OC LEADER BOARD | Opinion, Analysis, Insight

Meet OC's Future Business Leaders

*Editor's Note: The **CEO Leadership Alliance Orange County** (CLAOC) created the **OC Fellows** early professionals program in 2020 to help retain top talent in OC. This leadership development program was designed for diverse, rising professionals to broaden their understanding of the range of exciting companies and career opportunities in OC. Now in its fourth year, the OC Fellows program has created a dynamic, inclusive network of up-and-coming talent, with 90%+ staying here in OC. A few of the OC fellows wrote a synopsis of their experiences for the Business Journal. For more information, go to www.ocfellows.org.*

Minh Nguyen
Program Manager
UCI Health Strategic Services

My goal has always been to launch an enterprise dedicated to improving healthcare delivery models while also investing in innovation. The OC Fellows program has connected me with others who have similar entrepreneurial goals, interests and aspirations. My parents settled in OC after immigrating to the U.S. Contributing to the growth and development of OC has given me the opportunity to translate the lessons from the program into helping others build brighter futures.

Leah Kraskin
Account Manager
omo.md

The program has given me the tools to propel my career, and has empowered me to embark on new opportunities, including my MBA. I've been inspired by the leaders I've met through the program, who demonstrate the importance of perseverance, grit, and hard work. Networking with other community leaders and entrepreneurs has motivated me to launch my own social media agency. Life begins outside of our comfort zone. By understanding the challenges of others, we can make a positive impact on our community.

Arnold Francisco
Engineer I (EIT/EDP)
MicroVention-Terumo

My family immigrated to the U.S. from the Philippines, and I was raised in OC. Through the program, I've met other like-minded individuals from different backgrounds and industries and built a community of mentors. The development programs have helped me grow my confidence and gain a different perspective on life. I plan to apply the skills I've learned in my career as an engineer in the medical device industry. I hope to continue to be a part of making patients' lives better.

Sandra Silva
Conflicts and Compliance Systems Analyst
Latham & Watkins

Participating in the program has been one of my most enriching experiences. The ability to connect with so many talented young professionals from across many industries has been immeasurably valuable both personally and professionally. The learning components of the program in the form of workshops and speaker series are always highly informative and engaging. These future leaders and the connections we've formed will undoubtedly shape the future of the region in a positive way.

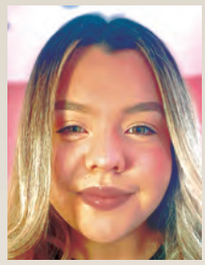
David Morales
OC Fellows Advisory Board
Mergers and Acquisitions Professional

I take pride in being a first-generation Mexican American college graduate. The program has significantly expanded my network, adding immense value to my career. I've built my personal brand, identified my strengths and gained exposure to the entrepreneurial world through firsthand accounts of accomplished CEOs. As someone who values the act of giving back, I find it gratifying to be part of a program that shares my commitment and passion for making a positive impact in OC.

Kali Sanders
Engineer 1
MicroVention-Terumo

Early in my career, I lacked the self-confidence, network and resources I needed to succeed. Through the program, I was able to connect with experienced mentors, business leaders and peers for guidance and support. Despite the difficulties I experienced growing up, I learned to persevere and not let the obstacles I faced stop me from achieving my goals. Everyone has the potential to succeed, regardless of their circumstances. I am astonished at how much I have grown through the program.

Susan Gonzalez
Customer Support Specialist
Movn Health



The program has allowed me to connect with individuals who share a common commitment to personal development and community impact. Through my involvement and experiences, I have grown into a more confident leader, capable of making a positive impact in my community. A few years ago, I was named a Difference Maker by the **Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce** for my dedication and involvement in my community. I hope to continue to create positive changes in OC in my professional and personal life.

Noah Estrada-Rand
Marketing Analytics Analyst
Pacific Life

My OC Fellows experience set the stage for greater connection and integration into the OC community. Group exercises at our quarterly learning events and our community outreach activities exposed me to groups of people I otherwise may have never encountered. The connections I've made here extend well beyond the confines of business and have become great friends. I am passionate about mental health advocacy and education equity, which is a significant focus of my future career plans.

Basti Lopez
Student Services Coordinator
for Dual Enrollment
Santa Ana College

The program has helped me learn how to shine a light on my skills and embrace being part of something bigger than myself. As a first generation educated person of color, I am passionately dedicated to providing underserved students and their families with a quality education experience. I am proud of my collaborative efforts with school districts, community partners and education professionals to identify barriers and devise plans to improve and celebrate student success. I will continue to use my knowledge and leadership skills to make an impact.

Kimberly Overton
Manufacturing Engineer II
New Product Development
Edwards Lifesciences

The workshops provided through the program gave me insight on important skills, such as communication, navigating personalities, and identifying personal goals for personal and professional growth. Consistent, structured opportunities have helped me develop skills and make a difference in my community. Through my work with the LA Chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers, I have been able to empower and support local diverse technical talent through strategic programming, mentorship, and community service in OC.

Lucas Erb
Sensing Lead - NExT Team
Deloitte Consulting

This program is a hidden treasure in OC. Workshops led by distinguished leaders have been a wellspring of knowledge and inspiration. Learning alongside accomplished individuals has equipped me with practical skills, industry insights and a broader perspective on work. Their wisdom has helped me navigate challenges, make informed decisions and chart a course towards success. My work at Deloitte is to advise Fortune 500 clients on emerging technology strategy. I am a co-author of the Technology Futures Report with the World Economic Forum.

Samantha Malloy
Operations Coordinator
BankTech Ventures

I have grown in areas that I had not even considered before the program started. Through the workshops, I have been able to identify my strengths and become more effective in my career. Because of the program, I met some of my closest friends, valued mentors and even my current roommate during my first year. I can confidently say that the OC Fellows has been the number one contributor to my personal and professional network.