



**Claire Uke, CWSS Summer Intern
California Polytechnic State University, Pomona
Major: Plant Science
Estimated Graduation Year: Winter, 2012**

Summer Intern Found Playing ‘Where’s Waldo’

My name is Claire Uke and last summer I participated in the California Weed Science Society Internship Program with director Carl Bell at the UC Cooperative Extension Office in San Diego. Compared to the summer heat of CalPoly Pomona, San Diego was a beautiful paradise and home-away-from-home since I am originally a San Diego native.

My stay at UCCE was fun and eventful. My starting work familiarized me with wildfire vegetation management, the Urban-Wildland Interface, and how each district in San Diego manages related problems. I conducted research, compiled spreadsheets, put together an index of vegetation management research publications, managed a database of fire departments by zip code, and made updates to their wildfirezone.org website. This work left me with an understanding of wildfire vegetation management, fire departments, and ordinance information. I also was introduced to ArcGIS software, which was pretty neat.

The research collection projects were very fun. My boss Carl was researching ways to control invasive grasses, and I was able to see how data was collected and used for this process. I was also given instructions to travel around San Diego to survey every retail plant nursery in the county for invasive species. I learned a lot in my visits and had a good time playing ‘Where’s Waldo’ in other people’s nurseries.

I feel very fortunate to have had such an enriching experience at UCCE. I received valuable exposure to the industry and experienced research in a tangible, hands-on way outside the classroom. I’d like to thank the California Weed Science Society for making opportunities like this available to students like me.