections from a community-based, action research collective*.

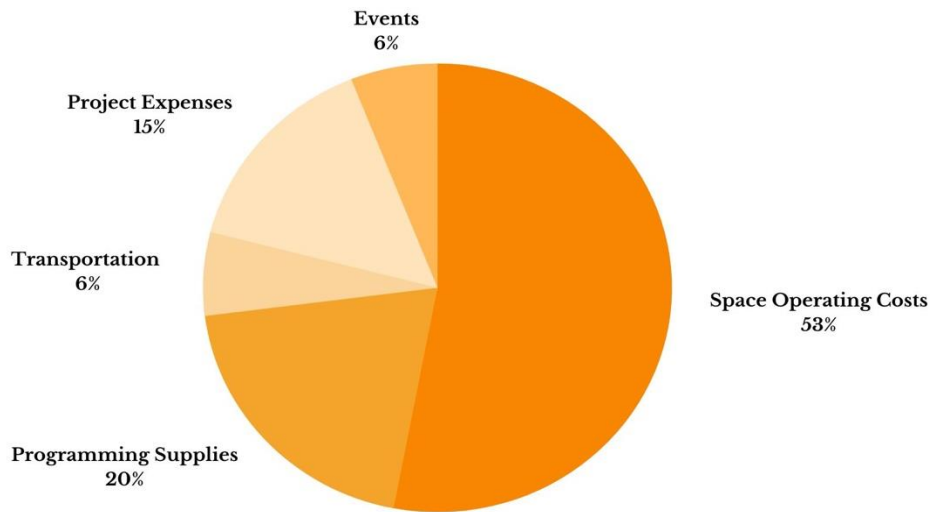
## FUNDING

The funding for CASA is provided through two streams: Pitzer's hard money budget support and a five year gift from an anonymous donor. The break down of funding is directed accorded the priorities and needs of the academic program and community hub and related programming.

## The Gift Budget



## CASA Budget



## LOOKING FORWARD

### *The People's IE: Oral History and Archival Project*

*The People's IE: Repairing the past, reinventing the future* will highlight the often-abandoned political and social unrest of the Inland Empire (IE), documenting the lived

experiences of those who reside within the region and face the frontline impacts of systemic injustice. Through the facilitation of a public community archive, this project seeks to dismantle archival violence against marginalized voices and (re)claim such stories—sites of struggle, triumph, joy, and resistance—as defining narratives of the IE. It will tap into the visions that residents want to feel, see, and enact to uplift their communities, rights, and well-being into the future.

Archives are a powerful tool for preserving and sharing records, but have also traditionally been sites of silence, erasure, and containment. There are multiple tensions that complicate what is entered (or not) into an archive, even one grounded in community relationships. This project aims to uphold ways of research that are not violent, but instead centers relational, co-creative processes. We affirm and honor participants’ agency—which can also manifest through silence, refusal, and illegibility. We approach the concept of an archive with an ethics of care, considering the web of relationships connecting archivists, archive-subjects, archive-users, and community, as well as the responsibilities such a relationship implies. While the final form of this project is still changing, we imagine a hybrid physical-digital archive that allows community members to submit their stories in forms as varied as oral histories, art, written records, physical artifacts, and more.

### ***CASA Resilience and Restorative Justice Program***

We aim to build on our existing *Know Justice, Know Peace* work to create an in-depth exploration of embodied leadership, trauma-informed and resiliency-centered personal and organizational development founded on confronting injustice and working for equity, well-being, and peace while creating joy, security, and connection. This will take place on two tracts: one for organizational leaders and another for student organizers so that different entities can act as on-the-ground champions to help usher in these culture shift. From there, we aim to utilize the freedom schools' model (six-week summer school course), where those who have “graduated” from the CASA organizational and leadership workshop offerings can co-teach frameworks and strategies of healing justice to community members, expanding the impact infinitely.

## **TEAM CASA**

Pictured at the 2023 Know Justice, Know Peace Summer Celebration





## Tessa Hicks Peterson

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Assistant Vice President  
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Each year Pitzer faculty from across the disciplines rotate in teaching core courses in the CASA program. During the 2022-2023 academic year the following professors taught in the CASA program:



**Barbara Junisbai**

Interim Director of CASA Pitzer, Fall 2022  
Professor of Organizational Studies  
*CASA 105: Research Methods for Community Change,*  
Fall 2022

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**Erich Steinman**

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