

Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences / Fall 2021 Alumni Newsletter



A Message from Dean Cooley

November 22, 2021

Dear Alumni,

This fall semester feels especially joyful as our beautiful Yale campus comes alive again after the disruptions and uncertainties of the worst months of the pandemic. I am equally inspired by Yale's launch of the [For Humanity](#) campaign, which will include the goal of transforming graduate education at Yale.

With the pandemic slowly ebbing, it is a good time to take stock of where we are, how far we have come, and what we would like to achieve next...

[Read Dean Cooley's message.](#)



Yale Launches *For Humanity* Campaign

Yale kicked off the public phase of [For Humanity](#), a \$7 million capital campaign to engage the Yale community and raise financial support for the university's academic mission, with a spirited [broadcast](#) from the Yale Schwarzman Center earlier this month.

[Read more.](#)

Diversity News: NIH Grant for Training Future Biomedical Scientists

The GSAS Office for Graduate Student Development and Diversity (OGSDD) in collaboration with the Yale Biological and Biomedical Sciences Program (BBS) was recently rewarded grant funding in the amount of \$1.4 million by the **National Institutes of Health** to support a **Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP)** at Yale University. The NIH PREP will provide underrepresented participants with a one-year program of faculty-mentored research training and professional skills development aimed at preparing them for entry into rigorous biomedical, research-focused Ph.D or M.D./Ph.D. programs.

The long-term goal of the NIH PREP is to expand the pool of well-trained, diverse biomedical scientists with the range of perspectives needed to address important problems in human health and disease, including health disparities.

[See this snapshot](#) for an overview of diversity efforts at the Graduate School.



Perspectives: Conversations with Alumni

December 1, 2021

8:00 PM ET / By Zoom

[Click to REGISTER NOW](#)

Join us for the next *Perspectives* webinar featuring NASA research engineer, **Lyndsey McMillon-Brown, '19 Ph.D.** (Chemical Engineering). Dr. Brown is the principal investigator of a \$2.5 million early career initiative developing a new class of solar cells that can be manufactured in space and on the moon. [Read more](#) about Dr. Brown and [tune in](#) to learn how organizations can make research spaces more inclusive.

Charles D. Brown II, '19 Ph.D. (Physics) was the inaugural speaker for the discussion series which first broadcast on October 27. He is a National Academies of Science Engineering and Medicine Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow in the Ultracold Atomic Physics Group in the Department of Physics at the University of California, Berkeley. [Read more](#) about Dr. Brown and his [#BlackinPhysics](#) initiative.



Cross Campus Mentorship Program

Cross Campus is Yale's online networking, community-building, and mentoring program -- it connects alumni directly to students and other alumni, creating a forum for social

connections and career advice. Most importantly, it is a way to help students with the knowledge you wished you had when you were at Yale. Since 2020, thousands of alumni have volunteered for more than 1,500 one-to-one 3-month mentorships to support our students. To join the effort, [sign up here](#).

[Read about the student-mentor partnership](#) between **Maria-Elena Liosi (6th year, Chemistry)** pictured left and **Gregg Keaney, Ph.D. '05 (Chemistry)**.



Promoting Science in New Haven

In October, GSAS students gave New Haven middle-school students a behind-the-scenes look at the work done in some of our unique lab spaces as part of **Yale West Campus Showcase**. [Read more](#) about this powerful way our students made a positive impact on local schools and communities. (*Nia Harmon pictured left. Photo credit: Jon Atherton*).



Student Research Spotlight

Aanchal Saraf is a fifth-year graduate student in American Studies with a certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. To adapt to the pandemic, she made an unexpected research pivot from Hawaiian honeycreepers to the persistence of Cold War militarization in Micronesia. [Read about Aanchal's butterfly effect...](#)

Accolades

Yale Chemistry Ph.D. candidate **Nia Harmon** (*pictured above left*) was recently awarded a **2021 Rising Solar Fellowship** by the Women of Renewable Industries and Sustainable Energy (WRISE) and GRID Alternatives. [Read more](#) about Nia and this exciting award for diverse students interested in solar-related careers.

Ana-Maurine Lara, a graduate of Yale's combined Ph.D. program in African American Students and Anthropology won this year's **Gregory Bateson Prize** awarded by the **Society for Cultural Anthropology (SCA)** for innovative ethnographic writing. The SCA lauded her book [Queer Freedom: Black Sovereignty](#), based on more than three years of field work in the Dominican Republic.

ICYMI (In Case You Missed It)

MacArthur Foundation Fellowships

In September, 'genius grants' were bestowed upon [three members of the Yale community](#), including a current graduate student and a GSAS alum.

The Amodio Rodeo

An historic [38-game Jeopardy winning streak](#) ended on October 11 when Matt Amodio (5th year, Computer Science) closed down his astounding run on the popular gameshow. After garnering fame, fortune, and not a few [romantic overtures](#), it's back to the lab and his dissertation for the time being.

Tasty Business

Rachel Naa-Du Laryea, a doctoral student in the joint degree program in Anthropology and African American Studies, attracted the attention of [The New York Times](#) when she opened a new food stall in the Dekalb Market Hall in Downtown Brooklyn. The shop, [Kelewele](#), features delicious food in a style true to Laryea's Ghanaian heritage.

Nature's Little On-Off Switch

Graduate students **Yangqi Gu** and **Vishok Srikanth**, researchers in the [Malvankar Lab](#), helped find an unexpected structure that helps power nature's 'electrical grid.' [Read more](#) about how they used cryo-electron microscopy to reveal bacterial hairs that create nanowires and a corresponding molecular switch that had been previously hidden.



I am for _____

Are you for the arts? For the humanities? Social science insights or scientific breakthroughs? GSAS alumni around the world and across disciplines bring their purpose and passion to the world. In light of Yale's *For Humanity* campaign, we invite you to click on the image above to answer the question:

What are **you** for?

Lux et Veritas

Yale

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