



22ND ANNUAL YALE BOUCHET CONFERENCE ON GRADUATE EDUCATION 2026

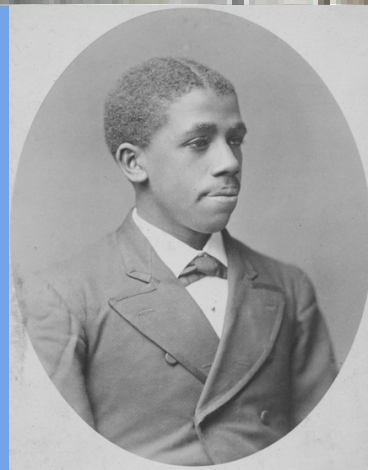
"Historic Milestones and Future Directions:
Innovative Strategies to Empower the Next
Generation of Scholars"

CELEBRATING 174 YEARS 1852-2025

CONFERENCE

APRIL 10 - 11, 2026 | FRIDAY - SATURDAY |

<https://gsas.yale.edu/annual-yale-bouchet-conference-graduate-education>



Edward Alexander Bouchet

Physics: B.A., 1874, Ph.D. 1876



The Connecticut State Legislature passed the Gradual Emancipation Act in 1784. This act held that children of enslaved blacks were to be freed by their 25th birthday. The state banned the sale of slaves four years later and required owners to register all children born into slavery; however, it was not until 1848 that the state finally outlawed the holding of all slaves.

Born September 15, 1852 on the colored end of Bradley Street in New Haven, Edward Alexander Bouchet became a man of exceptional intellectual and emotional courage, undaunted by barriers of the day. His father, William Francis Bouchet, according to some, was born in Connecticut in 1817; others report that he arrived in New Haven in 1824 as the body servant to a Yale student from Charlestown, South Carolina. Edward's mother, Susan Cooley Bouchet, was born in Westport, Connecticut, October 1817, daughter of Asher and Jane Drake Cooley. Edward, the youngest of four surviving children born to William and Susan Bouchet, their only son, attended the Artisan Street Colored School, an ungraded elementary school with about 30 students and one teacher. He was enrolled in the New Haven High School for two years before entering Hopkins Grammar School (now Hopkins School) in 1868. Hopkins, a prestigious private school in New Haven, is devoted exclusively to college preparation. The course of study in this very academically oriented secondary school in the nineteenth century was three to five years based on the age and intellectual level of the student. To enter at an advanced level, Bouchet had to pass examinations in courses completed by his class. During his time at Hopkins, he studied the classics, Latin, Greek and Greek history, geometry and algebra, and graduated valedictorian in 1870.

Bouchet entered Yale College in the fall of 1870 but lived at home. He was not engaged in campus extracurricular activities but worked as a sexton for the Temple Street Congregational Church (Dixwell Avenue United Church of Christ). During his senior year, he was contacted by Alfred Cope. Cope was a member of the Board of Managers for the Society of Friends Institute for Colored Youth, a prestigious private high school in Philadelphia. Ebenezer D.C. Bassett of Connecticut was principal of the Society of Friends Institute for Colored Youth until he was appointed by President Grant in 1869 to be the first African American Diplomat, Minister, resident and consul-general of the United States to the Republic of Haiti. Cope offered Bouchet a faculty position at the Institute but recommended that he remain at Yale and pursue graduate studies in physics. Bouchet accepted Cope's offer and recommendation under the conditions that he provide financial support for his graduate studies at Yale and a guarantee of a \$1,500 starting salary per annum at the Institute. Cope agreed to both.

Concentrating in physics and mathematics, Bouchet completed his undergraduate studies in 1874, with orations (highest honors or *summa cum laude*), class rank of six and election to Phi Beta Kappa. He enrolled immediately into graduate studies at Yale. He finished his required courses, passed his language and comprehensive examinations, completed his doctoral thesis research in experimental physics, and wrote his dissertation on Measuring Refractive Indices in two years. A bit short of his 24th birthday, he had earned from Yale a Ph.D. in Physics. By 1876 when perhaps as many as half the citizens in America were able to read and write, Bouchet had become the first self-identified African American to graduate from Yale College, the first admitted to Phi Beta Kappa but not initiated (George W. Henderson who graduated from the University of Vermont in 1877 was the first African American initiated), the first to earn the Ph.D. in any discipline from an American university, and the sixth person ever to earn the Ph.D. in physics in the western hemisphere. Bouchet, the graduate scientist, joined the faculty at the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia, a high school, without benefit of laboratory, library, graduate students, and scientific collaborators. He taught mathematics, physics, and chemistry for twenty-six years with confidence, elegance, and enthusiasm. During his time in Philadelphia Bouchet presented public lectures in science; he was a member and warden of St. Thomas, the first African American Episcopal Church in the nation; he was among the earliest members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the American Academy of Political and Social Science, and the Franklin Institute; and as a faithful member of the Philadelphia Yale Alumni Association, he was cordially and respectfully received at meetings and dinners. In disagreement with the Institute's administration over the value of a classical liberal arts education versus a practical one for African Americans, he was made redundant and departed from the Institute and Philadelphia. Bouchet was never called to the new graduate department of physics at Harvard; nor was he called to the fledgling graduate program at Johns Hopkins; nor was he called to Yale, the nation's first Ph.D. granting university. The record shows that he sought a faculty position at Yale, Hampton and Tuskegee among others, but to no avail. For his twenty-fifth reunion he wrote:

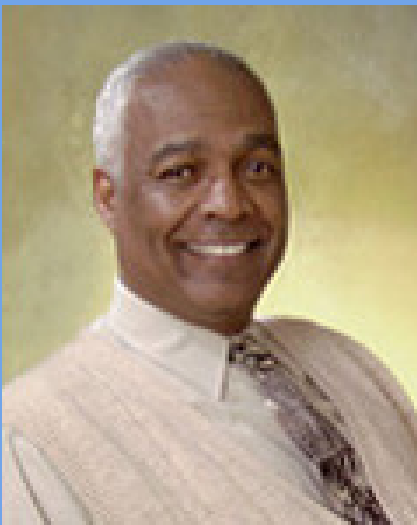
I have endeavored to discharge my duty as teacher to those coming under my care, and have aimed to be a good citizen, and to exemplify in my life the mottos of our Alma Mater... From November 1903, until May 1904, I was business manager for the Provident Hospital, a private institution located in St. Louis, MO. From May 1904 until March 1905, I was United States Inspector of Customs at the Louisiana Purchase exposition in St. Louis, stationed at Ceylon Court... In October 1906, I became director of Academics at the St. Paul Normal and Industrial School, located at Lawrenceville, VA., where I remained until June 1908, and in September 1908, I accepted the position of principal of the Lincoln High School at Gallipolis, Ohio."

Bouchet remained in Gallipolis for four or five years when poor health forced his return to New Haven. After recuperation, he went to Bishop College in Marshall, Texas around 1914, but returned to New Haven again for health reasons in 1916.

Following a life devoted to teaching and good works, he died October 28, 1918. His funeral was at St. Luke's Episcopal Church and he was buried in an unmarked grave in the family plot in New Haven's Evergreen Cemetery. A black granite headstone on which Bouchet's image and achievements have been etched was unveiled with ceremony on October 18, 1998 by the Reverend Dr. Victor A. Rogers, then Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, the former Dean of the Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Susan Hockfield, who is the former president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, former Dean of Undergraduate Education at Yale, Joseph Gordon, former Headmaster of Hopkins, Thomas Rodd, Jr., the former New Haven Superintendent of Education, Dr. Reginald Mayo, Yale Chief Research Archivist, Judith Schiff, and Professor Emeritus Curtis L. Patton.

We may never know the specifics of his suppression. Few documents give clues to his thoughts or ambitions as the first African American graduate scientist. We do know that he lived during a period that was terrible for Black people, a period of great challenge. Edward A. Bouchet entered Yale with the prestige of having been valedictorian at Hopkins, and beginning with matriculation to the end, as he went back and forth between Yale and the Colored end of Bradley Street, Philadelphia to St. Louis, Virginia, Ohio, Texas and back to Bradley Street, he ranked among outstanding men, one who demonstrated fine intellect, great energy, and the courage of his convictions. In all his associations, at Yale and in later life, he showed himself a thorough gentleman in the best sense of the term. Prestigious fellowships, prizes and awards have been named in his honor as well as an International Conference on Physics and Technology. His life remains an influence for good at his alma maters, Hopkins and Yale, the city, state, and nation where he was born, the institutions where he taught. For the good progress in education and graduate scholarship, he is memorialized by (1) the Edward A. Bouchet Undergraduate Fellowship Program at Yale, (2) the Promising Scholars Fund – Edward A. Bouchet Scholarship, established by Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Beta Tau Boulé of New Haven, Connecticut (3) the Yale Bouchet Leadership Award medal, a national award given to leaders who have played critical roles in diversifying higher education, (4) the Edward Bouchet Abdus Salam Institute, (5) the American Physical Society (APS) Bouchet Award, (6) the Bouchet Graduate Honor Society, and (7) the Bouchet Academy in Chicago, Illinois (previously The Bryn Mawr Elementary School) where First Lady Michelle Obama, nee Robinson attended school. The original Bouchet portrait hangs in the Yale Sterling Memorial Library transept and in facsimiles at Hopkins School (New Haven), Howard University, and in corridors and offices of schools in New Haven, Connecticut and across America. His name, chiseled in granite above the archway leading from Yale's Saybrook College courtyard to the Dean's office, was unveiled by Peter Salovey, then Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, now President, and by the former Dean of Yale College, Mary E. Miller, then Master of Saybrook College.

Curtis Patton, Professor Emeritus, Epidemiology and Public Health, Yale University



Day One - Friday, April 10, 2026

PROGRAM

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM

Yale University Art Gallery Tour

Meet group at 1111 Chapel Street at 11:05 AM

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

National BGHS Steering Committee Meeting

****Institutional Representatives Only****

McDougal Graduate Student Center;

135 Prospect Street, Programming Room

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Yale Campus Tour

Meet group at 165 Whitney Avenue at 1:50 PM

3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Conference Registration

Yale Science Building

260 Whitney Avenue; Marsh Lecture Hall Lobby

4:00 PM - 6:00PM

Opening Plenary Session

Yale Science Building

260 Whitney Avenue; Marsh Lecture Hall

**Scholars for Today and Tomorrow: Many Musings on
Meandering Through the Modern Maze**

Guest Speaker: C. Brandon Ogbunu

Associate Professor Tenure, Department of Ecology and
Evolutionary Biology, Yale University

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Reception for Registered Conference Guests Only

Kline Biology Tower

219 Prospect Street; 14th Floor

Must be at least 21 years old



Day Two - Saturday, April 11, 2026

PROGRAM

7:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Poster Exhibit Set Up

Marsh Lecture Hall Lobby
260 Whitney Avenue

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Registration

Marsh Lecture Hall Lobby
260 Whitney Avenue

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast & Networking

Steep Cafe at Yale in Kline Biology Tower
219 Prospect Street

9:15 AM - 10:00 AM

**2006 Inaugural Bouchet Graduate Honor
Society Inductees' Recognition Ceremony**

Marsh Lecture Hall; 260 Whitney Avenue

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

**Bouchet Graduate Honor Society
Induction Ceremony**

Marsh Lecture Hall; 260 Whitney Avenue

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM

Poster Exhibition

Marsh Lecture Hall Lobby; 260 Whitney Avenue

12:30 PM - 1:45 PM

Lunch & Networking

Humanities Quadrangle; 320 York Street
Room 131 - Food/Seating; Room 134 - Seating



Day Two - Saturday, April 11, 2026



2006 INAUGURAL INDUCTEES' RECOGNITION CEREMONY

Saturday, April 11 | 9:15 AM - 10:00 AM

Gahodery K. Rodriguez Cambry is a lawyer, motivational speaker, and host of the Labor for Life podcast on work, unions, and the economy from a pro-life perspective. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, she holds a B.A. in Political Science Summa Cum Laude from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus and a Ph.D. in Political Science from Yale University. Fresh out of Yale, she worked for UNITE HERE, a labor union in the hospitality industry, representing workers in hotels, casinos, and airline catering. Thirteen years later she went to law school, obtaining a Juris Doctor from Ave Maria School of Law. A Senior Editor for the Ave Maria Law Review, she interned with the Hon. William P. Dimitrouleas, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, and the Hon. Bronwyn C. Miller, Florida Third District Court of Appeal. A former prosecutor, Gahodery has worked for the State of Florida in both criminal and civil matters. Her book *Presidential Outreach and the Transformation of Party Coalitions: Lessons from the George W. Bush Era*, is available on Amazon. She is also an advocate and volunteer for pregnancy centers.

Damani Piggott, MD, PhD is the Inaugural Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Diversity and Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University. In this position, he supports graduate level initiatives and efforts to promote pathways to graduate education. He also serves as Executive Director of the Vivien Thomas Scholars Initiative, an endowed fellowship program dedicated to nurturing, mentoring, and connecting students from a broad range of academic backgrounds to STEM graduate education and future leadership in STEM careers. An Associate Professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, with a joint appointment in the Department of Epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, Dr. Piggott has worked on clinical and research projects in urban and rural communities in the United States, the Caribbean, West Africa, and South Africa. He is actively engaged in the clinical care of patients with HIV. His research program centers on understanding the biological, behavioral, and social determinant pathways necessary to improve survival and quality of life for persons aging with HIV. Dr. Piggott received his Bachelor of Science degree in biology and Spanish from Morehouse College, graduating summa cum laude as the class valedictorian. He subsequently obtained his PhD degree in immunobiology and his medical degree from Yale University, with induction into the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. He completed clinical residency training in internal medicine and pediatrics at Yale New Haven Hospital and fellowship training in infectious diseases and epidemiology at Johns Hopkins. An inaugural inductee of the Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society, Dr. Piggott has been the recipient of the Arnold P. Gold Foundation Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award, the Yale University School of Medicine Dean's Prize for Community Service, the Betsy Winters House Staff Award for medical student education, and the Cortlandt Van Rensselaer Creed Award, and was recognized as a Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine 125th Anniversary Hopkins Hero. A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Harold Amos Scholar, Dr. Piggott is a Fellow of the Infectious Diseases Society of America.



POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Saturday, April 11 | 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM | Location - Marsh Lecture Hall Lobby

Career Paths, Transitioning

P.1 Rebecca Steele, Virginia Tech

Reimagining Access and Belonging: Neurodivergent Medical School Applicants' and Students' Experiences and the Future of Inclusive Admissions

Chronic Diseases, Health

P.2 Adebisi Adeleke, Howard University

Optimization of Niosomes Co-encapsulating Two Chemotherapeutic Drugs for Colorectal Cancer Targeting

P.3 Julianne Armijo, University of Michigan

Chronotype and Quality of Life Among Nurses with Bipolar Disorder: A Longitudinal Mixed-Methods Analysis

P.4 Jared Thomas Bailey, Emory University

Use of Hair Straighteners/Chemical Relaxers and Cancer Incidence

P.5 Tasmine Clement, University of Michigan

Longitudinal Mapping of Microbial Transmission Across Healthcare Touchpoints: Visualizing Pathogen Spread and Identifying Critical Control Areas to Improve Infection Prevention

P.6 Rashidat Elesho, Howard University

The Impact of Telehealth Interventions on Therapy Adherence in Oncology Patients: A Systematic Review of Randomized Clinical Trials

P.7 Stephanie Kim, University of Miami

Mapping the intronic Landscape of Somatic Mutations Across Cancer Genomes

P.8 Abdul-Azeez Lanihun, Howard University

Electrochemiluminescence Immunoassay for Quantifying ZMA001 in Human Serum: Method Development, Validation, and Clinical Pharmacokinetic Application

P.9 Allegra Minor, Northwestern University

Self-Restraint: Senescence Induction in KRAS, LKB1 Mutant Lung Cancer

P.10 Rose Olumuyide, Hunter College

Investigating the Role of Leptin in Survival of Mice During Influenza Infection

Day Two - Saturday, April 11, 2026



POSTER PRESENTATIONS CONTINUED

Saturday, April 11 | 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM | Location - Marsh Lecture Hall Lobby

Chronic Diseases, Health (Continued)

P.11 Oluwabukunmi Olajubutu, Howard University

Novel Drug Combination for the Treatment of Pancreatic Cancer

P.12 Stephanie Osei, Howard University

Suppression of the Notch Pathway by Tangeretin: A Therapeutic Strategy for Androgen-Dependent and Androgen-Independent Prostate Cancer Cells

P.13 Iqra Shams, University of Miami

Comparison of PIP₂ Sensitivity Between Kv7.5 and Its Counterparts

P.14 Alexis J. Smith, Emory University

Multilevel Systems of Support for Black Women with Breast Cancer: A Qualitative Study

P.15 Katrina Sookraj, Howard University

Effect of Relative Autonomy Index on Exercise in Black Women

Race Relations, Social Movements

P.16 Piero Olazabal, Stockton University

Examining the Effects of Colorism on Bullying Experiences and the Protective Role of Parenting in Peruvians

P.17 Deborah Ugo-Omenukwa, Hunter College

Restorative Justice on Screen: Rewriting the Narrative of Justice Through Media

P.18 Adenike Tella, Howard University

A Framing Analysis of Female Senators' Social Media Use in Nigeria

Science, Technology, Science Policy

P.19 Lillian E. Agosto Maldonado, Howard University

The Representation of Diasporican Identity: Facebook Groups for Digital Placemaking in Puerto Rican Barrios

P.20 Mohammed Alrizqi, Cornell University

Design for Complexity: An Integrated Framework for Iterative Co-Evolution Across Complex Socio-Technical Systems



POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Saturday, April 11 | 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM | Location - Marsh Lecture Hall Lobby

Science, Technology, Science Policy (Continued)

P.21 Jeannie Correa, Hunter College

Swipe, Match, Report, Repeat: Exploring Dating App Facilitated Violence and Harassment

P.22 Emmanuella Ejichukwu, University of Michigan

Student-AI Collaboration in Engineering Education and the Development of Engineering Problem-Solving Expertise

P.23 Dafrosa Kataraihya, Florida International University

Wind Impact on Sea Level Variability along the US Atlantic and Gulf Coasts: Implications to Coastal Flooding Hazard

P.24 Rikki Laser, Cornell University

Parental Care and Temperature Jointly Shape Development of Caregiving Behavior in a Biparental Rodent

P.25 Pablo Moreno-Yaeger, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Glaciation and deglaciation modulate explosive eruptions in the Andean Southern Volcanic Zone

P.26 Stephen Nwagwughigwu, Howard University

Security and Reliability of Robotic Middleware in Autonomous and Cyber-Physical Systems

P.27 Brittany Pellettiere, University of Miami

Investigating PFAS and Uranium as Co-contaminants: Potential for Sustainable Nanomaterials to Improve Environmental Justice Amidst Shifts in Nuclear Policy

P.28 Natalia Pineros-Guerrero, Cornell University

Using Population Biology of *Stemphylium Vesicarium* to Underpin Durable Management of *Stemphylium* Leaf Blight of Onion in New York

P.29 Myah Rather, Howard University

Improving Hurricane Intensity Forecasts: Precipitation, Track, and Intensity Prediction through Cumulus Parameterization Schemes

P.30 Uriel Antoinette Rufen-Blanchette, Emory University

Molecular Determinants of Human Astrogenesis



POSTER PRESENTATIONS CONTINUED

Science, Technology, Science Policy (Continued)

P.31 Leonardo (Leo) Salgado, Cornell University

Performance of Novel Alternatives to Neonicotinoid Insecticide Seed Treatments for Managing Maggots (Diptera: Anthomyiidae) in Large-Seeded Vegetable Crops

P.32 Elizabeth Strehl, University of Michigan

Making Sense of Social Class: Exploring the Experiences of Working-Class Undergraduate Engineering Students and their Navigation of College Expectations

P.33 Toneisha Stubbs, Emory University

Defining Functional Relationships Among Ciliary ARL GTPases Using Fast-Cycling Rescue Approaches

P.34 Kory Wells, Emory University

Engineering a Multifunctional Nanoparticle Delivery Platform to Boost CAR T Cells Accumulation and Cytotoxicity in Solid Tumors

P.35 Jason Wu, Cornell University

Expanding the Methodology of Carbonyl Olefination via Cross Metathesis

U.S./International Policy, Law, Economics

P.36 Jordan Michael Parker, Michigan State University

Beyond Scores: Youth Experiences with the YLS/CMI and Policy Implications



ORAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Concurrent Sessions I

Humanities Quadrangle (HQ); 320 York Street

Rooms (132 133, 207, 227, 229)

2:00 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.

Chronic Diseases, Health (Room 132)

(2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.) Christian McDonald, University of Miami

An Archaic Translation Initiation Factor eIF5B Supports KSHV Lytic Replication and Viral Oncogenesis by Mimicking a Hypoxic Cellular Landscape

(2:20 p.m. - 2:35 p.m.) Brandon Lewis, Yale University

Insights into Indoor Air Pollution in the Accra Metropolis: How Biomass Fuels and Window Treatments Drive Air Pollution Exposure

(2:40 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.) Augustina Mensa-Kwao, Johns Hopkins University

Structural and Environmental Determinants of Adolescent Mental Health in Baltimore, Maryland

Literature Arts, Culture (Room 133)

(2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.) Euge Helyantus Stumm, University of Miami

Innovative Archival Strategies for Marginalized Linguistic Communities: The B/Pajubá Digital Archive

(2:20 p.m. - 2:35 p.m.) Nelson Pham, Howard University

HBCUs as Transfer Options in California: Black East Bay Community College Students' Awareness, Fit, and Enrollment Intentions

(2:40 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.) Juan David Escobar Chacon, Emory University

Asynchronous Encounters: Images of Latin America through Translations in Literary and Cultural Journals

Science, Technology, Science Policy IA (Room 207)

(2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.) Angelica F. Lopez, Johns Hopkins University

Spatially Targeted Neuromodulation with Focused Ultrasound for Autonomic and Hemodynamic Control

(2:20 p.m. - 2:35 p.m.) Dini Hajarrahmah, Virginia Tech

Balancing High vs Low Technological Innovation in the Diffusion of Regenerative Agritourism Experiences

(2:40 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.) Jing Ge, Florida International University

Governing Artificial Intelligence Between Peace and Power: U.S.-China Regulatory Regimes and the Politics of Structural Intervention



ORAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Concurrent Sessions I (Continued)

**Humanities Quadrangle (HQ); 320 York Street
Rooms (132, 133, 207, 227, 229)
2:00 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.**

Science, Technology, Science Policy IB (Room 227)

(2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.) Sarah Verhoff, Emory University

Machine Learning-Driven Discovery of Next-Generation CXCR4 Antagonists for Cancer and HIV Therapeutics

(2:20 p.m. - 2:35 p.m.) Xiaowei Ou, Yale University

Improving Neural Network Performance for Solving Quantum Sign Structure

(2:40 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.) Aleesha George, Cornell University

Near-UV Tunable Polaritons from Magic-Size Clusters

Race Relations, Social Movements (Room 229)

(2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.) Chelsea D. McNutt, Cornell University

Care as Governance: Black Women and the Everyday Work of the NAACP, 1935-1970

(2:20 p.m. - 2:35 p.m.) Morgan L. Henson, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Performing for Whom? Divergent Logics of Legitimacy-Seeking in the German and American Far-Right

(2:40 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.) Abbey Michelle Gali, Florida International University

Developing the Lebanese Resilience Schema: A Critical Narrative Review Integrating Psychological Literature and Media

Discourse



ORAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Concurrent Sessions II

Humanities Quadrangle (HQ); 320 York Street

Rooms (132, 133, 207, 227, 229)

3:05 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Chronic Diseases, Health (Room 132)

(3:05 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.) Cátia Dombaxe, Cornell University

Why Goldfish Can Regenerate their Spinal Cords and Humans Can't (Yet!)

(3:25 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.) Kristina Brandveen, University of California, San Diego

"They Checked Outta' Here Early": Exploring Occupational Cancer Risks Through the Eyes of African American Farmers from Virginia and North Carolina Exposed to Agrochemicals

(3:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.) Fairuziana Humam Hamid, University of Miami

Across Borders, Within Faith: A Critical Review of Gender, Religion, and Well-Being in Muslim Women's Lives Across Majority and Minority Contexts

Literature, Arts, Culture (Room 133)

(3:05 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.) Paola Yuli, Howard University

"Because without them there would be no rain": Climate Crisis and Literary Petrarch in Diana McCauley's Daylight Come

(3:25 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.) Ozivell Ecford, Northwestern University

To Be or Not to Be: A Study on Shakespeare, Incarcerated Youth, and Future Orientation

(3:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.) Enrica Bridgewater, University of Michigan

"We Want Our Own Representation, Not Leftovers": Black and Hispanic/Latinx Audiences' Media Representation Narratives

Science, Technology, Science Policy (Room 207)

(3:05 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.) Joshua E. Chaparro Mata, Yale University

Observation of Low-Energy 4f Electrons in Pr-Doped High-Tc Cuprate Bi-2212

(3:25 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.) Blakely Lockhart, Virginia Tech

From Milestones to Momentum: Early Nutrition, Infant Growth, and the Future of Developmental Science

(3:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.) Wisdom Akpan, Northwestern University

A Connector-Beam Lattice (CBL) Model for Microscale Mechanical Modeling of Wood



ORAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Concurrent Sessions II (Continued)

Humanities Quadrangle (HQ); 320 York Street

Rooms (132, 133, 207, 227, 229)

3:05 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Race Relations, Social Movements (Room 227)

(3:05 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.) Derrick Boakye Boadu, Florida International University
Hybrid Leadership Model: A Pathway to Innovative Leadership in Collaborative Governance

(3:25 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.) Jermaine R. Howell, Michigan State University
Exploring Black Educators' Perspectives of Culturally Relevant (Math) Pedagogy with Black Students: A Qualitative Inquiry

(3:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.) Elle K. Butler, Howard University
The Pursuit of Purpose: Developmental Implications of Psychosocially Toxic Events on Black Emerging Adults' Risky Behavior Involvement and Self-Actualization

Career Paths, Transitioning (Room 229)

(3:05 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.) Ebenezer Marfo Asamoah, Virginia Tech
Mentors, Scholars, and Career Transitions: How a Graduate Teaching Scholars Program Transforms Doctoral Career Trajectories

(3:25 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.) Junellie Perez, Johns Hopkins University
Empowering Space Scientists through the League of Underrepresented Minoritized Astronomers (LUMA)

(3:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.) Kirby R. Gibson, Michigan State University
Black Girl Return Home: An Endarkened Narrative Inquiry on the Exits of Former Black Women Student Affairs Practitioners



ORAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Concurrent Sessions III

Humanities Quadrangle (HQ); 320 York Street

Rooms (132, 133, 207, 227, 229)

4:10 p.m. - 5:05 p.m.

Chronic Diseases, Health (Room 132)

(4:10 p.m. - 4:25 p.m.) John Fuller, Emory University

Beyond Stigma: The Dual Role of Social Support in Shaping Depressive Symptoms Among People Living with HIV in Anal Cancer-Related Care

(4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.) Bailey Holmes Spencer, Johns Hopkins University

The Relationship Between Social Media and Help-Seeking Behaviors for Mental Health among Black/African American Young People

(4:50 p.m. - 5:05 p.m.) Shola Onissema-Karimu, Cornell University

Analyzing Mineralization of Bone Matrix with the CAM Assay

Literature, Arts, Culture (Room 133)

(4:10 p.m. - 4:25 p.m.) monét cooper, University of Michigan

The Persistence of Black Queer and Trans Youths' Lives within Afterlife Literacies

(4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.) Bankole Wright, Florida International University

Street Kinship and Everyday Cultural Production of Lagos Motor Parks

(4:50 p.m. - 5:05 p.m.) Viola Torkornoo, Howard University

Ghana's Soundtrack for Cultural Tourism: Analysis of Afrobeats, Digital Promotion, and Media-induced Tourism

Science, Technology, Science Policy (Room 207)

(4:10 p.m. - 4:25 p.m.) JaMor Hairston, Emory University

Automating Thematic Characterization Using Large Language Models for Substance Use Disorders

(4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.) Phylindia Gant, University of Florida

Characterizing Tenax TA Reaction Products to Constrain Sources of Martian Organics

(4:50 p.m. - 5:05 p.m.) Blake T. Hipsley, University of Michigan

Investigating Optical Properties of Two-Dimensional Semiconductors using Multidimensional Coherent Spectroscopy



ORAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Concurrent Sessions III (Continued)

Humanities Quadrangle (HQ); 320 York Street

Rooms (132, 133, 207, 227, 229)

4:10 p.m. - 5:05 p.m.

Race Relations, Social Movements IIIA (Room 227)

(4:10 p.m. - 4:25 p.m.) Daniel I. Adeniranye, Florida International University
Paradoxical Navigation: Black Engineering Transfer Students' Experiences as Non-Centered Minorities at a Minority Serving Institution

(4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.) Lauren Rouse, Northwestern University
Ethics of Care in the Service-Learning Classroom During ICE Raids (and Other Politically Challenging Times)

(4:50 p.m. - 5:05 p.m.) Hannan Hijazi, Howard University
The Syrian Diaspora in the United States: Negotiating Identity, Religion, Trauma, and Belonging

Race Relations, Social Movements IIIB (Room 229)

(4:10 p.m. - 4:25 p.m.) Phill Campbell, Yale University
Who Said it was Simple?: Langston Hughes's Radical School of the Blues

(4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.) Natalie Rivera, Michigan State University
Victimization and Perpetration Behind Bars: Race, Ethnicity, Trauma, and Staff-Related Harm Among Incarcerated Women

(4:50 p.m. - 5:05 p.m.) Gheremey D. Edwards, University of Michigan
Are There Environmental Costs to Racial Bias in Retail Settings

Day Two - April 11, 2026

BOUCHET LEADERSHIP AWARD KEYNOTE LECTURE AND DINNER

**Omni New Haven Hotel at Yale, 155 Temple Street
Grand Ballroom**

5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Registered Conference Guests Only/Assigned Seating

2026 Bouchet Leadership Award Medal Recipient



Dwight A. McBride is a leading scholar of race and literary studies. McBride earned a bachelor's degree in English, with a concentration in African American studies, from Princeton University, and a master's degree and PhD in English from the University of California, Los Angeles. McBride currently serves as the Gerald Early Distinguished Professor of African and African American Studies & Senior Advisor to the Chancellor at Washington University in St. Louis.

McBride is widely known for his academic achievements and his innovative, interdisciplinary approach to university leadership. Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2022, McBride has written numerous books and edited volumes exploring race, Black studies, sexuality and identity politics including James Baldwin Now, Impossible Witnesses: Truth Abolitionism, and Slave Testimony, Black Like Us: A Century of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual African American Fiction, and Why I Hate Abercrombie and Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality. He is a two-time Lambda Literary Award winner and in 2003, was awarded the Monette/Horowitz Trust Achievement Award for research combating homophobia. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities have all supported McBride's research.

He was previously President and University Professor at The New School and served as Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at Emory University. He has also held leadership roles at Northwestern University and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

McBride is co-founder and co-editor of the annual open-access journal James Baldwin Review, and a founding co-editor of "The New Black Studies Series" at the University of Illinois Press, which has published more than 50 titles. He is also a founding co-director of the Academic Leadership Institute, a partnership with the University of Michigan that supports development of future academic leaders who are committed to advancing diversity and inclusion in the academy.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Cornell University 2026

Mohammed A. Alrizqi

Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

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Mohammed A. Alrizqi is a Ph.D. candidate at Cornell's Sibley School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, specializing in the design of complex socio-technical systems. His PhD work develops a framework for designing complex systems by integrating computational models, AI-augmented design intelligence, and participatory design to analyze and improve engineered systems—including education, healthcare, and infrastructure systems, with a case study on complex engineering educational system. His research has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Engineering Education and presented at premier conferences, including the International Conference on Engineering Design, the American Society for Engineering Education Annual Conference, and the International DESIGN Conference. His work applies engineering design methodologies to traditionally non-technical domains, demonstrating how systems thinking and computational modeling can address complexity in different domains. Mohammed holds three master's degrees—all with 4.0 GPAs—and has received multiple awards, including the Best Paper Poster Award in Mechanical Engineering from the American Society for Engineering Education, Leadership and Exemplary Service Award from the Cornell Graduate School Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement, the Graduate Student of the Year Award from Cornell's Sustainability Office, and a Letter of Commendation for Academic Distinction from the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission in the United States. Following his doctorate, Mohammed aspires to establish a faculty research program advancing Design Research and Methodology for Complex Systems, integrating computational modeling with participatory methods to address complex global challenges in engineering, healthcare, and sustainability.

Beatrys Rodrigues

Communication

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Beatrys (Bya) is an award-winning social scientist, educator, strategist, and media-maker from Brazil. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Communication at Cornell University, where she is a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow and a recipient of a SUNY Graduate Diversity Fellowship. Her research examines the sociotechnical power dynamics of transnational digital media and artificial intelligence. Her work focuses on creating collaborative pathways to mitigate technology-mediated violence and to foster feminist futures. She collaborates with activists and creators to produce data and stories that support organizations in making informed decisions to resist forms of oppression shaped by technology. Beatrys holds a specialization in Consumer and Material Culture: Semiopsychoanalytic Perspectives and a B.A. in Social Communications with an emphasis in Advertising from the University of São Paulo. She has more than 11 years of experience supporting public and private organizations in understanding technology, digital culture, and emerging trends through research, education, and strategy. Her academic background is grounded in an interdisciplinary research approach, drawing on perspectives from Communication, Media Studies, Science and Technology Studies, Human-Computer Interaction and Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Her scholarship is informed by theories of intersectional feminisms and decolonial/anti-colonial perspectives. Additionally, she explores the intersections of scientific inquiry with collaborative media-making, documentary filmmaking, and speculative design practices.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Cornell University 2026

Rikki Laser

Psychology

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Rikki (she/they) is a candidate for a Ph.D. in Psychological Sciences and Human Development with a concentration in behavioral and evolutionary neuroscience at Cornell University. Her research focuses on how our environment affects our behavior and brain across development. During their graduate studies, they have been investigating how increasing ambient temperature affects parental behavior and development. Rikki is a Dean's Excellence Fellow, a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow, and has received certificates from the NextGen Professors and Building Mentorship Skills for Academic Careers Programs. Additionally, she has had the honor of working with the Graduate Student organizations under the Graduate School Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement for five years, most notably as a Graduate Student Coordinator and Co-Chair of the MAC Doctoral Peer Mentoring Club. They are also the current chair of the Communications Committee for the Animal Behavior Society. Ultimately, Rikki intends to promote inclusion and belonging in and outside of academia through leading a community-engaged research laboratory that integrates physiological ecology with developmental psychobiology in order to untangle the impact of the sensory environment on development.

Natalia Piñeros-Guerrero

Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology

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Natalia Piñeros-Guerrero is a Ph.D. candidate in Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology from Villavicencio, Colombia. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Agronomy with a minor in Plant Pathology from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia in 2019. Her interest in agriculture began during visits with her father to strawberry fields in Cundinamarca, where she interacted with growers and local communities and developed an early appreciation for crop production. During college, Natalia conducted research on sustainable corn seed treatment strategies, including thermotherapy and fungicide applications to control seed-borne pathogens. In 2018, she participated in the Undergraduate Research Experience Purdue-Colombia (UREP-C) program, spending six months at Purdue University working with Dr. Janna Beckerman in the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology. This experience was her first time in the United States and solidified her interest in plant pathology research. In fall 2019, Natalia began her master's degree at Purdue University under the supervision of Dr. Darcy Telenko. Her research focused on mapping QoI fungicide resistance in *Cercospora soja* populations causing frogeye leaf spot of soybean in Indiana. She completed her M.Sc. degree in summer 2021 and joined Dr. Sarah Pethybridge's laboratory at Cornell University in fall 2021 as a Ph.D. student. At Cornell, Natalia's research focuses on the population biology and fungicide resistance of *Stemphylium vesicarium*, the causal agent of *Stemphylium* leaf blight of onion. Her work integrates disease management, molecular biology, fungal genetics, and bioinformatics, and connects research with growers through Cornell Cooperative Extension while advancing inclusive, bilingual outreach beyond academia.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Cornell University 2026

Leonardo Salgado

Entomology

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Leonardo (Leo) Salgado is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Entomology at Cornell University, where he conducts research under the direction of Dr. Brian Nault. His research focuses on integrated pest management in vegetable cropping systems, with particular emphasis on onion maggot and seedcorn maggot. Leo's work examines early-season species composition in onion fields, evaluates the field efficacy of insecticide seed treatments, assesses maggot susceptibility through laboratory bioassays, and investigates how regional production scale may influence population genetic structure of maggot pests. His research aims to improve the durability and sustainability of pest management strategies for growers. Leo earned his bachelor's degree in Agricultural Sciences (Ingeniero Agrónomo) from the Universidad Nacional de Agricultura (UNAG) in Honduras and his master's degree in Entomology from Louisiana State University (LSU), where he also completed a minor in applied statistics. At LSU, he worked on pest management in field crops and was a founding member of the UNAG Alumni Association in the U.S. and the UNAs at LSU organization. Both organizations facilitate international research engagement and graduate training pathways for UNAG students across different universities in the U.S. In addition to his research, Leo has demonstrated sustained academic service through leadership roles in student organizations, professional committees, and outreach and extension activities serving diverse agricultural communities. He plans to graduate in summer 2026 and aspires to pursue a faculty position with a research and extension appointment, integrating applied science, stakeholder engagement, and student mentoring.

Jason Wu

Chemistry and Chemical Biology

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Jason Wu is a candidate for the Ph.D. in chemistry with a concentration in synthetic organic chemistry at Cornell University. His research focuses on the design, synthesis, and evaluation of novel small organic molecules as catalysts for applications in methods development in the subfield of organocatalysis, photocatalysis, and electrochemistry. Jason has been recognized as a Chemistry Bauer Scholar, Center for Innovation Graduate Teaching Fellow, and a NextGen Professor participant. He received a Bachelor of Science in chemistry from University of California – Los Angeles (UCLA), where he was a recipient of the Geissman Research Fellowship. Jason's dedication to continual growth fuels his commitment to inspire others, and he shares his excitement of chemistry through engaging teaching and supportive mentorship. He has been an avid volunteer with the Exploring Your Horizons initiative, an annual conference to promote and demonstrate STEM activities to students from pre-K to middle school. Motivated by the potential of science to uplift communities, Jason seeks an academic career that bridges scientific discovery and entrepreneurship to deliver technologies that make a tangible difference in people's lives.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Cornell University 2026

Aleesha George

Chemistry and Chemical Biology

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Aleesha George is a Ph.D. candidate in Chemistry and Chemical Biology at Cornell University. Her research focuses on the optical and electronic properties of organic and hybrid materials, with the goal of advancing photonic and optoelectronic technologies relevant to quantum information science, low-power lasers, and next-generation communication systems. Her work emphasizes the use of sustainable organic materials as alternatives to conventional inorganic materials. Aleesha is a recipient of the American Association of University Women International Fellowship and the Exemplary Leadership and Service Award from the Cornell Graduate School Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement, recognizing both her scholarly contributions and leadership. She earned her bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Kerala as an INSPIRE Fellow, an award given to the top 1% of students in India based on academic merit, and completed her master's degree in analytical chemistry at Mahatma Gandhi University. In addition to her research, Aleesha is actively engaged in academic service and outreach. She serves as Chair of the Diversity and International Students Committee of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly at Cornell University and has contributed to STEM outreach initiatives, such as Expanding Your Horizons and programs at the Ithaca Science Center. She is also the founder of Adopt-A-Future, a nonprofit initiative in India that supports tribal girls through educational scholarships and science and English workshops. Aleesha aspires to pursue an academic career at a primarily undergraduate institution, where she aims to combine research, teaching, and mentorship to support inclusive and supportive learning environments.

Shola Onissema Karimu

Biomedical Engineering

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Shola Onissema Karimu is a Ph.D. candidate in Biomedical Engineering at Cornell University. Her research explores how chemotherapeutic drugs alter cell behavior in bone-metastatic breast cancer. She is preparing two thesis-based publications that establish a bone model system and show how chemotherapy modifies bone properties through cell-mediated processes that influence cancer cell behavior. Shola has been recognized as a Dean's Excellence Fellow, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow, and Cornell Provost Diversity Fellow. As an NSF S-STEM scholar, Shola received a Bachelor of Science in biomedical engineering from Rowan University. During undergrad, she participated in three competitive NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates, which strengthened her dedication to science. Shola has dedicated her time to extensive outreach, teaching, and community engagement programs, spanning from K-12 to senior college students, to advance diversity and inclusion within engineering. She is involved in several programs throughout Cornell's community, including New Visions Engineering, CATALYST, Cornell University Engineering Success Program, and more. Through these initiatives, she mentored high school students and guided students in navigating academic and career pathways in STEM. She has mentored undergraduate students in writing successful proposals for the Undergraduate Research Grant, enabling them to engage and apply their classroom knowledge to hands-on research experience. Acknowledged by her commitment to service and outreach, Shola was awarded the Robert Mozia Graduate Student Distinguished Service Award. Ultimately, Shola aspires to continue her journey in academia to reach her long-term goal of becoming an independent investigator, addressing fundamental scientific questions and driving advancements in personalized medicine.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Cornell University 2026

Chelsea D. McNutt

History

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Chelsea D. McNutt is an advanced Ph.D. candidate in History at Cornell University and a Graduate School Dean's Scholar. Her research examines twentieth-century Black women's intellectual and political labor in the United States, with particular attention to grassroots activism, organizational leadership, and the production of historical knowledge during the long civil rights movement. Drawing on extensive archival research, her dissertation centers on Black women's leadership within the NAACP and forms the foundation for her first book manuscript. McNutt earned both her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees in History, with a minor in African American History, from Arkansas State University—Jonesboro. She was the recipient of the Dr. John A. Galloway Award, Arkansas State University's highest honor, awarded to an outstanding Master of Arts graduate student in History. Her research interests include Black women's political thought, community organizing, and the history of race and democracy in the modern United States. In addition to her research, McNutt is actively engaged in professional service and scholarly leadership. She serves as Co-Book Review Editor for *American Nineteenth Century History* and is the chair of the Women in American Studies Network, an international scholarly organization based in the United Kingdom. She also serves as a subcommittee member for Development and Education with the British Association for American Studies, contributing to initiatives that support interdisciplinary scholarship and inclusive academic communities. McNutt aspires to a career in the professoriate, where she seeks to integrate research, teaching, and mentorship while contributing to institutional efforts that broaden access to academic pathways and support scholars from historically underrepresented backgrounds.

Cátia P. Dombaxe

Biomedical Engineering

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Cátia P. Dombaxe is a Ph.D. candidate in Biomedical Engineering at Cornell University, where she conducts research in regenerative medicine and tissue engineering. Her doctoral research focuses on developing biomaterial-based therapies for spinal cord injury, including hydrogel systems for the delivery of regenerative extracellular matrix components and enzymes to promote axonal growth and functional recovery. She employs integrated in vitro and in vivo models and imaging to study mechanisms of neural regeneration. Dombaxe is the Founder and CEO of STEAMpact Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit organization advancing equitable access to STEM education across Sub-Saharan Africa. She is the recipient of a National Geographic Society grant supporting the Comunidade Ubunye project, which develops hands-on STEM learning kits and teacher training programs for underserved rural communities in Angola. Her education-focused scholarship emphasizes sustainability, local capacity building, and evidence-based assessment of learning outcomes. Her academic and service contributions have been recognized through numerous honors, including the HHMI Gilliam Fellowship, National Geographic Explorer designation, NYS Spinal Cord Injury Research Predoctoral Fellowship, SMDP MedTech Fellowship, and the Maribel Garcia Community Spirit Award. At Cornell, Dombaxe served as a Lead Teaching Fellow with the Center for Teaching Innovation, where she supported inclusive pedagogy, learning, and graduate instructor development. Dombaxe has authored peer-reviewed publications in biomedical engineering and neuroscience-related fields and is preparing additional manuscripts based on her doctoral research and education initiatives. She aspires to pursue a faculty career that integrates translational biomaterials research with community-engaged scholarship and mentorship aimed at broadening participation in science and engineering.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Emory University 2026

Jared T. Bailey

Environmental Health Sciences

Jared T. Bailey is a third-year Ph.D. candidate in Environmental Health Sciences at Emory University. He is a trainee in the NIEHS Predoctoral T32 Training Program in Environmental Health Sciences and Toxicology. His academic foundation began at Morehouse College (B.S., Biology), followed by a Master of Public Health from Morehouse School of Medicine. His training integrates biology, epidemiological methods, biostatistics, and toxicology to examine environmental determinants of chronic disease. Jared's doctoral research centers on the exposome, toxicology, and cancer epidemiology. As a former trainee in the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Environment and Cancer Epidemiology Group, he leads research investigating chemical exposures from personal care products in relation to cancer incidence within a large U.S. prospective cohort. His first-author publication, "Use of hair straighteners and chemical relaxers and incidence of non-reproductive cancers," was recognized as NIEHS "Paper of the Month" and later awarded 2025 Paper of the Year. He employs high-throughput omics and untargeted exposure assessment approaches in the Comprehensive Laboratory for Untargeted Exposome Science to characterize molecular signatures of toxicant exposure and develop rigorous methods for chemical analysis. He also serves as a doctoral trainee at the Chemical Insights Research Institute under Underwriters Laboratories Research Institutes, where he advances consumer product toxicology and women's health research. Demonstrating leadership, scholarship, and service, Jared serves on the Board of Directors for Odyssey Atlanta and is an active member of Brothers in Public Health, advancing environmental justice, health equity, and STEM engagement among youth in Atlanta, Georgia.

Juan David Escobar

Hispanic Studies

Juan David Escobar is a candidate for the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Hispanic Studies at Emory University. His research focuses on the role of translation in shaping the Latin American literary and intellectual field during the Cold War. Escobar has worked as a community liaison between organizations such as the Alliance Theatre and Hispanic communities in Atlanta through the Mellow Intervention Program. He received a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Master of Arts in Latin American Literature from the National University of Colombia, where he taught from 2012 to 2020. Escobar's leadership and advocacy are reflected in his sustained involvement with graduate student organizations serving underrepresented populations. He has served as president of the Graduate Association of Spanish and Portuguese, where he co-organized events for the Latinx population, and as treasurer of the Graduate Student Parent Association, an organization dedicated to supporting graduate students who are parents, an often invisible and structurally vulnerable group within PhD education. Ultimately, Escobar aspires to work at the intersection of politics, aesthetics, translation, and public and digital humanities.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Emory University 2026

John A. Fuller

Nursing

John A. Fuller is a candidate in the Ph.D. program in Nursing at Emory University. His research focuses on understanding the social and structural determinants that impact people living with HIV and cancer. John has been recognized as a recipient of the Centennial Scholars Fellowship, the George W. Woodruff Fellowship, and the 2025 Dr. Kharen L. Fulton Award for Inclusive Excellence in the Laney Graduate School. He is distinguished as an American Psychosocial Oncology Society (APOS) Health Equity Scholar, an Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Fellow, a National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) Advanced Research Training in Social Determinants of Health Fellow, and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Health Policy Research Scholar. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Science from The Ohio State University, where he was a Health Sciences Scholar, Pelotonia Scholar, and Young Scholar. John served as president of the PhD Nursing Student Association (PNSA) and as PhD representative for the Emory Black Nursing Student Organization (EBNSO). He has been actively involved with National AIDS Education and Services for Minorities (NAESM), a community-based nonprofit organization focused on HIV prevention among Black LGBTQ+ people in Atlanta and nationally. He completed the Creating Responsible and Intelligent Black Brothers (CRIBB) Fellowship with NAESM. John is a scholar, educator, advocate, storyteller, and mentor. He aspires to become an independently funded thought leader advancing cancer health equity through anti-deficit, community-driven scholarship.

JaMor M. Hairston

Computer Science & Informatics

JaMor Hairston is a Ph.D. candidate in Computer Science and Informatics with a Biomedical Informatics concentration at Emory University School of Medicine. His research applies natural language processing and large language models to address substance use disorders and maternal health disparities, with support from NIH NIDA and NLM funding. His publications include automating thematic analyses using LLMs, characterizing social media discussions of xylazine-associated wounds and nitazenes, and multi-task transfer learning for opioid use disorder detection. On campus, JaMor serves as University Representative for the Laney Graduate Student Council, Vice President of the Black Graduate Student Association, Treasurer of the Collective, and Emory Senate Member. As a Graduate Teaching Assistant, he has taught three computer science courses and mentored diverse students on foundational and advanced topics. JaMor demonstrates leadership as AMIA Board Member, Chair-Elect of AMIA's Public Health Informatics Working Group, and Co-Chair of IMIA's Student and Emerging Professionals Special Interest Group. He co-organized the NSF-funded Data for Good for Education workshops in 2024 and 2025. His service extends to federal health IT initiatives, advising on data standards and interoperability for ONC, SAMHSA, and CDC. JaMor's scholarship has been recognized by the Emory Centennial Scholar Fellowship, the NIDA T32 Training Grant, the NIH HEAL Initiative Supplement Grant, the KPMG PhD Project Doctoral Scholar designation, and the 2025 Mary Jane Seacole Award in Healthcare Technology. His advocacy includes organizing panels on maternal health equity and delivering keynote addresses on STEM excellence.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Emory University 2026

Trinidi D. Prochaska

Neuroscience

Trinidi D. Prochaska is a neuroscience Ph.D. candidate at Emory University studying the impacts of lifetime trauma exposure on cognition across perimenopause in Black women. At Emory, Trinidi was awarded the Centennial Scholars Fellowship and won the Neuroscience Early Scientific Achievement Award in recognition of her academic and scientific accomplishments. Trinidi completed her undergraduate degree in Biology: Neuroscience at Washington University in St. Louis in 2023, where she received the WashU Impact Award. She was an undergraduate fellow for the Enhancing Neuroscience Diversity through Undergraduate Research Education Experiences (ENDURE) and Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC) programs and served as an Aspirational Peer Mentor, where she mentored first-generation, low-income freshmen throughout their college transition. Trinidi has contributed to impactful initiatives that enhance inclusive excellence and nourish diversity within academia. As a member of the Grady Trauma Project (GTP) Community Advisory Board (CAB), Trinidi curated scientific newsletters that disseminated GTP research back to participants and the broader Atlanta community. She also served as the Events Lead for the Advancing Experiences and Opportunities in the Neuroscience Graduate Program (AXON) Committee, where she promoted inclusive scientific research and organized workshops to enhance financial literacy among graduate students. Trinidi also served as the Laney Graduate Student Council Vice President and Student Ambassador for the Flourishing at Laney Initiative, highlighting her immense leadership skills. Ultimately, Trinidi aims to become an independent investigator studying neurobiological mechanisms of risk and resilience in women's mental health and to mentor underrepresented students within academia.

Uriel Rufen-Blanchette

Neuroscience

Uriel Rufen-Blanchette is a neuroscience Ph.D. candidate at Emory University's Laney Graduate School. Her research focuses on uncovering the intrinsic mechanisms of human neurodevelopment, with an emphasis on the molecular cues driving astrogenesis from neural stem cell progenitor populations using human-based, in vitro models. Uriel earned her Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Spelman College and completed postbaccalaureate training at New York University's Neuroscience Institute. She has presented her doctoral work at the European Meeting on Glial Cells in Health and Disease, has earned authorship on two high-impact publications from her postbaccalaureate research (Nature, 2021; Cell Reports, 2025), and contributed to a pre-print currently under review from her doctoral research (bioRxiv, 2025). On campus, Uriel strives to create space for all. She served as the president of the Laney Graduate Student Council, where she collaborated closely with deans and administrative leadership to effectively serve the Ph.D. and master's student body by developing programming focused on professional development, community building, and cross-program unification. Uriel also serves as outreach chair of the Black Graduate Student Association, where she created a program bringing local middle school scholars monthly STEM lessons. For her academic and altruistic strides, Uriel has been awarded the Dana Foundation Grant, the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, the Emory University Centennial Fellowship, and the Emory Neuroscience Graduate Program's Service Award. Uriel's career goal is ultimately to ensure that underrepresented groups no longer encounter barriers to STEM and to create space for representation, equity, and inclusive excellence in higher education.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Emory University 2026

Alexis Smith

Behavioral, Social, & Health Education Sciences

Alexis J. Smith is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Behavioral, Social, and Health Education Sciences at Emory University. Her current research interests include 1) understanding how historical and structural determinants of health inequities shape the health outcomes of oppressed communities and 2) uplifting how communities respond to racism and structural violence through their networks and ethics of care. Alexis has been recognized as a Karen Askew Leaders Fellow, a BLKHLTH Community Advocacy for Racial Equity School (CARES) Fellow, and a George W. Woodruff Fellow. In addition, she received a Bachelor of Arts in Social Anthropology from Harvard University and a Master of Public Health from Columbia University. Alexis is passionate about community engagement and bridging the gap between the academy and the community. During her time at Emory, she has been an active member of the BRIDGE Community program that aims to amplify the voices of Black women affected by breast cancer. Ultimately, she aspires to work in a space where she can partner with communities, design equity-centered programs, and translate research into practice.

Toneisha Stubbs

Human Genetics

Toneisha Stubbs, Ph.D., earned her doctorate in Neuroscience from Ohio State University and is currently a postdoctoral fellow in Emory University's Department of Human Genetics. Her research focuses on the molecular mechanisms that regulate primary cilia signaling, with particular emphasis on ARF-like GTPases. During her doctoral training, Dr. Stubbs investigated G protein-coupled receptor trafficking in neuronal cilia, demonstrating that disrupting dopamine D1 receptor localization alters signaling and metabolic regulation. Her work has been published in the *Journal of Neuroscience* and *Frontiers in Cell and Developmental Biology*. She has presented her work at national and international conferences and is committed to rigorous, hypothesis-driven scholarship. Beyond research, Dr. Stubbs is dedicated to leadership, service, and advocacy in science. She founded and served as president of her graduate program's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and led neuroscience outreach initiatives that provided hands-on learning for K–12 students. She has mentored several undergraduate and high school trainees in the research lab, using the opportunities available to her to support their journeys. Committed to science education, Dr. Stubbs joined the Emory FIRST program, where she received formal pedagogical training and now teaches in the biology department at Spelman College. Dr. Stubbs aspires to become a faculty member at a primarily undergraduate institution, where she will integrate research, mentorship, and inclusive teaching to broaden participation in the biomedical sciences.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Emory University 2026

Sarah R. Verhoff

Chemistry

Sarah Verhoff is a Ph.D. candidate in Chemistry with a concentration in artificial intelligence and machine learning for drug discovery at Emory University. Her research focuses on the design and evaluation of novel small molecules for a myriad of diseases, including viral diseases and cancer, using advanced artificial intelligence methods. She applies machine learning models to predict efficacy against biological targets and employs generative AI approaches to design and optimize potential drug candidates, contributing to innovation in drug discovery. Sarah has been recognized for academic excellence and leadership through the Advancing Excellence through Recruitment and Opportunities ambassadorship at Emory University, the Emory Diversifying Graduate Education ambassadorship, the Centennial Scholars Fellowship, and the Women in Natural Sciences Fellowship. Demonstrating a strong commitment to leadership and service, she serves as President of the Pi Alpha Chemical Society at Emory University, where she organizes and supports student engagement, professional development, and community-building events within the Department of Chemistry. She earned a Master of Science in Chemistry from Emory University with a concentration in artificial intelligence for drug discovery and a Master of Science in Chemistry with a concentration in bioinformatics from Georgia State University. Through her scholarship, leadership, and service, Sarah is committed to advancing inclusive excellence in science while contributing innovative AI-driven solutions to modern drug discovery challenges.

Kory J. Wells

Cancer Biology

Kory Wells is a doctoral candidate in the Cancer Biology PhD program at Emory University, where his research focuses on the development of nanoparticle-based strategies to enhance CAR-T cell function in solid tumors. His work integrates immunology, nanotechnology, and in vivo modeling to address challenges in cancer immunotherapy. Kory has contributed to peer-reviewed research, presented at national conferences, and secured funding to support his research and professional development. He is known for his collaborative approach, mentorship of undergraduate and graduate trainees through structured mentoring programs and outreach initiatives, and dedication to creating spaces where students feel supported, heard, and empowered to succeed. Beyond research, Kory is actively engaged in leadership and service across campus. He has served in multiple leadership roles, including President of the Division Student Advisory Council and representative for the Cancer Biology Program, acting as a liaison between graduate students and institutional leadership. In these roles, Kory has facilitated town halls, contributed to policy discussions, and supported initiatives aimed at improving student wellness, engagement, and graduate training environments. Kory is also a member of several diversity, equity, and inclusion committees at the departmental and institutional levels, including the Winship Cancer Institute DEI Steering Committee and the Cancer Biology Program at Emory. Through these efforts, he advocates for equitable access to mentorship, inclusive training practices, and community-building within biomedical research. As a first-generation scholar, Kory aspires to continue strengthening academic and research environments that enable scholars from all backgrounds to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the scientific enterprise.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Florida International University 2026

Daniel I. Adeniranye

Engineering and Computing Education

Daniel I. Adeniranye is a Ph.D. candidate in Engineering and Computing Education at Florida International University (FIU), where his research examines the lived experiences of engineering transfer students at a Hispanic-Serving Institution using transcendental phenomenology. His educational and professional journey spans five countries including UAE, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As a co-investigator on federally funded projects from the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Defense, he has designed mixed-methods research protocols and led qualitative data collection across multiple institutions, advancing understanding of STEM transfer pathways and broadening participation in engineering. Daniel's scholarly output includes over 20 peer-reviewed conference proceedings, journal articles under review including in the Journal of Engineering Education and Studies in Engineering Education, and two authored educational textbooks. He serves as Immediate Past Division Chair of the American Society for Engineering Education Student Division, providing strategic leadership for 624+ student members nationally and globally, and co-chairs the Policy Action Network Group for NSF- and DOD-funded multi-institutional STEM education initiatives. He received FIU's Outstanding Service Award in 2023 and 2025. Daniel's service extends to community engagement through the Florida Local Alliance for Math Literacy and Equity and the Young People's Project, documenting program impact on historically underserved populations. As Graduate Student Representative on FIU's STEM Transformation Institute Equity Committee, he advocates for international scholar perspectives in institutional policy. Daniel aspires to advance inclusive engineering education through research, teaching, and institutional transformation.

Abbey Michelle Gali

Applied Social & Cultural Psychology

Abbey Michelle Gali is a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Social and Cultural Psychology with a Graduate Minor in Middle East and Muslim World Studies at Florida International University (FIU). She currently serves as a Doctoral Affiliate at the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (CAMES) at the American University of Beirut, where she is conducting dissertation fieldwork in collaboration with local scholars and community members. Her research examines how cultural narratives, systems, and power structures shape identity, resilience, and social behavior among Arab and Middle Eastern populations. Abbey is a two-time recipient of the FIU Doctoral Evidence Acquisition Fellowship, a competitive award supporting her dissertation fieldwork conducted in partnership with the American University of Beirut. She has also received multiple honors recognizing her scholarship and teaching, including the Excellence in Graduate Teaching Award, SPSSI Grants-in-Aid Research Grant, and the Meghji Family Trust Tuition Support Award. Service and advocacy are central to Abbey's academic identity. She serves as Chair of the Newsletter Subcommittee for AMENA-Psy, where she leads the dissemination of research and strengthens scholarly community among psychologists working with Middle Eastern and North African populations. She is also deeply committed to mentoring graduate and undergraduate research assistants in Beirut and the United States. Abbey aspires to advance psychological science within the MENA region by elevating Arab and MENA scholarship, mentoring the next generation of regional researchers, and strengthening local knowledge production while generating theoretically innovative and policy-relevant psychological science.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Florida International University 2026

Jing Ge

International Relations

Jing Ge is a Ph.D. candidate in International Relations at Florida International University (FIU). Her research focuses on international organizations, global governance, and regulatory coordination under conditions of great-power competition. Jing has published eight peer-reviewed journal articles and one policy-oriented op-ed, and has presented her research at major academic conferences, including the International Studies Association, the American Political Science Association, and the Midwest Political Science Association. Her research has been supported by multiple competitive fellowships and grants, including the Jean Monnet Center of Excellence EU Graduate Student Doctoral Research Grant, the ISA Dissertation Completion Fellowship, and the Doctoral Evidence Acquisition Fellowship. In addition to her scholarly work, Jing demonstrates strong leadership and service within the academic community. She served as a Research Assistant at the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy, where she conducted comparative research on international cybersecurity governance and regulatory frameworks. She also completed policy-focused internships in Washington, DC, and served as a Communication Specialist at the Maurice A. Ferré Institute for Civic Leadership. Jing serves as President of the Politics and International Relations Graduate Student Organization and as a member of the University Graduate Advisory Board, where she advocates for graduate student engagement and institutional inclusion. Through her scholarship, leadership, service, and advocacy, Jing is committed to advancing inclusive academic communities and policy-relevant research in international affairs.

Dafrosa Kataraihya

Earth Systems Sciences

Dafrosa Kataraihya is a PhD candidate in Earth Systems Sciences with a concentration in Coastal Oceanography and Artificial Intelligence (AI) at Florida International University (FIU). Her research characterizes factors affecting coastal sea level variability particularly wind and ocean currents and develops short-term sea level forecasting models. She is a three-time recipient of the Faculty for the Future Foundation Fellowship (2024–2026) and has also received the Matt Howard Fellowship (GCOOS, 2025), the FIU Oceans and Coastlines Division Award (2024), and the Leap and Learning Scholarship (2024). Dafrosa has earned first place in both the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) and poster presentations at multiple conferences. Beyond research, she is actively engaged in community service, participating in beach and park cleanups and supporting coastal neighborhood restoration efforts in Miami. She is also committed to science outreach, through sharing her research with high school students through local educational initiatives. She aspires to work at the intersection of science and coastal communities, advancing knowledge while helping protect and strengthen vulnerable coastal regions.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Florida International University 2026

Bankole Wright

Sociocultural Anthropology

Bankole Wright is a Ph.D. candidate in Sociocultural Anthropology with a concentration in urban anthropology at Florida International University (FIU). His research examines the cultural production of street life through the everyday infrastructural and performative practices of motor park workers in Lagos, Nigeria. His dissertation, titled "Performing the Street: Cultural Production and Everyday Urban Life in Lagos," examines how motor park union workers, bus conductors, and street vendors create urban culture through their everyday performances and improvisations in Lagos, Nigeria. His work positions African cities as sites of theory-making rather than empirical appendages to Euro-American frameworks and he considers his research participants as knowledge producers and co-theorists. Bankole has been awarded the Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant and a Doctoral Evidence Acquisition Fellowship. Beyond his research, Bankole has organized multiple conference panels on African urban studies and served as president of both the African & African Diaspora Studies Graduate Student Association and the Sociology, Anthropology, and Geography Graduate Student Association, and current Vice-President of the Future Educators Association at FIU. Bankole is committed to decolonial scholarship that centers African knowledge production and treats research participants as intellectual co-theorists. Ultimately, he aspires to secure a tenure-track position at a research university where he can continue producing scholarship that centers African urban experiences, mentor students from underrepresented backgrounds, and advocate for decolonial methodologies in Africana studies.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Howard University 2026

Lillian E. Agosto Maldonado

Communication, Culture & Media Studies

Lillian E. Agosto Maldonado is a candidate for the Ph.D. in communication, culture, & media studies at Howard University. She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Puerto Rico and a master's degree in Puerto Rican and Caribbean Studies from the Center for Advanced Studies in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. Her dissertation investigates how Puerto Rican online communities in the continental U.S. use digital placemaking to shape and sustain their Diasporican identity and how social media represents the barrios. Her interest in Latino representation in the media is evident in her role as a communication and curatorial assistant for the "De Última Hora: Latinas Report Breaking News" exhibit at the National Museum of American History through the Latino Museum Studies Program. She wrote a book chapter on Latino representation in *Amending Our Pasts and Futures: Observing Media and Place as Means to Memory* (2024), and her academic work has been published in the *Journal of Communications in Healthcare* and presented at conferences like the National Communication Association. As a professor at Sagrado Corazón University in Puerto Rico, her work has been acknowledged by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and the Online News Association. She has been a fellow with the International Women's Media Foundation and the International Center for Journalists, contributing to outlets like *Primera Hora*, *El Nuevo Día*, *Univision Radio*, and *ESPN*. Additionally, her online magazine *Mundos Paralelos* received support from CUNY's Entrepreneurial Journalism Creators Program and the Google News Initiative Startups Lab.

Carlos Aguilera

Political Science

Carlos Aguilera is a candidate for the Ph.D. in political science at Howard University specializing in American politics, public policy, and direct democracy. His research examines the intersection of campaign finance, civic engagement, and democratic participation within California's statewide ballot initiative system. His dissertation analyzes election cycles to assess how contribution patterns, expenditure strategies, and mobilization efforts shape initiative outcomes and voter engagement. His scholarship is grounded in theories of democratic engagement and social capital, and contributes to policy debates on transparency, equity, and civic education. His work provides evidence-based recommendations to strengthen inclusive participation in systems of direct democracy and to mitigate the influence of financial inequality in electoral policymaking. Carlos is a recipient of the American Political Science Association Diversity Fellowship, Frederick Douglass Doctoral Scholarship, and Ernest E. Just–Percy L. Julian Research Assistantship and participated in the California Education Policy Fellowship Program. Professionally, Carlos has served in roles across federal and state government, including the U.S. Government Accountability Office and the California Governor's Office of Finance. These experiences inform his interdisciplinary approach to research, bridging empirical analysis with applied policy impact. Carlos's long-term scholarly agenda centers on advancing equitable democratic institutions through rigorous research, public service, and community-engaged policy leadership.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Howard University 2026

Elle K. Butler

Developmental Psychology

Elle Butler is a candidate for the Ph.D. in developmental psychology with a concentration in neuropsychology at Howard University. She earned her master of science in psychology from Howard and her bachelor of science in psychology from Towson University, where she excelled in the Honors Clinical Psychology Area of Focus program. Her research investigates the developmental implications of psychosocially toxic environments on Black emerging adults' risky behavior involvement and self-actualization. Elle has been recognized with the Most Outstanding Teaching Fellow Award and the Legacy Award for her work as Lead Teaching Fellow for the National Education Opportunity Network. This role involves mentoring undergraduate fellows and educating high school students in Introduction to Psychology. She is also the Cultural Socialization Laboratory coordinator at Howard University, alongside Principal Investigator Dr. Debra Roberts. As a founding member of the Howard University Rollerskating Club on campus, Elle remains actively engaged in leadership, community mentorship, and volunteer service. She is well poised and eager to embark on a career in which she will make meaningful contributions to both the academic community and the broader community through her research and sustained advocacy efforts aimed at marginalized youth.

Rashidat Folashade Elesho

Pharmaceutical Sciences

Rashidat Folashade Elesho is a candidate for the Ph.D. in pharmaceutical sciences at Howard University with a research focus on digital health transformation, health informatics, and health outcomes research. She holds a bachelor of science in pharmacy and a master of science in pharmaceutical sciences from the University of Lagos, Nigeria. Her dissertation examines electronic health record (EHR) adoption and readiness for health information exchange (HIE) implementation in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on pharmacists' perspectives and their role in medication safety and care coordination. Rashidat has co-authored peer-reviewed publications in journals including Telemedicine and e-Health, Discover Oncology, and the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities, addressing topics related to telehealth utilization, cancer genomics, and health disparities. She has presented her research at national and institutional forums such as the RCMI Conference, Howard University Research Week, and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Annual Meeting. Rashidat is a four-time recipient of the Edward Alexander Bouchet Doctoral Scholars Assistantship and was awarded the Presidential Gold Medal by the President of Nigeria for outstanding contributions to society. She also received the Best Female Lecturer Award from pharmacy students at the University of Ilorin in recognition of excellence in teaching and mentorship. A Certified associate in healthcare information and management systems (CAHIMS), her scholarly work is situated at the intersection of pharmacy practice and digital health informatics, with the goal of informing data-driven approaches to reducing healthcare disparities and improving health outcomes in underserved settings.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Howard University 2026

Hannan Hijazi

Social Work

Hannan Hijazi is a candidate for the Ph.D. in social work at Howard University whose scholarship focuses on mental health among immigrants, refugees, and Muslims in the 21st century. Her dissertation examines the Syrian diaspora, exploring how young adults navigate religious and cultural identity, belonging, and well-being within racialized and sociopolitical contexts. Hannan's academic training integrates research, clinical practice, and teaching. She has served as a research assistant on multiple community-engaged projects examining Muslim religious affiliation and disaffiliation and the educational and psychosocial experiences of Muslim youth. Her work has been published in Taylor & Francis and presented at major national conferences, including the American Psychological Association (APA), the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting, and the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference. Hannan is a CSWE Minority Fellowship Program Fellow and an SSWR RISE Fellow. She earned her master of social work from the University of Maryland, graduating with highest honors and receiving the Behavioral Health Workforce Integration Service and Education (BHWISE) Fellowship. She holds a bachelor of science in psychology from Marymount University. In addition to her scholarly work, Hannan is licensed in Maryland and works at Children's National Hospital, providing case management and psychoeducation for youth transitioning to adult care. She has taught and supported multiple undergraduate and graduate-level courses in social work and psychology. A dedicated scholar and aspiring educator, she is committed to mentoring future social workers and advancing culturally responsive mental health care for marginalized communities.

Stephen Nwagwughia

Computer Science

Stephen Nwagwughia is a candidate for the Ph.D. in computer science at Howard University, where his dissertation research focuses on securing autonomous and embedded systems through cross-layer analysis of firmware, runtime engines, and robotic middleware. His work examines structural execution vulnerabilities, including system call-level firmware tampering, speculative type confusion in just-in-time compiled JavaScript Engines, and unsafe deserialization in ROS 2 middleware used in robotic and cyber-physical systems. His research advances practical techniques for detecting and mitigating execution-flow violations across system layers. He is the lead author of a peer-reviewed research paper on ROS 2 deserialization vulnerabilities presented at the IEEE/SICE International Symposium on System Integration (SII 2026) in Cancún, Mexico, where his work identified a previously undocumented vulnerability in widely deployed open-source ROS and contributed to vendor-acknowledged security fixes. Stephen has completed research and security engineering internships at Apple, AON, and Autodesk, contributing to product security, threat intelligence, and applied systems security initiatives. He has been recognized for his scholarly contributions as a Design Automation Conference (DAC) Fellow and as a recipient of the Apple HBCU Scholarship, and his doctoral research has received support from Amazon. He also serves as President of the Howard University chapter of Upsilon Pi Epsilon (UPE). He holds a bachelor of technology in mathematics from the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria, and a master's degree in cybersecurity and networks from the University of New Haven. His scholarly interests center on strengthening the security and resilience of systems critical to modern infrastructure and industry.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Howard University 2026

Oluwabukunmi Olajubutu

Pharmaceutical Sciences

Oluwabukunmi Olajubutu is a candidate for the Ph.D. in pharmaceutical sciences at Howard University. Her research focuses on developing novel targeted drug delivery systems for the treatment of pancreatic cancer, one of the deadliest and most difficult cancers to treat. Through the Howard University Center of Excellence, she has participated in multiple cohorts of training next generation of STEM leaders. She currently serves as President of the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) Howard University Chapter and as a Graduate School Ambassador, roles through which she actively promotes student development and upholds the University's academic reputation. Prior to joining Howard University, she earned a master of science in pharmaceuticals (with distinction) and bachelor of pharmacy degree (with distinction) from Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, in 2022 and 2016, respectively. She has co-authored several articles in peer reviewed journals and presented her research findings at several conferences. In recognition of her academic excellence and research contributions, Oluwabukunmi was inducted into Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Honor Society, in 2025. She is a four-time recipient of the Edward Alexander Bouchet Doctoral Fellowship and a recipient of the Ernest E. Just–Percy L. Julian Graduate Research Assistantship, two highly competitive awards supporting outstanding graduate scholars. Oluwabukunmi is committed to her long-term goal of becoming an accomplished educator and researcher dedicated to mentoring and training future scientists.

Nelson Pham

Higher Education Leadership and Policy Studies

Nelson Pham is a candidate for the Ph.D. in higher education leadership and policy studies at Howard University. His research examines institutional access, transfer pathways, and strategic expansion in higher education, with a focus on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. His dissertation, "HBCUs as Transfer Options in California: Black East Bay Community College Students' Awareness, Fit, and Enrollment Intentions," uses a mixed-methods design to analyze how Black community college students view HBCUs as viable transfer destinations and how institutional presence, cultural alignment, and regional context shape enrollment decisions. Nelson's scholarship is grounded in research-practice traditions and applied institutional research. His work integrates policy analysis, organizational strategy, and community-engaged frameworks to inform how institutions pursue expansion while maintaining mission integrity and student-centered outcomes. Guided by Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Community Cultural Wealth, his research centers stakeholder perspectives and positions community knowledge as a critical component of institutional planning and growth. His scholarly work has been presented at national and regional academic and professional conferences, including Harvard University's AOCC, the APAHE, and the National Association for Black Culture Centers conference. He currently has two research manuscripts under review focused on higher education leadership and AI. In addition to peer-reviewed scholarship, Nelson has contributed to grant-funded research, institutional reports, and cross-sector research-practice partnerships that inform enrollment strategy, infrastructure readiness, and workforce-aligned academic programming. Nelson is a current NSF-funded Broadening Participation Research and Training Consortium Fellow, and his work advances policy-relevant research on equity, access, and institutional capacity in higher education.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Howard University 2026

Paola Yuli

English

Paola Yuli is a candidate for the Ph.D. in English at Howard University in the Department of Literature and Writing, specializing in Caribbean and diasporic literatures. Her research focuses on Caribbean literary water bodies and hydro-crisis in the blue humanities, climate humanities, feminist studies, and postcolonial studies. Paola's dissertation is tentatively titled "Literary Hydro-Crises: The Poetics of Water in Caribbean Women's Writing 1980s-2020s." From 2024-2025, she was awarded a Just-Julian Graduate Research Assistantship. Paola is currently a graduate English instructor at Howard, teaching Introduction to Caribbean Literature through interdisciplinary, multi-modal approaches to non-English majors. Previously, she was a Howard University Writing Center Coach, a 2025 CUNY Dominican Studies Institute (DSI) Summer Intern, and a 2024 student advisor for The Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) exhibit, The Shape of Power: Stories of Race and American Sculpture. Paola also served as the 2023-2024 Howard Graduate English Student Association (GESA) Vice President. She is the co-author of a forthcoming book chapter entitled "HBCU Writing Centers Confronting the 'Canonized Corpus'" in the edited collection Writing Centers and AI: Generating Early Conversations (WAC Clearinghouse). Paola has presented her research at national and international conferences, including but not limited to the 2024- 2026 Modern Language Association (MLA) Annual Conventions, the 2025 Caribbean Digital XII Conference, the 2025 Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) Conference, the 2025 Yale Bouchet Conference, the 2024 West Indian Literature (WIL) Conference, and the 2023-2024 College Language Association (CLA) Annual Conventions. Paola received her bachelor of arts in English with a minor in environmental science from Barnard College in 2017.

Myah Rather

Atmospheric Sciences

Myah Rather is a candidate for the Ph.D. in atmospheric sciences at Howard University and a NOAA Center in Atmospheric Sciences and Meteorology (NCAS-M) Fellow. Her dissertation research focuses on improving the prediction of tropical cyclone intensity and structure through targeted evaluation of physical parameterization schemes and data assimilation approaches within the Hurricane Analysis and Forecast System (HAFS). Her work emphasizes the role of cumulus parameterization, entrainment and detrainment processes, and microphysical representations in regulating rapid intensification and inner-core evolution of hurricanes. Myah conducts high-resolution numerical simulations on NOAA high-performance computing platforms and validates model output using satellite, radar, and best-track observations. She has led physics sensitivity experiments examining multiple convective schemes, including SAS, TiedTKE, and RAS, with a primary case study on Hurricane Ian (2022). Her research integrates diagnostic analyses of intensity bias, precipitation structure, and dynamical processes relevant to operational forecasting. She has presented her research at national scientific meetings, including the American Meteorological Society Annual Meeting, and has participated in collaborative research activities with NOAA's Hurricane Research Division and Environmental Modeling Center. Her academic achievements include competitive fellowships and advanced training in numerical weather prediction, tropical meteorology, and data assimilation. Through her scholarship, Myah aims to bridge research and operations to advance hurricane forecast skill and societal resilience.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Johns Hopkins University 2026

Joyline Chepkorir

Nursing

Joyline Chepkorir is a postdoctoral fellow at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) School of Nursing. Joyline's research centers on leveraging digital health tools to improve care access and chronic disease management among medically underserved populations in Sub-Saharan Africa and the United States. Joyline is the founder and executive director of the Mwangaza Cancer Initiative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to breast and cervical cancer prevention among rural, low-income women in Kenya. Joyline also has served as a board member for the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program and co-founded the JHU School of Nursing International Students Organization. Joyline received a Ph.D. degree in nursing from JHU, an M.S. degree in global health policy from the University of Edinburgh, and a B.S. degree in nursing with a minor in health promotion and risk reduction from Michigan State University. Joyline has been the recipient of the Reverend Melvin B. Tuggle East Baltimore Community Excellence Award, the 2025 JHU Doctoral Life Design Career Impact Award, the Oncology Nursing Foundation Doctoral Education Scholarship, the Mastercard Foundation Master's Scholarship, and the Mastercard Foundation Visionary Leader Award. Ultimately, Joyline aims to lead and collaborate on digitally enabled, community-engaged research to advance health equity, while mentoring students and trainees from rural and medically underserved communities.

Bailey Holmes Spencer

Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Bailey Holmes Spencer is a candidate for the Ph.D. in social and behavioral sciences at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Bloomberg School of Public Health (BSPH). Bailey's research focuses on the relationship between social media and help-seeking behaviors for mental health among Black youth. An emerging health equity fellow for the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and a member of the ADA Type 1 diabetes committee, Bailey also has served as program coordinator for the Black Health Explained Foundation and president of the BSPH Black Graduate Student Association. Bailey has mentored youth in pathways to higher education through the Whiting Internships in Science and Engineering Program, the JHU Diversity Summer Internship Program, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. Bailey received an M.P.H. degree in population and family health from Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and a B.A. degree in sociology with a minor in public health from Spelman College. Bailey has been the recipient of the National Institute of Mental Health Data Integration for Causal Inference in Behavioral Health Training Award, the American Public Health Association Award for Outstanding Work in Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs, and the Pedro Zamora Young Leaders Scholar Award. Bailey also is an inductee of the Delta Alpha Pi Honor Society and the Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health. Ultimately, Bailey aspires to become a leader in digital behavioral health research, translating rigorous scholarship into actionable strategies that improve population health outcomes.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Johns Hopkins University 2026

Angelica Lopez

Biomedical Engineering

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Angelica Lopez is a candidate for the Ph.D. in biomedical engineering at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) School of Medicine. Angelica's research focuses on neuromodulation technologies and ultrasound-based medical devices for cardiovascular and neurological applications. Angelica has mentored many students in the lab, from high school students to medical trainees, supporting them in their pursuit of graduate degrees. Angelica has served as treasurer and grant writer for the Johns Hopkins Translational Neuroengineering Technologies Network, promoted science education in Baltimore City public schools as a leader with Science in Action, and has advanced pathways to higher education for youth through the WISCIENCE and JHU Basic Science Institute summer internship programs. Angelica received an M.S. degree in biomedical engineering from JHU and a B.S. degree in biomedical engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Angelica has been the recipient of the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, Mercile J. Lee Chancellor's Scholarship, Hilldale Research Fellowship, Jensen Family Engineering Scholarship, and LEED Scholarship. Ultimately, Angelica aspires to advance the frontier of neuroengineering as a scientist in the biomedical industry, developing innovative medical devices that revolutionize neurocritical care and enhance patient quality of life. Driven by a commitment to scientific inclusivity, Angelica plans to bridge the language gap in healthcare by disseminating critical neurological health information through Spanish-language media networks and local community organizations. Furthermore, Angelica intends to establish national internship pipelines that connect Hispanic scholars to careers in research and development, ensuring that the next generation successfully navigates and leads the future of biotech.

Augustina Mensa-Kwao

Mental Health

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Augustina Mensa-Kwao is a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Mental Health at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Bloomberg School of Public Health (BSPH). Augustina's research integrates youth engagement, mixed-methods, and implementation science to examine how urban environments shape youth mental health globally and in Baltimore. Augustina has worked with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization and served as a youth commissioner for the Second Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Well-being. Augustina is committed to public service, serving as an ambassador for the BSPH admissions and IDARE offices, a board member for Delta Omega Alpha, and a representative on the BSPH Doctoral Student Council. Augustina has mentored K-12 youth through the Hopkins HEAT Corps and the Boys and Girls Club, promoted student mental health through the University of Washington Dean's Advisory Council, and expanded access to affordable health insurance for over 20,000 residents through the nonprofit Be Jersey Strong. Augustina received a Ph.D. degree in mental health from JHU, an M.P.H. degree in behavioral sciences and health education from Emory University, and a B.A. degree in neuroscience and global development studies from the University of Virginia. A Gates Millennium Scholar and Rhodes Scholarship Finalist, Augustina has been the recipient of the Paul V. Lemkau Scholarship, University of Virginia Echols Scholar Award, Dr. Alma Adams Scholar Award, and the Women's Initiative Challenge into Change Award. Augustina aspires to lead transformative research and policies that champion youth as partners in advancing global mental health equity.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Johns Hopkins University 2026

Alejandra Montano Romero

Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

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Alejandra Montano Romero is a postdoctoral fellow in chemical and biomolecular engineering at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Whiting School of Engineering. Alejandra's research focuses on developing artificial intelligence-driven antibody design methods targeting G-protein coupled receptors, as well as designing therapeutic antibodies for cancer treatments. Alejandra has served as vice president of general affairs for the JHU School of Medicine Graduate Student Association, a mentor with Science in Action bringing STEM education to Baltimore City youth, and a volunteer with Hungry Heart, preparing home-cooked meals for children and families facing food insecurity in Baltimore County. Alejandra received a Ph.D. degree in biochemistry, cellular, and molecular biology from JHU and a B.S. degree in biology from St. Mary's University. Alejandra has been recognized as a St. Mary's Presidential Scholar and Biaggini Research Scholar, and the recipient of the Alicia Showalter Reynolds Research Award for her Ph.D. thesis work. Ultimately, Alejandra aspires to become a Principal Investigator of an independent research lab focusing on therapeutic antibody design targeting membrane proteins, combining computational and experimental work.

Zariah Nicole

Education

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Zariah Nicole is a candidate for the Ph.D. in education at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) School of Education. Zariah's research expands critical phenomenology with a bell hooksian approach to lovingly explore how fictive kinship supports Black teachers' wellbeing, pedagogical practice, and persistence in the face of systemic challenges. Zariah has promoted inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, and social justice through service on the committee for the annual School of Education Connecting Across I.D.E.A.S Conference, provided peer support in the navigation of professional pathways as a QuestBridge Companion, advanced literacy for Baltimore City youth through the Baltimore City Public Schools Reading Partners Program, and provided youth mentorship through the St. Francis Neighborhood Center Power Project After School Program. Zariah received a B.A. degree in philosophy and Spanish from Emory University. A Gates Millennium Scholar, Zariah has been the recipient of the Russel G. Hamilton Scholarship, the 100 Senior Honorary Award, and the Robert Lee Award for Mentoring and Teaching. Ultimately, Zariah aspires to pursue a scholarly career grounded in community. Following the example of scholars like Dr. Walter Rodney, Zariah will join with communities in collective efforts to challenge oppressive systems and dissolve the hierarchical separation between the academy and the community. Zariah is committed to bringing scholarship outside the ivory tower and supporting community-driven interventions, engaging the community as partners rather than mere participants in the work. This is not just her intended career path; connecting research with communities is Zariah's passion.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Johns Hopkins University 2026

Junellie Perez

Earth and Planetary Sciences

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Junellie Perez is a candidate for the Ph.D. in earth and planetary sciences at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Krieger School of Arts and Sciences. Junellie's research focuses on bridging the gap between geologists, planetary scientists, and astronomers through the study of rocky exoplanets. Junellie has served as coordinator for the League of Underrepresented Minoritized Astronomers, administrative and social media committee lead for the astrophysical literature journal *Astrobites*, and outreach and social media team lead for the Women of Color Project and was selected as a NASA Habitable Worlds Observatory Emerging Leader. Junellie has served as president of the JHU Earth & Planetary Sciences Department Graduate Student Association, coordinator for the JHU Geosciences high school summer camp, Baltimore Polytechnic Institute Ingenuity Project mentor, and has engaged in extensive STEM outreach to elementary, middle, and high school students. Junellie received an M.A. degree in Earth and planetary sciences from JHU and a B.S. degree in astronomy with a minor in planetary sciences from the University of Maryland, College Park. Junellie also was a researcher at NASA GSFC. Junellie has been the recipient of the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Award, the Maryland Space Grant Consortium Graduate Fellowship, the Kelly Miller Fellowship, the Banneker Key Scholarship, the JHU Career Impact Award, and was the 2023 winner of the JHU Empower Your Pitch competition. Junellie aspires to pursue a career that combines expertise in scientific research, project management, outreach, science communication, and leadership to train and inspire the next generation of scientists.

Naomi Rankin

Civil and Systems Engineering

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Naomi Rankin is a candidate for the Ph.D. in civil and systems engineering at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Whiting School of Engineering. Naomi's research focuses on data-driven infectious disease modeling utilizing non-traditional datasets to address health disparities within disease dynamics. This work has included COVID-19 forecasting using wastewater-based epidemiology. Naomi has served as president of the JHU Black Graduate Student Association, a Whiting School of Engineering (WSE) graduate ambassador, and has mentored youth in the pathway to STEM and higher education through several organizations, including THRIVE, Thread, and NSBE. Naomi received an M.S. degree in systems engineering from JHU and a B.S. degree in applied mathematics with minors in biology and computer science from Howard University. Naomi has been recognized as a Vivien Thomas Scholar, a Karsh STEM Scholar, and a James A. Ferguson Emerging Infectious Diseases Fellow, and has been the recipient of the James A. Donaldson Prize for Excellence in Research, National Academies of Medicine DC Public Health Case Challenge Wildcard Award, the Alaine Locke Scholar Award, and the WSE Doctoral Student Excellence in Leadership Award. Ultimately, Naomi aspires to utilize her technical skills to foster relationships between national public health partners and data stewards to enhance our understanding of disease dynamics and improve community health outcomes for those that have been systemically overlooked.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Johns Hopkins University 2026

A. Michael West Jr.

Mechanical Engineering

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A. Michael West Jr. is a postdoctoral fellow in mechanical engineering at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Whiting School of Engineering. Michael's research, rooted in control theory, advances robotic technologies such as rehabilitation robotics, collaborative robots, prosthetics, and dexterous robots through the investigation of human motor control, learning, and perception. Michael has served as postdoctoral chair for the JHU Mechanical Engineering Department Belonging Committee, co-founder of Math Up, a tutoring initiative designed to strengthen early STEM preparation for students, treasurer for the MIT Black Graduate Student Association and MIT Academy of Courageous Minority Engineers, and pod leader for the MIT Summer Research Program. Michael received a Ph.D. degree in mechanical engineering and an M.S. degree in mechanical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a B.S. degree in mechanical engineering from Yale University. Michael has been the recipient of the JHU Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowship, Shirley Anne Jackson Award, Accenture Fellowship, Takeda Fellowship, Ben Gold Fellowship, GEM Fellowship, and UCEM SLOAN Scholarship. Michael recently has been hired to join the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Tech as an Assistant Professor starting in August 2027. There, Michael will establish his own research laboratory focused on leveraging insights from human motor control and perception to develop innovative medical robots and rehabilitation technologies. More importantly, Michael looks forward to fostering an environment where students of all backgrounds are empowered to excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community.

Rodney Williams

Neuroscience

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Rodney Eric Williams is a candidate for the Ph.D. in neuroscience at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) School of Medicine. Rodney's research sits at the intersection of neuroscience and virology and centers on how mosquito-borne viral infections disrupt neural function and cause long-term impacts in global health. Rodney has centered his journey on a commitment to science and education equity. At Johns Hopkins, Rodney has expanded on this mission through leadership as president of the Graduate Student Association and advising on academic governance to shape institutional policy on student support and research, also contributing to institutional efforts to foster a more inclusive research ecosystem. As a Vivien Thomas Scholars Initiative Graduate Fellow, Rodney has provided peer mentorship to numerous doctoral scholars. In the policy sphere, Rodney has served as a Howard Garrison Advocacy Fellow at the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, advocating for federal investments in biological research and strengthening the scientific workforce. Rodney received a B.S. degree in biology with a minor in chemistry from Jackson State University. For his contributions inside and outside the lab, Rodney has been the recipient of the JHU Neuroscience Annual Student Recognition Award, the Solomon H. Snyder Fellowship, and the Society for Neuroscience Trainee Professional Development Award. Long term, Rodney seeks to work at the intersection of science, health security, and advocacy to shape policies that protect public health while expanding access to scientific innovation.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Michigan State University 2026

Kirby R. Gibson

Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education (HALE)

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Kirby R. Gibson (she/her) is a scholar-practitioner dedicated to cultivating communities grounded in narrative sharing, lifelong learning, coalition building, liberation, and love. She is a Ph.D. candidate in the Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education (HALE) program at Michigan State University (MSU). Anchored in Black Feminist Epistemology and Endarkened Narrative Inquiry, her research explores the exits of former Black women student affairs practitioners and seeks to offer critical insights and strategies for transforming the SAHE workforce for Black women. Kirby brings over a decade of experience in student affairs and higher education. She currently serves as the Associate Director of Residence Education for Student Learning and Leadership at MSU, where she provides strategic leadership focused on student learning, leadership development, and fostering inclusive residential communities. Her work also includes facilitating trainings, workshops, intergroup dialogues, and seminars centered on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ). She has contributed to institutional DEIJ initiatives as a facilitator and core planning team member for programs such as MSU Dialogues and the Anti-Racist Path. Kirby is actively engaged in professional associations including NASPA and ACUHO-I. Career highlights include serving as Chair of The Placement Exchange (TPE) Planning Committee, membership on the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP) Advisory Board, serving as a three-time faculty member and director of the NUFP Dungy Leadership Institute, publishing in ACUHO-I's Talking Stick, and presenting at regional and national conferences. Her commitment to service also extends to community-based organizations in Greater Lansing, including the NAACP Lansing Branch and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®.

Jermaine R. Howell

Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education

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Jermaine R. Howell (he/him) is a Ph.D. candidate in the Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education program at Michigan State University (MSU). His research focuses on equity and justice-oriented pedagogies in mathematics education. Jermaine's dissertation investigates elementary teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and sensemaking of asset-based math pedagogies in a participatory action research project. His work was recently published in the Journal of Urban Mathematics Education, which conceptualized equity-oriented practices of math teachers in urban classrooms (Howell & Orr, 2025). He has served as the Chief Diversity Officer for the International Student Association at MSU. In this role, Jermaine collaborated with university leaders on multicultural and diversity initiatives to support the well-being of international students on campus. Jermaine currently serves as a mentor for undergraduate and graduate students in the Teacher Education Department at MSU. Within the College of Education at MSU, Jermaine has organized and facilitated several communities of practice with faculty members, staff, and graduate students that focused on culturally relevant pedagogy and justice-oriented practices in teaching and research. Prior to pursuing his doctorate at MSU, Jermaine served as a global educator and an elementary school teacher in Jamaica and North Carolina. While teaching in North Carolina, he was awarded Teacher of the Year for his school and was a Teacher of the Year district finalist for the Wake County Public School System. Jermaine holds a Bachelor's degree in Primary Education (K-6) from the International University of the Caribbean, Jamaica, and a Master's degree in Curriculum, Instruction, and Development Supervision from North Carolina State University.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Michigan State University 2026

Raymundo Lopez

Political Science

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Raymundo Lopez (He/Him/His) believes in a political science that moves. At Michigan State University, he studies American politics and research methods. His work examines how elected officials articulate their social identities in real time, primarily through survey experiments and video-as-data approaches. Lopez is a 2025-2026 Fellow in the American Political Science Association's Public Scholarship Program, where he produces public-facing analyses that translate political science research into accessible insights for broader audiences. He is also the creator of Atom Laboratories, a YouTube channel that uses data, peer-reviewed scholarship and digital storytelling to demystify complicated concepts in political science. In addition to his research and public scholarship, Lopez has collaborated with nonprofits like the Women's Center of Greater Lansing to support civic education initiatives and community needs. He currently leads the Social Science Initiative at FLI SCI, where he designs curriculum and implements programming that introduces first-generation and limited-access students to social science inquiry.

Jordan M. Parker

Criminal Justice

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Jordan M. Parker (He/Him/His) is a Ph.D. Candidate in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Prior to MSU, he earned his B.S. and M.S. in Criminal Justice from Bowling Green State University. His research interests include community-based violence interventions (CVI), juvenile justice and delinquency, and program evaluation. Broadly, Jordan is a community-engaged researcher who works with practitioners and justice-involved individuals to improve individual and community outcomes. Jordan is a Future Academic Scholars in Teaching (FAST) Fellow in the MSU Graduate School, where he examines the impact of hands-on research experiences on undergraduate students' critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and decisions to pursue graduate education. During his time at MSU, he has served as Event Coordinator, Vice President, and President of the School of Criminal Justice Graduate Student Association. He currently serves as the Director of Equity and Anti-Discrimination for the Council of Graduate Students. Additionally, Jordan is actively involved in MSU's Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) Program and has spent the past two summers working with the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP).



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Michigan State University 2026

Tiyanna Peterson

Educational Policy

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Tiyanna Peterson is a third-year Ph.D. student in Education Policy at Michigan State University. Her research centers on the intersection of race, disability, and education policy, with an emphasis on academic and well-being outcomes for Black neurodivergent K–12 students. She currently serves as Service Chair for the AERA Division L Graduate Student Committee and is a UCEA Barbara L. Jackson Scholar. At MSU, Peterson co-directs the Education Policy Program's Mentor Committee. She also mentors undergraduate scholars through the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP), supporting undergraduate students pursuing graduate education. Peterson has experience as a public-school educator from early childhood through high school. She is also the founding director of a grassroots mental health education nonprofit in Detroit, MI, Be A Friend, Inc. Drawing from these experiences, Peterson grounds her scholarship in practice and community engagement. Her research involvement includes a state-wide project examining well-being and chronic absenteeism in Georgia, a research-practice partnership exploring school discipline and restorative practices in a midwestern state, and a scoping review of culturally responsive social and emotional learning.

Natalie Rose Rivera

Criminal Justice; Chicano/Latino Studies

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Natalie Rose Rivera is a dual-major doctoral student in Criminal Justice and Chicano/Latino Studies at Michigan State University. Her work is guided by a deep commitment to equity, justice, and community accountability, and is informed by Chicana feminist epistemology. Broadly, her research examines issues of gender-based violence, victimization, racial and ethnic inequality, and the experiences of marginalized and system-impacted communities. Through culturally grounded and interdisciplinary approaches, she seeks to challenge structural inequities and elevate voices that have been historically excluded from academic and policy conversations. Rivera's scholarship engages questions of diversity, equity, and inclusion within higher education and the criminal legal system, with particular attention to how knowledge is produced, valued, and disseminated. Her work has been published in peer-reviewed outlets and edited volumes, contributing to national conversations about inclusive pedagogy, epistemic justice, and institutional transformation. In addition to her research, Rivera is actively involved in campus and community spaces that support student mentorship, equity-driven leadership, and inclusive excellence. She is committed to creating supportive academic environments, mentoring students from underrepresented backgrounds, and advancing research and teaching practices that center cultural knowledge, critical reflection, and collective well-being. Her work reflects a dedication to using scholarship as a tool for social change and institutional accountability.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Northwestern University 2026

Lauren Rouse

Political Science

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Dr. Lauren Rouse (they/them, xe/xir) is a Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow in the Bobbie and Stanton Cook Family Writing Program at Northwestern University. They have a PhD in Texts and Technology from the University of Central Florida (2023). They also hold a Master of Arts in English from DePaul University (2019), and a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education from Indiana University Indianapolis (2017). Dr. Rouse's research is situated at the intersections of fan and audience studies, media studies, and disability studies. Their current monograph project seeks to analyze how fans with disabilities respond to, remix, or reify content about their disabilities in superhero narratives through the usage of trauma informed methodologies, disability studies lenses, and interviews with fan authors, artists, and community members. Dr. Rouse's research is interdisciplinary and connects to the larger fields of critical platform studies, online labor, and race, gender, and sexuality studies. Dr. Rouse has been published in *Popular Communication*, *Social Media + Society*, and *New Media and Society*. Their research is in conversation with their advocacy work both on and off campus, where they demand equity and solidarity with LGBTQ+ communities, food insecure and unhoused populations, and the immigrant community in Chicago. They are a member of the Northwestern University Postdoctoral Union, engage with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights rapid response networks throughout Chicagoland, and are a member of a LGBTQ+ collective focused on lesbian and sapphic experiences.

Ozivell Ecford

Learning Sciences

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Ozivell is a third-year doctoral candidate in Learning Sciences at Northwestern University, studying how interdisciplinary arts empower marginalized communities to heal from trauma and develop self-agency. With over twenty years of experience as an award-winning educator in multimedia design, music, theatre, and curriculum development, he serves as lead teaching artist and student researcher for Shakespeare Behind Bars (SBB) at the Illinois Youth Center in Chicago. Through his SBB research, Ozivell made a significant discovery: four new types of future orientation among incarcerated youth, identified in his Cross-Dimensional Future Orientation (CDFO) Framework. His paper, "To Be or Not to Be: A Study on Shakespeare, Incarcerated Youth, and Future Orientation," was presented at the 2025 International Conference of Learning Sciences in Helsinki, Finland, and was nominated for an Outstanding Student Paper award, and received Best Paper honors at the University of Illinois's 16th Annual Graduate Student Conference. Ozivell co-authored "Observing Joy: An Observation Protocol to Assess Joyful Learning in STEAM Classrooms," presented at AERA 2025. In Spring 2025, he received the Lader Family Scholarship and the Jim Reilly Reformer Scholarship. In April 2026, he will present his paper: "GSB: Reimagining Adult Literacy with Dignity and Humanity" at AERA 2026. As the lead facilitator for Northwestern's Cities Mentor Project, Ozivell trains Northwestern undergraduates to serve as mental health educational facilitators. He also serves as co-curriculum developer for the D65 Coded Beats program run by the Tidal Lab at Northwestern.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Northwestern University 2026

Allegra Minor

Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics

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Allegra Minor is a PhD candidate in Life Sciences in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Her research focuses on applying biochemical and multiomic methods to study senescence as a mechanism of tumor growth control in lung cancer. Allegra has been recognized as a GEM Fellow, Feinberg School of Medicine Carcinogenesis Training Program Pre-Doctoral Fellow, and received the Feinberg Dean's Award. She received her Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Computation from Stanford University, where she graduated with distinction. As a proud beneficiary of several programs aimed at increasing equity and inclusion in science, Allegra is committed to the goal of reducing barriers to trainee engagement with STEM. At Northwestern, she has served as a member of the student leadership team within the Cancer Biology Cluster and contributed to youth-focused outreach initiatives with the Lurie Cancer Center. Together, these efforts serve to cultivate a sense of belonging among trainees at the graduate level and embolden the next generation to envision themselves as scientists, if they so choose. Ultimately, Allegra hopes to continue her social impact work while diving deep into target and drug discovery research with the goal of improving outcomes for cancer patients and trainees alike.

Prianka Hashim

Obstetrics & Gynecology

Prianka H. Hashim received her dual bachelor's degree in Neuroscience and Gender & Sexuality Studies from Muhlenberg College. Prior to starting at Northwestern, she was a research technician at the University of Michigan under the mentorship of Dr. Ariella Shikanov utilizing a female-to-male mouse model to investigate the impact of testosterone treatment on reproductive and fertility outcomes. This work culminated in two first-author publications and 3 additional publications. Currently she is a PhD-MPH candidate in the laboratory of Dr. Francesca Duncan investigating the role of the cGAS-STING pathway in ovarian follicles and whether it functions as a surveillance mechanism to prioritize development of the highest quality oocytes. She has one first-author manuscript from these findings and has presented them at 11 scientific meetings. Additional projects within the laboratory led to an additional 3 publications with 2 as co-first author. On campus Prianka has been involved in multiple leadership positions and served on the board of Women in Science and Engineering (2022-2023) and the Science Policy Outreach Taskforce (2022-present) as a General Board Member, Science Policy Symposium Organizer, and President. Given her passion for reproductive science and health, Prianka has interned at the Center for Policy and Leadership at the American Society for Reproductive Medicine and with Pamoja CBO in Kisumu, Kenya to improve equity and access to reproductive healthcare in the US and Kenya. Ultimately, Prianka is interested in working at the intersection of reproductive science and policy by advocating for evidence-based policies that improve reproductive health access and equity.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Northwestern University 2026

Oluwagbotemi Akinsoji

Chemistry

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Oluwagbotemi Akinsoji is a Ph.D. candidate in chemistry at Northwestern University with a concentration in materials chemistry. Her research focuses on design and synthesis of novel porous materials for transformative electrocatalytic and photocatalytic applications in the reduction of carbon dioxide: a vital endeavor at the cutting edge of environmental remediation and sustainable energy science. Oluwagbotemi has been recognized as a Ronald E. McNair Scholar and a Barry Goldwater Fellow, reflecting her strong commitment to research excellence. She received a Bachelor of Science in chemistry from University of Central Florida, where she was a recipient of the STEM Transfers' Opportunities for Nurtured Growth (STRONG) Scholarship. Oluwagbotemi is dedicated to fostering academic success and early STEM engagement among students. Through her volunteer work with Science in the Classroom, she brings hands-on science experiences to middle school students across the Chicago area. As a first-generation, low-income (FGLI) graduate mentor, she also guides and supports undergraduate and graduate students, empowering them to succeed in their academic pursuits. Oluwagbotemi aspires to work at the intersection of science, innovation, and leadership, with a passion for leveraging advanced materials and emerging technologies to improve lives and address global challenges.

Wisdom Uwem Akpan

Civil and Environmental Engineering

Wisdom Akpan is a Ph.D. candidate in Civil and Environmental Engineering at Northwestern University, specializing in computational mechanics, materials durability, and sustainable infrastructure. His research focuses on the Connector-Beam Lattice Model for Wood (CBL-W), a multiscale computational framework that reconstructs wood's cellular microstructure to predict anisotropy, fracture, creep, and moisture- and temperature-driven behavior. His work addresses critical challenges in modeling the long-term performance of engineered wood products and supports the development of low-carbon, climate-resilient construction systems. Wisdom holds a master's degree in Structural Engineering from Northwestern University and a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Uyo, where he graduated as the Best Student in the School of Engineering in his cohort. A recipient of the highly competitive 2021 Michael Taiwo Graduate School Scholarship, he now mentors scholars across multiple cohorts, many of whom have progressed to doctoral programs internationally. He currently serves as Treasurer of the African Graduate Students Association, where he helps foster a vibrant and supportive community for African scholars. He is also a Graduate Fellow in the Residential College of Cultural and Community Studies, where he mentors undergraduate residents and facilitates meaningful dialogue on culture and identity. Through his roles as an English Language Proficiency (ELP) and English Development through Guided Exploration (EDGE) Peer Mentor, he supports international and multilingual graduate students as they navigate the transition into U.S. graduate education. In addition, he has been an active volunteer with the Rural Nurture Initiative, a social impact organization advancing community-centered rural development across Africa.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The Chicago School 2026

Jazmyn Conston

Counselor Education and Supervision

Jazmyn Conston is a Ph.D. candidate in the Counselor Education and Supervision Program at The Chicago School. Jazmyn is a mental health therapist with a heart for accessibility, equity, and creative healing. She believes that everyone deserves quality mental health care, regardless of their background or income, and has built her work around that belief. Through her work, she provides affordable, quality, compassionate therapy designed to meet people where they are, using modalities like EMDR, Narrative Therapy, and Gestalt Therapy to assist in long-term change. She serves as an officer for Brave Space for Diverse Students, helping to create inclusive environments where future counselors of color can thrive, and as a board member for an organization that provides affordable mental health support to night entertainment workers- a population often overlooked but deeply deserving of care. She has also attended conferences as a presenter and events as a speaker. Her passion lies in teaching others about the importance of taking care of themselves and helping others understand just how close self-care and self-love can be. Jazmyn's doctoral research explores the experiences of African American counselors, aiming to amplify their voices and contribute to more equitable professional spaces. She is especially passionate about creating pathways for Black and Brown clinicians to feel seen, supported, and celebrated. Ultimately, Jazmyn walks with the motto to "intangibly touch the lives of others," which she will continue to do in all facets of her life.

Jomaris De Jesus

Business Psychology

Jomaris De Jesus is the Executive Director of The Prosperity Agenda, where she leads initiatives that equip human service agencies to adopt participant-centered practices through evidence-based training and coaching. A Certified Entrepreneur and Life Coach, she was featured in *The Coaching Gurus*, Vol. II for her chapter, "A Strategic Plan for Your Life." Her lifelong commitment to empowerment began in Puerto Rico, where she collaborated with legislators, law enforcement, and advocacy groups to address domestic violence, increase public awareness, and help establish lasting legislation that continues to protect families today. After relocating to Louisville, Kentucky, De Jesus expanded her community work by serving on nonprofit boards dedicated to improving health, education, and wellness among underserved populations. Her leadership and commitment to civic engagement led her to election as County Commissioner for Jefferson County District B, where she served a four-year term from 2020 to 2024, advancing initiatives that supported community development and equitable access to resources. De Jesus holds an M.A. in Cultural Studies from the University of Louisville and an MBA in Global Management from the University of Phoenix. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Business Psychology at The Chicago School, where her research employs grounded theory to explore how cultural value differences shape perceptions of workplace incivility across cultures. Her scholarship advances cross-cultural understanding in organizational contexts and reflects her broader mission: to empower people and organizations to address social justice issues.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The Chicago School 2026

Alison Dube

Applied Behavior Analysis

Alison Dube is a Ph.D. candidate in the Applied Behavior Analysis Program at The Chicago School. Alison is a dedicated scholar, advocate, and autism parent whose academic and professional work is deeply informed by lived experience. With a foundation in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and specialization in healthcare equity and access, she has led and published about policies and interventions aimed at ensuring fair access to ABA and other services for individuals with autism. As a parent of three adult children on the autism spectrum, she brings both personal insight and scholarly rigor to advocate for systemic change. She has held leadership roles in nonprofit policy groups, served on local and state committees, and mentored early-career clinicians and students, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds. Her dissertation explores structural and policy barriers in Medicaid and equitable service delivery. In joining the Edward A. Bouchet Society, she seeks to further amplify her commitment to service, leadership, mentorship, and social justice in the academy and beyond.

Bina Parekh

Clinical Psychology

Dr. Bina Parekh received her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of California, Berkeley, and her M.A. in Community Psychology from New York University. She completed her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and minor emphasis in Biostatistics at Loma Linda University. She completed her postdoctoral fellowship at Kaiser Hospital in Milpitas, California, in behavioral medicine, addiction medicine, and psychiatry. She has served as a project coordinator for several large grants at the Behavioral Health Institute at San Diego State University (SDSU) and acted as a clinical supervisor in the joint doctoral program between SDSU and the University of California, San Diego. She has been the Associate Department Chair and Full Professor in the Clinical Psychology program at The Chicago School in Anaheim since March 2019. She also served as the Associate Professor Chair at the American School of Professional Psychology in the Clinical Psy.D. program for approximately 13 years. She has published several peer-reviewed papers in the areas of cross-cultural psychology, psychological assessment, and behavioral health. Her clinical focus includes trauma, health psychology, couples counseling, addiction medicine, general psychiatry, and multicultural counseling.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The Chicago School 2026

Orlando Saiz

Applied Clinical Psychology

Orlando Saiz obtained his Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership from The Chicago School in 2017. Saiz currently serves as an Assistant Professor at The Chicago School, where he instructs and advises doctoral dissertation research in multiple program emphases, including Business Psychology and Organizational Leadership. Saiz also serves in full-time capacity at Pacific Oaks College as Administrative Professor, Director of Research, and IRB Co-Chair. Orlando has recently been featured in the Tea for Teaching podcast, reflecting his approach toward the ethical use of AI in doctoral student programs in efforts to direct academic policy. Saiz has supervised approximately 40 published dissertations (ProQuest) as a dissertation chair and reader with The Chicago School since 2018. Saiz has recently published two book chapters for IGI Scientific Publishing (2025; 2026), contributing to optimizing the doctoral student experience through researcher agency, self-leadership, growth, and faculty mentorship. Saiz's second book chapter involved the practicality of presenting qualitative results for a doctoral dissertation. Saiz is currently developing courses, curriculum, and instructional strategies through instructing and administering Pacific Oaks College's inaugural doctoral degree in Early Childhood Education. Saiz has also remained engaged as a doctoral committee member and instructor of dissertation courses at The Chicago School.

Craig Scanlon

Organizational Leadership

Craig Scanlon is a Ph.D. candidate in Organizational Leadership at The Chicago School whose research focuses on organizational change management within U.S. higher education, examining how institutional culture, leadership practices, and structural conditions influence the success or failure of change initiatives. Building upon his 15-year career in education as a classroom teacher, elementary school principal, admissions representative, and now Assistant Director of Admissions, he integrates practitioner experience with scholarly inquiry to develop actionable frameworks that improve institutional decision-making, implementation, and stakeholder engagement. Craig initially developed and honed his leadership skills serving as principal of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School in Evanston, Illinois, where he led faculty development, advanced school improvement efforts, and developed enrollment strategies in collaboration with school leadership. He also organized several school-wide service initiatives in partnership with nine local nonprofit organizations, resulting in nearly 1,800 community service hours in a single year. Craig transitioned into his various roles in admissions at The Chicago School, where he led several campus-level initiatives, including designing and chairing online Resource Review Sessions that support more than 150 new students each session start, coordinating group interviews for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program, and launching a student ambassador program that engaged over 40 graduate student volunteers. Through his research and professional practice, Craig is committed to strengthening educational institutions, developing leaders, and producing scholarship that supports equitable and sustainable transformation in higher education.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The Chicago School 2026

Ahsaki Thomas

Applied Behavior Analysis

Ahsaki N. Thomas is a Ph.D. candidate in Behavior Analysis at The Chicago School Online Program and an instructor in the Department of Psychology and Sociology at Grambling State University. Her scholarship centers on advancing equitable mentorship and inclusive pedagogy in higher education, particularly within Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Her postgraduate thesis, *The Use of Behavior Skills Training to Create an Online Course: Training College Students to Create an Effective Online Learning Environment*, demonstrated that Behavior Skills Training (BST) and checklist-based instruction can effectively prepare college students to design engaging and high-quality online courses. Building on this foundation, her dissertation, *Enhancing Faculty Mentorship at HBCUs: A Behavior-Analytic Approach*, applied BST to faculty development, evaluating how structured training strengthens mentorship effectiveness, consistency, and student outcomes. At Grambling State University, Thomas teaches undergraduate Psychology courses, integrating technology, applied learning, and culturally responsive pedagogy to promote student engagement and success. Beyond the classroom, she mentors and supports first-generation and underrepresented students, fostering persistence and academic confidence through individualized guidance and professional development. She also participated in The Chicago School's Preparing Future Professional Faculty (PFPF) program and Teaching Online Pedagogy Standards (T.O.P.S.) training, advancing excellence, access, and evidence-based practice in higher education. Through her teaching, research, and advocacy, Thomas seeks to create equitable pathways for success, foster environments of support, and contribute to a more inclusive and diverse professoriate.

Johanna Williams

Clinical Psychology

Dr. Johanna D. Williams is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Associate Director of Clinical Training for The Chicago School in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. She obtained her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Howard University School of Education in 2017. Her contributions to health care, clinical research, and leadership development have helped members of diverse communities challenge health care disparities, social justice reform, and leadership models in geopolitical landscapes that are counterintuitive to success. Dr. Williams' overarching research interests examine the personality constructions of individuals facing systemic pressures in the areas of health, education, law, and government. Her psychoanalytic and psychodynamic training has guided her understanding of how intersecting identities under such pressures can impact psychological health and well-being. Thus, her role as an Associate Director for Clinical Psy.D. students primarily focuses on bridging the gap between professional development and best practices in psychology using real-time, real-world events. Since 2022, Dr. Williams' tenure at The Chicago School has involved her co-leading critical conversations within the department, such as a post-election town hall; proposing the implementation of deliberate practice exercises to enhance profession-wide competencies; presenting a paper and ongoing commentary about the rollback of DEI and science in a Trump world era; and working in training, curriculum, and policy committees at the local and national level to ensure equity and rigor in teaching and training. Hence, Dr. Williams believes that a commitment to excellence is best personified by the acknowledgement of worth and value in all people, but most importantly, in one's unrelenting, self-sacrificing, yet unregrettable and rewarding service to others.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The Chicago School 2026

Tiffany Rush-Wilson

Counselor Education and Supervision

Dr. Tiffany C. Rush-Wilson is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor with supervisory designation and Licensed Psychologist whose 30-year career spans counselor education, trauma-informed clinical practice, sports counseling, and equity-centered scholarship. A dual U.S.-Canadian citizen, she brings a transnational and multilingual perspective to her work, shaped by years of teaching, research, and community engagement across both countries. She obtained her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Akron in 2003. She serves as a Full Professor and Program Chair in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Counselor Education & Supervision programs at The Chicago School, where she leads curriculum development, faculty mentoring, CACREP-aligned assessment and accreditation, admissions, and strategic academic initiatives. Her scholarship reflects sustained contributions to four core areas: counselor education; racial and gender identity development; eating disorders in diverse and underserved communities; and sports counseling and mental performance. Dr. Rush-Wilson has authored multiple peer-reviewed publications and book chapters (including foundational work on eating disorders among African American women) and has delivered more than 150 presentations nationally and internationally across the United States, Canada, Europe, the Caribbean, and Central America. Her binational academic background and engagement in English, French, and Spanish inform her culturally grounded research and teaching. In addition to her academic work, she serves as a Consulting Team Psychologist for the Cleveland Browns (NFL), providing mental health care, crisis response, and performance-focused support to athletes, families, and staff, and is deeply committed to advancing equity, representation, and access in graduate education.

Kevin Winters

Organizational Leadership

Kevin Winters is a Ph.D. candidate in the Organizational Leadership program at The Chicago School. Kevin is a scholar specializing in the study of toxic leadership and its impact on both organizational and individual health. His research examines the precursors and consequences of destructive leadership behaviors, focusing on the mental, physical, and emotional impacts on employees and the underlying reasons for the phenomenon's persistence. Throughout his academic career, Kevin has primarily engaged in the nonprofit sector, with a notable focus on mental health, special needs, and environmental issues. These opportunities have enabled him to collaborate with diverse nonprofit organizations, local community groups, and elected officials who share a common vision of creating measures that foster healthy organizational cultures, and advocating for equity, inclusion, and diversity while making significant contributions to society. Kevin's research aims to enhance understanding of why toxic leadership and its destructive behaviors are often overlooked, as well as the impact they have on an individual's mental, physical, and emotional well-being. His study aims to influence policy and practice, encouraging systemic reforms that address the fundamental causes of toxic leadership. He is dedicated to incorporating research findings into practical solutions that advantage organizations, communities, and broader societal contexts. Kevin earned a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Purdue University and a Master of Arts in Psychology from The Chicago School. Kevin was also recognized by The Chicago School for his academic accomplishments, having been awarded an Academic Distinction certificate for maintaining a 4.0 GPA throughout his master's program.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The George Washington University 2026

Mariana Fagundes Grilo

Exercise Physiology and Applied Nutrition

Mariana Fagundes Grilo is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Exercise Physiology and Applied Nutrition, with a specialization in Nutrition Policy, at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. Her research examines how food environments and nutrition policies shape families' purchasing decisions, particularly for children, and how these influences vary across socioeconomic contexts. She has received distinctions from the George Washington University as well as recognition from national and international scientific organizations for her contributions to nutrition policy and public health, including the GW Research Day Doctoral Award in Public Health, recognitions from the American Society for Nutrition, the Early Career Award from the International Congress of Nutrition in Tokyo, and the Award for Combating Hunger and Malnutrition from the State of São Paulo, Brazil. She holds a Master of Public Health in Epidemiology and a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition from the State University of Campinas in Brazil. Mariana is committed to mentorship, service, and advancing equitable food systems, and she aspires to build a research career at the intersection of science and policy to expand access to healthy foods and improve health outcomes for children and families worldwide.

Kimberly Greenfield

Translational Health Sciences

Kim Greenfield is a doctoral candidate pursuing a PhD in Translational Health Science at the George Washington University School of Medicine. Her research focuses on examining health disparities in pancreatic cancer through comprehensive assessment of social determinants of health that influence patient treatment pathways. Specifically, she investigates how these determinants affect patient eligibility for curative surgical interventions and their subsequent impact on five-year survival outcomes. Her scholarly work aims to systematically identify patient-, provider-, and system-level barriers that contribute to inequitable treatment access and disparate survival rates. Kimberly demonstrates exceptional leadership in both research and patient advocacy capacities. She currently serves as Chair of the Survivors and Caregivers Committee for the District of Columbia affiliate of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PANCAN) and actively advocates for policy initiatives through organizations including Rally for Medical Research and the American Association for Cancer Research. Her professional achievements include recent induction into the National Society of Leadership and Success and certification as a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt, through which she applies evidence-based process improvement methodologies to address healthcare delivery challenges. Her professional aspirations center on developing and implementing targeted interventions to ensure equitable access to high-quality care for all pancreatic cancer patients, while simultaneously mentoring emerging researchers in the field.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The George Washington University 2026

Aaron P. Henry

Translational Health Science

Aaron Henry is a candidate for the PhD in Translational Health Science, a physician assistant, and Co Director of Clinical Education at The George Washington University Physician Assistant Program. His scholarship focuses on advancing health equity for Black men through trust-building with healthcare providers. His dissertation research examines how Black men in the Washington D.C metropolitan region determine trust in healthcare providers, to identify practical strategies to improve patient-provider relationships and health outcomes. Beyond the campus, Aaron maintains a community-based presence and regularly speaks at local churches and events, providing men's health education focused on disease prevention. Aaron is equally committed to diversifying the healthcare workforce and routinely speaks at local high schools, introducing students from underserved communities to careers in the health professions. Nationally, Aaron presents on Black men's health and healthcare trust at professional medical conferences and has published his work in peer-reviewed journals and books. Across his roles as clinician, educator, researcher, and community advocate, Aaron strives to embody the Bouchet Society's pillars of scholarship, character, leadership, service, and advocacy.

Vicky Ho

Clinical Psychology

Vicky Ho is a Ph.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology at George Washington University. Her research examines the access to and quality of mental health services for adolescents and emerging adults in immigrant and ethnic minority communities through two lines of research: 1) the impact of family-level processes on child and adolescent psychological outcomes, and 2) sociocultural barriers and facilitators to psychological service utilization. Vicky has received external training opportunities focused on advanced statistical and qualitative methodologies through Children's National Hospital and George Mason University's Summer Institute in Anti-Racist and Decolonizing Research Methods. She also received the GWU Columbian College of Arts & Sciences Dean's Graduate Lectureship to develop and teach a freshman seminar course on immigrant child and family psychological well-being. Vicky is deeply committed to fostering inclusive academic spaces and diversifying pathways to the field of psychology through teaching and research mentorship. In addition to her scholarship pursuits, Vicky delivers behavioral health services to children and families in community-based and hospital settings, with a focus on evidence-based and culturally-informed practices. Vicky received her B.A. in Psychology from Northwestern University and her M.A. in Counseling from Teachers College, Columbia University. Vicky hopes to continue building a program of applied clinical research, with the aim to develop best practices for improving linkages to mental health services and quality of care for populations that have been historically underserved.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The George Washington University 2026

Frank Yingjie Huo

Physics

Frank Yingjie Huo is a PhD candidate in physics and the recipient of the Columbian Fellowship at George Washington University. His research focuses on the theoretical physics of complex systems including complex social networks and AI systems. He is the leading author of *Introduction to Online Complexity*, an Oxford University Press published book on the original research of his research group. He has also published over ten peer-reviewed papers. He holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Mathematics from Pembroke College, University of Cambridge, where he was awarded a Foundational Scholarship. Outside of research, he is dedicated to teaching and enhancing the learning experience for undergraduate physics students. He has been a teaching assistant for four years and has consistently received high student ratings and honours such as best teaching from the department.

Ciara E. Johnson-Davis

Health Policy

Ciara E. Johnson-Davis is a doctoral candidate in Health Policy at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. Her research examines the evolving regulatory landscape of over-the-counter contraceptive access and its implications for equitable health care delivery. Her scholarship analyzes how federal policy, insurance coverage frameworks, and health system design influence access to reproductive health services, with particular attention to reducing structural barriers for historically underserved populations. In addition to her academic work, Ciara serves as a Health Policy Advisor and Director of Policy, Communications, and External Affairs within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In this role, she contributes to federal initiatives spanning sexual and reproductive health, adolescent health, and maternal and child health. She has led cross-agency policy coordination, grants oversight, and stakeholder engagement efforts that connect research, implementation, and community impact. Ciara's work reflects a sustained commitment to scholarship, leadership, service, and advocacy. She mentors emerging public health professionals and advances evidence-informed, patient-centered policy approaches that strengthen equitable systems of care. Through her research and public service, she seeks to reinforce the connection between rigorous scholarship and effective policymaking to improve health outcomes nationwide.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The George Washington University 2026

Wendy S. Post

Nursing

Wendy S. Post, DNP, MSN, MS, RN, FNE-A, is a Ph.D. candidate in Nursing at The George Washington University and a tenure-track Assistant Professor at Bowie State University, Maryland's oldest HBCU. A nurse scientist and forensic nurse examiner with more than 26 years in high-risk obstetrics, she investigates maternal mortality in the United States through the lens of eyewitness testimony—centering the accounts of partners, families, and clinicians present when care fails. Her scholarship advances patient safety methodologies to examine breakdowns in clinical recognition, escalation, and institutional accountability, particularly among structurally marginalized populations. By positioning testimony as empirical evidence, Dr. Post reframes maternal mortality as both a systems failure and a measure of structural injustice. She has authored peer-reviewed publications in *Birth*, *Health Affairs*, and *Health Equity*, including empirical and concept-based work on severe maternal morbidity, failure to rescue, and accountability in maternal health systems, with additional manuscripts in press. A 2024 AACN Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Fellow and recipient of the 2026 Maryland Higher Education Commission's Dr. Peg E. Daw Nurse Faculty Annual Recognition (NFAR) Award for Teaching Excellence, Dr. Post mentors emerging scholars in health equity research and leads community-engaged initiatives integrating perinatal education and Medicaid-approved doula workforce development. Her work reflects sustained commitments to scholarship, leadership, service, character, and advocacy in advancing justice within maternal health systems.

Alana C. Rule

Clinical Psychology

Alana C. Rule is a Ph.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology at George Washington University. Her research examines risk and protective factors associated with suicide among African-American youth, with a particular focus on culturally and developmentally grounded influences on mental health. Her work highlights the roles of racial discrimination and gendered racism as trauma-related risk factors, with the goal of advancing more equitable and culturally responsive approaches to psychological research and practice. Alana's research has been presented at multiple national conferences and published in academic journals, and she has contributed to several NIH-funded research initiatives, serving in key project management roles. In addition to her research contributions, she is deeply committed to mentorship, advocacy, and service. She has supported and mentored marginalized students pursuing careers in psychology through organizations such as Psychologists of Color and the D.C. Psychological Association and has also served on the board of a youth suicide research consortium dedicated to improving mental health outcomes for marginalized youth. Alana earned her Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Wake Forest University and her Master of Arts in psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University. Ultimately, Alana aspires to pursue a research-focused academic career devoted to expanding scholarship in critically understudied areas, mentoring future scholars, and advancing research that improves the lives of historically underserved communities.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

The George Washington University 2026

Emily C. Zhang

Social and Behavioral Sciences

Emily C. Zhang is a third-year Ph.D. candidate in Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University. Her research is rooted at the intersection of adolescent development, technology, and mental health. In particular, her dissertation examines the impacts of social media use on adolescent mental health outcomes, such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness. Emily received her Bachelor of Science in Public Health from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Science in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University. She has presented her research at the Society for Research on Adolescence and recently received the Dr. Delbert Oberteuffer Scholarship from the Foundation for the Advancement of Health Education for her academic achievement and potential for advancing the health of children and youth. She shares her passion for public health through extensive roles as a Teaching Assistant, fostering an inclusive learning environment for students of all backgrounds. Emily is also an affiliate fellow in the GW Co-Design of Trustworthy AI Systems program, which prepares scholars to consider the socio-technical context of artificial intelligence and human work systems. Ultimately, Emily strives to use rigorous public health research as a tool for health equity. Her goal is to translate her research into evidence-based strategies that support adolescent mental health in an increasingly digital world. She is excited to join the Bouchet Society with her fellow inductees in creating a more inclusive academy where diverse scholars thrive.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of California, Los Angeles 2026

Ashley Chen

Cognitive Psychology

Ashley Chen is a Ph.D. candidate in Cognitive Psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), specializing in human learning and memory. Her dissertation aims to uncover the motivational and attentional mechanisms that support learning across the lifespan, employing an interdisciplinary approach that integrates perspectives from cognitive science, education, and gerontology. Ashley's research is complemented by her efforts to strengthen scholarly communities and promote diversity in academia. Notably, she is the President of Psychology in Action, a graduate-student organization dedicated to increasing public engagement with psychological research through science communication (e.g., blogging, writing retreats, Exploring Your Universe science fair). Ashley has also assumed various positions that enabled her to guide departmental decision-making and student advocacy efforts. For example, she served as Vice President of the Psychology Graduate Student Association, mobilizing support for graduate students' needs through faculty briefings and professional development initiatives. Concurrently, Ashley seeks to expand undergraduate representation in research as the Graduate Student Coordinator of the annual UCLA Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference, a role she has held for four years, creating an intellectual environment where undergraduate students can showcase their projects and forge meaningful connections with peers and faculty. Alongside the aforementioned activities, she is dedicated to teaching and mentoring, having taught multiple upper-division courses in cognitive and educational psychology. Overall, Ashley strives to empower the next generation of scientists through continued service and research while advancing equity and inclusion in her community.

Elayne Stecher

Political Science

Elayne Stecher is a PhD candidate in Political Science at the University of California, Los Angeles, where she is also completing an M.S. in Statistics and Data Science. Her research examines how exposure to violence shapes political attitudes, cognition, and support for coercive state policies in conflict-affected settings. Using experiments, large-scale survey data and unexpected events during survey design (UESD), she studies how individuals interpret political violence and how these experiences influence political behavior. Her work combines rigorous quantitative methods with collaborative field research across multiple countries.

Jose Nateras

Theater & Performance Studies

Jose Nateras (he/him) is a PhD candidate at UCLA in Theater & Performance Studies. His research concerns the performance of horror in relation to marginalized identities. Jose has his BA in Theatre from Loyola University Chicago and his MFA in Writing from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). Alongside experience teaching (SAIC, Truman College) and both writing for and acting on stage and screen (SAG-AFTRA, AEA, WGA), he is a published novelist. Jose's work applies an interdisciplinary, transmedia approach to horror as a method for Queer and BIPOC survival as with his current research on vampiric counterperformance.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of California, Los Angeles 2026

Elizabeth A. Yonko

Epidemiology

Elizabeth A. Yonko (she/they) is a candidate for the PhD in Epidemiology at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. Her research focuses on HIV and sexually transmitted infection prevention, LGBTQ+ health, and the psychosocial and structural factors that shape health outcomes. Originally trained as a biomedical engineer at Duke University and later earning a Master of Public Health in Epidemiology from Columbia University, Elizabeth brings a unique interdisciplinary approach to her research, integrating quantitative and qualitative methods and centering community-based participatory research principles to drive social change and policy reform. Her dissertation examines how policy and structural factors influence HIV risk, mental health, and substance use among LGBTQ+ populations. She has recently led several mixed-methods studies examining emerging issues in LGBTQ+ health, including implementation preferences for doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis (DoxyPEP), experiences with mpox vaccination during the 2022 outbreak, and the disruptions to HIV care following the January 2025 Los Angeles wildfires. Her scholarship has resulted in more than 15 peer-reviewed manuscripts published or under review, including several first-author publications in leading public health journals. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, Elizabeth is deeply committed to mentorship, teaching, and community engagement. Through the [UCLA Center for LGBTQ+ Advocacy, Research and Health](#), she mentors high school, undergraduate, and graduate students, and contributes to community programming focused on sexual health, HIV prevention, and harm reduction. Elizabeth ultimately aims to become a professor of epidemiology, leading an independent research program that develops and applies rigorous and community-centered methodological approaches to address HIV and LGBTQ+ health inequities, while fostering greater representation in academia.

Rebeca Martínez-Tibbles

History

Rebeca Martínez-Tibbles is a Ph.D. candidate in History at the University of California, Los Angeles, where she specializes in colonial Latin America, with particular emphasis on gender, sexuality, and legal culture in early modern Spanish America. Her research examines women and bigamy in colonial Mexico from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, exploring how women navigated marriage, migration, and ecclesiastical authority within the overlapping legal frameworks of the Spanish Inquisition and the Catholic Church. Through close analysis of inquisitorial records and archival sources from Mexico and Spain, her work investigates how race, religion, and social status shaped women's experiences of marital transgression and legal prosecution in the early modern Spanish American world. Martínez-Tibbles holds an M.A. in History from UCLA and a B.A. in History and French from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she graduated summa cum laude and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Her research has been supported by numerous fellowships, including a Fulbright-Hays DDRA Fellowship for archival research in Mexico City and Seville. She has presented her work at conferences such as the American Historical Association and the Western Association of Women Historians and has published on colonial Mexican women in bigamy cases.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of California, San Diego 2026

Christian Cazares

Cognitive Science

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Dr. Christian Cazares, an immigrant from Mexico, is a postdoctoral research fellow in Dr. Bradley Voytek's lab at UC San Diego. He uses electrophysiology to bridge human EEG, neural organoids, and mouse models to study neurodevelopmental conditions. Dr. Cazares also co-administers the CoB-KIBM Scholars program (<https://colorsofthebrain.com/cob-kibm/>) in collaboration with the UC San Diego Kavli Institute for Brain and Mind, which offers a paid summer research experience to undergraduates from historically marginalized and excluded backgrounds in neuroscience.

Devontae C. Baxter

Astronomy & Astrophysics

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Dr. Devontae Baxter is a National Science Foundation Astronomy & Astrophysics and UC Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellow at UC San Diego investigating the co-evolution of galaxies and their environment. He did his undergraduate studies at Georgia Institute of Technology, majoring in Physics with a specialization in Astrophysics and minoring in Spanish. He did his graduate studies at UC Irvine under the supervision of Professor Michael Cooper, and his thesis work centered on merging machine learning, cosmological simulations, and observations from large extragalactic surveys to constrain the physical mechanisms driving the suppression of star formation in galaxy groups and clusters environments. As a postdoctoral fellow, he is working to understand how the densest environments in the early universe, namely galaxy protoclusters, influence the suppression and enhancement of star formation and stellar mass growth of galaxies. Beyond research, he is very active in community outreach, having developed the Computational Astrophysics Research Preparation (CARP) program. This is a week-long programming and mentorship workshop held at the San Diego Supercomputer Center that helps prospective community college transfer students develop research skills and enhance their transfer-readiness. He is also passionate about science communication, having taught foundational astronomy concepts to K-12 students via stargazing events and portable planetarium shows. He has also endeavored to make cutting-edge astrophysics research accessible to the general public via engaging public lectures. In his free time, he enjoys skateboarding, learning new languages, and spending quality time with his friends and family.

Eric M. Jordahl

Biological Sciences

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Eric M Jordahl is a candidate for a Ph.D. in Biology at the University of California San Diego. His research focuses on the characterization of the rhomboid protease RHBDL4 in Pancreatic Cancer. Eric has been recognized as a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Program (NSF GRFP) Fellow and Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Gilliam Fellow for his graduate education. He received a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Bachelor of Arts in Classics from the University of Pittsburgh where he received a Colella Award Fellowship and a Horowitz Award Fellowship. Eric has a love for mentorship, sharing his experiences in science with the next generation of scientists. He is the Mentorship Chair of the Biology Undergraduate and Master's Mentorship Program (BUMMP), which provides mentorship to undergraduate and master's students in Biology at the University of California San Diego. Eric has paired over 1700 mentorship pairings through BUMMP over his 4 years as Mentorship Chair, overseeing over 400 pairings per year. Eric aspires to start his own research program at an R1 research institution, pushing the boundaries of cell and cancer biology while supporting and mentoring students of all backgrounds.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of California, San Diego 2026

Ilyse Clark

Astronomy & Astrophysics

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Ilyse is a Ph.D. candidate in Astronomy & Astrophysics at UCSD, where her research focuses on low-metallicity extragalactic environments to understand galaxy evolution under conditions similar to the early universe, where many chemical processes remain poorly understood. Her work includes the first resolved study of an extragalactic low-metallicity photodissociation region using infrared data from the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) and radio data from the Atacama Large Millimeter/Submillimeter Array (ALMA). She received a Bachelor of Science in Astronomy and Physics from the University of Texas at Austin and is committed to fostering inclusive academic communities. Ilyse has served as Co-President of the Astronomy Graduate Council, building community among graduate scholars, and has led the Undergraduate & Graduate Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program, and currently leads the Graduate & Postdoctoral Mentoring Program, organizing mentorship and community events across departments. Her contributions have been recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation for Advancing Equity from UCSD's Division of Graduate Education & Postdoctoral Affairs. Nationally, she is a member of the Heising-Simons Mentoring Network and the League of Underrepresented Minoritized Astronomers (LUMA), and is a founding member of the Astronomy's Poverty Problem working group, which develops solutions to remove poverty-related obstacles in Astronomy. Through her work and service, Ilyse works to ensure that scholars of all backgrounds can thrive in Astronomy and Astrophysics.

Kristina Brandveen

Public Health

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Kristina Brandveen is a PhD candidate within the Joint Doctoral Program in Public Health at San Diego State University and the University of California, San Diego. Her passion for working on projects surrounding global health and social justice initiatives was influenced by her childhood in a multicultural Afro-Surinamese and Southern African American household. Her research focuses on agro-environmental racism and agrochemical exposures as drivers of adverse health outcomes experienced by African American farmers and farmworkers. Kristina has been recognized as a UCSD Merkin Fellow, University of California-Alianza México Graduate Research Stay Awardee, American Public Health Association and Kaiser Permanente Community Health Leadership Fellow, and International Society for Children's Health and the Environment Research-to-Action Fellow. She incorporates critical pedagogy and anthropological sensibility within her teaching, prioritizing empathy, justice, and humility in working in and with communities globally. She is passionate about health equity and addressing environmental injustices among diverse communities with experience collaborating with communities in the Southern United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. She holds a Master of Public Health from the Colorado School of Public Health and a Bachelor of Arts in Foreign Language (Spanish) from Virginia Commonwealth University. Kristina aspires to work as a professor at a Historically Black College or University, championing the next generation of global health and environmental health agents of change.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of California, San Diego 2026

Manuel A. Carrión-Lira

Literature and Critical Gender Studies

Manuel A. Carrión-Lira is a Ph.D. candidate in Literature and Critical Gender Studies at UC San Diego. His research develops “mapulectics,” an Indigenous materialist methodology for analyzing how contemporary Indigenous media in Abyayala uses speculation and refusal to imagine sovereign futures. His scholarly work has been supported by a Fulbright Fellowship and the Speculative Environmental Futures Collective PhD Fellowship. Manuel is currently co-editing the foundational volume *OPACIDADES GENERATIVAS/ GENERATIVE OPACITIES* (2025), which archives a decade of trans-Indigenous artistic and community practice. As an educator, he received the 2024 Excellence in Teaching Award from the Department of Linguistics, a testament to his versatile, student-centered pedagogical approach. Has curated international film programs, such as *Chileym* and *Pachacuti*, redirecting institutional resources to Indigenous creators in the Global South. As a Mapuche champurria scholar-artist, he exemplifies the Bouchet Society's five pillars through his dedication to relational accountability, collaborative scholarship, and the mentorship of underrepresented students within the academy.

Robin H. Glefke

Physics

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Robin Glefke is a Ph.D. candidate in Physics and NSF Graduate Research Fellow at the University of California San Diego. She studies quantum materials to use in brain-inspired approaches to more energy-efficient machine learning hardware, motivated by the growing energy demands of AI. She believes scientists have a responsibility to not just answer interesting questions, but to understand the impact of our work and clearly communicate it to a broad audience. As such, she has pursued interdisciplinary training through UC San Diego's School of Global Policy to examine the societal and policy implications of her research. Robin is also committed to mentorship, community-building, and expanding access in STEM—especially for women and gender minorities. She served as President of UC San Diego's Physics Graduate Council and Graduate Women in Physics, co-chaired the APS Conference for Undergraduate Women and Gender Minorities in Physics (CU*IP) at UCSD, and founded the STEM Girl Summer camp to support high school students exploring STEM pathways. Trained in both physics and visual art, Robin approaches science communication using clear storytelling and design to make complex ideas accessible while fostering supportive academic environments where others can thrive.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Florida 2026

Joshua M. Benjamin

Biology

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Joshua M. Benjamin is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Biology (Zoology) at the University of Florida. He has also completed graduate certificates in Tropical Conservation and Development and Sustainable Development Practice. His research focuses on linking aquatic community structure, trophic ecology, and trace element dynamics along a longitudinal gradient in an Afrotropical River. Joshua has been recognized with a certificate of Outstanding Merit from the University of Florida International Center and received the Mentoring Award from the Biology Graduate Student Association for his mentorship role in the Biology Department. He also received a Master of Science in Limnology and Wetland Management from BOKU University, Austria, and IHE-Delft, the Netherlands, where he was a recipient of the prestigious Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP) Scholarship. As well, he received a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies from Karatina University, Kenya. Joshua continually grows through each endeavor and is committed to sharing his passion for zoology through teaching. Ultimately, Joshua aspires to work in academia as a professor, sharing knowledge and skills with the next generation of scientists.

Phylindia Gant

Geological Sciences

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Phylindia Gant is a Ph.D. candidate in Earth and Planetary Sciences at the University of Florida, where her research is grounded in astrobiology and geochemistry. Her work focuses on organic molecular biosignatures in terrestrial Mars-analog environments, with implications for understanding how signs of life are preserved in extreme environments. Phylindia's scholarly work is shaped by a strong commitment to teaching, mentorship, and service. This commitment is informed by her experiences in research, leadership, and science communication. She is passionate about creating inclusive academic spaces and expanding access to scientific knowledge beyond traditional boundaries. Phylindia believes that scientific excellence and community impact are deeply connected. Ultimately, she aspires to a career in academia where she can conduct meaningful research, teach with intention, and continue building pathways that support and uplift future generations of scientists.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Florida 2026

Ali Mahmoudi

Interior Design / Construction Management

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Ali Mahmoudi is a Ph.D. candidate in the College of Design, Construction, and Planning at the University of Florida. His research examines how characteristics of the built environment can prevent workplace violence in healthcare settings and enhance the safety, well-being, and resilience of healthcare employees. His work focuses on informing evidence-based prevention strategies through retrospective analysis of incident data, employing advanced textual analysis of logged reports and narrative incident descriptions. Ali was awarded the prestigious Griffin/McKahan/Zilm Fellowship from the American Institute of Architects for the 2024–2025 academic year. He has presented his research at national venues, including the Healthcare Design Conference in Kansas City (2025), and was the winner of the DCP Research Symposium in 2022; one of several notable achievements during his doctoral studies. Beyond his research, Ali is deeply committed to service and leadership. As a first-generation graduate student, he actively develops and advances new paradigms for peer mentoring and graduate student well-being. He collaborates with multiple entities across the University of Florida to promote supportive academic communities and to help graduate students thrive both personally and professionally. Ali's long-term vision is to contribute to the creation of healthcare environments that are safer for staff and more therapeutic, humane, and restorative for patients.

Juan S. Restrepo-Cardona

Wildlife Ecology and Conservation

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Juan Restrepo is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation at the University of Florida. He has a broad background in conducting interdisciplinary research on human-wildlife interactions and raptor ecology and conservation. Juan has an outstanding academic record. He received 24 grants, awards, and honors in recognition of his contributions, 17 of which were during his PhD program alone. He already has more than 30 peer-reviewed publications, 14 of which have been published since his arrival on UF campus. Juan's research focused on analyzing human conflicts over raptors in Ecuador and Colombia, and implementing conceptual frameworks to turn human-wildlife conflicts into raptor conservation and human-raptor coexistence. His extensive commitment and research experience have also led to his being invited to co-advise several MS and undergraduate thesis projects in his home country of Colombia and in Spain. Juan aspires to obtain a professor position at a respected university. Then, he will use his experience in biodiversity conservation and social-ecological research to teach the next generation, develop high-quality interdisciplinary scientific studies, and facilitate knowledge co-production to achieve community-based conservation.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Florida 2026

Taofeek O. Tejuosho

Chemical Engineering

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Taofeek O. Tejuosho is a candidate for the PhD in chemical engineering within the research area of polymer science and engineering. His research focuses on the computational design of polymeric materials, uncovering fundamental insights that guide their applications in diverse technologies such as polymer adhesion and processing. Taofeek has received multiple awards in recognition of his academic and research excellence, as well as his service, from both the University of Florida and professional organizations. Most notably, he has received the Chemical Engineering Research Excellence Award and the Peer Mentoring Award, the Daniel R. King Memorial Scholarship from the Adhesion Society, and recognition as a Board of Education Fellow by the University of Florida. He received a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering from the University of Lagos, Nigeria, where he was the recipient of Professor William Harmon Ray's Prize. Taofeek is a passionate STEM educator and has contributed through several programs, including the Student Science Training Program, the Women in Chemical Engineering Program, the Chemical Engineering Workshop for Teachers, and the Florida STEM Symposium. Taofeek had the opportunity to intern at Dow Chemical, one of the country's leading materials science companies, as an advanced degree researcher. Through this experience, he gained firsthand insight into how research and development translate into real-world impact and generate business value, and he aspires to work as a scientist or research engineer in similar settings to continue driving innovations that improve quality of life.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Miami 2026

Foluso Adeosun

Chemical, Environmental, and Materials Engineering

Foluso Adeosun is a Ph.D. candidate in the Chemical, Environmental, and Materials Engineering Department at University of Miami due to receive her doctoral degree (Ph.D.) in Chemical Engineering by August 2026. Foluso's research champions the understanding of fundamental mechanisms that govern the design of bio-based stimuli-responsive hydrogels for the effective delivery of biotherapeutics. Her work is critical to the advancement of the design and innovation of soft matter systems as next-generation biotherapeutic delivery platforms. She has authored and co-authored publications in reputable journals and presented findings from her work at multiple scholarly conferences. Being a founding PhD member of the Soft Matter Product Design Lab, Foluso was instrumental to establishing the laboratory at University of Miami and has developed a strong repertoire of skills in advanced characterization of soft matter systems. She has trained numerous undergraduate and graduate researchers and continues to actively mentor students in scientific inquiry and experimental design. Advocacy is a defining aspect of her leadership identity, shaped by her prior roles in the National Society of Black Engineers and her current service as a Senator representing her department in the Graduate Student Association at the University of Miami. She is deeply committed to broadening participation in STEM, regularly volunteering through outreach initiatives that inspire and support emerging scientists. At the heart of Foluso's pursuits is a commitment to leading innovative research that advances knowledge, fosters collaboration, and drives meaningful progress across diverse disciplines, while empowering communities by translating discoveries into real-world solutions that create lasting impact.

Fairuziana Humam Hamid

Community Well-Being

Fairuziana Humam Hamid is a Ph.D. candidate in Community Well-Being at the University of Miami. Her research examines the intersections of gender, religion, and well-being among Muslim women, with recent particular attention to Acehnese-Indonesian women in post-conflict and post-disaster contexts. Grounded in community psychology, decolonial feminist theory, and participatory approaches, her scholarship interrogates how gender norms, spiritual practices, and institutional power shape well-being. She holds a master's degree in Community Psychology and Social Change from The Pennsylvania State University and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Universitas Syiah Kuala. Fairuziana received an Honorable Mention for her Op-Ed on Muslim women's pathways to liberation from the University of Miami Graduate School and the Academic Excellence, Leadership, and Service (AELS) Award from the Graduate Student Association. Fairuziana has authored and co-authored peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and conference papers on Muslim mental health, community well-being, and public health. Her work has appeared in peer-reviewed journals such as *Pastoral Psychology*, *Psychiatric Quarterly*, *Health, Risk & Society*, as well as a book chapter published by Cambridge University Press on wellness, fairness, and worthiness. Fairuziana demonstrates leadership, service, and advocacy through sustained engagement with women and youth across Indonesia and Southeast Asia, particularly in health and well-being education and advocacy. She also works closely with the Acehnese diaspora and communities in Indonesia by organizing community discussions and coordinating disaster response efforts. Her professional goal is to become a scholar who bridges academic rigor and community-based action to advance research that centers vulnerable and marginalized populations.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Miami 2026

N'Dyah R. McCoy

Teaching and Learning

N'Dyah R. McCoy is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning with a concentration in language and literacy learning in multilingual settings at the University of Miami. Her research focuses on Black Language and pedagogical practices for Black and multilingual children. N'Dyah is a Gates Millennium Scholar (GMS), a Holmes Scholar, and a Center for Global Black Studies Research Fellow. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from the University of Georgia, as a Zell Miller Scholar and president of the GMS Campus Based Organization. She earned a Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) from Columbia University. As a first-grade teacher, adjunct professor, and instructional coach to first-year teachers, N'Dyah is dedicated to fostering meaningful learning experiences, supporting educator growth, and advancing equitable, evidence-based instructional practices. This commitment extends to her scholarly work, as evidenced by publications in two peer-reviewed journals, which examine and inform effective instructional practices for Black girls and multilingual students. N'Dyah has presented at internationally recognized research conferences including American Educational Research Conference, American Association for Applied Linguistics, and Literacy Research Association. She is an avid volunteer with Girl Power, an organization that supports young girl's growth and academic success. She has also served as an ESOL teacher for Afro-Ecuadorian youth. Ultimately, N'Dyah aspires to be a community engaged scholar whose teaching, research and global collaborations work together to create meaningful change for linguistically marginalized communities.

Jovanka Ravix

Cancer Biology

Jovanka Ravix is an M.D./Ph.D. candidate pursuing the Ph.D. in Cancer Biology at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine through the Medical Scientist Training Program. Her research focuses on how epigenetic and social determinants contribute to cancer risk and outcomes. Supported by an NIH F31 Ruth L. Kirschstein Predoctoral Fellowship, her dissertation integrates DNA methylation profiling, single-cell genomics, and population-based epidemiology to examine how environmental and structural exposures become biologically embedded and influence cancer outcomes. Ravix's training is deliberately interdisciplinary, spanning engineering-based research, wet-laboratory discovery, and computational analysis to address cancer risk from population-level inequities to molecular signaling pathways. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Northwestern University, where she conducted undergraduate research in the Woodruff Laboratory of Reproductive Science and Medicine. There, she contributed to the development of microfluidic and biomimetic platforms modeling the human female reproductive tract, integrating engineering principles with physiologic and endocrine signaling. She later expanded her mechanistic training as a post-baccalaureate fellow at the Mayo Clinic, investigating cellular signaling, oxidative stress, and mechano-transduction in reproductive and pulmonary disease models. Her peer-reviewed publications and abstracts reflect this technical breadth, encompassing cell culture systems, molecular and genomic assays, epigenetic profiling, and epidemiologic analyses across breast, gynecologic, and airway diseases. Currently, Ravix co-leads Sante Nou Se Avni Nou, a community-engaged molecular epidemiology initiative focused on cancer research under the Florida Cancer Health Disparities Registry. Her scholarship reflects versatility, rigor, and commitment to excellence integrity aligned with the Bouchet Graduate Honor Society.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Miami 2026

Euge Helyantus Stumm

Literary, Cultural, and Linguistic Studies

Euge Helyantus Stumm is a Ph.D. candidate in Literary, Cultural, and Linguistic Studies at the University of Miami, where they serve as a recipient of the Dean's Fellowship, the Digital Humanities Fellowship, and current holder of the Center for the Humanities Dissertation Fellowship. Their research examines how gender and sexual dissidents in Latin America create new forms of language to encompass their experiences, focusing on gender-inclusive Spanish in Argentina and Pajubá — a cryptolact developed by Brazilian travestis and trans women — in Brazil. Stumm has presented their scholarship nationally and internationally at venues including the Latin American Studies Association, Harvard University's Graduate Music Forum, and the International Conference of Europeanists. They have published in scholarly journals such as *Revista Periódicus* and *Revista Contraponto*, examining topics ranging from queer cinema during the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964–1985) to innovative pedagogical practices for undergraduate teaching. Their digital scholarship includes the Pajubá Digital Archive and the Gender-Inclusive Spanish Digital Archive, promoting access and preserving the memory of these language variations. Currently, Stumm co-convenes both the Queer Studies and Digital Humanities Interdisciplinary Research Groups, having offered workshops on data literacy, coding and web development for humanists, GitHub, and open-source tools for the University of Miami's academic community. In Brazil, Stumm served as a volunteer psychologist with NGO SOMOS, which provides assistance to people living with HIV/AIDS and LGBTQ+ individuals, and as a clinical psychology intern with GTÊNERO/UFRGS, which offers mental health services to gender and sexual minorities from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Michigan 2026

Julianne Armijo

Nursing Science

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Julianne Armijo is a PhD candidate at the University of Michigan School of Nursing, a T32 predoctoral trainee supported by the NIH, and a family nurse practitioner. Her research explores how sleep and chronotype affect quality of life and how employment status influences this relationship among adults with bipolar disorder, with a subfocus on nurses. She has 16 years of clinical experience in cardiothoracic critical care, infectious diseases, and primary care for U.S. military veterans. She advocates for occupational mental health and works to reduce stigma against mental illness. Upon completing her Master of Science in Nursing, Julianne was recognized with the Graduate Academic Achievement Award at the University of New Mexico. She has published two first-authored papers, has another first-authored manuscript under review at the Journal of Religion and Health, and has co-authored two additional published manuscripts. As a volunteer nurse practitioner at Hope Clinic in Ypsilanti, Michigan, Julianne provides primary care to underserved and marginalized communities. On campus, she mentors students and is a student leader in the Centre of Research Excellence in Bipolar Disorder (CORE-BD) Bipolar Disorder Student Network. In addition to her scholarly work, she has given invited talks and webinars and has participated in creative community outreach to promote inclusive environments for clinicians with serious mental illness. Julianne aims to continue her work with bipolar disorder in academic and clinical settings. Her commitment to scholarship, leadership, service, character, and advocacy shapes her efforts to build spaces that value diverse experiences.

Enrica E. Bridgewater

Communication and Psychology

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Enrica E. Bridgewater is a candidate in the Independent Interdepartmental Degree Program, pursuing a joint Ph.D. in communication and psychology at the University of Michigan. Her research focuses on how exposure to entertainment media content impacts identity development, well-being, and stereotype endorsement among people of color. Her work has been published in *Child Development Perspectives*, *Journal of Media Psychology*, and other outlets. Enrica has been recognized as a Daniel Katz Dissertation Fellow by the Institute for Social Research and has received the PACE Fellowship and the Anna Olcott Smith Award from the Rackham Graduate School. She obtained a Bachelor of Science in psychology from Brooklyn College, where she received the Ernesto Malave Academic Scholarship, and a Master of Science in psychology from the University of Michigan, where she received the Lorraine Nadelman Graduate Student Research Prize for her thesis. For much of her graduate school career, one of Enrica's main goals has been to help make academia a more equitable and welcoming place for historically excluded groups seeking higher education. In this vein, Enrica has mentored six women as they applied for clinical and developmental psychology Ph.D. programs and Psy.D. programs through two non-profit organizations that seek to increase equity and access to graduate programs in the U.S. (i.e., the Project SHORT Pre-Grad Program and the Científico Latino Graduate Student Mentorship Initiative Program). Ultimately, Enrica aspires to work with scholars and entertainment industry professionals to ensure that academia and mediated spaces reflect the rich histories and perspectives of minoritized communities.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Michigan 2026

monét cooper (she/they)

Joint Program in English and Education

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monét cooper is a poet, teacher-educator, and candidate for the Ph.D. in English and Education at the University of Michigan. A former middle and high school English teacher for 11 years prior to entering the academy, her research focuses on Black and Latine queer and trans youths' literacies as the practice of freedom, contemplating how their engagements with each other, their interiority, and livingnessanimate liberatory self-making and critical English education. monét's work has been generously supported through fellowships, awards, and grants from the Rackham Graduate School, National Council of Teachers of English, Learning for Justice Educator Fund at the Southern Poverty Law Center, American Educational Research Association, Conference on College Composition and Communication, Hurston-Wright Foundation, Imagining America, and Lambda Literary. She also co-hosts Dancing on Desks, a podcast that celebrates justice-full abolitionist education. monét holds an A.B. in journalism from the University of Georgia and a master's in African American Studies from Boston University.

Elizabeth Strehl

Engineering Education Research

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Elizabeth (Betsy) Strehl is a Ph.D. candidate in Engineering Education Research at the University of Michigan and a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow. Her dissertation research examines how working-class undergraduate engineering students make sense of their experiences within elite engineering programs, with particular attention toward classed expectations, belonging, and institutional culture. Using mixed and participatory methods, including surveys, interviews, and photovoice focus groups, her work centers student voices to better understand how classism operates within engineering education and how students navigate often unspoken academic and professional norms in higher education. Betsy's research has been presented at national conferences, including the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), and she has authored multiple peer-reviewed conference papers on socioeconomic inequality, ethics, and student experiences in engineering. She is also engaged in collaborative manuscript development, examining coping strategies among first-generation and low-income engineering students. Beyond research, Betsy is deeply committed to leadership, service, and advocacy. She has served in multiple institutional leadership roles, including Rackham Student Government and the Michigan Engineering Student Advisory Board, and contributes to initiatives focused on inclusive teaching and curriculum reform across engineering. She is an active volunteer with the Washtenaw County Community Action Network, where she supports K-12 students through after-school programming, work that contributed to her recognition by the United Way of Southeastern Michigan. Through her scholarship, mentorship, and service, Betsy is committed to advancing equity and accountability within engineering education.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Michigan 2026

Blake T. Hipsley

Physics

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Blake T. Hipsley recently defended his dissertation and will be earning his PhD in Physics from the University of Michigan this May. His research explores the electronic and optical properties of novel semiconductors using nonlinear spectroscopic techniques. Blake graduated summa cum laude from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) in 2019 with a B.S. in Physics and B.A. in Mathematics. While there, he was a scholar in the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Scholars Program. Since then, Blake has remained active in supporting the McNair Scholars Program, in addition to other TRIO programs, through mentorship and advocacy, helping students from diverse backgrounds achieve their academic goals. At the University of Michigan, Blake helped foster an inclusive and collaborative working environment within the Physics department, serving leadership positions on the Physics Graduate Student Council and as Lead Graduate Student Instructor for the introductory labs. His dedication to teaching, course development, and mentoring fellow graduate student instructors was recognized with the Physics department awarding him the Marcellus L. Wiedenbeck Teaching Award in 2023. Through his research, mentorship, and service, Blake demonstrates a commitment to advancing scholarship, inclusive leadership, and access to science education for all.

Kayonne Christy

Sociology

Kayonne Christy is a PhD Candidate in Sociology at The University of Michigan, specializing in migration and urban studies. Her dissertation research explores how the transnational practices of the Jamaican diaspora shape ongoing urban transformations in Jamaica's capital city, Kingston. Kayonne's research has been supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the University of Michigan's International Institute, and has been recognized by the American Sociological Association and the Pacific Sociological Association. Her published work spans a range of contemporary social issues, including medical racism, urban inequality, medical education, and the impacts of COVID-19 on society. As an interdisciplinary, justice-oriented scholar, Kayonne views research and pedagogy as powerful tools for positive social change. Beyond her research, she has designed and facilitated social justice-oriented university courses, professional workshops, and faculty development seminars for medical professionals within and outside of the university. She has also delivered training sessions on qualitative research methods to community organizations in the Greater Toronto Area, and mentors underrepresented students in academia. Kayonne aspires to one day lead a global research institute that produces innovative, usable, and justice-oriented scholarship on migration and urban change in cities across the Global South.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Michigan 2026

Tasmine Clement

Computational Medicine

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Tasmine Clement is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Computational Medicine at the University of Michigan, where her research focuses on the application of genomics to study healthcare-associated infections. She has been recognized as an American Society for Microbiology (ASM) Future Leaders Fellow and a Michigan Center for Infectious Disease Threats Trainee. She holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Notre Dame. Prior to her doctoral studies, Tasmine gained valuable research experience at the National Cancer Institute, applying computational approaches to cancer research, and served in the Department of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine, where she contributed to COVID-19 community health advocacy during a critical public health moment. A dedicated leader and scholar, Tasmine has also served as Co-Director with the Graduate Society of Women Engineers at the University of Michigan, through which she organized and led a professional development conference for women in Liberia, West Africa, which reflects her commitment to global service and advocacy. She has further demonstrated her commitment to education as a Graduate Student Teaching Assistant, cultivating the next generation of scientists by sharing her passion for biology and computer science with undergraduate and graduate students. Most recently, Tasmine was selected as an AstraZeneca award recipient to develop innovative approaches to improving patient outcomes and driving innovation in oncology care. Ultimately, she aspires to work at the intersection of science and innovation, with a passion for improving lives through research and technology.

Emmanuella Ejichukwu

Industrial and Systems Engineering

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Emmanuella Ejichukwu is a PhD candidate in Industrial and Systems Engineering with a concentration in human-centered engineering design at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Her research focuses on student-AI collaboration in engineering education, examining how generative artificial intelligence tools shape problem-solving strategies, decision-making, cognitive workload, and learning outcomes. By examining how students collaborate with generative AI during engineering problem-solving, her work addresses concerns related to cognitive workload, process efficiency, and human-system integration. Emmanuella has been recognized for academic excellence and scholarly achievement through her induction into the Alpha Pi Mu, the Industrial Engineering Honor Society, and the Sigma Xi Scientific Research Honor Society. Emmanuella earned the University of Michigan Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) Certificate and has worked alongside faculty through the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching in Engineering (CRLT-Engin) to improve inclusive course design. Emmanuella received a Bachelor of Engineering in Industrial and Production Engineering from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria, and a Master of Science in Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering from the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Emmanuella approaches each endeavor as an opportunity for growth and actively supports community-engaged STEM learning through mentoring, outreach, and educational initiatives that introduce learners to engineering design and problem-solving. Looking ahead, Emmanuella aspires to advance human-centered design and engineering education at the intersection of artificial intelligence, design, and learning, using research, mentorship, and advocacy to empower the next generation of scholars.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Michigan 2026

Brittany Puller

Asian Languages and Cultures
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Brittany Puller is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Michigan. She is a social and religious historian of early modern South Asia whose dissertation examines community and religious formations, historical memory, and caste in Sikhism. Her research has been supported by the Rackham Predoctoral Fellowship, Fulbright-Hays Program, the American Institute of Indian Studies, the Rackham Merit Fellowship, and several other institutes. Brittany is also a dedicated Graduate Student Mentor in the Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars Program (MICHHERS), a program that provides mentorship to first-generation and low-income undergraduate students from marginalized backgrounds as they pursue higher education in the Humanities. In her leadership and service roles to her department, Brittany has worked to implement programming to improve departmental climate, coordinated pedagogy workshops around inclusive and equitable teaching strategies, developed interdepartmental events to encourage collaboration across departments, and facilitated faculty and student discussions around academia's hidden curriculum. Her advocacy work with the Tricontinental Solidarity Network has allowed her to collaborate with several organizations in Michigan to provide aid, create academic and artistic collectives, and organize teach-ins around migrant labor exploitation, criminal justice reform, immigration assistance, and global imperialist struggles.

Gheremey D. Edwards

Business Administration
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Gheremey D. Edwards is a doctoral candidate in Marketing (Consumer Behavior) at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. His research examines how identity shapes consumer behavior in marketplace contexts, with particular attention to the costs consumers bear when their identities are threatened or rendered marginal. His work explores how Black consumers develop distinct protective behaviors through racial socialization to navigate retail environments where bias is anticipated. He also examines when these strategies backfire. When they do, they can create unintended costs for individual consumers and environmental sustainability. In doing so, they emphasize how marketplace inequality reaches far beyond the immediate shopping experience. Gheremey's scholarship has been recognized with honors including the Milton Bohm Prize in Marketing, the Josephine Kendrick Marketing Award, and the American Marketing Association's Valuing Diversity Award. Prior to his doctoral studies, he worked in industry as a retail marketer on seasonal and digital campaigns. His work is driven by the belief that rigorous scholarship on marketplace inequality is foundational to building markets where all consumers can participate fully and fairly.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Wisconsin-Madison 2026

Brandon E. J. Cortez

Electrical & Computer Engineering

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Brandon Elias Joshua Cortez earned his B.A. in Physics and Applied Mathematics, as well as his M.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He is now an Electrical Engineering Ph.D. candidate, with a Physics doctoral minor, and National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow at UW-Madison. His research focuses on developing next-generation x-ray communications (XCOM) to eliminate the mission-critical blackout period that plasma sheaths induce during spacecraft atmospheric re-entry. His dissertation work involves creating new modulation strategies and evaluating novel electron sources for x-ray-based systems, and he also contributes to broader research in high-power microwave vacuum electronics. Cortez has presented his work at multiple international conferences, including the IEEE International Conference on Plasma Science (ICOPS) and the International Vacuum Electronics Conference (IVEC), where he was a Best Student Paper Award Finalist in both 2024 and 2025. He is passionate about using his experience to give back, actively serving in organizations like the Graduate Engineering Research Scholars (GERS) and McNair Scholars programs to help the next generation of scholars navigate their academic paths and avoid the challenges he has overcome.

Morgan L. Henson (he/him)

Sociology

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Morgan L. Henson is a Sociology Ph.D. candidate with a doctoral minor in Political Science. He earned his B.A. in History from Fordham University and dual master's degrees in Global Policy Studies and Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. His scholarship investigates the convergence of racial hierarchies, nationalism, and digital infrastructures in fueling contemporary far-right movements. His research employs trilingual digital ethnography to analyze how extremist groups adapt to platform censorship and legal repression. He is deeply committed to translating sociological research into public good; he has given whiteness talks to community organizations, authored institutional microaggression policies for businesses in Madison, WI, and published articles and op-eds on geopolitics and racism. His foundational work on "Russian Racial Logic" has been presented at major conferences like the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, serving as an influential analysis of racial formation in "raceless" societies. His research on transnational extremism has been supported by Foreign Language & Area Studies Fellowships, Gullickson Teaching Fellowships, and a research award from the Center for German & European Studies. In addition to his research, Morgan has a passion for teaching. As a Project Assistant for L&S's TA Training & Support Team, he strengthens instructional quality by creating resources and mentorship frameworks for new and established teaching assistants. For his dedication to student success and inclusive pedagogy, he received the 2022 Honored Instructor Award from the University of Wisconsin-Madison's College of Letters & Science.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Wisconsin-Madison 2026

Hector Lopez Moreno

Plant Breeding and Plant Genetics

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Héctor Lopez Moreno is a Ph.D. candidate in Plant Breeding and Plant Genetics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, originally from Oaxaca, Mexico, and proudly Mixtec (Ñuu Savi). He earned his B.S. in Agronomy with honors from the Chapingo Autonomous University, Mexico's leading agricultural university. As an undergraduate research assistant in a *Physalis* breeding program, he conducted thesis research developing a molecular marker-based method for detecting virus resistance. He later obtained his M.S. in Plant Biotechnology from the Advanced Genomics Unit of LANGEBIO–CINVESTAV. His master's research focused on the genetics and genomics of *Capsicum* domestication to elucidate the genetic changes underlying this “short-rapid” evolutionary process, which led to dramatic phenotypic shifts and ultimately gave rise to the cultivated forms that sustain global agriculture today. This work resulted in a first-author publication in *Frontiers in Genetics*. Currently, his doctoral research integrates genetic mapping, multi-omics, and microscopy approaches to uncover the genetic and biological bases of fruit quality in American cranberry. To date, his work has yielded two first-author publications (with a third currently under review), four co-authored papers, and another in submission related to his ongoing research. Héctor has presented his work at national and international conferences and contributes to outreach and extension for the international *Vaccinium* community through the VacCAP project. His commitment to open science, community service, and inclusion is reflected in his contributions to open-source computational tools for high-throughput phenotyping, his service as a peer reviewer for scientific journals, and his active involvement in student organizations.

Pablo Moreno-Yaeger

Geoscience

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Pablo earned his MS in the Department of Geoscience at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he is now a Ph.D. Candidate. He holds a BSc in Geology and a minor in Renewable Energies from the University of Chile and a Teaching Diploma from the Universidad Catolica de Temuco (Chile), where he lectured and mentored dozens of students. His research focuses on the response of volcanoes to ice sheet growth and decay. Findings thus far indicate that volcanoes erupt less frequently during glaciation and more frequently following ice loss. Pablo seeks to answer how and why glaciation and deglaciation impact volcanic eruptions. Notably, Pablo has shown that glaciation temporarily inhibits eruptions, but that magma beneath a volcano erupts violently once the ice retreats. Because the research links climate and ice changes to volcanic activity, Pablo has been interviewed by several news media, including the BBC, CNN, and The Guardian. His work has been published in the *Geological Society of America Bulletin*, the *Journal of Geophysical Research*, and the *Bulletin of Volcanology*, which are very high-impact journals in Geosciences. Besides mentoring students on and off campus, Pablo is collaborating with several researchers on the impacts of ice in volcanic eruptions and on modeling the response. As part of this research, Pablo also leads a summer program for community college students in Temuco (Chile) and Oregon that shows them how their interests align with Geosciences and the connections between different systems (such as volcanoes and ice) in nature.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

University of Wisconsin-Madison 2026

Marquel Norton (they/any)

Counseling Psychology

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Marquel Norton is a doctoral candidate in Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison whose scholarship bridges Black trans liberation, affect theory, and participatory action research. Their dissertation, *Black Trans Youth Rising: A Study of Black Gender Expansive Youth Affectivism*, explores how Black trans youth transform emotion into collective strategy through art, organizing, and healing-centered community practices. Building upon this foundation, Marquel co-founded and participates in the Black Trans Youth Rising Collective, a collective of gender-expansive community-based scholars implementing participatory youth fellowship series. Marquel's transdisciplinary research advances models of wellness and leadership to resist extractive approaches to the study of marginalized communities. Their work has been featured in presentations at the American Psychological Association, the National Trans Health Summit, and the Association of Black Sociologists. They have co-authored publications on colonization, gender-expansive identities, and critical analysis and approaches to gender-affirming care and psychotherapy, as seen in the *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, *American Psychologist*, and the *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. They are currently seeking to publish more scholarship on critical consciousness, liberation psychology, youth participatory action research, and healing justice in their field. As both scholar and practitioner, Marquel's clinical and pedagogical approaches emphasize community accountability, collective care, and embodied methods of resistance. Their ongoing commitment is to transform psychology's research and training infrastructures through Black trans–centered methodologies that redefine how knowledge, care, and power circulate within and beyond the academy.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University 2026

Vinicius A. Cruz

Animal Sciences

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Vinicius A. Cruz is a Ph.D. candidate in Animal Sciences with concentration in ruminant nutrition and physiology at Virginia Tech, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Previously, he earned a bachelor of Science and Masters degree in Animal Sciences at Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro – Brazil, where he was awarded a scholarship from Capes-Brazil to study abroad in the United States, learning about equine nutrition and management (North Dakota State University) and beef cattle nutrition and management (University of California - Davis). In particular, he is interested in the fundamental question of how different management and nutritional strategies during gestation can impact not only cow/heifer reproductive performance, but also its impacts on productive traits of the offspring throughout their lives. Vinicius is an inducted member of the National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS) and contributes as member for both American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) and North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA), receiving the Teaching Award of Merit in 2023. Vinicius is a passionate educator and has actively served as a teaching assistant and instructor of record in many areas of animal sciences. Vinicius has also contributed to extension projects such as 4-H program seminars and Lee County reproduction event. Ultimately, Vinicius aspires to work as a professor in higher education, aspiring to improve lives through service, leadership and passion.

Aran Garnett-Deakin

Human Development and Family Science

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Aran Garnett-Deakin is a Ph.D. Candidate in Human Development and Family Science at Virginia Tech. Her research focuses on gender, identity, and meaning-making in family contexts. Her dissertation work examines how young men experience and navigate their family cultures of masculinity, paying particular attention to the ways families might encourage or restrict transformative masculinities. Aran has been recognized for her service and leadership within the field of family science by the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), which awarded her the Cindy Winter Scholarship in November 2025. She received a Bachelor of Science from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, where she was recognized with an Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award and NCFR Honors. Aran always seeks out new opportunities to grow and learn in her research, teaching, and service. She has been engaged in department and university-level service throughout her career at Virginia Tech. In addition to serving on the executive board of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate, she served as President of the Human Development and Family Science Graduate Student Association for two years. Ultimately, Aran aspires to remain in academia, leveraging community-based participatory research methods to explore the ways in which power hierarchies and patriarchy harm young men and how families might serve as the front line for combatting hegemonic masculinity.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University 2026

Dini Hajarrahmah

Hospitality & Tourism

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Dini Hajarrahmah is a Ph.D. candidate in Hospitality and Tourism Management at Virginia Tech, where her research examines regenerative tourism, social entrepreneurship, and innovation. She is the recipient of the 2024 Michael D. Olsen Memorial Graduate Fellowship in Strategic Management and the 2025 Feiertag HTM Virginia Tech Outstanding Doctoral Student Award. Her work explores how tourism actors (e.g., social entrepreneurs, destination management organizations, and local communities) mobilize change toward regenerative and socially just tourism systems. Two of her three dissertation articles have been published in leading journals, including *Annals of Tourism Research* and *Tourism Management*, contributing to scholarship on regenerative tourism, social movements, and value co-creation in tourism. Beyond research, Dini is actively engaged in teaching, leadership, service, and advocacy that bridge academic scholarship and community practice. She has taught Virginia Tech's Pathway undergraduate course on Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism, using experiential learning and community-engaged pedagogy to foster critical thinking and global awareness among students. Dini served as President of PERMIAS (the Indonesian Students Association) at Virginia Tech from 2025–2026, where she worked closely with the Cranwell International Center to support international student engagement and cross-cultural dialogue. She is also an active member of B Academics, a global community of scholars dedicated to research and advocacy for business as a force for good. Beyond academia, she is also a social entrepreneur and co-founded Wanderlust Indonesia and Barokah Coffee Shelter.

Mohammad H. Heydari

Environmental Design and Planning

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Mohammad H. Heydari is a Ph.D. candidate in Environmental Design and Planning at the Myers-Lawson School of Construction, Virginia Tech. His research focuses on the technological transformation of construction supply chains, examining how coordination challenges, information flow, and network relationships affect project delivery. His work investigates how organizations make decisions under uncertainty and how improved information-sharing practices can enhance project performance and reduce waste. Mohammad has been recognized as a Virginia Tech Diversity Scholar and has completed a dual Master's degree in Computer Science alongside his doctoral studies. He has also earned a Graduate Certificate in Future Professoriate from Virginia Tech, central to his passion for academic leadership and teaching excellence. Central to Mohammad's academic journey is his commitment to service and positive impact. He actively volunteers in initiatives that benefit students and served as a student member on the Graduate School Strategic Planning Committee, advocating for student perspectives. His service reflects his dedication to improving academic environments and supporting fellow graduate students. Mohammad aspires to work at the intersection of technology and construction, either in an innovative startup environment that creates solutions for industry challenges or in academia where he can continue advancing research while mentoring the next generation of scholars and practitioners.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University 2026

Blakely Lockhart

Translational Biology, Medicine, & Health

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Blakely Lockhart is a Ph.D. candidate in the Translational Biology, Medicine, and Health Program at Virginia Tech, where her research examines how nutritional exposures and caregiving environments shape neurodevelopmental trajectories, with an emphasis on translational research and populations historically underrepresented in biomedical science. She has contributed to peer reviewed publications, and both national and international conference presentations focused on mother-infant dyads, infant feeding behaviors, and interdisciplinary approaches to maternal and child health. Her research has been recognized with the FIT'NG Young Investigator Award, the James R. Carter Sr. Memorial Award for Translational Neuroscience, and she is a recent recipient of the Gerber Foundation Novice Research Grant. Prior to joining Virginia Tech, she received her Bachelor's of Science in neuroscience with minors in leadership and biology from Christopher Newport University, where she was a recipient of the Presidential Leadership Program Scholarship and the Honors Research Scholarship. Lockhart demonstrates leadership and service through her role as President of the Roanoke Graduate Student Association, representing graduate students across the Virginia Tech campus. In this capacity, she collaborates with institutional leadership, supports shared governance initiatives, and advances policies that strengthen graduate training, mentorship quality, and inclusive academic climates. Advocacy is a defining pillar of Lockhart's work. As an Early Career Policy Ambassador for the Society for Neuroscience, she participates in science policy, communication, and outreach efforts that connect research with public understanding and decision making. Through scholarship, character, leadership, service, and advocacy, her work reflects a sustained commitment to excellence, integrity, and nationwide impact.

Olivia Ryan

Engineering Education

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Olivia Ryan (she/her) is a Ph.D. candidate in Engineering Education at Virginia Tech. She holds a master's degree in Engineering Mechanics and a bachelor's degree in Engineering, with a specialization in Electrical Engineering and a minor in Mathematics. At VT, her research examines how mathematics-related curriculum structures shape students' pathways, time-to-degree, and experiences in engineering. Her work focuses on identifying and addressing barriers created by math placement, sequencing, and curriculum design, particularly for students who enter engineering but are not yet ready for Calculus 1. Olivia's scholarship includes multiple peer-reviewed journal articles and conference publications spanning topics such as math placement, the development of professional skills for engineering students, and middle-years engineering education. In addition to her research, Olivia has extensive teaching experience across undergraduate and graduate contexts, including serving as a graduate teaching assistant in first-year engineering, a teaching apprentice for a graduate-level engineering education course, and a co-instructor for a global engineering study abroad program. She has also served as the graduate student representative for her department, representing student perspectives in departmental decision-making, and as Co-Chair of the American Society for Engineering Education Student Division Best Paper Award. She is also a member of the Virginia Tech Academy for Outstanding Graduate Pedagogy. Together, her research, teaching, and service reflect a commitment to improving engineering education and expanding opportunities for students to thrive within it.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University 2026

Erica S. Shafer

Cognitive Neuroscience & Biopsychology

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Erica S. Shafer is a Ph.D. candidate in Psychology with a concentration in Cognitive Neuroscience and Biopsychology at Virginia Tech and is pursuing a Certificate in Gerontology. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Cognitive Science from the University of Virginia, where she was a recipient of the AccessUVA Scholarship. Her research examines the cognitive and neural mechanisms that support episodic memory across adulthood, with particular emphasis on how attentional control and strategic encoding contribute to age-related differences in memory performance. She integrates behavioral methods with EEG/ERP techniques to identify neural markers of attention and recollection that explain when and why encoding strategies are effective across the lifespan. Shafer has presented her work at national conferences, including the Psychonomic Society and the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, and has multiple co- and first-author publications and manuscripts in preparation. Her honors include the Powell Fellowship, the J. Frank Yates Student Travel Award, the S.J. Ritchey Endowed Scholarship, and the Cognitive Neuroscience Society Graduate Student Abstract Award. In addition to her research, Shafer serves as the Graduate Student Mentor Program Coordinator in the Psychology Department and is the founder of the Psychology Graduate Student Emergency Fund, which provides short-term financial assistance to graduate students facing unexpected hardship. She is committed to being both a rigorous researcher and an engaged community member and volunteers weekly with Virginia Tech Adult Day Services. Through her scholarship, leadership, and service, Shafer seeks to advance cognitive neuroscience research while promoting equity, mentorship, and access within the academic community.

Jessica R. Spence

Agricultural Leadership and Community Education

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Jessica R. Spence is an Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science research scholar, and a Ph.D. candidate at Virginia Tech's Department of Agricultural Leadership and Community Education. Her scholarship sits at the intersection of agricultural communications, international development, and gender equity in agriculture. Her doctoral research focuses on the lived experiences of smallholder farmers practicing conservation agriculture in Ghana, with particular attention to how gender dynamics shape access to resources, adoption of innovation, and agricultural outcomes. Using qualitative, multimethod approaches—including narrative inquiry and arts-based methods—her work is grounded in feminist and postcolonial frameworks and seeks to elevate voices that are often marginalized in agricultural research and policy. Beyond her research, Spence demonstrates a strong commitment to leadership, mentorship, and service within and beyond the academy. She led international education programs, supported cross-university partnerships in Sub-Saharan Africa, and contributed to efforts aimed at strengthening agricultural communications capacity globally. Her professional experiences living and conducting research in Africa have informed a scholarly approach rooted in cultural humility, ethical engagement, and advocacy for inclusive knowledge systems. Through her scholarship, teaching, and service, Ms. Spence exemplifies a commitment to academic excellence, leadership, character, and the creation of supportive environments that foster the success of sustainable agricultural systems.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University 2026

Rebecca Steele

Higher Education
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Rebecca Steele (she/they) is a Ph.D. candidate in the higher education program at Virginia Tech. Her dissertation research focuses on the experiences of neurodivergent medical school applicants and students. They have also conducted independent research on aerial circus as a form of inclusive physical activity. Rebecca has been recognized for her work with the “Dr. Aunt Peg” Margaret Driscoll Fellowship for Transformative Graduate Education (2023), the Roger and Debbie West Student Grant, and a Diversity Scholarship (2023). She participated in the Global Perspectives Program (2024) and earned a Future Professoriate graduate certificate as a result. They received their Bachelor of Science in sociology and Master of Science in biology from East Tennessee State University, where they were awarded the Quillen College of Medicine Department of Biomedical Sciences Scholarship Enhancement Award for Research, the Quillen College of Medicine Department of Biomedical Sciences Award for Teaching Excellence and Innovation, and the James H. Quillen Scholarship. They were also the runner-up in ETSU’s inaugural Three Minute Thesis Competition. Rebecca maintains her passion for science communication and teaching through volunteer work with Hokie Bug Fest and the 4-H Mobile Learning Labs. She aspires to work in a role that offers her ample opportunities to meet students where they are, promoting equity and fostering a love of science, education, and medicine, regardless of their age or stage in their educational journey.

Josh Thompson

Curriculum and Instruction, English Education

Josh Thompson is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in English Education at Virginia Tech. His research focuses on rural trans and queer adolescent literacies and critical place-based study abroad pedagogy for rural students. Josh’s scholarship has been published in research and practitioner journals like *English Journal*, *Study & Scrutiny: Research on Young Adult Literature*, and *The Rural Educator* as well as in several book chapters. He and colleagues won the Virginia English Journal Writing Award in 2025 for a research article detailing the influence of anti-trans-and-queer educational legislation and policies in Virginia on rural secondary English teachers’ practices. Prior to the Ph.D. program, Josh taught English language arts for seven years in rural and rural-serving public high schools in Virginia and received a High School Teacher of Excellence Award from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in 2021. He also served NCTE in various leadership capacities for which he was recognized with a 2024 Outstanding Service Award. In addition to professional service, Josh is a community advocate, especially for his local trans and queer community. He is a co-founder of Community Pride in Blacksburg—an organization focused on cultivating trans-and-queer-affirming spaces in the New River Valley—and has led book clubs and writing workshops for rural students in his region. In 2025, NCTE awarded Josh the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy and Leadership Award to honor his significant contributions to the trans and queer community as well as the literacy education profession.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Washington University in Saint Louis 2026

Joseph Adjei

Plant and Microbial Biosciences

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Joseph Adjei is a Ph.D. candidate in the Plant and Microbial Biosciences (PMB) program seeking to explore intracellular/intercellular communication within organisms, with the aim of improving food security and human condition. He is a deaf student from Ghana, West Africa. Joseph received his BS with Honors in Biomedical Science from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 2022 and was a Sasakawa-DeCaro Scholar. He joined the Burch-Smith Lab at the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center as a remote data analyst. Besides research, he mentors and engages in social development causes in his community, and he hopes to spearhead science education for the Deaf in Ghana.

Marlene Campos Guerrero

Cancer Biology

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Marlene Campos Guerrero is currently a PhD candidate in Cancer Biology at WashU working in Dr. Stephanie Markovina's lab. Marlene received her BS in Microbiology from Kansas State University, where she conducted virology research focused on reprogramming vaccinia virus to target cancer cells and received two Johnson Cancer Center Awards for her work. Her PhD research focuses on cervical cancer progression, invasion/metastasis, and the treatment resistance biomarker SERPINB3 to elucidate novel therapeutic treatments for patients. Marlene is also passionate about science communication and outreach, which led to her selection for the Pivot314 internship program, where she interned with the BioSTL Education to Workforce team. As a first-generation student, Marlene has served multiple leadership roles throughout her academic journey including president of the WashU SACNAS (Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science) chapter, as well as graduate student organizations GALNACS (the Graduate Association for Latinx, Native Americans and Caribbean Students, and ProSPER (Promoting Science Policy, Education, and Research). Her commitment to outreach has led her to participate in several public science demonstration events at the science center and greater STL community. Marlene actively seeks opportunities to mentor the next generation of scientists, especially those of underrepresented backgrounds while working to make meaningful contributions to the field of oncology.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Washington University in Saint Louis 2026

Qingwei Niu

Molecular Cell Biology

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Qingwei Niu is a Ph.D. candidate in the Molecular Cell Biology program within the Division of Biology and Biomedical Sciences at WashU. She earned her bachelor's degree from Rutgers University and her master's degree from Johns Hopkins University, and is jointly mentored by Dr. Polina Lishko and Dr. Rui Zhang. Qingwei's research integrates structural biology, ion channel physiology, reproductive biology, and parasitology to investigate how essential molecular systems—most notably the inwardly rectifying potassium channel Kir7.1 and the ciliary and flagellar cytoskeleton—govern signaling, motility, and ion homeostasis across diverse biological contexts. Using high-resolution cryo-electron microscopy (cryo-EM) and electrophysiology, her work has revealed molecular mechanisms underlying key physiological processes, including cerebrospinal fluid regulation, fertility, and vision, as well as pathological conditions such as ciliopathies, parasitic infections, and age-related blindness. Her research has resulted in multiple high-impact publications, including papers in *Cell*, *Nature*, and *Science*. She has been invited to present at national and international conferences. Her work bridges fundamental discovery and translational relevance, advancing understanding of conserved cellular mechanisms with broad implications for human health. Qingwei is committed to leadership and service. She mentors trainees at multiple career stages, contributes to graduate education and recruitment, and supports collaborative research efforts across laboratories. Qingwei's long-term goal is to build an academic career centered on mentoring the next generation of scientists and contributing to a more inclusive and impactful scientific enterprise.

Anthony J. Nixon, Jr.

Public Health Sciences

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Anthony J. Nixon, Jr. is a Ph.D. candidate in the Public Health Sciences program within the School of Public Health at Washington University in St. Louis and a social and perinatal epidemiologist focused on family health and family formation. His research focuses on Black fathers, their roles, and contributions to perinatal health and well-being, exploring how race, gender, and socioeconomic status influence fathering experiences and health outcomes. His work bridges public health, epidemiology, and family systems by examining the impact of fathering on family health outcomes. He uses community-based participatory approaches and mixed methods, including quantitative epidemiologic analyses and qualitative research. In addition to his research, Anthony serves as a Student Representative on the Governing Council for the School of Public Health at Washington University in St. Louis and as a Race & Ethnicity Scholar with the Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity. He is also President of the Student–Postdoctoral Committee for the Society for Epidemiologic Research (SER) and a Graduate Research Fellow with the American Institute for Boys and Men. Anthony holds a Bachelor's of Science (BS) in Biology from Morehouse College with honors and a Master's of Public Health (MPH) in Epidemiology from The Ohio State University. He is dedicated to advancing health equity and social justice with a focus on improving health outcomes for marginalized communities.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Washington University in Saint Louis 2026

Meles Weldegebriel

Electrical & Systems Engineering

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Dr. Meles Gebreyesus Weldegebriel earned his PhD in Electrical Engineering from Washington University in St. Louis. His research focuses on wireless communications and spectrum coexistence, with emphasis on Pseudonymetry, a privacy-preserving protocol that enables device accountability under extremely low signal-to-noise ratio conditions. Through this work, he aims to promote fair, responsible, and cooperative use of shared spectrum resources. His research combines theoretical modeling with practical over-the-air experimentation using software-defined radios and large wireless testbeds, including field trials at the Owens Valley Radio Observatory, where his work shows real impact in protecting scientific and critical spectrum users. He has published peer-reviewed papers in IEEE conferences and journals on dynamic spectrum access and interference management. Before his doctoral studies, Dr. Meles spent more than ten years in academia at Mekelle University, Ethiopia, including service as Dean of the Mekelle Institute of Technology, where he worked to strengthen research capacity, expand educational opportunities, and support student success.

Elizabeth J. Carlen

Biology

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Elizabeth J. Carlen is a postdoctoral research fellow with the Living Earth Collaborative and the Biology Department at WashU. She earned her Ph.D. in biology from Fordham University in New York City. Her research focuses on how cities shape the evolution of urban wildlife, revealing that humans have profound impacts on urban wildlife populations. At WashU, Dr. Carlen examines how environmental racism creates unequal urban landscapes that, in turn, shape the evolution and ecology of eastern gray squirrels. Her research demonstrates that racial policies including redlining continue to influence genetic diversity and population structure in urban wildlife decades after implementation. This place-based, community-driven work has been published in over a dozen journals including *Nature Cities*, *Ecology & Evolution*, and *People & Nature*, earning her the Spark Award from the Association for Women in Science and the Early Career Investigator Award from the American Society of Naturalists. Beyond research, Dr. Carlen is committed to advocacy and service, serving on diversity committees for the Society for the Study of Evolution and American Society of Naturalists where she successfully championed gender-neutral restrooms and free menstrual products at conferences. She has mentored over two dozen undergraduates and several graduate students through independent research, earning the Outstanding Postdoc Mentor Award from WashU. She enjoys creating mixed media art that celebrates diversity in science, with her piece "Queer Kingdoms" featured in the inaugural diversity zine published by the American Society of Naturalists.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Washington University in Saint Louis 2026

Pallavi Chhabra

Education

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Pallavi Chhabra is a postdoctoral research associate in the Translational Fellows Program in Education at WashU. She earned her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on transforming educational systems by examining how institutional structures shape teaching and learning in increasingly digital contexts, with particular attention to amplifying voices traditionally marginalized in education policy and practice. By centering perspectives traditionally excluded from research conversations, her scholarship challenges deficit narratives, repositions diverse stakeholders (including students, families, communities, teachers, and school leaders) as holders of valuable knowledge. Her scholarship generates actionable insights for creating more equitable classrooms and education systems. At WashU, Dr. Chhabra builds research-practice partnerships with school districts and research organizations to address critical challenges including achievement gaps in math and literacy, exclusionary discipline practices, chronic absenteeism, and teacher preparedness with digital technologies. Her collaborative approach brings together policy and practitioner perspectives to co-design evidence-based solutions that sustain equity for underserved populations. Her scholarship has been published in reputable journals, and she regularly presents at national conferences, including AERA, CIES, SREE, and NNERPP. Beyond research, Dr. Chhabra is committed to building inclusive communities and advancing equity at the institutional level. As treasurer of WashU Postdoc Society and past President of C&I International Student Association, she advocates for systems-level solutions to challenges faced by international and early career researchers. Her work reflects compassionate leadership through contemplative practices including yoga, mindfulness, and reflective awareness workshops at conferences and community spaces.

Kevin Hurtado

Nephrology

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Kevin Hurtado is a postdoctoral research scholar in the Division of Nephrology at WashU. He earned his Ph.D. in Pharmacology and Toxicology from the University of Arizona. His research focuses on metabolic dysfunction in acute and chronic kidney injury, with particular emphasis on the role of peroxisomal fatty acid oxidation in renal proximal tubule injury and disease progression. At WashU, Dr. Hurtado investigates renal metabolism in the context of both acute and chronic kidney injury. His work has been supported by an NIH-funded metabolism T32 training grant, and he is currently an American Heart Association postdoctoral fellow. His undergraduate and graduate training led to first- and middle-author peer-reviewed publications in high-impact journals, and his research has received awards at national conferences. Beyond research, Dr. Hurtado is committed to leadership, advocacy, and service through his role as President of the WashU Postdoctoral Society, where he represents postdoctoral researchers and works to enhance professional development, wellbeing, and institutional engagement. He is also dedicated to mentorship and scholarship, actively mentoring undergraduate students during summer research programs and throughout the academic year, with a particular emphasis on encouraging higher education among first-generation students and fostering collaborative research environments.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Washington University in Saint Louis 2026

Jessica S. Samuel

African & African American Studies

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Jessica S. Samuel is a postdoctoral research scholar in the Department of African & African American Studies at WashU. She earned her Ph.D. in American Studies from Boston University. Her research focuses on the interconnectedness of environmental justice, educational opportunity and political self-determination across the African Diaspora. At WashU, Dr. Samuel has been working on her first book manuscript tentatively titled *From Virgin Land to Virgin Islands: How Colonial Myths Haunt Educational Aims on St. John*, where she examines the ways conservation impedes educational opportunity on the 20 square-mile island. Her scholarship has been published with such outlets as *Environment and History*, *Environment and Planning F*, and *History Workshop*. In addition to working on her scholarship, Dr. Samuel serves as conference chair for the Black Women's Studies Association. In 2025, she received the Maya Angelou Postdoctoral Award for Excellence in Leadership. Dr. Samuel is committed to bridging the gap between scholarship and civic life through an ethic of radical love. Currently, she sits on the board for Ujima, a food justice nonprofit working in north St. Louis city and also serves as education co-chair for Right to Democracy, a decolonial advocacy group dedicated to confronting American colonialism in the unincorporated territories of the U.S. In the past, Dr. Samuel served as an appointed board member of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Racial Imbalance Advisory Council. Through her education consultancy, R.E.A.L., she provides identity-affirming personal and professional development to students and those who serve them.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Yale University 2026

Jack Carew

Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases

Jack Carew is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases with a concentration in malaria epidemiology at Yale University. His research focuses on the emergence and spread of artemisinin-resistant malaria in East Africa. He is currently a Fulbright-Fogarty and Global Health Emerging Scholars Fellow in Uganda, where he is investigating the use of xenosurveillance for monitoring the spread of partially artemisinin-resistant malaria with colleagues at Gulu University and Makerere University. Before beginning his Ph.D., Jack studied comparative literature and global health at Middlebury College. He then completed a Fulbright research project investigating relationships between environmental variables and cutaneous leishmaniasis transmission, before earning his Master of Public Health from the University of Vermont. Jack has worked extensively in Jordan, including through collaborations with the Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network, the Jordan Breast Cancer Program, and Hashemite University, on brucellosis, breast cancer, and leishmaniasis epidemiology, respectively. He has also studied molecular determinants of malaria transmission and anopheline vector biology at the Harvard School of Public Health and at Centro Internacional de Entrenamiento e Investigaciones Médicas in Cali, Colombia. He speaks Arabic, Spanish, French, and English. On campus, Jack serves as a representative to the Graduate Student Assembly, as well as the Student Assembly of Yale School of Public Health. He is passionate about teaching and has designed and taught graduate level coursework at the University of Vermont and engaged with numerous teaching workshops through the Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning at Yale. Outside of Yale, Jack serves as the volunteer Director of Academic Partnerships and Global Health at Respond Crisis Translation, a nonprofit organization focused on providing interpretation and translation services to asylum seekers and refugees.

Olivia N. Kachingwe

Social and Behavioral Sciences

Olivia Kachingwe, PhD, MPH, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Yale School of Public Health. Her research focuses on understanding how healthcare providers, peers, family members (particularly fathers), and technology can better support the sexual and reproductive health of Black youth and young adults. Most recently, she is conducting a study focused on improving the sexual and reproductive health communication between youth, their parents/guardians and pediatricians supported by a newly developed mobile application. This study is funded by the National Institutes of Health's National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) KL2 program. A central component of Dr. Kachingwe's research is strong partnerships with community-based organizations and providers. She works closely with a Father's Place Prince George's County, Inc. (in Beltsville, Maryland) and My People Clinical Services (in Hartford, Connecticut) to help evaluate and strengthen their fatherhood initiatives focused on involved parenting and improved family functioning. Beyond research, scholarship and service, Dr. Kachingwe is the director of the KaCHANGE Lab, where she provides hands on research opportunities and mentorship to MPH students interested in community-based maternal and child health research among marginalized youth populations. Lab members have co-authored peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations and acquired research skills vital in their success once leaving Yale. Dr. Kachingwe also serves as the academic advisor for the Yale Black Public Health Association, founded in 2022, and each Spring teaches Sexual and Reproductive Health Justice in the Yale School of Public Health. Fostering rigorous research opportunities for students traditionally underrepresented in the academy and advocating for equitable and inclusive healthcare systems is core to Dr. Kachingwe's teaching pedagogy, research and scholarship.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Yale University 2026

Kohar Avakian

American Studies

Kohar Avakian is a Ph.D. candidate in American Studies at Yale University. She earned a B.A. in History, modified with Native American Studies, from Dartmouth College. Her dissertation project, “Before and After America: Diasporic Indigeneity, Familial Reparations, and the Afterlives of Genocide,” examines American history through the politics of Indigenous cultural preservation, genocide recognition, and “impossible archives,” artifacts and testimonies that survive outside of traditional academic institutions. Anchored in New England, her research traces the migration journeys and photographic practices of the Nipmuc, Black, and Armenian diasporas of Worcester, Massachusetts. Avakian's work blends archival research, oral histories, visual texts, and land-based pedagogies, conducting fieldwork alongside the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band Land Stewardship Committee, The Hidden Census: Data as Resistance, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, and more. She currently teaches the history course Wilderness in the North American Imagination: Naturalizing Settler Colonialism. Throughout her teaching career, she has developed culturally-responsive curricula for diverse classrooms, including Native high school students at UMass Amherst, refugee learners at Worcester's Adult Learning Center, and undergraduate students at Yale. An alumna of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, she contributes to diversifying the academy as a fellow for Yale's Office for Graduate Student Engagement and Development. Avakian's art and scholarship have appeared in Boundless: Native American Abundance in Art and Literature (Amherst College Press, 2025) and in We Are All Armenian: Voices from the Diaspora (University of Texas Press, 2023). In 2025, she produced We Hold These Truths, a site-specific solo exhibition at The Tender Artspace in Concord, MA. Using interdisciplinary methods, Avakian conducts interviews, develops ArcGIS StoryMaps, produces pedagogical podcast episodes, facilitates archival research and museum sessions, and creates scholarship that functions as an ongoing archive for her communities and homelands. Across research, teaching, and public engagement, Avakian demonstrates leadership, advocacy, and service by designing interventions that preserve marginalized histories, center community agency, and foster historical repair inside and outside the classroom.

Maya L. Foster

Biomedical Engineering

Maya L. Foster recently earned her Ph.D. in biomedical engineering at Yale University on March 6, 2026, under the guidance of Dr. Dustin Scheinost and her thesis committee, Drs. Richard Carson, Nicha Dvornek, and Xenophon Papademetris. Her thesis research focused on applying computational methods to large-scale brain imaging datasets to identify the brain correlates underlying and associated with psychiatric disorders and their symptoms. Maya's scholarship has gained recognition through conference presentations and publications in scientific journals, including a first-author paper featured on the cover of Neuropsychopharmacology. Notably, her proposal to facilitate a roundtable discussion on integrating siloed areas of neuroimaging research to advance understanding of brain physiology-behavior relationships was selected for presentation at the premier conference of her field. Such contributions have earned her various accolades over the past few years, including the Quad Fellowship, the Yale Center for Clinical Investigation predoctoral award for translational science, and recognition through the NIH-funded AIM-AHEAD & NCATS Training Program. Outside of academics, Maya is dedicated to community engagement and mentorship. She has held professional development and advocacy leadership roles in affinity groups, taught undergraduate students, mentored high school summer research interns, and contributed to her community as a Graduate Center Community Building Fellow. Recently, she played a key role in organizing an in-person conference for the Black in Neuro non-profit organization in Fall 2025. Maya's career aspirations include fostering global collaborations and spearheading education-driven initiatives. Maya is committed to advocating for the importance of research intent as a best practice to maximize societal impact. She aims to operationalize ethical frameworks within broader scientific practices, ensuring that research findings can equitably benefit all of those in need.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Yale University 2026

Thomas J. Near

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Thomas J. Near is a Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Bingham Oceanographic Curator at the Peabody Museum of Natural History, and Head of Saybrook College at Yale University. His research focuses on the evolutionary biology and phylogenetics of fishes with particular emphasis on geographic patterns of speciation, the diversification of Antarctic fishes, and the taxonomy of ray-finned fishes. His work has elucidated the evolutionary origins of antifreeze proteins in Antarctic fishes and patterns of diversification across a diverse array of lineages within the fish tree of life. Professor Near's scholarship is reflected in more than 205 peer-reviewed publications. He has described 13 new fish species, and his research has been featured in prestigious journals such as *Nature* and *Science*. Numerous grants from the National Science Foundation have supported his work. In leadership, Professor Near served as Chair of the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from 2018 to 2024, leading the department to a #4 national ranking in U.S. News & World Report's Best Ecology Programs. During his tenure, he recruited seven of the current 17 ladder faculty members. He transformed the department's culture to be more inclusive and transparent, making EEB one of Yale's most diverse STEM faculties. As Head of Saybrook College from 2015 to 2026, he transformed a struggling operation into one of Yale's top-ranked residential colleges, living in residence with his family in a community of over 500 students. Professor Near's commitment to service and advocacy is exemplified through his roles as Director of Undergraduate Studies for the EEB department and Chair of the Faculty Committee on Athletics. A first-generation, low-income student from the Lathrop Homes-Hamlin Park neighborhood in Chicago, he has been a dedicated mentor to FGLI students. He has championed educational innovation, including the creation of a pre-medical track in EEB that tripled undergraduate enrollment. His exceptional work in hiring strategy, supporting junior colleagues, and advancing inclusion earned him the 2024 Faculty of Arts and Sciences Dean's Award for Inclusion and Belonging. In 2024, he was elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Binyam Mogessie

Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology & Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences

Binyam Mogessie is an Assistant Professor of Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology at Yale University, with a secondary appointment in Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences at Yale School of Medicine. His research explores the fundamental mechanisms that ensure accurate chromosome segregation during mammalian reproduction and how failures in these processes contribute to infertility, developmental disorders, and reproductive aging. Dr. Mogessie's laboratory combines quantitative live-cell imaging, molecular perturbation techniques, and biochemical strategies to understand how cytoskeletal systems organize and protect the genome during female meiosis and early embryo development. His research has uncovered previously unknown actin-based structures that assist chromosome segregation in mammalian eggs and has offered new mechanistic insights into how cytoskeletal and chromosomal systems work together to maintain genome stability. More generally, his work aims to identify the molecular causes of age-related aneuploidy in human eggs and to discover regulatory pathways that support reproductive health. Dr. Mogessie completed his undergraduate degree in biochemistry and cell biology at Jacobs University in Germany and received his Ph.D. from the Institute of Cancer Research in London. He conducted postdoctoral research at the Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge and at the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry in Göttingen before starting his independent research program. His research has received several honors and fellowships, including the Pew Biomedical Scholars Award, the Human Frontier Science Program Young Investigator Award, and the Wellcome Trust and Royal Society Sir Henry Dale Fellowship. It is also supported by funding from the National Institutes of Health. Alongside his research, Dr. Mogessie is dedicated to mentorship, leadership, and expanding opportunities in scientific training. At Yale, he mentors undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral researchers and helps with graduate admissions and training programs that improve access and fairness in biomedical science. Through his scholarship, mentorship, and service, Dr. Mogessie aims to promote scientific discovery and support the growth of future scientists.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Yale University 2026

Catherine Lima Chantre

Public Health

Catherine Lima Chantre is a candidate for the Ph.D. in Public Health at Yale University School of Public Health. Her dissertation research focuses on the impact of forced displacement on HIV risk for young adults internally displaced from an ongoing conflict in northern Mozambique. In her research, Catherine uses a diversity of methods (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods), all of which feed into the interdisciplinary nature of her work, with a focus on HIV epidemiology, global mental health, and traumatic stress studies. Catherine's research interests stem from her previous service work, most of which she has conducted in organizations serving refugee and immigrant populations. Through both scholarship and community engagement, Catherine seeks to elevate the voices and experiences of refugee populations and contribute to more equitable systems of care. Alongside these efforts, she works to promote integration in both her professional and personal spheres by fostering cultural awareness and celebrating diversity. She believes that meaningful integration strengthens communities and enriches academic spaces by encouraging collaboration across cultures, disciplines, and perspectives. These values shape not only her work but also her approach to leadership, service, and community building. Beyond her academic work, she is committed to translating research into action through sustained engagement with the communities most affected by health disparities. By building partnerships across disciplines and communities, she hopes to contribute to solutions that are inclusive, community-informed, and sustainable. Her long-term goal is to continue integrating research, service, and advocacy to advance health equity and support systems that allow all communities to thrive.

Dalena Ngo

History of Science and Medicine

Dalena Ngo is a candidate for the Ph.D. in History of Science and Medicine at Yale University. She did her undergraduate work at St. Olaf College in Biology and American Studies and received an M.A. from the University of California, Merced in History/Critical Race and Ethnic Studies. Her research focuses on the intersection of critical university studies, academic shared governance, and institutional politics of care, exploring how the university/hospital dyad operates as a site of contestation, contradiction, and care. Recently she published an essay on diagnosis and misdiagnoses for the Sage Encyclopedia on Critical Refugee Studies, she is also working on a podcast and co-edited volume on the history of the university. Her research on care in the university is grounded in her university service as a fellow in the Office of Student Accessibility Services, as the graduate fellow in the Office of the Secretary and Vice President for University Life, as co-founder of the BIPOC Graduate Student Collective, and as a member of the Committee for Addressing the Legacy of Slavery. Heavily influencing her work is her participation in the UC Ethnic Studies Council which seeks to bring Ethnic Studies curriculum to K-12 in California as well as the Community Histories Lab at the School of Medicine. Through her involvement on the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) Executive Board, she operates as a key interlocuter between the administration and students and her contributions to the Health, Humanities, and History Working Group as the co-chair breaks down disciplinary barriers in bringing together historians and medical students. Outside of the university, she is the co-chair of the Graduate and Early Career Caucus for the History of Science Society and the Student Councilor for the American Studies Association.



National Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Inductees

Yale University 2026

Tyler Johnson

Physics

Tyler Johnson is a postdoctoral associate at Yale University in the Physics Department and Wright Laboratory. His work centers around the development of Rydberg atom-based microwave photon sensors for the axion direct-detection experiment RAY and cryogenics for the ALPHA experiment. Additionally, he works on the neutrinoless double beta decay experiments CUORE and CUPID. He received a PhD in physics from Duke University in 2025. His doctoral research focuses on developing novel particle detectors to study neutrino-nuclear interactions, specifically elucidating the existence of a new way to split the atom with neutrinos called neutrino-induced nuclear fission or “nuFission.” Tyler was an Arms Control Fellow for the Stanford US-Russia Forum, Alfred Sloan Foundation Minority PhD Scholar, NNSA Anti-neutrino PhD Fellow, Robert C. Richardson Fellow, Goshaw Family Fellow, and previously a Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellow. At Duke, he sat on the Finance Committee for the Board of Trustees, the Capital Sub-Committee in service of the Finance Committee, the Board of Trustees Strategic Engagement Program, Duke’s University Center for Exemplary Mentoring Advisory Board, President’s Council on Black Affairs, the Advisory Committee on Investment Responsibility, the Search Committee for the Trinity Dean of Arts and Sciences, and the Young Trustee Nominating Committee. He also spent time at Italy’s National Institute for Nuclear Physics, Fermi National Accelerator Lab, and Oak Ridge National Lab. Tyler received his Bachelor’s degree in physics from the University of Chicago.

Paul Turner

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Dr. Paul E. Turner is the Rachel Carson Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Yale University, and Microbiology faculty member at Yale School of Medicine. Turner obtained a BA in Biology (1988) from University of Rochester and a PhD in Microbial Evolution (1995) from Michigan State University, and he completed postdoctoral studies at National Institutes of Health, University of Valencia in Spain, and University of Maryland-College Park, before joining Yale in 2001. Turner’s research concerns microbial evolutionary genetics and genomics, to elucidate how microbes undergo changes in their genes and traits when adapting to overcome environmental challenges. To do so, he uses a highly interdisciplinary approach, employing concepts/tools from molecular biology, microbiology, computational biology, genomics and mathematical modeling. Turner conducts research on mosquito-borne and directly transmitted virus pathogens, to foster better predictions of when and why certain viruses emerge to cause dangerous epidemics and pandemics in humans. Turner also examines the problem of antibiotic resistance evolution in bacterial pathogens, helping to address this global health concern by developing technologies such as phage therapy where viruses that specifically attack bacteria are used to combat drug-resistant infections. This effort is entrepreneurial and translational, leading to biotechnology patents, the founding of a startup company, and tests of experimental new phage-based drugs in emergency patient treatments and in clinical trials. Turner previously served as Chair and as Director of Graduate Studies in his department, and as Yale’s Interim Dean of Science. He was Director of Yale’s Quantitative Biology Institute, and he currently serves as Director of the Center for Phage Biology and Therapy at Yale. Turner is active in science-communication outreach to the public, and in programs where Yale faculty collaborate with K-12 teachers to improve STEMM education in underserved public schools in New Haven and across the country. Turner is a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology, U.S. National Academy of Sciences, American Academy of Arts & Sciences, and American Philosophical Society.



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