Aqshems Nichols

University of California, Berkeley

Collaborative Sciences Center for Road Safety (CSCRS) led by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Bio

Aqshems Nichols is pursuing a doctoral degree in Civil Engineering with a focus in Transportation Engineering at the University of California, Berkeley. His current research focuses on investigating the relationship between transportation access and the educational outcomes of community college students. During his time at the UC Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC), he has worked on research projects that included a study on the implications of pluralistic ignorance on safety; the production of short videos (including one on the role of perception of safety); and an evaluation of active transportation safety. He was awarded a Graduate Fellowship by the FHWA Dwight D. Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program in 2020 and 2021.

Degree and Anticipated Graduation Date

Ph.D. in Civil Engineering (Transportation Engineering) from the University of California, Berkeley, 2024

M.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley, 2017

B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin, 2015

Preferred Career after Graduation

Aqshems's career plans are in academia and the public sector.

Broad Research Interests

Transportation planning; transportation policy

Specific Research Area

Transportation access and equity

Primary Mode

Public Transit

Top Accomplishments in 2022

Aqshems developed a literature synthesis exploring the relationship between transportation safety and pluralistic ignorance that illustrated his intellectual depth and creativity. He then created a research brief that makes this topic, which is situated in the field of psychology and not familiar to many transportation researchers, accessible to a broader audience.

Dissertation Title and Summary

"Investigating Transportation Access to Community Colleges"

Aqshem's dissertation focuses on investigating the relationship between transportation access and the educational outcomes of community college (CC) students. To study these topics, he is using tools such as Python and GIS for spatial data analysis, and employing qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus groups, to acquire insights into the transportation barriers faced by community college students in California. The ultimate deliverable from his dissertation will be the formation of policy recommendations to be submitted to state lawmakers and other stakeholders that advise on how to best improve transportation access to CCs.