



# MEET GABRIELA

## TAHOE DONNER GIVING FUND IMPACT SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT

It's our pleasure to introduce Gabriela, a Truckee native who is now a proud University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) "banana slug." What could be a more fitting university mascot for this Plant Sciences major? Banana slugs have been called the "clean-up crew for the forest floor" because they speed decomposition, recycle nutrients, enrich soils, and spread seeds and spores.

### Investment in Our Planet's Future

Gabriela received a Tahoe Donner Giving Fund Impact Scholarship in June 2023, and is now beginning her sophomore year at UCSC. When the scholarship committee interviewed her in the spring of 2023, Gabriela told us that upon getting her first paycheck, she invested in a microscope – a sure sign that she was headed for a future in science.

As the first in her family to attend college, Gabriela is forging ahead in her studies. She is interested in habitat restoration and enthusiastically described her first internship at Younger Lagoon Reserve. Interns are involved in every aspect of habitat restoration, including native seed collection, native plant propagation and invasive species removal. Gabriela plans to



join the Greenhouse Club at UCSC to further her experience in this area.

Gabriela's favorite class so far has been Introduction to Field Research and Inquiry. This course had Gabriela and her classmates taking weekly research-based field trips to areas surrounding the campus. On one such outing, they studied sand fleas and puzzled over why their population was denser closer

to the ocean waters than it was near the lagoon's edge. The answer, it turns out, is that the quality of the softer sand near the ocean provides better burrowing opportunities.

Gabriela told us emphatically, "I love this campus! And, I thank the generous IMPACT Scholarship donor for this opportunity." We thank Gabriela for choosing science because it's an investment in our planet's future.

The Tahoe Donner Giving Fund is administered as an affiliate fund of the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, EIN 68-0416404. All contributions are voluntary, irrevocable, and are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The Tahoe Donner Giving Fund Committee is chartered by the Tahoe Donner Board of Directors to carry out the mission of the Tahoe Donner Giving Fund: to inspire generosity and charitable giving among Tahoe Donner members in order to support deserving programs and youth in the greater Truckee community. Tahoe Donner Giving Fund grants and scholarships are made through the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation's annual review process.

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Deepest thanks to our founding partner, Elements Mountain Company, who has supported the Tahoe Donner Giving Fund since its inception in 2014; to the anonymous Tahoe Donner member who has generously funded IMPACT Scholarships each year since 2019; and to every Tahoe Donner member who has supported these programs through their kind donations.

