

Thanks to the financial support of the Environment and Community Master's Program, Kristian Salgado, a second-year E&C graduate student, had the opportunity to travel to the most southern corner of California this October to present at the 7th Annual Imperial County Environmental Health Leadership Summit (EHLS) 2016. The EHLS is organized by Comite Civico de Valle (CCV) and is one of only a handful of community-organized environmental justice conferences in California that brings community members, government officials, and academics of all levels under the same roof to discuss some of the most pressing environmental and social justice issues in the state. Ms. Salgado had the honor of representing not only Humboldt State University, but also the Imperial Valley, as she is a native of the region. It was important for Ms. Salgado to be able to present her research at a forum inclusive to all that would like to attend and support the dissemination of knowledge to promote positive social change.

The basis of Ms. Salgado's presentation was to inform attendees of the current progress of the Identifying Violations Affecting Neighborhood (IVAN) Community Development Project that is being funded by the 2016 CalEPA Small Grant. The IVAN Community Development Project is focused on establishing tools such as a guidebook and a revised reporting and monitoring website to help communities better report environmental hazards and violations. She presented alongside Michelle Wong, Health Communication Director of the California Environmental Health Tracking Program, and John Hernandez, the director of Our Roots Multicultural Center, both of whom are also currently working on other aspects of IVAN, such as the IVAN Air Monitoring System, which is a network of 40 air monitors located through the Imperial Valley. For more information about IVAN or related projects visit: <http://ivan-imperial.org/>.

Other notable speakers included a range of individuals representing government agencies to non profits, such as: Martha Guzman-Aceves, the Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary of the Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown, who openly discussed the limits of government's ability to solve environmental problems and the need for creative grassroots solutions; Bradley Angels from Greenaction; and Mark Lopez from East Yard Communities, who shared their current involvement in the environmental justice movement in California. According to Ms. Salgado, "events like this are extremely valuable, especially for a community like the Imperial Valley, where people might not have the opportunity to travel to expensive conferences in Sacramento or San Diego. It's more accessible to citizens of the Imperial Valley."