



Student Spotlight

Kae Takazawa

Field of study: Public Relations
Next goal: Transfer to CSU or UC

Kae embarked on her journey at El Camino College in Fall 2022, driven by her love for movies, particularly Disney classics. Her fascination with film led her to Hollywood, the heart of the entertainment industry. Taking a public speaking class in her first semester not only boosted her confidence but also taught her the art of communication and storytelling. Inspired by this experience, she switched majors to Public Relations, diving into journalism courses along the way.

Recruited by her journalism professor, Kae joined the ECC newspaper, The Union, as an illustrator. She later found community and confidence as a reporter at The Union. Her hard work paid off in 2023 when she received The Jolene Combs Memorial Award for Journalism Excellence, earning four other top honors. This recognition earned her an invitation to the College Media Association conference in New York City in 2024. Reflecting on her journey, Kae credits her proactive approach, regular meetings with her academic counselor, and networking efforts for her achievements. As she prepares to transfer to a university, her advice remains clear: "Stay ahead of the game, connect with others, and persevere towards your goals."



ISP Staff Spotlight

Candace Trice

My running journey began years ago when I learned to find enjoyment in running. It wasn't always that way, though. In grade school, I had no desire to run. I realized it was more that I did not like it because I could not do it. Not for long periods of time, anyway. It wasn't until my 30th birthday that I decided to take fitness seriously. What started as me not being able to run for the duration of one minute, turned in to me running five miles. During the COVID pandemic I bought a Peloton Bike so I could exercise from home. Through Peloton, I was able to find my way back to the fitness journey I had abandoned years ago. I connected with women across the United States (even a few across the pond). Through social media, I watched many of my new friends do something that had never entered my mind as something that I would (or could) do – run an actual race! My Peloton friends formed a team that would run "The Race" in Atlanta, GA on October 7, 2023. I figured it would be the perfect opportunity to run my first official race. I had the option to choose either a 5K race or a Half Marathon. I chose to run the Half Marathon. Because, why not?

I trained for several weeks and completed the Half Marathon through the hills in Atlanta in roughly 2 hours 20 minutes. Yay! Since then, I have run 3 additional Half Marathons for a total of four! Before running "The Race" in Atlanta, I had the crazy idea to run the Los Angeles Marathon. Last year, in 2023, I watched the race on television and thought, "I could do this!" So, I registered for the 2024 LA Marathon. Yikes!

I didn't know if I would be ready when race day arrived. I told myself to still prepare for it and if I wasn't ready by race day, I could just not show up. Well, race day arrived and I did show up to the start line! I didn't feel quite ready because my training did not go as planned, but I knew that if I just ran (or walked) one mile at a time, I could make it. This had to be the hardest thing I have ever done, but 26.2 miles and 5 hours 51 minutes later, I crossed the finish line! I can now say that I am a Marathon Finisher.



Life During OPT

If you are an International Student, you probably have heard about OPT before. According to the USCIS website, Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment directly related to an F-1 student's major area of study. Students may apply for OPT after completing an academic degree, which was what our International Student, Takahiro Mori, decided to do. Takahiro, originally from Tokyo, Japan, decided to come to the U.S. and start his academic path at El Camino College in 2019. Later, in 2022, he achieved his associate degree in business management and applied for his OPT experience.

As a way to encourage current students, Takahiro shared his experience with us. "ISP was my main source of help during the application process, everything worked out pretty fast. The most challenging step during the process was to find a job related to my major. I finally found a job at a law firm where I worked full-time. My favorite moment during OPT was to discover new interests while working. OPT is definitely worth it if you seek new experiences. Regardless of where you choose to work, the experience of working in the US will certainly have positive consequences on your future." Takahiro is currently back at ECC and will transfer to university in the fall of 2024, where he plans to achieve his Bachelor's degree.

Takahiro Mori



Important Dates

March 28

ISP Event: Coffee Break with Warrior's

April 6 - 12

Spring Recess

April 13

Midterm Classes Begin

April 19

Last Day to add midterm classes

Register Today!

2nd 8-week Classes

How to register:

1. Search for Second Gr8-Week
2. Check the "2nd 8Wk" checkbox under "Short Session"
3. Add classes you are eligible

Protect Yourself Online



By following these digital safety tips, you can protect yourself and your personal information online.



JOB SCAMS

Job scams are a common way for criminals seek to gain personal information and money from targets.

HOW TO AVOID JOB SCAMS

- Be careful of jobs sent by email
- Most job opportunities will be sent from departments - not student emails
- F1 Students can only work on campus



PASSWORD SAFETY

- Create strong passwords using a mix of letters, numbers, and symbols.
- Change your passwords regularly to prevent hacking.

PHISHING SCAMS

- Beware of suspicious emails asking for personal information.
- Double-check the sender's email address before clicking on any links.



SMISHING

Smishing uses fake mobile text messages to trick people into downloading malware, sharing sensitive information or sending money to cyber criminals.

HOW TO AVOID SMISHING

- Do not respond
- Contact your sender directly
- Avoid clicking links or information in the text
- Use multi-factor authentication (MFA)



SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

- Limit the amount of personal information you share online.
- Adjust your privacy settings to control who can see your posts.

ONLINE SHOPPING SAFETY

- Shop from secure websites with 'https'
- Use a credit card with fraud protection when making online purchases.
- Google if the shop is real or not



ROMANCE SCAMS

- Be skeptical of anyone who says their love fast
- Do a reverse image search
- Be wary of anyone who does not meet in person.
- If you do meet in person, meet in a public place NEVER send money to online dates interests



SOFTWARE UPDATES

- Keep your software and operating system up-to-date to prevent vulnerabilities.
- Enable automatic updates for convenience and security.

