

Samantha is a Mexican-American and first generation student, born and raised in Sylmar in the Northeast San Fernando Valley. Growing up at her family home with her five siblings, she has personally seen how climate change impacts like extreme heat and wildfires affect communities of color, many of which are already overburdened by high levels of air pollution. Her upbringing inspired her passion for climate resilience and environmental justice within her academic and professional career. Samantha recently graduated summa cum laude from UCLA in 2022 with a Master's degree in Public Policy as well as cum laude from Scripps College in 2018 with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Analysis. In her Master's Program she explored courses and knowledge from interdisciplinary fields like sustainable science, community engagement, economics, policy, urban planning, and law, which have inspired her interdisciplinary approach in her career.

In her Grants and Programs Analyst role at Climate Resolve, Samantha writes grant proposals and accesses new funding opportunities and relationships. Previously, Samantha spent her summer 2021 as a Luskin Intern at Climate Resolve and later was contracted by Climate Resolve as a Grant Writing Consultant for applications to the 2021 California Resilience Challenge (CRC) grant and the EJ4Climate Grant. Samantha collaborated on the 2021 CRC grant application with and for the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians' (FTBMI's) Tribal Climate Resilience Framework Plan, and the FTBMI was awarded the grant.

Before that, Samantha worked at the Luskin Center for Innovation (LCI) as a Luskin Fellow as well as an administrative intern at Culver City's Transportation Department. During her LCI fellowship, she worked on the climate adaptation team assisting in research related to how the climate crisis (specifically extreme heat) impacts vulnerable populations and informs policy to increase community resilience. Samantha aspires to work towards an anti-racist and climate-just future that is rooted in principles of abolition, environmental justice, and intersectional feminism. During her free time, you can find Samantha laying on the beach, picking up a new sports hobby, trying a new BIPOC-owned restaurant, or catching a jazz or punk live show.

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