

# EXPOSURE



## REIMAGINING STUDENT SUCCESS

*A student assistant's commitment to technology*

Story by [Fresno State](#)

August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020

As Fresno's spring temperatures began to creep above double digits, cars filled with Fresno State students, faculty, and staff lined up along Woodrow Avenue. Despite the heat, veteran DISCOVERe guide, Armando De Alba, proudly smiled at his peers through his mask and worked diligently to provide them with iPads and wifi hotspots.

Established in 2014, the DISCOVERe Mobile Technology Program works to infuse mobile technology into the classroom through the use of laptops, tablets and smartphones. In addition to its focus on technology-enhanced courses, the program is supported by students

You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story [click here](#).

like Armando who staff the DISCOVERe Hub—the program’s tech support and loaner device headquarters, usually located on the first floor of the Henry Madden Library.

“Being a student assistant on campus is really cool in that it's not just DISCOVERe, but I feel like any job, because you're able to support the same people you're studying with and learning with,” Armando says. “It's cool to help your fellow students when you understand their issues a lot of the time.”

In March 2020, after Fresno State announced its campus closure and transition to virtual learning amid California’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many campus-based student support programs were thoughtfully reimaged, including DISCOVERe.

As the DISCOVERe Hub transitioned to a drive thru pick-up system and virtual help sessions, most of the student guides were unable to remain on staff, leaving the program’s success dependent on the passion and commitment of students like Armando.

“I feel like there’s really a large sense of responsibility towards how we perform not just at the DISCOVERe Hub, but the DISCOVERe programs as a whole. So for me, that kind of was above everything else,” he says.

---

“I wanted to make sure that we put out as much help as we could, because that's why I joined the program—to help people.”

---

For Armando, working with DISCOVERe, especially during such uncertain times, has opened his eyes to the realities many members of the campus community face—a lack of access to technology.

He says he is proud of the program for expanding its reach, innovating new ways of teaching and breaking down the digital divide.

“It's really cool to create that equality for all students,” he says. “Not just people that have the resources but the people that don't, so they can get a fair shake as well.”

After all, creating that equity, Armando says, “is what DISCOVERe is all about.”



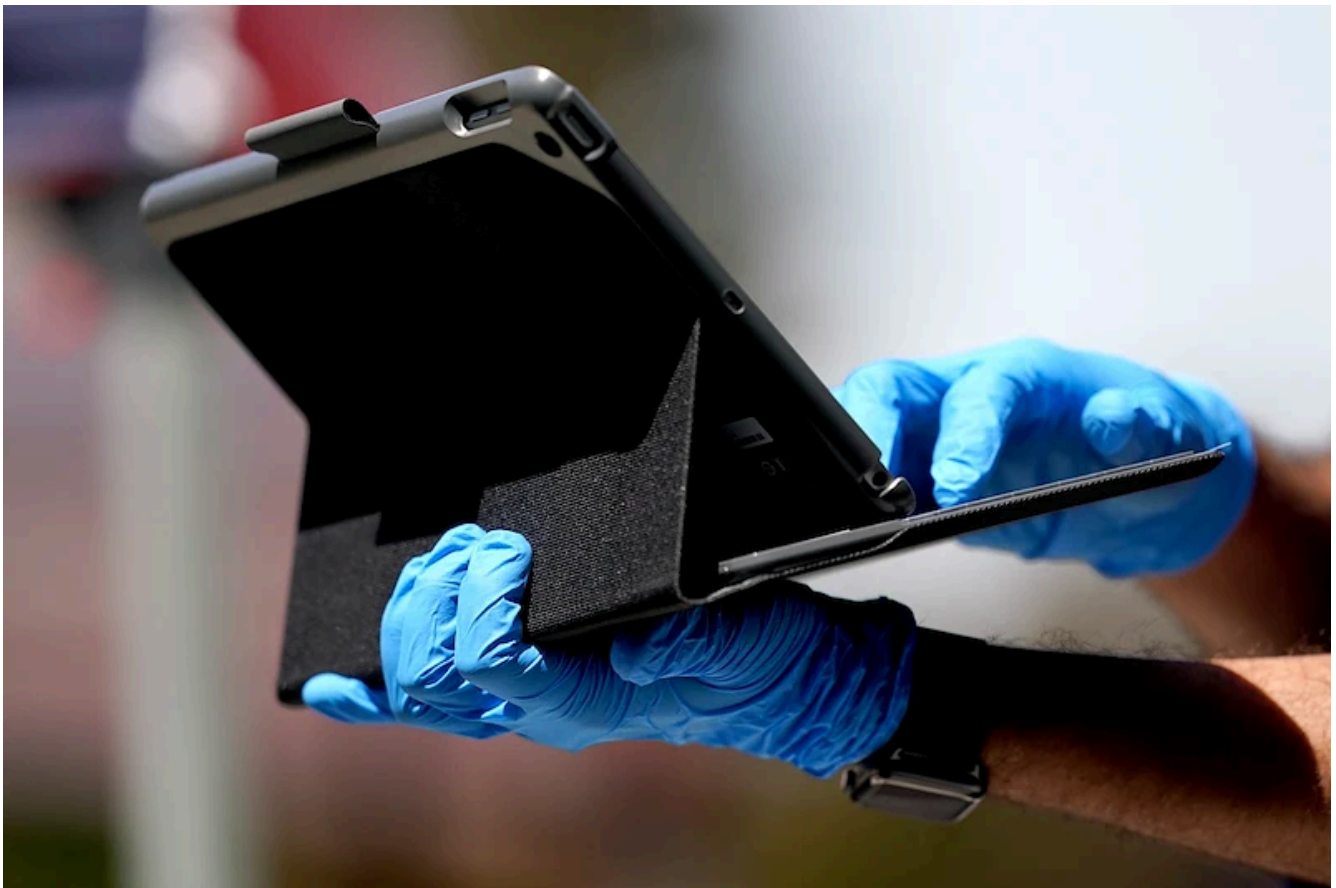
You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).



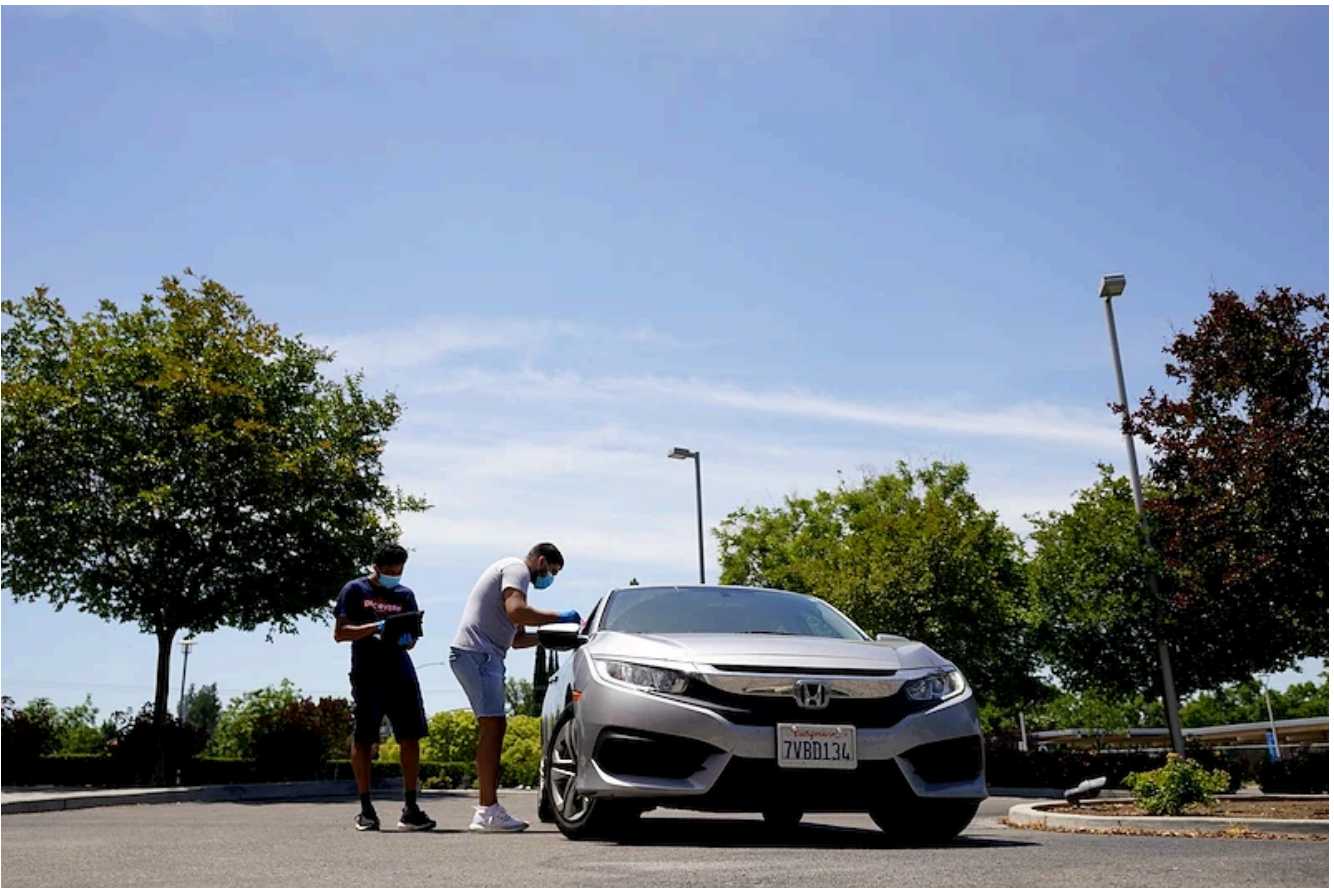


You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).





You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).



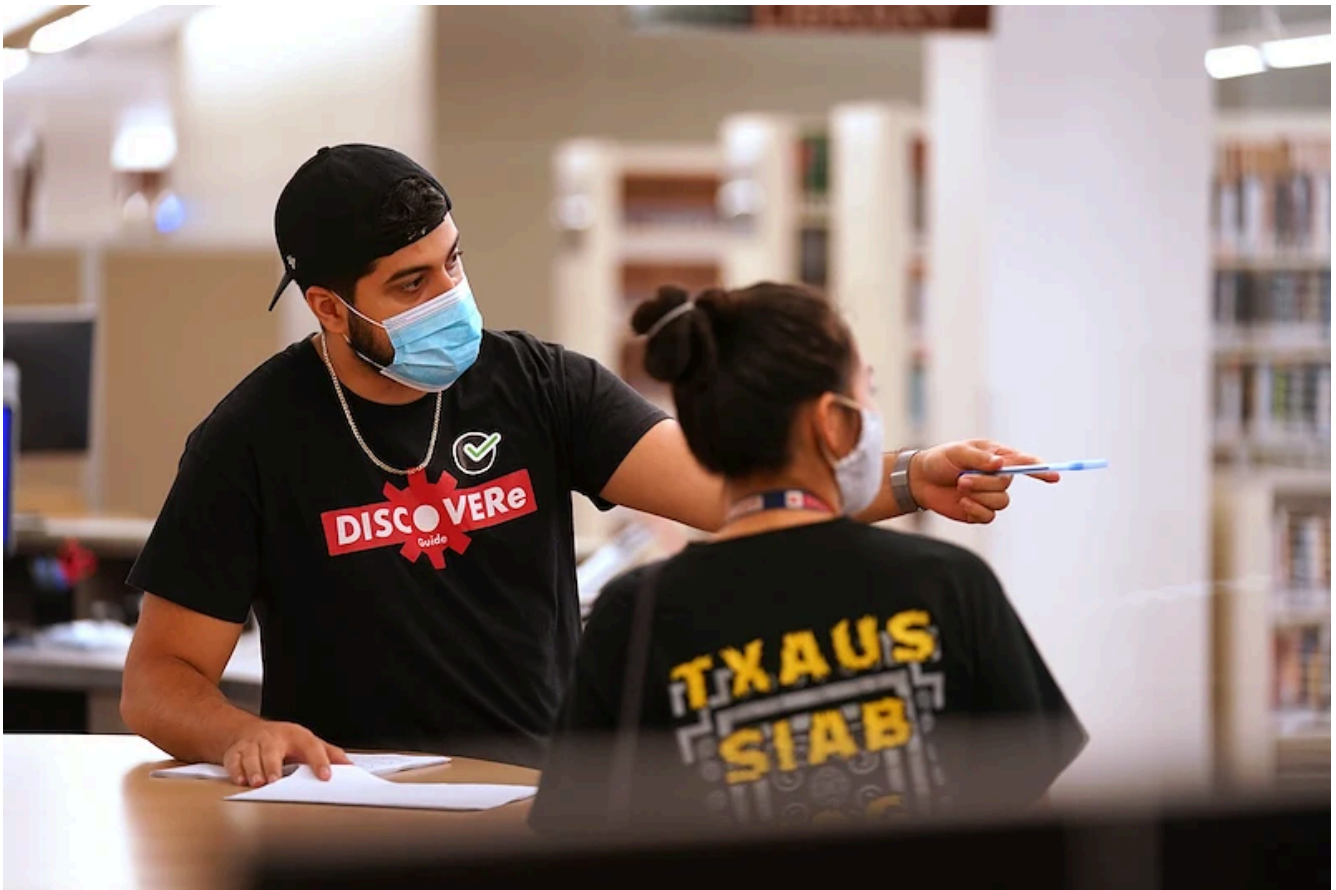
You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).



→Did you know? The DISCOVERe program distributed 4,290 iPads and 3,170 wifi hotspots to Fresno State students for the fall 2020 semester, more than any other university in the CSU system.



You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).



You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).





## LIFE IN THE HUB

Armando has always enjoyed teaching others. When he was younger, he was inspired by the enthusiasm of science educator, Bill Nye the Science Guy, and his ability to break down difficult topics.

That inspiration and the patience he learned from teaching his parents to use technology, he says, are the foundations that built his passion for teaching others. Through the DISCOVERe Hub, Armando has been able to harness this passion and amplify his reach, breaking down topics for his peers the same way Bill Nye did for him.

“They come in really frustrated...and they kind of feel better about themselves when you physically see like this weight lifted off their shoulders, when they're able to learn how to use their phone or whatever it is,” he says.

Not only does Armando help his peers with their tech problems, but he also helps community members who come to the Henry Madden Library looking for technical support. He says topics can range from wireless internet to Microsoft Word.

“I've helped multiple elderly people that don't know how to work technology. They just come in and we give them one-on-one help,” Armando says.

You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story [click here](#).



You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).





You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).

# EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION

Although Armando's love for teaching has been lifelong, he admits that working at the DISCOVERe Hub, including during his undergraduate stint as a biology and chemistry double major and during his first year as a biotechnology graduate student, has ignited a new passion for education.

---

“DISCOVERe showed me that teaching is what I really love to do. Not just teaching like a science, but helping people learn, understand something that they didn't before,” he says.

---

After graduation, Armando plans to pursue a career in education, implementing the knowledge and insights he gained through DISCOVERe and “doing that on a larger scale.”

As an alum, he hopes to reach beyond himself, embodying Fresno State's goal of educating the next generation of leaders.



You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story [click here](#).



**Join Armando in supporting student success.**

[Click Here](#)

**Footnote:** *Photos by Cary Edmondson, Story by Victoria Cisneros — University Brand Strategy and Marketing*

---

**Story by [Fresno State](#)**

© Copyright 2025

Published with [Exposure](#)

**You're viewing a version of this story optimized for slow connections. To see the full story click [here](#).**