

Alumni Profile



Viviana Padilla '18

Policy Politics and Justice



My Environmental Studies Degree prepared me well for my position as the Operations Manager of the Berkeley Farmers' Markets, a program of a non-profit called the Ecology Center. We have three different markets in Berkeley, and my primary responsibility is to ensure that each has everything it needs to run smoothly. I also support the financial tracking of our CalFresh and Market Match nutritional benefit programs, which the Ecology Center facilitates for the entire state of California.

My favorite thing about my job is the market itself! My mom grew up in the fields, so my entire life she made it a point to take me to the farmers' market each Saturday to meet the farmers and show me the origin of my food. I always had a passion for food and people, so seeing an entire alternate food system pop up, seemingly out of nowhere, always amazed me. Now I know well that there's a *lot* that goes into it, but the effort is certainly worth it.

Something I draw on constantly from my EVST days are the many case studies like climate change and fracking, where progress required collaboration with a diverse set of stakeholders. In my role, I seek to create and maintain a space that benefits farmers, vendors and customers in three very different socioeconomic areas. I frequently speak with members of each of these groups and I consider their unique needs and experiences when making decisions for the market as a whole.