



Natalie Gasca, PhD

Candidate Statement

Current position: **Science Policy Fellow**, California Council on Science and Technology (public outreach and science communication efforts for the California Department of Pesticide Regulation)

Education: **PhD in Biostatistics**, University of Washington (Dissertation: Sparse PLS Methods for Modeling Heart-Healthy Diets)

Statistical interests: supervised methods, variable selection, epidemiological studies, intervention evaluation

WNAR involvement:

- [2022] **Chair of invited panel** at WNAR 2022 that showcased graduate school experiences and reflections from underrepresented (bio)statisticians
- [2022] **Collaborator** with WNAR's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) committee
- [2019] **Outstanding oral paper awardee** in WNAR 2019 student paper competition

Select interdisciplinary collaboration, science communication, & mentorship:

- [2020-Present] **Contributor**, Mexicans in Statistics and Health (disseminating COVID-19 scientific advances to broad Spanish-speaking audiences via news articles)
- [2019] **Client Liaison**, UW Statistics in the Community group (networking with local non-profits and offering free student-led statistical consulting)
- [2013-Present] **Panelist** (sharing advice on applying to research experiences, conferences, fellowships, or graduate school)
- [2012-Present] **Peer mentor** (organizing writing groups for underrepresented graduate students, sharing department expectations and resources)

Apart from my WNAR involvement, I have been active in other STEM organizations such as the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) and the Pacific Math Alliance. I would like to leverage partnerships across these organizations, as well as share perspectives with WNAR as an early career professional in the government sector. For example, I would like to support WNAR members by advocating for more mentorship and career development opportunities for students and early career professionals. I am committed to helping WNAR expand its outreach to students and professionals interested in (bio)statistics, biometrics and quantitative biology in our region.