MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY | HONORS SCHOOL

GRADUATES AND AWARD WINNERS 2021

2021 JANE FREED AWARDS

All Honors Thesis /Capstone projects receiving a grade of B+ or above are considered for the prestigious Freed Award. Faculty members of the Honors Council select the most outstanding student work based on originality of thesis, depth and range of research, clarity of argument, and quality of presentation.

THE JANE FREED AWARD FOR BEST THESIS, WINNER

JAMES R. WATSON, III

History and English; Minor in Race and Ethnic Studies
First Reader: Dr. Hettie Williams
Second Reader: Dr. Frank Fury

The Rose that Grew From Harlem: Tracking the Pessimism within 20th Century African American Protest Literature

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THE JANE FREED AWARD FOR BEST THESIS, HONORABLE MENTIONS

VICTORIA CATTELONA

Political Science
First Reader: Dr. Joseph Patten
Second Reader: Dr. Stephen Chapman

Creating Citizens: Civic Education's Role in Encouraging Youth Voter Turnout

ROMAN VAI

Business; Marketing, Management and Decision Science
First Reader: Professor P. Jeffrey Christakos
Second Reader: Professor Maiya Furgason

Creating a Marketable Cost Structure for New York Television and Film Production

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THE JANE FREED AWARD FOR BEST THESIS, FINALISTS

JESSE BRAGGER `21

Biology with concentration in Molecular Physiology
First Reader: Dr. Megan Phifer-Rixey
Second Reader: Dr. Richard Bastian

Differences in Behavior Among House Mice from Different Climates

EVAN JERALOMAN `20

Chemistry
First Reader: Dr. Joseph Patten
Second Reader: Dr. Stephen Chapman

The Opioid Crisis: Treating Opioid Addiction with Opioids

SUBAH SONI

Biology with concentration in Molecular Physiology
First Reader: Dr. Dorothy Lobo
Second Reader: Dr. James Mack

The Effects of Kumquat Oil on the Proliferation and Viability of Cancer Cell Lines and Normal Human Fibroblast Cells

2021 DR. WILLIAM P. MITCHELL AWARD

RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS BY A GRADUATE OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Inspired by the work and legacy of the founding head of the then Honors Program Dr. William P. Mitchell, and in his honor, alumnus Terence Bodak, Jr., '12, '18M established and has generously supported this award that annually recognizes a superior graduate for their contributions to the Honors School. Senior honors students who have achieved a 3.5 GPA in their major and who meet at least two of the following criteria may be included for consideration: active member of the Honors community, member of the Peer Mentoring Program for at least two years, represented the Honors School at an academic conference, served on the Honors School Association, or member of the Honors School Newsletter for at least four issues. The award winners are selected by the Honors School Dean.

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Melissa Lauria `21

English

Melissa has been an active and enthusiastic member of the Honors School since she first arrived on campus. She is a long-time Peer Mentor and has consistently represented the Honors School at Open Houses and recruiting events. Her research had been accepted for presentation at the Northeast Regional Honors Conference where she would have represented Monmouth an academic conference, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, she was unable to attend in person. Melissa has been a consistent and universally liked and respected member of our community, and has consistently represented the Honors School positively and wholeheartedly!

Noah Rottler-Gurley

Computer Science

Noah has also been a fixture in the Honors School since he arrived on campus in his first year. As a Peer Mentor, he has been a leader and a tremendous resource to his mentees. After attending a Northeast Regional Honors Conference, Noah applied and was selected to be a presenter at a subsequent conference; however due to the Covid-19 pandemic, he had to present virtually. Noah is part of the team who chose the first-ever group thesis project, one of Dean Mezey's initiatives, demonstrating his leadership in challenging himself and making the most of his Honors School education.

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY | HONORS SCHOOL

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD
SANJANA RAGUDARAN, Ph.D, MSW

The Honors School Award for Outstanding Service is presented annually to a Monmouth University employee whose contributions to the Honors School are instrumental to fulfilling our mission. With great pleasure, the Honors School has selected Dr. Sanjana Ragudaran as this year's recipient. We are grateful for her contributions, dedication, creativity, and enduring commitment to our students and to honors education in general.

Sanjana Ragudaran is an Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work. She graduated from the City University of New York with a Ph.D. in Social Welfare. Her research areas include migrant experiences, race disparities and program evaluation. Sanjana's research is collaborative with agencies where the study informs service delivery and advocacy. She is currently collaborating with an agency to gain an understanding of migrant experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sanjana teaches global human rights and social justice, social welfare policies and services, research for social workers, and community practice. She is the vice president of the New Jersey Baccalaureate Social Work Education Association, and the co-chair of the Mixed Migration subcommittee of the NGO Committee on Migration.

Sanjana has served the Honors School as an Honors Council member, and as a member of the Honors School's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion subcommittee. She serves our students as the School-Level Honors Thesis Advisor for the School of Social Work, and has served as First Reader for multiple Honors theses/capstones.

We are grateful for her support and contributions to the Honors School.

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY | HONORS SCHOOL

DEAN MEZEY PROUDLY PRESENTS OUR GRADUATES

BRADLEY AIKEN
FELICIAN ASCHETTINO
BRITTNEY BOBOWSKI
JESSE BRAGGER
KELLSEY CHURCH
WILLIAM COOKE WHARTON
JASMINE COOPER
TYLER GORDON
GRACE HAEMMERLE
CATHERINE HARVEY
SAINE HERNANDEZ BURGOS
ISABELLA HUZAR
LONDON JONES
BROOKE KAMPF
MARIAH LASTER
MELISSA LAURIA
MEGAN LEFFLER
BRIANNA MILLER
MICHELE NISNEVITZ
KEVIN PECCI
NICHOLAS PILLARELLA
CHRISTIANA POPO
SKYLAR RATHVON
MACKENZIE RICCA
KATHERINE RIVERA
NOAH ROTTLER-GURLEY
SAIERA SHUEIB
SUBAH SONI
EMMA SYTSEMA
KAILA TORTORELLI
EMILY TUCKER
ELISA VILLA
JAMES WATSON

BRADLEY AIKEN

Computer Science

Galloway, New Jersey

Thesis: *Web Application for the Monmouth University Virginia A. Cory Community Garden*
Kevin Pecci, Noah Rottler-Gurley, and I have designed a web application to help with the maintenance of the Monmouth University Community Garden and communication among administrators and gardeners.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: I became a member of the Upsilon Pi Epsilon computer science honor society. I have maintained a GPA over 3.9 since freshman year. I was an e-board member of the Monmouth Gamers United club for three years.

Why I joined the Honors School: I wanted a more academic-centered college experience and to participate in honors events and activities.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Meeting and living with new friends in Beechwood and attending honors trips.

Plans after graduation: Work as a software developer for the Federal Aviation Administration and continue my education and earn a master's degree in computer science.

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FELICIA ASCHETTINO

Business Education with a concentration in Finance

West Long Branch, New Jersey

Thesis: *The Finances Behind Theatre Crowdfunding Campaigns*
With both theatre and business being key interests in my life, I looked at both successful and failed Theatre Kickstarter programs to see if there are any specific determinants that led to the success or failure of programs. Theatre is an entertaining and crucial art form and the world as a whole would look drastically different without it. Because many do not believe in or appreciate the arts as a whole, there is often a lack of funding or attendance, which leads to theater programs shutting down or shows closing before their anticipated closure date. I examined successful, failed, and canceled theater Kickstarter projects since April 2009. With over 7,000 campaigns in relation to theatre, I looked directly at the successful and failed projects to try and find a correlation between the two. Through my research, I examined if there is a link between finance and theatre and if that link specifically results in the success or failure of particular projects.

Activities: I joined multiple honor societies, a sorority, and the business school's SEEMA program.

Why Did I Join the Honors School: I joined the Honors School to make connections, gain opportunities, and grow as an individual.

Memory: My fondest memory was making great connections and new friendships that I would not have if it was not for the honors school and the honors classes offered.

Plans after Graduation: I plan to pursue a career in financial advising at Merrill Lynch.

BRITTNEY BOBOWSKI

Chemistry with a concentration in Biochemistry

Point Pleasant, New Jersey

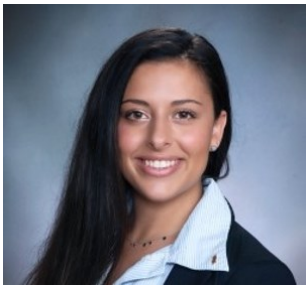
Thesis: *Venom: Death or Relief?*
My project was about how venoms have various bioactive compounds that may be used for pain treatment because they have shown to be effective like a pain reliever. Many types of pain killers are opioid drugs which can be highly addictive and dangerous, but some of the compounds found in venoms have been shown to have the pain relieving properties without the addictive qualities. Therefore, my project was to further shed some light in this area of research to explain some of the benefits as well as problems with this research in medicine.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: I became a part of Phi Eta Sigma as a freshman at MU. I was a School of Science Peer Mentor as well as a Biochemistry SI leader. I have been multiple lab assistants throughout my years at Monmouth. I was a student Chemistry Researcher in an Inorganic chemistry lab for almost two years. In 2020, I was honored to be given the ACS Inorganic Chemistry Award. Most recently, I was nominated to be a part of the Phi Lambda Upsilon Honorary Chemical Society.

Why I joined the Honors School: For one to be a part of the Honors school one must have a certain GPA, attend certain types of honors classes as well as complete a thesis project. Although these may be the minimum requirements to be a part of the Honors school, it was these qualities that made me determined to keep my grades up high. However, I didn't want to stop there, I decided to challenge myself further by taking on more jobs and opportunities that came my way. I loved that the Honors school provided a bar that I had to keep myself above, because it added to my goals of where I wanted to be after college and what I needed to do to get there.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors school has to be how warm and welcoming the office always was. Whenever I had a meeting or a question, someone was quick to help me find an answer.

Plans after graduation: After graduating a semester early, I got a job as a temporary Associate Microbiologist for a local pharmaceutical company. I have also been accepted into the PhD program for Pharmacology at Weill Cornell Graduate School for Biomedical Sciences, which I will be attending in the Fall of 2021.



JESSE BRAGGER

JANE FREED AWARD FOR BEST HONORS THESIS FINALIST

Biology with a concentration in Molecular Cell Physiology

Millstone Township, New Jersey

Thesis: *Differences in Behavior Among House Mice from Different Climates*
There are now many examples of environmental adaptation in widely observed species. House mice, Mus musculus domesticus, have adapted to their new environments in the Americas after their arrival ~500 years ago from Western Europe. Behaviors are a class of phenotypes that can have a great impact on fitness of an individual including mating success, food search, or predator avoidance. It is known that nesting behavior varies over a climatic gradient on the East Coast of the United States and that those differences have a genetic basis. Little is known about variation in other behaviors in these mice, like exploratory behavior, activity levels, and refuge all of which may contribute to fitness. In this experiment, mice from wild-derived house strains derived from five locations (Saratoga Springs, New York (NY); Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (EDM); Gainesville, Florida (FL); Tucson, Arizona (AZ); and Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil (BR)) were tested using two classic rodent behavior assays, a light and dark test and an open field test spaced one week apart. This study asked if there are differences in the use of refuges, activity levels and exploratory behavior between both male mice of strains derived from different locations.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Served as the TriBeta Secretary and Vice President, Worked as a Vivarium Technician, Worked as a Microbiology Supplemental Instructor, Interned at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center through the COOL Scholar Program, A member of Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society and Phi Eta Sigma Freshman Honor Society, Served as an Honor School Peer Mentor, Senator for Student Government, Director of Annual Big Event Community Service Day, Office Assistant for The School of Science Deans Office, Selected Speaker at School of Science Building Grand Opening, Served as a Research Assistant and researched at the School of Science Summer Research Program , Dean's List, Recipient of Award for Research Presentation at MACUB

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because I wanted to be surrounded by the most intelligent and hardworking students and faculty. I also was super eager to write a thesis, as I think that it is a great experience to go through and makes you stand out on a resume. I was fortunate to have this opportunity to be a part of the Honors School and am glad I chose to be involved in such an amazing community.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors School was making all the memories and friends. I especially enjoyed working during the Honors School orientation as an Honors School Peer Mentor. I was able to pass my knowledge to so many freshmen as they transitioned from high school to college and it was so rewarding.

Plans after graduation: My plans are to attend medical school in the near future and in the interim, I would like to work as a full-time researcher at a university.

KELLSEY CHURCH

Chemistry with a concentration in Biochemistry

Waldwick, New Jersey

Thesis: *Levels of Selected Toxic Heavy Metal(loid)s in JUUL Electronic Cigarette Devices*
This research looked at the potential presence of selected toxic heavy metal (loid)s in JUUL Electronic Cigarette Devices. These devices have become increasingly popular amongst cigarette users and new smokers. X-Ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy was used to examine the presence of these metal(loid)s in the device's battery, pod, and e-liquid. The presence of some, but not all, of these selected heavy metal(loid)s were found. This lead to the conclusion that further research should be conducted to examine if these metals are being vaporized and inhaled by users.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Peer Mentor for the School of Science, Supplemental Instructor for General Chemistry 1 and 2, Study Abroad: Florence, Italy in Fall 2019, Chemistry Departmental Honors, Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society, Phi Lambda Upsilon Honors Society

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because I wanted to be a part of a community that valued academics. Throughout high school I had taken honors classes and felt they encouraged me to excel because my peers were all just as academically motivated as I was. I also wanted to challenge myself further in my classes here at Monmouth. Being a part of the Honors School allowed me to take honors level classes and also push myself to complete my own research project which was beyond rewarding. I have been able to grow so much more than I would have hoped being apart of this community at Monmouth.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors School was the First Year Orientation. I met many of my college friends there and it made me feel more comfortable leaving my parents on that first day. It also helped me to recognize familiar faces of faculty and peers within the Honors School. Being that there's unique expectations amongst students in the Honors School it was helpful to be given millions of helpful outlets and tips. upon arrival.

Plans after graduation: My plan after graduation is to work on my application for medical school for the Fall of 2023. During my gap years I will be working as a Research Technician in Dr. Elena Piskounova's Lab at Weill Cornell Medicine in New York City.

WILLIAM COOKE WHARTON

Biology with a concentration in Molecular Cell Physiology

Bury St Edmunds, England

Thesis: *The occurrence of injuries within the early years of a professional soccer players career compared to the final years before retirement*
Injuries were collected from the English premier league. The injuries were then analyzed to figure out if there is a relationship between the years of professional soccer played and the sites/ frequencies of injury.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: 2x MAAC champion with the tennis team, Captain of the tennis team

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School to challenge myself academically.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: The first day of freshman year, and meeting everyone in the Honors School. Met friends that lasted for the next 4 years.

Plans after graduation: I am planning on pursuing a master's degree in my field.

JASMINE COOPER

Sociology

Bowie, Maryland

Thesis: *Knucking and Bucking Too Hard: Did we Forget our Purpose?*
My project explored the impact of Black Greek Lettered Organizations more specifically Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated and whether or not that impact has changed from generation to generation through semi structured interviews with members.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: President of the Tau Eta Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, Selected as a 2020 International Leadership Fellow, New Member of the Year (Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life), President of the National Council of Negro Women, Head Resident Assistant for the Office of Residential Life, Black Student Union, Chamber Orchestra, Best Paper Award Political Science and Sociology Conference Monmouth University, 2020 Unsung Hero awarded by the Office of Student Activities

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because I wanted to be a part of a living and learning community that challenged me academically while still allowing me to seek leadership positions throughout the campus community.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest Honors School memory was attending the Honors BBQ's at the beginning of each year. It was a great time to spend time with other Honors School students and my favorite faculty and staff members!

Plans after Graduation: I will be attending Washington and Lee School of Law.

TYLER GORDON

Accounting

Freehold, New Jersey

Thesis: *The Best Practices in Putting Together a Platform for Outsourced Accounting*
This project is meant to ease the transition from an in-house to an outsourced accountant. I created a portal which will hold key information such as financial statements and billing information, that can be accessed by both the client and the firm providing the outsourced work.

Notable activities and achievements: I was accepted into both Phi Eta Sigma and Beta Gamma Sigma. I also participated in Scholarship Week in 2018 as well as 2021. I also was a finalist in the Hess Excellence in Scholarship Series.

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because I wanted to better myself as well as be in a group of highly motivated and driven individuals.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors School was being accepted into it upon my admission to Monmouth University.

Plans after graduation: I am going to be working full time at an accounting firm, that I have been interning at for the previous two years, while also completing my MBA in finance at Monmouth University part time.

CATHERINE KELLY HARVEY

History and Secondary Education

Wanamassa, New Jersey

Thesis: *Slavery in the Classroom*
A look at textbooks across three states from the 1970s that worked to analyze the representation of slavery within the texts and connect the proliferation of misinformation that I found into a modern context.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Member of Kappa Delta Pi (2019; Secretary 2020-2021), Phi Alpha Theta (2019), Phi Theta Kappa (2017), & Tau Sigma (2018); One of three MU nominees for the New Jersey Distinguished Clinical Intern Award (state level winners announcing on June 9th, 2021); Winner of the Brian Greenberg Social Justice Award (2020); Winner of the Outstanding Undergraduate Scholar in History Award (2020)

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School after I transferred to Monmouth because I was excited about the opportunity to further enrich my undergraduate experience. I wanted to be able to push myself academically, and saw the Honors School as a great way to do that. Once I joined the Honors School I stayed because of the incredible support I was given and the opportunity for research that I was provided.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors School is the yearlong research and writing process, culminating in my thesis presentation. I not only loved getting to share my hard work with peers, but I loved getting to listen to other Honors School students excitedly share their hard work and findings!

Plans after graduation: After graduation I hope to find a fulltime position teaching history at the secondary level. In the future, I intend to return to school for graduate degrees in both history and education!

SAINE HERNANDEZ BURGOS

Anthropology

Passaic, New Jersey

Thesis: *The Count's Skull: An Exploration of the Analysis of Human Remains*
I applied metric and visual methods to assess the alleged skull of Carl von Donop to create a biological profile and determine whether the skull belongs to the German colonel.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Member of the Lambda Alpha National Honors Society; Member of the Eta Pi chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, Spanish National Honor Society; graduated magna cum laude

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because I wanted to be part of a supportive community that challenged me to thrive as a scholar.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory is an ice cream social the Honors School had my freshman year, where I got the opportunity to meet everyone and feel comfortable around them.

Plans after graduation: After graduation I will be starting my graduate career at NYU in the Human Skeletal Biology program.

GRACE LAUREN HAEMMERLE

Chemistry with a concentration in Biochemistry

Hillsdale, New Jersey

Thesis: *Biochemical Characterization of Alcohol-Adapted Lipid Rafts from Adolescent Brain Membranes*
Ongoing brain development appears to make adolescents more susceptible to binge alcohol consumption and there is a strong correlation between alcohol use during adolescence and lifelong susceptibility to alcohol dependency. This study tested the biochemical properties of lipid rafts to determine the effects of alcohol abuse in minors. This study concluded that alcohol-treated raft fractions had lower cholesterol/protein ratios. Cholesterol plays a strong role in the physical properties of membranes so recognizing that alcohol consumption changes membrane raft properties provides a new focus for studies seeking to better understand the cellular level adaptability of the adolescent brain to alcohol and its role in alcohol dependency.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Chapter President and Membership Vice President of Alpha Xi Delta, Resident's Assistant, Supplemental Instructor, Phi Lambda Upsilon National Chemistry Honors Society, Global Experience trip to Guatemala to build a medical/dental clinic

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because I knew it would open me up to a community that placed a strong emphasis on academic excellence, and I could work with others who value growth!

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Taking thesis development and getting to work through my project with Dr. Mezey and think thoroughly about the process

Plans after graduation: Gap year and then I will be studying to become an optometric physician.

ISABELLA HUZAR

Health Studies

Marlboro, New Jersey

Thesis: *Content Analysis of Online Messages of Diet as they Relate to Skincare*
For years researchers have neglected to link the effects of diet with skin health. Only recently have studies evolved that have expressed the distinct association between various vitamins and nutrients present in one's diet and their impact on the skin. While these rudimentary studies focus on various nutrients found in all diets, I narrowed that research to question how the constitutes of a vegan diet may affect one's skin. The current study assessed what formal, commercial websites, and informal, non-commercial websites, portray about vegan diets as they relate to skin health.
A sample size of thirty commercial websites and thirty non-commercial sites were assessed on their content, including messages related to skin health and messages related to vegan diets. A code sheet was used to determine the percentage of these online platforms that are conveying messages that link the two variables. This study was built on the Theory of Reasoned Action, in particular, the Belief of Consequences aspect of the theory was put in place to assess whether this online information is aiding individuals in making a change to their behavior. The results of this study indicate that the hypothesis was correct such that there is minimal research and information online linking a vegan diet to improved skincare. From these results we would anticipate that individuals remain uninformed and therefore will not be inclined to make a behavior change. The results from this study can be implicated to skincare professionals seeking to educate their patients on alternatives to dermatologic medications or to dietitians promoting a vegan diet.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Completing my honors thesis and conducting research with professors that I admire.

Why I joined the Honors School: To give me a sense of community and guidance throughout my time at Monmouth University.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Attending the basketball games with the Honors School and enjoying snacks in the room upstairs overlooking the game.

Plans after graduation: To attend PA school and become a PA in dermatology.

LONDON JO NICOSIA JONES

COMMUNICATIONS

Clayton, New Jersey

Thesis: *A critical content analysis of how brand sponsorships affect Instagram influencer's perceived authenticity*

Social media influencers have risen to fame within the past decade, becoming a profitable profession through their work with brand sponsorships. This study focused on four influencers on Instagram, a photo and video sharing platform, and the companies that they partner with, to analyze if sponsorships cause a fluctuation in influencers' social metrics, like follower count, "likes", and feedback. Using Horton and Wohl's Para-social Interaction theory (1956), the idea of relational bond between Instagram influencers and their followers have been analyzed with each sponsored post. Topics such as native advertising, "Word of Mouth" marketing, and influencer niches are further discussed as they aid in the analyzation process.

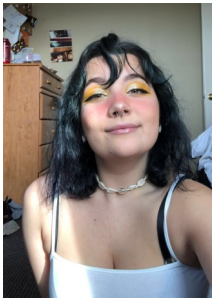
Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Dean's List- Fall 2018, Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Alpha Psi Omega- Inducted Spring 2019, 2020 Climate Crisis Teach-In Student Presenter October 2020, M.U. Players Treasurer- September-May 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, Alpha Psi Omega President-September-May 2020/2021 , Alpha Psi Omega Treasurer- September-May 2019/2020, 2021 The Institute of Global, Understanding Biennial Symposium- March 2021, Urban Coast Institute Research Assistant- Summer 2020

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School after my first semester as a freshman so that I could make the most out of my education here at Monmouth University and excel in all facets of life!

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors School would have to be building long-lasting relationships with the wonderful professors who helped me every step of the way.

Plans after graduation: I will be attending Seton Hall School of Law and obtain a legal degree!

BROOKE KAMPF



Psychology

Edison, New Jersey

Thesis: *I Hope We Can Stay Friends: The Influence of Relationship Variables on Perceived Break-Up Line Effectiveness*
I wanted to find out "What psychological factors influence how people react to break-up lines?" The goal of my study was to find out how psychological variables, such as the fear of being single or commitment, affect how people react to imagined situations in which their current partner uses a break-up line, or a statement said with the purpose of initiating a conversation about relationship dissolution. Break-ups are an inevitable part of life, especially among college-aged individuals. Learning what influences our reactions to them might help us understand how to express and process our feelings, as well as to initiate healthier break-ups.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Secretary and President of the Psychology Club; Treasurer and Vice President of Artists for Change; A part of the Gender and Development Research Land; Recipient of the Randeburg Memorial Award for Excellence in Psychology

Why I joined the Honors School: I wanted an opportunity for a really hands-on and unique education while also having a supportive community

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Living in Beechwood let me meet so many people that will be in my life forever! The Honors School community really helped me make my experience at Monmouth memorable.

Plans after graduation: I'm taking a gap year to finally get some rest, but after that I hope to attend a Clinical Psychology PsyD program to get my doctorate.

MARIAH LASTER

Psychology

Pemberton, New Jersey

Thesis: *Common Themes of Sexual Abuse: A Forensic Case Study*
Thesis focused on three forensic sexual abuse cases to identify common themes among the cases and evaluate how closely they relate to the literature on sexual abuse.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: School of Humanities and Social Sciences Dean's Award Nominee, Educational Opportunity Fund Graduate Achievement Award, Dean's List Recipient, Haiti Global Experience Program Volunteer, Diversity & Inclusion Certificate Program Student Leader, Psychology Club President

Why I joined the Honors School: To challenge myself academically and help prepare me for graduate school

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Becoming an Honors School Peer Mentor

Plans after graduation: Attending Kean University's School and Clinical Psychology Psy.D. Program

MELISSA LAURIA

DR. WILLIAM P. MITCHELL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN HONORS

English and Secondary Education

Smithtown, New York

Thesis: *On The Two Lane Road: Ethnolinguistics and Jack Kerouac's Scroll of On The Road*
The thesis was a study of Jack Kerouac's language in On The Road, primarily how the language was influenced by his French-Canadian upbringing.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Writing assistant, Editor in chief of Monmouth Review, President of Sigma Tau Delta

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School to engage with a community of intellectuals

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Visiting the Baltimore Aquarium

Plans after graduation: Hopefully teaching!

MEGAN LEFFLER

Health Studies, Exercise Science

Livingston, New Jersey

Thesis: *The Psychosocial Impact on Injured Athletes Throughout Their Recovery*
This study focused on the psychosocial reactions of intercollegiate student-athletes when dealing with a traumatic injury. This study explored how individual personality traits, the phases of recovery, and social support systems all affect an athlete and how they change over time when dealing with a traumatic injury.

Activities/Achievements at Monmouth: Senior Captain of the Monmouth University Women's Soccer Team where I earned 3 regular season titles, 3 conference tournament championships, and 4 conference all-academic team recognition. I am a 2 year member of the Chi Alpha Sigma Athletics Honors Society. I have made Dean's List every semester.

Why I Joined Honors School: I wanted to continue to push myself academically and prove that I can still excel in the classroom while being a Division 1 athlete.

Honors School Memory: My fondest memory of the Honors School was working with the guidance and assistance of Dr. McGovern to complete my thesis.

Plans After Graduation: I hope to attend a Physician Assistant Master's program after graduation.

BRIANNA MILLER

Chemistry with a concentration in Biochemistry

Wall Township, New Jersey

Thesis*: Examining the Conformational Changes Between B-Form and A-Form DNA During the COVID-19 Pandemic*
The B-form to A-form transition in DNA is associated with the continuation of cell processes such as cell division. This transition can be monitored using various methods including circular dichroism, fluorometry, and computational simulations. The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed several challenges to course-based undergraduate research experiences, especially to laboratories in predominantly undergraduate institutions, that study the local changes in conformation associated with this transition. A methodology was developed that accounts for research efficacy, safety, and skill development in undergraduate researchers involved in the study of the B-form to A-form transition by combining best practices for COVID-19 protection and using virtual tools with established wet lab and dry lab techniques to maximize study of this phenomenon in an ever-evolving pandemic situation.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Secretary of S.P.E.C.T.R.U.M. at Monmouth University; violinist in Monmouth University Chamber Orchestra; recipient of American Chemical Society certification upon graduation; presented at 2019 Monmouth University School of Science Summer Research Program, presented at 22nd Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium in the Chemical and Biological Sciences at University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School at Monmouth University to explore the mysteries of fundamental biochemical processes. My honors classes, as well as my thesis preparation and writing, aided my discovery of the beautiful intricacy through which biochemical processes facilitate life that would otherwise not be introduced in my lecture courses. My experiences in the Honors School have nourished my curiosity of the unknown mechanisms and interactions of biochemical processes that facilitate life.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors School was that I delivered a poster presentation on March 7, 2020 of my research to potential Monmouth University students in the Great Hall. I found it remarkable, when I visited my colleagues' presentations, to see the breadth of research being conducted under the Honors School ranging from literature to social sciences and to scientific fields.

Plans after graduation: After my graduation from Monmouth University, I will be conducting research to attain a degree in the Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. program at West Virginia University

MICHELE NISNEVITZ

Health Studies
Marlboro, New Jersey

Thesis: *Limitations of Social Emotional Learning on Educational Progress and Mental Health*
My project evaluates the various mental, socioeconomic, racial, and other exclusive barriers to sustaining the benefits of social emotional learning, particularly in a predominantly virtual academic world due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: President of Delta Phi Epsilon Sorority (2019-2020), Vice President of Operations of Delta Phi Epsilon Sorority (2018-2020), Dance team (2018), President of Eta Sigma Gamma National Health Education Honorary (2020-2021), Secretary of Eta Sigma Gamma National Health Education Honorary (2019-2020), Supplemental Instruction Leader for anatomy and physiology (2020)

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School to challenge myself academically and expand my horizons. The Honors School has given me plenty of resources that will help me succeed in my future.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Receiving a graduate assistantship through the Honors School!

Plans after graduation: I will be attending Monmouth University's Master of Physician Assistant (PA) graduate program starting in the fall.

KEVIN PECCI

Software Engineering

Richboro, Pennsylvania

Thesis: *MU Community Garden App*
The purpose of this project was to create a better way for the volunteer gardeners to communicate with each other and receive information about the garden through an easy to use and access web portal.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Monmouth Gamers United President and Monmouth Esports Co-President

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because it provided unique opportunities outside the classroom, especially the trips to places like New York and Baltimore. I also wanted to live in Beechwood with my fellow Honors Students freshman year, where I met lifelong friends.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors School was living in Beechwood Freshman year, it was a perfect environment to get used to living on campus and I had a wonderful time there.

Plans after graduation: After graduating I plan to move back to the Philadelphia area and start my career developing software.

NICHOLAS PILLARELLA

Biology with a Concentration in Molecular Cell Physiology

Staten Island, New York

Thesis: *Advances in Understanding the Effect of Chronic Alcohol and Amphetamine Co-use on Behavior and Expression of Glutamate Receptors in the Adolescent Brain*
The behavioral and biochemical effects of alcohol use alone and when combined with amphetamine use was tested in the model of the adolescent brain in a rat. The project collected data on the behavioral aspect of the withdrawal symptoms developed in the Long Evans rat strain along with the Spontaneously Hypertensive Rat (SHR) strain. The biochemical portion of this project analyzed the expression and regulation of lipid raft associated n-methyl-d-transferase (NMDA) glutamate receptor in multiple regions of the adolescent brain treated with alcohol, amphetamine, or alcohol and amphetamine simultaneously.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Honors school Peer Mentor for 3 years (2018-2021), Conducted undergraduate research with Dr. Rhoads for 3 years (2018-2021), Class of 2017 Annual Scholarship Recipient, Vice President (2019-2020) and President (2020-2021) of Beta Beta Beta National Biological Honors Society, Awarded the Tri-Beta Research Grant (2019), Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society Member, Alpha Epsilon Delta Honors Society Member

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School in order to advance and obtain the most I possible could out of my college education. I also joined to meet multiple individuals with similar interests as me entering college. Although this is what I was able to obtain, I also was able to connect to and create so many memories with the Honors School community and faculty.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory of the Honors School has to be the various move-ins I worked throughout the years of being a Peer Mentor. Being able to be the first friend to many incoming freshmen and be a source of information and knowledge throughout their first undergraduate year brought me so much joy. I will miss making these connections and building a community within this university.

Plans after graduation: I will be attending Monmouth University's Physician Assistant Graduate Program in Fall 2021.

CHRISTIANA EMILY POPO

Biology

Long Branch, New Jersey

Thesis: *Uncovering Bias in Ecological Primary Literature*
Biases are present all over science, and can even be seen within publishing trends in scientific journals. I reviewed 4 different high impact ecological journals, and recorded data from each article in order to see if there was a bias present. After analyzing the data, I found many countries do not have research being published within them, as well as multiple ecosystems and taxa not getting the recognition they deserve. My thesis project uncovers biases that can help future journal editors and scientists attempt to accurately represent all regions, countries, ecosystems, and phyla.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Member of Phi Eta Sigma, Awarded the B&D Scholarship in 2019, Treasurer of Tri-Beta Biological Honor Society, Member & Treasurer of Women's Club Field Hockey Team, Member of Women's Club Lacrosse Team, Participated & Presented at School of Science Summer Research Symposium in 2018 & 2019

Why I joined the Honors School: To make new friends and make connections in the honors school and science department.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Making friends in my honors classes freshman/sophomore that I still have today!

Plans after graduation: I am taking a gap year to apply to veterinary schools and training to be a technician at an emergency vet hospital. I am also planning on presenting my research from my thesis at a couple of conferences in the fall/spring.

SKYLAR RATHVON

Sociology with a concentration in Applied Research and Community Organizing

Long Branch, New Jersey

Thesis: *Comparing Mainstream and Indigenous Media: Coverage of McGirt v. Oklahoma in Relation to the Protection of Indigenous Women*
This project looked at the ways in which colonization, government policies, and media have worked to create a cycle of violence against indigenous women. Previous literature covered topics surrounding laws and policies that work against native women; however, past research fails to connect how the media's coverage, or lack thereof, of indigenous issues and events perpetuates violence against indigenous women. This study drew from a sample of online-sourced news articles to examine the similarities and differences in mainstream and indigenous media coverage of the *McGirt v. Oklahoma* Supreme Court case. 38 articles were chosen from mainstream, national and local news websites and indigenous-ran online news websites; in order to qualify to be in the sample, these articles must state content related to the *McGirt v. Oklahoma* case. Articles were coded based on their coverage of the case, and if the articles relate the ruling to violence against indigenous women. Data was analyzed using crosstabs, and as hypothesized, indigenous articles were the most likely to mention the McGirt ruling in relation to violence against women when compared to mainstream media. The exclusion of indigenous issues from the mainstream media aligns with Tribal Critical Race Theory which argues that not only are minority issues overlooked by the majority population, but indigenous issues are especially misunderstood due to historic effects of colonialism.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Member of Alpha Kappa Delta (sociology honors society), awarded a Professional Development grant from the psychology department, vice president of the Gender Studies and Intersectionality Club, member of the Honors School since my acceptance to the university

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined so that I could push myself to be a better student, and I loved the sense of community the Honors School provided me with.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Harry Termyna was my RA freshman and sophomore year and he really inspired me to keep pushing to stay in the Honors School.

Plans after graduation: Going to pursue my Ph.D. in sociology or gender studies

MACKENZIE RICCA

Political Science

Staten Island, New York

Thesis: *Profiling the Female Extremist- Examining the Motivation of Female Islamic Terrorists*
The female Islamic extremist is in fact fundamentally different from a male Islamic extremist. This analysis will create an overarching complete profile of the mind of the female Islamic extremist based on three influences – religion, regional stressors, and societal influence. Theories from psychology, criminology, and political science will be utilized in the profile of the female suicide bomber, the "administrative leaders," and the "motherly influencer" within different Islamic caliphates. By examining case studies and trends of women engaging in these activities over the last ten years, a new theory will be presented to explain the motivations females have to partake in Islamic extremism.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: President of Monmouth Model United Nations Team (3 years), Debate Team member, Founding member of Young Democrats, Exchange student at New College, University of Oxford, Peer Learning Assistant aiding in creating Monmouth's first "model United Nations course," Six Time Model United Nations Award Winner - Best Delegate - London International Model United Nations (2018 and 2019), Best Delegate - Oxford International Model United Nations (2018), Best Delegate - Southern Regional Model United Nations (2019), Best Delegate - National Model United Nations D.C. (2019).

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School to further expand my horizons and more importantly to challenge myself. Throughout my four years at Monmouth, the honors curriculum has always pushed me to strive to push myself and do things I might have never thought of doing. I have the Honors School to thank for helping me experience incredible study abroad opportunities, challenging coursework, and more importantly - great friendships along the way

Fondest memory of the Honors School: The Freshman year breakfast, socials for finals and mid-term weeks were my favorite. Dorming in Beechwood as a freshman and getting to know my fellow honors peers in the lounge, at activities, etc. really left an impact on me.

Plans after graduation: I moved to Hawaii in January 2021 after graduation to begin my life in Hawaii as a Teach for America 2021 Corps Member. I will be teaching Secondary Special Education (Grades 6-12) in Oahu, Hawaii for two years. Afterward, I am planning to proceed to law school.

KATHERINE RIVERA

Health Studies

Manalapan, New Jersey

Thesis: *Sport Specialization: Do Parents Know the Risks?*
This project is a content analysis of websites for parents with children ages 4 through 18. It aimed to see if the research about the negative outcomes (muscle overuse, injury, etc) of sports specialization is available to parents so they can make informed decisions about their children's athletics.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: I am the OT club's vice president. I am also a peer tutor which has given me another community of people. I love being able to help other people at our university.

Why I joined the Honors School: I chose the Honors School to have a community of people. I also really wanted to do a thesis project because my major does not require one. I wanted to find a topic I was passionate about and go through the research process.

Fondest Memory of the Honors School: All of the events we had freshman year like the breakfasts, walking to the beach and other events were so helpful when I was transitioning into college. I made so many friends and had a community I could rely on. I've also had a great time working on my thesis!

Plans after Graduation: In the future, I want to be an occupational therapist! I plan to find another internship this summer then apply to Monmouth's new OTD program for next summer.

NOAH ROTTLER-GURLEY

DR. WILLIAM P. MITCHELL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN HONORS

Computer Science

Atco, New Jersey

Thesis: *Web Application for the Monmouth University Virginia A. Cory Community Garden*

A group project to create software that elevates the communication, productivity, and cohesion among the community gardeners, while streamlining maintenance and administration of the garden.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: History and Graphic and Interactive Design Minors, Eboard member of Monmouth Esports, Monmouth Artists for Change, Monmouth Outdoors Club, and Monmouth Gamers United clubs, Member of Phi Eta Sigma and Upsilon Pi Epsilon National Honor Societies

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School to be part of a tight-knit community and to challenge myself with more enriching courses.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory is of joining the Honors School at the 2019 Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference in Baltimore, where I enjoyed exploring both Baltimore and Washington, D.C. with new friends.

P**lans after graduation**: After graduation, I hope to earn my Master's Degree in History in Germany, while continuing my work in cybersecurity and indie game development.

SAIERA SHUEIB

Business Administration
with a concentration in Finance

Ocean Township, New Jersey

Thesis: *The Great Recession's Banking Regulations Applied to the COVID19 Recession*
My project analyzed banking regulation from the Great Recession era as they apply today, amid the COVID19 Recession. Specifically, I looked into the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection act and reviewed common criticisms found in previous literature. I analyzed the too-big-to-fail phenomenon, the effectiveness of stress testing banks, costs of compliance with regulations, and the effects of the legislation specifically on small banks.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: For the past three years, I have been a Peer Tutor in the Writing and Tutoring Services Department. It was always fun being around the other tutors and helping students when they needed the help. I also have been the Vice President for SAA this past year. I am most proud of earning Dean's list every semester, so far.

Why I joined the Honors School: I initially joined the Honors School because I really wanted to put myself out there and challenge myself. But after I met everyone during my freshman year, I was just really happy to have found really kind and awesome people and I knew I wanted to be a part of it.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Attending the Honors School barbecues

Plans after graduation: My immediate plans are to take a relaxing summer break (maybe travel as safely as possible) before I carry on being an adult and start working full time.

SUBAH SONI

JANE FREED AWARD FOR BEST HONORS THESIS FINALIST

Biology
with a concentration in Molecular Cell Physiology

Manahawkin, New Jersey

Thesis: *The Effects of Kumquat Oil on the Proliferation and Viability of Cancer Cell Lines and Normal Human Fibroblast Cells*
I exposed three human cell lines (cervical cancer tissue, cancerous connective tissue, and normal connective tissue) to varying concentrations of kumquat essential oil. I found that as the concentrations of kumquat oil increased, the viability of each cell line decreased. This treatment killed the cells, prevented them from reproducing, and induced apoptosis (controlled cell death).

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Biology SI Leader and Tutor, Writer and Marketing Director for HerCampus, Tri-Beta Member (Biology Honors Society), Dean's List for 7 consecutive semesters, Student Research Assistant, Volunteer and Group Leader for Guatemala Global Experience trips, Residential Assistant, Chair of Extracurriculars for Honors School Advisory Board, Volunteer for Food Recovery Network

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because I wanted to be a part of a diverse and intellectually stimulating community of individuals who shared a similar passion for wanting to learn as much as they could about their field of study, and how they could connect their area of expertise to other fields.

Fondest memory of the Honors school: My favorite memories from the Honors School are of the theatre trips. Seeing a Broadway show or even a touring company in Philadelphia was always a fun time, but I really liked supporting the local theaters like the Two River Theater and the State Theatre.

Plans after graduation: I will be going to John Hopkins University for a Masters of Health Science in Molecular Microbiology and Immunology.

EMMAMAE SYTSEMA

Psychology

Wantage, New Jersey

Thesis: *Who you calling blonde, Bimbo?*
My thesis was an artistic project that expanded upon my psychology experimental research thesis completed the year prior. The artwork demonstrated my research findings on blondes and the 'dumb blonde' stigma.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Club soccer, 3.78 GPA, Dean's list, Athletes intervarsity club, completed 2 theses projects

Why I joined the Honors School: To challenge myself academically.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Trips to the city! Especially to see Kinky Boots!

Plans after graduation: I graduated in January 2021! I currently work full time as an Operations Analyst at a company called Fusion.

KAILA TORTORELLI

Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing

Howell, New Jersey

Thesis: *Impact of Online Brand Reviews in the Form of Comments on Instagram on Consumer's Overall Attitude and Purchase Intentions*
This study looked at how mostly positive or mostly negative electronic word of mouth Instagram comments affected consumer attitude and purchase intentions toward the brand features in an Instagram post.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Resident Assistant and Co-President of Student Activities Board, as well as part of honors societies such as Tau Sigma and Beta Gamma Sigma

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School to learn new skills and unleash my potential.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: My fondest memory was completing my thesis which was so rewarding.

Plans after graduation: After graduation I plan to pursue a Masters in Business Administration at Monmouth University.

EMILY TUCKER

Health Studies

Middletown, New Jersey

Thesis: *Content Analysis: Non-Governmental Organizations Contribution in Addressing the Barriers to Attaining Health Care Faced by Indigenous Guatemalan Communities*
This research identified the role of various non-governmental organizations in the alleviation of the barriers in accessing health care faced by indigenous communities

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Team member of the Global Experience Programs to Guatemala Summer 2018, Haiti 2019, and Haiti 2020, Peace Corps Prep Program, Philanthropy Chair (2019) and Panhellenic Delegate (2020) of Phi Sigma Sigma Sorority, Rho Lambda National Panhellenic Leadership Honor Society, Gamma Sigma Alpha National Greek Academic Honor Society

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School to challenge myself academically and make the most of my educational opportunities!

Fondest memory of the Honors School: Breakfast in Beechwood during finals week!

Plans after graduation: Master's in Global Public Health at NYU

ELISSA VILLA

Psychology

Milan, Ohio

Thesis: *Seizure Disorder Masquerading as Borderline Personality Disorder*; A case study on a patient with Temporal Lobe Epilepsy who was originally misdiagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Senator at Large and Committee Chair of The Nest for the Student Government Association; Resident Assistant in Beechwood; Griffin Memorial Award for the highest GPA of the senior psychology students.

Why I joined the Honors School: I wanted the additional challenge and to be pushed to really excel while in college.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: The feeling of accomplishment I had when I finally finished my thesis

Plans after graduation: I will be attending graduate school.

JAMES RITZ WATSON, III

JANE FREED AWARD FOR BEST HONORS THESIS WINNER

History and English

Naperville, Illinois

Thesis: *The Rose that Grew from Harlem: Tracking Afropessimism in 20th Century African American Protest Literature*

In my project, I looked at 20th century African American protest literature in three specific genres in order to explain the shift in tone that the protest literature undergoes. I looked at three distinct genres and time periods in my project: including The Harlem Renaissance, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Hip Hop Era. I analyzed Claude McKay's "If We Must Die", James Baldwin's "The Fire Next Time" and Tupac Shakur's "Me Against the World". Through these three pieces, I demonstrated a shift in the African American voice from cautious optimism to a renowned sense of pessimism about social mobility. I believe there is a substantial trend through these three pieces and I argued that the current pessimism is a result of this shift.

Notable activities and achievements while at Monmouth: Four-year member of the Honors School, Four-year member of Varsity Men's Lacrosse Team, Member of Athletes Intervarsity (Student Athlete Bible Study), 3 Time MAAC All-Academic Team, 2021 Jane Freed Award Winner, 2021 Scholar History Student Award Winner, 2021 Brian Greenberg Social Justice Award Winner

Why I joined the Honors School: I joined the Honors School because of its academic rigor and its reputation of academic excellence. I also enjoyed the community and the opportunity for the capstone project in my junior and senior year.

Fondest memory of the Honors School: The orientation in which I met some lifelong friends!

Plans after graduation: Plans after graduation: I will be studying at the University of Notre Dame to pursue a Masters of Education. Through the program, I will be teaching high school English at Bishop Dunne High School in Dallas, Texas.

Congratulations Class of 2021

Bradley
Felicia
Brittney
Jesse
Kellsey
William
Jasmine
Tyler
Grace
Catherine
Saine

Isabella
London
Brooke
Mariah
Melissa
Megan
Brianna
Michele
Kevin
Nicholas
Christiana

Skylar
Katherine
Noah
Saiera
Subah
Emma
Kaila
Emily
Elisa
James

HONORS