

HONORS  
SENIOR  
BANQUET  
AND AWARDS  
CEREMONY

2022

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MONMOUTH  
UNIVERSITY

HONORS  
SCHOOL

# 2022 JANE FREED AWARDS

All Honors Thesis /Capstone projects receiving a grade of A 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.

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## BEST THESIS, WINNERS

### **JASMINE N. COOPER '21**

SOCIOLOGY

First Reader: Dr. Walter Greason

*Knucking and Bucking Too Hard: Did We Forget Our Purpose?*

### **NICHOLAS PILLARELLA '21**

BIOLOGY

First Reader: Dr. Dennis E. Rhoads

*Advances in Understanding of the Effect of Chronic Alcohol and Amphetamine Consumption on Behavior and Expression of Glutamate Receptors in Adolescent Brain*

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## BEST THESIS, HONORABLE MENTIONS

### **NICHOLAS DELBUONO '22**

HISTORY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

First Reader: Dr. Maureen Dorment

Second Reader: Melissa Ziobro, M.A.

*Donald Duck – The Face of World War II: An Examination of Walt Disney and the Walt Disney Company's Influence and Role in World War II*

## **LAUREN FEASTER '21**

CHEMISTRY

First Reader: Dr. Danuta Szwajkajzer

*The Role of Diet, Environmental Factors and COVID-19 on the Gut Microbiome of Individuals with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)*

## **GRACE HAEMMERLE '21**

CHEMISTRY

First Reader: Dr. Dennis Rhoads

*Altered Cholesterol Levels in Alcohol-Adapted Lipid Rafts from Adolescent Brain Membranes*

## **EMILY MALOOL '22**

MATHEMATICS & SECONDARY EDUCATION

First Reader: Dr. Sandra Zak

Second Reader: Dr. Jason Fitzgerald

*Food Waste: It Just Doesn't Add Up*

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**BEST THESIS, FINALISTS**

## **JENNIFER LOSAVIO '22**

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (CONCENTRATION IN ACCOUNTING)

First Reader: Dr. Stuart Rosenberg

Second Reader: Professor Joe Rapolla

*Spotify Case Study: How Spotify Impacts the Way Musicians Create and Release Their Music*

## **TAYLOR RUPPRECHT '22**

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (CONCENTRATION IN ECONOMICS & FINANCE)

First Reader: Dr. Walter Greason

*Foundations of Trust*

# THE DEAN'S AWARD for EXCELLENCE IN HONORS

## RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS BY A GRADUATE OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

This award recognizes superior graduates 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, or served on the Honors Students Association. The award winners are selected by the Honors School Dean.

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## ROWAN A. ELRAIS '22

HISTORY & ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Rowan has been an active member and integral member of the Honors School for the last four years. She represented the Honors School at the National Collegiate Honors Council conference in October, 2021, serving as a session moderator. Rowan served as President of the Honors Student Association (HSA) where she was a major force in moving the HSA to become a university-recognized student club. In her role as President, Rowan organized and coordinated multiple student-focused events, collaborating with other student organizations, and motivating students from across campus to participate in honors-related activities. Rowan has also served as an important liaison between students and the Honors School Dean and staff to share ways to improve the Honors School and better serve honors students. Rowan's work exemplifies the best of what a member of the Honors School can be.

# OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD



## VICTORIA BOBIK

The Honors School presents this award 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 Victoria Bobik as this year's recipient. We are grateful for her contributions, dedication, and enduring commitment to our students and honors education in general.

Victoria has worked at Monmouth University since 2005, but was spending time here well before then, cheering on Monmouth Hawks Football, for which her husband Andy has served as defensive coordinator since 1996. She considers Monmouth home, as does her husband and her daughter Anna who is nine, and plans to attend Monmouth in the future to major in Software Engineering and join the Honors School! Victoria holds a dual degree in English and History from Colgate University and a M.A. in English from The University of South Carolina. Victoria spent the first nine years of her life in England and then immigrated to the United States with her family; her life-long study of history focuses around English history and she returns there as much as possible. Now settled on the Jersey shore in Interlaken, she is happy to call herself a member of the Monmouth University community and a permanent resident of the Garden State.

As Director of Undergraduate Admission, Victoria oversees freshman and transfer admission and over her career has overseen acceptance for thousands of students, including those into the Monmouth University Honors School. As a long-standing higher education professional, she is committed to the transformative power of education. She considers learning at this level to be a gift, an honor, and a lifetime investment. The Honors School at Monmouth University holds a special place in her affection since she herself was an honors student at Colgate and has never forgotten the challenges and rewards of a deep delve into a topic with classmates, a debate about a historical event or simply sitting with a historical biography. She often tells prospective students that she is the Honors School's biggest fan – and she means it! We are grateful for her support and contributions to the Honors School.

DEAN MEZEY PROUDLY PRESENTS

# THE HONORS SCHOOL GRADUATES

SUMMER 2021, WINTER 2022, AND SPRING 2022

Kyle Anderson  
Odalys Barrientos Pantoja  
Aspen J. Bollinger  
Abigail Brooks  
Megan Chase  
Haley Cichon  
Jessica E. Ciarcynski  
Gabriella Clevon  
Jenna K. Cordaro  
Hannah Craft  
Amanda Crocco  
Leslie Michelle Cruz  
William J. Dailey  
Nick DelBuono  
Mia DeMagistris  
Joseph V. DeMarco  
Rowan Elrais  
Olivia Enny  
Lauren Feaster  
Anastasia Francisquini  
Alejandro Garcia  
Mitchell Hendricks  
Antonella Henson-Vendrell  
Gabriella Herbert

Sydney A. Hess  
Morgan R. Kelly  
Makayla Laster  
Jeannette Lombardi  
Jennifer Losavio  
Emily Malool  
Mary McGee  
Madeleine Ogden  
Ashley Pastore  
Kurt M. Reinhardt  
Katie Roeder  
Taylor Rupprecht  
Brielle Sadowski  
Isaac Seruya  
Laura C. Sine  
Amanda M. Skunakis  
Roman V. Smith  
Diana L. Turcios  
Gina-Marie Verrone  
Jo Vonderhorst  
Chyna M. Walker  
Alexa Wallace  
Ariel D. Zavala

# KYLE ANDERSON

TINTON FALLS,  
NEW JERSEY

**MATHEMATICS (STATISTICS)**

with a minor in Physics



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...

I was drawn by all of the resources that were provided by the Honors School, including being a part of a community that knew everyone and was very inclusive. In addition, I wanted to push myself academically, making myself a better scholar.

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Member of Phi Eta Sigma Honor's Society; member of the Monmouth University Pep Band for four years; member of the Monmouth University A cappella club Sea Sharps for four years; worked as a statistical consultant for Dr. Mehrkam and Dr. Daneshgar, analyzing their data.

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Traveling to New York with other honors students to see *Wicked*. During this trip, I got to know my fellow Honors students better, and make long lasting friendships.

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

Currently, I am in the process of applying for jobs that will allow me to use my knowledge in statistics to the fullest potential. During this time, I also plan on studying to become an Actuary. I plan on going to get my Master's in either Statistics or Engineering within the following year.

## HOW INTERNAL FACTORS INFLUENCE ATTITUDES TOWARDS MATHEMATICS

Attempted to develop an effective survey that takes into account students' internal factors that influence their attitudes towards mathematics. Literature revealed that internal factors gender, race, parental influence, confidence in the subject matter, and math anxiety play a significant role in attitude towards mathematics. Using the case study methodology, questions from a number of studies examining these factors were analyzed taking into account the Cronbach alpha and test-retest reliability of said questions. Overall, questions from The Abbreviated Math Anxiety Scale were consistently used and reliable in Math Anxiety studies, and questions from the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey were the most reliable when looking into confidence of the subject matter. Race and Gender only served as identifier questions for the participants of the surveys, and Parental Influence questions consistently had the lowest internal consistency, but still high enough to be considered reliable questions.

# ODALYS BARRIENTOS PANTOJA

FREEHOLD,  
NEW JERSEY

MATHEMATICS (STATISTICS)



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...

To be part of the amazing community and to be able to participate in the wonderful opportunities the school has to offer.

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Vice President of the Math Club, member of the Enactus Club, Recipient of Math Department award.

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Presenting my honors thesis in December to all my family, friends, and advisors.

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

After graduation I plan on going to Carnegie Mellon University to pursue a PhD in Statistics and Data Science.

## COMPARING USER BEHAVIOR FROM TIKTOK USERS

TikTok is a social media app that has quickly gained popularity with over one billion users and counting. TikTok users can use the platform to post short content videos that consist of users dancing, acting, or lip-syncing to music. Using the TikTok public database, we collected data from 101 users using a TikTok API. In this study, we placed TikTok users into two categories: Famous users and ForYou users. Famous users are users who have more than 20 million followers, and ForYou users can be the average user who used the hashtag #foryou on their video. We used  $\epsilon$ -machines and generalized additive models (GAMs) to model the binarized posting behavior of the TikTok users. By estimating the  $\epsilon$ -machines and GAMs from the observed user behavior, we created models that captured the behavior of a given user and inferred if they were self driven or seasonally driven. The  $\epsilon$ -machine will best fit users whose future behavior depends on their recent activity and the GAM will fit users who typically post videos on a specific day of the week and time of day. Using the cross entropy loss function, we determined which category of users are more seasonally driven or self driven. From the data collected, we can say that within our sample of users both Famous and ForYou users are more self driven. Thus, their behavior is better explained by their past activity than the time-of-day and day-of-week. Using other metrics of information theory, confidence intervals suggest Famous users appear slightly more random than ForYou users. Additionally, ForYou users have slightly more complicated  $\epsilon$ -machines compared to Famous users. While there are no statistically significant differences between Famous and ForYou users behavior on TikTok there are small differences that could be more obvious with a larger sample size.

# ABIGAIL BROOKS

BAYVILLE,  
NEW JERSEY

**COMMUNICATION (PR AND JOURNALISM)**  
with a minor in Global Sustainability



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...

I received an invitation to do so upon my acceptance to Monmouth University when I was still in high school. I thrive in a classroom setting and have always valued my academics, so it only seemed right that I accept this offer and join the honors community. It's been a lot of hard work, but I wouldn't trade it for the world.

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Editor-in-chief and news editor for The Outlook, co-captain of Monmouth's Club Sailing Team, Honors School Peer Mentor

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Some of my best memories of the Honors School come from my freshman year, when I lived in Beechwood and met a lot of my closest friends. I'm actually still living with the same roommate from my freshman suite! I especially enjoyed living in Beechwood pre-pandemic because we were able to have so many amazing events that really brought us together as a community of honors students. Anytime you walked through the lobby, something was always going on or you ran into someone you knew and struck up a conversation. There were endless ice cream socials, arts and crafts, pre-finals breakfasts, and tons of other little events. It's been hard to continue having these kind of gatherings because of COVID, but I hope that the incoming honors students will get an experience that is similar to mine.

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

I plan to return to Monmouth next year to pursue a master's degree in Interactive Digital Media. After that, I hope to continue writing, whether it be journalism or public relations, for some sort of environmental sustainability company or non-profit.

## CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE ONLINE NEWS CYCLE

Climate change became the subject of an aggressive disinformation campaign in the 1990's, politicizing and polarizing what had previously been a widely accepted matter of science. Today, partisan media coverage of climate-related issues has contributed to this stark political divide – consumers often engage in selective exposure practices in order to find information that conforms to their partisan beliefs, regardless of its accuracy. My research examines how online versions of mainstream media outlets cover climate change by analyzing the frequency of coverage and framing techniques used in climate-related stories published on the websites of CNN, Fox, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, and The New York Times from Monday, February 28 to Friday, March 4. The results of this content analysis highlight the fact that climate change is not a salient issue in today's mass media environment, regardless of the political slant of the media outlet. Although most stories accepted the existence of climate change, many employed an economic frame that belittled the need for mitigation and adaptation efforts. These findings pose important implications about how mainstream online news sites are covering climate change and the potential agenda-setting effects this may have on public perceptions of the climate crisis.

# MEGAN CHASE

BAYVILLE,  
NEW JERSEY

PSYCHOLOGY  
with a minor in Criminal Justice



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...

To pursue a more vigorous and enlightening academic experience while also having a tight knit community of people to grow with during my undergraduate career.

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Past Vice President of the Honors School Association. Lead Student Ambassador in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Monmouth University's Student Employee of the Year for 2022. Student Advising Mentor during New Student Orientation 2019 and Orientation Leader for New Student Orientation 2020. Blue Hawk Records Recording Artist of Fall 2018. Member of Alpha Sigma Tau who served as Director of Sisterhood and New Member Educator. Award of Overall Excellence for Internship during Spring of 2021. Deans List Recipient.

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

The trip to Baltimore, Maryland during fall of 2018 where we went out to eat and then to an aquarium and museum. It was a gorgeous day outside and we were all able to explore and further bond and connect with one another.

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

I will be attending Rutgers Law in Newark to pursue a legal education focusing on Criminal Law, Family Law, and Civil Rights Law.

## THE POWER OF ELLE WOODS: INSPIRATIONAL OR DETRIMENTAL?

Women in legal careers have experienced much adversity and discrimination throughout history. Therefore, representation of females in legal careers in popular media such as the classic Legally Blonde can be very influential to those who experience such biases in real life. This thesis seeks to understand the extent to which women in legal careers have experienced harassment and inequality, while measuring the inspirational or detrimental effects that the film has on the women who are in the field. Through executing a qualitative content analysis of 14 media articles about the movie, which included content about harassment and inequality within the law profession, from interviews with 25 women in or pursuing legal careers, and including interviews from Reese Witherspoon, the lead actress in the film, this thesis found that the character of Elle Wood's has a positive, influential effect on many through the creation of opportunity and message of staying true to oneself it imposed. However, there were about a quarter of interviewees who believed that Elle Woods and the film created a false sense of success, only represented those granted with multiple privileges, and did not align with feminist ideals.

# HALEY CICHON

ABINGTON,  
PENNSYLVANIA

**BIOLOGY (MOLECULAR CELL PHYSIOLOGY)**  
with a minor in Information Technology



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

I wanted to make the most of my time at Monmouth and I believe the Honors School truly helped enrich my learning experience.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Pre-Med Club, Community Service Chair of Alpha Xi Delta.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

I always enjoyed the activities and socials that the Honors School had set up for us.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I plan on taking a gap year, and then I will be looking into nursing or PA programs.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO ANTIBIOTICS**

As the popularity of antibiotics grows, and subsequently as the misuse of antibiotics increases, the number of multidrug resistant bacteria is also on the rise. Multidrug resistant bacteria pose a global threat to the antibiotic market, and thus alternative medicinal options must be further researched and considered. In this thesis, the antibacterial properties of different essential oils were studied, along with their interactions with common bacterial strands. Information was pulled from a multitude of sources and studies and compiled into a literary review and was then displayed as a website using Adobe Dreamweaver. Using HTML and CSS coding, the information on essential oils and multidrug resistant bacteria was gathered and presented in a way that is easily understandable. The literary research that was done revealed both unique and shared antibacterial properties of different essential oils, as well as a variety of uses for these oils. Essential oils have tremendous potential in terms of their antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, and antiseptic properties, and show to be a promising alternative to antibiotics.

# GABRIELLA CLEVEN

TOMS RIVER,  
NEW JERSEY

**BIOLOGY (MOLECULAR CELL PHYSIOLOGY)**  
with minors in Spanish and Chemistry



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...

To challenge myself academically and surround myself with like-minded ambitious students!

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

President of Beta Beta Beta National Honor Society; Member of Phi Eta Sigma, Alpha Epsilon Delta (Pre-health), and Sigma Delta Pi (Spanish) National Honor Societies; PAL Leader for Anatomy and Physiology I and II; Research student in Dr. Mack's lab since Sophomore Year.

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

When I first moved in freshmen year and went on the Sunrise Walk from Beechwood Hall. I made my two first college friends that day and felt like I was a part of something!

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

I will be attending Drexel University's Physician Assistant Program in Philadelphia beginning in the fall!

## THE SYNERGISTIC EFFECTS OF ESSENTIAL OILS (EOs) ON THE GROWTH OF MULTIDRUG RESISTANT ENTEROBACTER CLOACAE

The overuse of antibiotics has resulted in bacteria evolving to become resistant, rendering many of these drugs ineffective in modern medical treatment of bacterial infections. One specific bacterium highlighted in the 2019 antibiotic resistance report from the CDC was *Enterobacter cloacae* (*E. cloacae*). This bacterium primarily infects immunocompromised people in nosocomial settings such as the intensive care unit (ICU). In this *in vitro* study, 102 essential oils (EOs) were initially tested against an American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) strain of a multi-drug resistant bacterium, *Enterobacter cloacae* (*E. cloacae*), as an alternative treatment to antibiotics. The EOs with the greatest inhibitory effects against *E. cloacae* were arbor vitae, cassia, cinnamon bark, oregano, and thyme. The minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) of these select EOs were determined by preparing dilutions using jojoba oil and measuring their zones of inhibition. These were also tested in different combinations of two to determine their synergistic effects. To determine the synergistic effects between these EOs, various dilutions were prepared using jojoba oil, the MIC was determined and then the fractional inhibitory concentration (FIC) index was calculated to estimate the interaction between each pair of essential oils. The results showed that the effectiveness of each combination was additive. Future research will include synergistic testing of the EOs with the leading antibiotics.

# HANNAH CRAFT

NATURAL BRIDGE STATION,  
VIRGINIA

**MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
BIOLOGY AND POLICY & CHEMISTRY**  
with a minor in Geographic Information Systems



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

To challenge myself in college and have a community coming into Monmouth.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

2020 NSF REU Intern, 2020 NOAA Ernest F. Hollings Scholar, 11th Annual Gail Carter Science Award Winner, Dean's List.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Eating pancakes in Beechwood with Reenie and the other honors students.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

To work and then pursue a graduate degree in marine biology and invertebrate ecology.

## **OCCURRENCE AND RESIDENCY OF THE ENDANGERED ATLANTIC STURGEON, ACIPENSER OXYRINCHUS, IN SANDY HOOK AND RARITAN BAYS, NEW JERSEY**

Sandy Hook Bay (SHB) and Raritan Bay (RB) are highly urbanized waterbodies located within close proximity of known Atlantic sturgeon coastal aggregation and freshwater spawning sites in the Hudson River. While Atlantic sturgeon have been historically documented to occur in SHB and RB, no formal surveys have been conducted to identify their presence or occurrence within the bays. The purpose of this project was to determine the presence and seasonality of Atlantic sturgeon within this area through the use of acoustic telemetry. Working cooperatively with Naval Weapons Station Earle, six acoustic receivers were deployed in spring of 2016 in SHB and expanded to RB in 2018 to monitor for previously tagged Atlantic Sturgeon. A total of 304 uniquely tagged individual Atlantic sturgeon were detected ( $n=240,033$  detections). Detections showed a presence of Atlantic Sturgeon in both SHB and RB with strong temporal and spatial patterns with some fish displaying high residency times. Atlantic sturgeon largely came from the NYB Distinct Population segment but some came as far as south as Chesapeake Bay (MD) and Edisto River (SC), indicating that multiple DPSs utilize the area. This acoustic detection data indicates that the region may represent an important late spring – early summer habitat, therefore spatial and temporal management may be needed to protect this region against localized threats within this shallow urbanized bay (e.g. commercial fishing, high speed ferries, and large ship traffic) during these periods.

# AMANDA CROCCO

RANDOLPH,  
NEW JERSEY

**ENGLISH (CREATIVE WRITING) &  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**  
Endorsement in English as a Second Language (ESL)



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

To make connections with people who value academics and ambition, challenge myself with the program's rigorous curriculum, and grow as an individual.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

During my four years at Monmouth University, I have made the Dean's List every semester and was inducted into the honor societies of Phi Eta Sigma (2019) and Sigma Delta Tau (2021). I was also initiated into the Iota Theta chapter of Alpha Omicron Pi women's fraternity (2019). Within this organization, I have served as the To Drama Reporter (2019-2020) and received the Scholarship Award (2019, 2022).

## **FONDEST MEMORIES OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

The sunrise walk during my freshman move-in weekend, the trip to Baltimore, MD in 2018, working closely with Dr. Alena Graedon to complete my Thesis/Capstone Project (2020-2021), and every moment with all the lifelong friends I have made through the Honors School!

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I am currently enrolled in Monmouth University's 5th-year Master's program for Teacher of Students with Disabilities. After graduate school, I plan on teaching in my own elementary school classroom. I will also be continuing to write in my free time to pursue my ultimate dream of becoming a bestselling author someday in the future!

## **NOT JUST EVER AFTER'S: A COMPARISON OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FAIRYTALES**

With reading and writing being key interests in my life, I decided to focus my thesis for the Honors School on the construction and timelessness of the fairytale genre in fiction. Considering I wish to become a published author one day, I decided to pursue this topic so I may have more experience in writing lengthier works of fiction as well as receive extra mentorship from the creative writing professors at Monmouth University. The goal of my thesis/capstone project was to study the creative writing craft process behind traditional and contemporary fairytales. I pursued the creative capstone option, and as such, I wrote an original fairytale that reflects my research and serves as the final product of this project. I also wrote a critical introduction and annotated bibliography. I approached this project by carefully reading and analyzing traditional and contemporary fairytales, grounding myself in historical literature, and consulting creative writing craft texts. All of this research drew me to the conclusion that stronger characterization and internally daunting conflicts set apart the contemporary fairytales from the traditional stories, and that these two elements of characterization and conflict are what make the fairytale genre of fiction so timeless and captivating.

# LESLIE MICHELLE CRUZ

FREEHOLD,  
NEW JERSEY

**INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**  
with minors in Spanish for Business



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

To challenge myself academically through my classes in addition to learning the process of writing a thesis.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

President of the Enactus Monmouth Chapter  
Participated in Student Government Association;  
Member of Beta Gamma Sigma Business Honor Society; Member of the Leon Hess Business School Student Advisory Board.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Going with my best friend to see *The Prom* on Broadway through an Honors School Field Trip.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I will attend graduate school at The George Washington School of Business in Washington DC to pursue a Master's in Finance.

## **GRASPING NAFTA'S RELATIONSHIP AMONG ECONOMIC AND WELFARE INDICATORS**

The North American Free Trade Agreement, otherwise known as NAFTA, was an agreement signed by Mexico, the United States, and Canada. Its purpose was to reduce trading costs, foster business investment, and boost North America's competitiveness in a global market. Since its implementation in 1994, regional trade increased and so did the number of factories along the US-Mexican border. The question of this paper is: what ways did NAFTA impact the economic and welfare conditions of its member countries? This paper discusses the overall impact of NAFTA on poverty, income inequality, job markets, trade, and foreign direct investment. Using the Lewis two sectoral model, this study applies structural change growth theory to the North American context. It discusses how industrialization shifts labor from the agricultural sector to the modern sector and its relation to demand for workers and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The analysis also uses the Kuznets Hypothesis, which posits an inverted U curve for the association with income growth and inequality. Additionally, this paper uses quantitative data as well as scholarly articles as evidence on the effect of NAFTA on inequality, poverty, and other economic indicators. Results show that there is evidence showing the effect on inequality on both sides; decrease in poverty; and that NAFTA has had an overall positive effect on the economy from benefits on trade and improvements in labor market conditions.

# NICK DELBUONO

SUN PRAIRIE,  
WISCONSIN

**HISTORY & SECONDARY EDUCATION**  
with a minor in Spanish



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

I wanted to be a part of the community that places great emphasis on academic rigor, student involvement in the Monmouth community, and that celebrated student achievement. I also wanted to be a part of the Honors School so I could become a better student. I wanted to be challenged academically and be pushed to step out of my comfort zone and grow as a student and within my field of study.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Nominee for the New Jersey Distinguished Clinical Intern Award; Recipient of the Samuel Magill Scholarship; Awarded the Susan Douglass Future Educator Award; Spring 2022 Excellence in Secondary Education Award Winner.

## **FONDEST MEMORIES OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Working on my Honors Thesis and being able to share it with the Honors School community. I loved learning about the projects my peers had worked on. I also really enjoyed the research process itself. I worked with two excellent readers, and reflecting back on it, I love how much I changed as a student because of that project.

Another fond memory that I had was working closely with Reenie. I remember joining the Honors School at the midterm point of my first semester as a freshman. I was nervous about joining and wanted to know more about it first. I remember having my conference meeting with Reenie to create my schedule and talking with her about the Honors School. She put me at ease and helped me to realize this was a perfect fit for me. I am forever grateful for that moment.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

To go to be a high school history teacher and work towards my masters in education.

## **DONALD DUCK - THE FACE OF WORLD WAR II: AN EXAMINATION OF WALT DISNEY AND THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY'S INFLUENCE AND ROLE IN WORLD WAR II**

Walt Disney and his characters have been a mainstay in American culture throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. They were also a mainstay of the American propaganda machine during World War II. At the start of the war, Disney's company faced economic ruin. The company had taken the monumental profits from their smash-hit film Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs in the late 1930s and had used these profits to produce a litany of projects. Because of this overextension of resources, the company had fallen on hard times. An employee strike further exacerbated the financial stress on the company. Disney's ship was sinking and needed a lifeline. That lifeline came in the form of government contracts at the start of World War II. Donald Duck, along with other characters, promoted war bonds, victory gardens, food rations, and appeared on insignia patches for American soldiers. This cast of characters also served as educators for the military in instructional films. This paper will demonstrate Disney's enlistment and active participation in the war propaganda or mobilization effort of the United States homefront and the U.S. Armed Forces. As Disney aided in saving the nation, the nation aided in saving Disney.

# MIA DEMAGISTRIS

STATEN ISLAND,  
NEW YORK

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MARKETING)**



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

To tap into my full educational potential and challenge myself to apply what I've learned in my classes to a study of my own. It also allowed me to meld my love for both the analytical and creative aspects of marketing. The Honors School has given me the opportunity to form valuable relationships with students and professors who share similar interests, which has been an amazing experience.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

My most notable achievements are being inducted into Phi Eta Sigma and Beta Gamma Sigma National Honors Society, as well as receiving the award for Outstanding Student in Marketing. During my time at Monmouth, I was also a part of Colleges Against Cancer.

## **FONDEST MEMORIES OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

These include the times I've spent learning from the staff and students, from having fun together at the Honors School barbecues, to the one on one times with my first and second readers. I am grateful for all of the times that others have shared their time and knowledge with me to help me become a better student.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I am currently the Social Media Specialist for both a State Farm Agency and The Local Fix Foundation, which is a local nonprofit. I plan to continue with this and use it as a stepping stone to marketing for a larger corporation.

## **PREVENTING TEENAGERS FROM FAST FOOD ADVERTISING TRAPS**

When creating fast food commercials, advertisers have several techniques that they use to target teenagers. This includes characters/celebrities, jingles/slogans, product placement, emotional appeals, and color. Teenagers and young adults are an ideal demographic to target due to their undeveloped cognitive abilities, as well as their impulsivity and level of independence. Without being aware of the implemented techniques, teens are likely to fall into the traps of the advertisements and have an increased likelihood of purchasing fast food products. This poses threats to their health and wellbeing. Fast food consumption can have physical effects, such as obesity, and also impact academic performance and everyday life. Through my creation of a public service announcement (PSA), teens are made aware of the health risks involved with heavy fast food consumption and how advertisers are persuading them to purchase it. PSAs are commonly based around health, improving undesired behavior, and providing solutions for the viewer. The purpose of the PSA is to inform teenagers and create a desire for healthy habits and provide them with the tools to recognize the advertising techniques they are exposed to.

# ROWAN ELRAIS

MARLBORO,  
NEW JERSEY

**HISTORY & ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**  
Endorsement in English as a Second Language (ESL)



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

My first semester I worked extremely hard to get high grades in order to join the honors school. I wasn't a part of any clubs or on campus communities yet and I thought the best place for me to start would be at the Honors School. Best decision I ever made. I was immediately met with friendly people and a joyous atmosphere.

I was assigned a peer mentor who helped me throughout my entire undergrad career and who I currently keep in touch with to this day. They helped me get a job in the office, which is where I made many of my lifelong friends. Whenever I had a problem, I know every person's door was always open for me. No matter how big or small the problem was. The Honors School allowed me to explore my love for leadership roles, event planning, and research. I credited the Honors School and every member involved with the Honors School for being the reason why I grew so much in the past four years of my undergraduate career.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Presented at the NAPDS 2022 Conference in Chicago

Presented at the NCHC 2021 Conference in Orlando

Presented at the MARAC Conference Online

Recipient of the Brian Greenberg Social Justice Award 2022

Recipient of the The Dean's Award for Excellence in Honors 2022

President of Monmouth University Honors Student Association

Vice President for Phi Eta Sigma (National Honors Society)

President of Monmouth University Muslim Student Association (MSA)

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

There's so many to pick from but my fondest memory was the NCHC Orlando conference. After spending almost 2 years online, being accepted into two other conferences and not being able to travel to them, this trip was life changing to say the least. Not only did I get to go to Florida with my own personal mentor, I was able to experience the trip with all my closest friends. After spending so long on Zoom planning Honors School events or just sitting there for hours talking about life, it was amazing to travel and see everyone who I grew so close to present research and enjoy Florida together. To this day the students and I who attended that trip referred to it as a fever dream because it seemed so surreal that it ever happened.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I am currently applying for grad school and jobs in Maryland. I recently got married and moved to Maryland and I am starting my life with my husband as well as furthering my education in a new environment.

## **EXCLUDED HISTORY REINTEGRATED**

With the current state of the United States and the education system, there have been many bumps in the road to providing an enriching education to all students. One of these obstacles would be the lack of focus in subjects like social studies. A potential explanation for this lack of concentration on this subject can be attributed to the little amount of time dedicated to teaching it. According to academic scholar Phillip J VanFossen, in his study on the overall teaching of social studies in an elementary school, he discovered that K-3 grade teachers spent less than 20 minutes on social studies instruction out of a five-hour instructional day, while teachers in grades 4-5 spent less than 30 minutes (VanFossen, 2005). Recent studies show that other subjects, such as reading or math, are occupying up to, if not more than 90 minutes of a school day each (FastBridge, 2021). It also states that that is the time necessary to successfully teach said subjects. With that being said, why are social studies classes being neglected? This research is being conducted for the purpose of understanding social studies as an overlooked topic within school districts. Topics that will be covered include issues surrounding social studies as a subject, such as the stigma of it not mattering. What causes social studies to be the first subject to be removed when it cannot fit a course curriculum. How educators play a role in modeling social studies standards within their classroom as well as promoting inclusiveness. How to better incorporate social studies within an interdisciplinary curriculum. Why it is important to correctly interpret and portray social studies and the standards that need to be met at the elementary level. This research will also present different strategies that teachers can begin implementing in their classrooms to promote social studies standards in an interdisciplinary way.

# OLIVIA ENNY

MIDDLETOWN,  
NEW JERSEY

**CHEMISTRY**  
with a minor in Physics



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

I wanted to achieve all that I could academically and gain experience in writing a thesis.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Participation in the Summer Research Program in 2019 and 2020; being inducted into Phi Eta Sigma; participating in the various musical ensembles on campus; presented my research virtually at the ACS spring conference of 2021; presented my research at the Undergraduate Research Conference at William Paterson University in 2022; earned several departmental awards in chemistry.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Becoming friends with other members of the honors community and being able to present my research accomplishments to them at the Honors Research Conference in the Spring of 2021. I also really enjoyed learning about their research accomplishments as well.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I plan to attend graduate school to earn a PhD in Chemistry and eventually pursue a career in drug research and development.

## **MACROCYCLES AS A POTENTIAL ANTI CANCER AGENT**

Current cancer treatment is very cytotoxic and is an area of research that is very important in the scientific, as well as medical, community. This project investigates the possibility of using macrocycles as an anti-cancer agent as well as the effect that sodium ions have on these molecules. It was found that sodium ions have a stabilizing effect on these molecules. Basic information on computational chemistry was also gathered and it was determined that these methods would be the best for this research.

# LAUREN FEASTER

COLTS NECK,  
NEW JERSEY

CHEMISTRY (BIOCHEMISTRY)



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...

To accelerate my academic career.

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Monmouth University Women's Soccer Captain;  
Monmouth University Student Athlete Advisory;  
Committee Executive Board Member;  
3x MAAC Champion;  
FLIGHT Academy Executive Board Member

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Meeting lots of great people!

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

Going to medical school starting in the fall of 2022.

## THE ROLE OF DIET, ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND COVID-19 ON THE GUT MICROBIOME OF INDIVIDUALS WITH INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE (IBD)

There is some research on Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), but there is no definitive cure or origin of this disease. This study established a holistic approach by incorporating multiple health factors and how they affect an individual who has IBD. This study explored the impact of IBD dietary recommendations, environmental factors and the COVID-19 pandemic on the gut microbiome of individuals with IBD. After conducting a survey for individuals with IBD from around the world, many similarities and differences were found. Common symptoms of IBD include abdominal pain/cramping, diarrhea, constipation, fatigue and weight loss or gain. Individuals with IBD have tried many different treatment options, diets and lifestyle changes in order to improve their symptoms. Although none completely diminished symptoms, the diets that were found to be most effective were elimination/food intolerance diets and dairy free diets. Most individuals with IBD have used medication to improve their condition, but many have tried multiple different types of medication such as Prednisone, Budesonide and Remicade. In addition, individuals with IBD did not get COVID-19 as much as the general population and if individuals did contract COVID-19, then they did not require hospitalization. Vaccination status and the brand chosen are also explored. The goal in managing IBD is to control the symptoms that an individual experiences so that they can live a normal lifestyle in addition to maintaining the integrity and functioning nature of their gastrointestinal system. The purpose of this study is to bring awareness to different aspects that can be used in order to improve quality of life and the overall gut microbiome in patients with IBD.

# ANASTASIA FRANCISQUINI

COLONIA,  
NEW JERSEY

**POLITICAL SCIENCE  
(INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)**  
with a minor in Spanish



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

To surround myself with other students who wanted to push themselves to explore deeper into their academic fields beyond what was required by our audits.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Published in New Jersey Association of Professional Mediators; President of Pre-Law Club; and 2nd Place Speaker in Debate at Rutgers University.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

The wonderful friends I've made through it.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

After graduation I will take a gap year before attending law school for international and human rights law.

## **THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY ON MEDIATOR APPROACH AND EFFECTIVENESS**

With alternative dispute resolution (ADR) growing in popularity across the United States, there is a need for better investigation in its process and potential. In particular, this research focuses on mediation as a form of ADR, and the role that cultural competency and sensitivity play in making it more effective. With a progressively diverse society and better awareness of such differences, mediators need to be prepared as to how these qualities impact the parties at conflict. At the same time training in such matters may not be required by many mediation training programs, nor law schools, within this research is also an exploration of what practices may help inform the longitudinal application of cultural competency in education and practice. Using the "What the Problem is Represented to be" theory by Carol Bacchi, I analyze how awareness and reduction of one's biases and prejudices can help inform the manner in which a mediator practices and the way they are received by the disputants. Results found that although disputants initially found more ease with a mediator that fit into their own culture, they also were better able to work with a mediator that was culturally competent and culturally sensitive than one that was not.

# ALEJANDRO GARCIA

SOUTH PLAINFIELD,  
NEW JERSEY

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (FINANCE)**  
with a minor in Information Technology



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

I wanted to challenge myself academically while making the most of the Honors School's resources.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Inducted into Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society; member of the Enactus E-Board, an entrepreneurial club on campus; Dean's list Fall 2020, 2021, Spring 2021; interned for Today's Business and Barclays during the summer of my Sophomore and Junior year.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Meeting like-minded classmates who are eager to excel inside and outside the classroom.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I will be working for ZAIS Group, an investment advisory based in Holmdel, New Jersey. At ZAIS, I will be working with the leveraged Finance team on specialized credit strategies. Also, I am pursuing a part-time MBA program to enhance my technical and professional skills.

## **IS THERE A CHANGE IN PUBLIC COMPANIES' RISK AFTER SOX PRACTICES ARE ADOPTED?**

The goal of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX) is to reduce insider trading and market manipulation. It was put in place by the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC), placing regulations and closely monitoring publicly traded firms accounting practices. My reasoning for selecting the topic is to understand if the risk of public companies would decrease when implementing SOX practices. Thus, by their risk diminishing, the confidence in the companies would increase, and investors would be more likely to participate in the stock market. Furthermore, the risk of public companies was measured using pre-and post-SOX data. Additionally, the risk was analyzed by looking at the Weighted Average Cost of Capital (WACC) of the firm. Simply WACC tells us whether firms are adding value or losing value. And it indicates the risk firms might have. However, the results found that SOX regulation did not affect the WACC of publicly traded companies. And it supports the claim that SOX is burdensome to publicly traded companies because of compliance costs.

# MITCHELL HENDRICKS

BETHLEHEM,  
PENNSYLVANIA

**POLITICAL SCIENCE (LEGAL STUDIES) &  
MUSIC (MUSICAL THEATRE)**



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

I wanted to push myself as far as I could academically, and be surrounded by people with the same mindset.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

President of MU Players; Music Director of Sea Sharps; Music Director of MU Players; Music Director of All Together Now; presented at Pi Sigma Alpha Research Conference; published original research; was cast in and filmed a feature film.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

All of the events that the Honors School hosted in Beechwood Hall!

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

Attending Lehigh University to earn a Master of Public Policy.

## **EVALUATING POLITICAL TRENDS THROUGH THE RISE AND FALL OF POPULAR MUSIC**

While not often associated, a person's political ideology and taste in music share a surprising number of similarities, including an appeal to moral and ethical ideals. Both political ideology and taste in music originate from a person's socialization, and are heavily influenced by the agents of socialization often discussed in political science. Since the two factors originate from similar sources, they could provide political scientists and musicologists with a unique opportunity to merge fields. Various other choices in a person's preferences are proven to relate to their political ideology, and music is no exception. Based on research conducted at Monmouth University in the Fall of 2021, various statistical tests reveal that there is indeed a relationship between a person's political ideology and their taste in music. Specifically, genres such as Rock, Pop, and R&B tend to appeal to those with more liberal ideologies, and Country music tends to appeal to those with more conservative ideologies. These findings could provide political scientists with another means of predicting political events based on the trends observed in popular music.

# ANTONELLA HENSON- VENDRELL

HAYMARKET,  
VIRGINIA

**BIOLOGY (MOLECULAR CELL PHYSIOLOGY)**  
with a minor in Health Studies



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

To challenge myself and elevate my studies to the next level. I was interested in doing my own research, so I was very excited to have the opportunity to do my own thesis in the Honors School.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Member of the DI Monmouth Women's lacrosse team (2018-Present); Induction into the Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society (Spring 2019); Member & current Vice President of the Beta Beta Beta Honors Society (April 2021-Present); Member of the Alpha Epsilon Delta Honors Society (April 2021-Present); Member of the Chi Alpha Sigma Honors Society (April 2021-Present); Member and current Treasurer of the Pre-Med club (2020-Present).

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

It was during the first Honors School BBQ for incoming freshmen. I got to meet my fellow Honors School classmates that would then become some of my best friends.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

After graduation, I will be taking a gap year to apply to medical school in the hopes of starting medical school in the fall of 2023. In addition to applying to schools, I will be working as a medical scribe and traveling to Europe!

## **INVESTIGATING THE INCIDENCE OF ANTERIOR CRUCIATE LIGAMENT INJURIES IN COLLEGIATE WOMEN'S LACROSSE PLAYERS DURING SEASON PERIODS AND IN GAMES VERSUS PRACTICES.**

Lacrosse is one of the fastest growing sports in the United States, which has led to an increased number of severe injuries in the sport, specifically anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries. The ACL is a major ligament that stabilizes the knee joint. The ACL injury rate for female athletes is 2-8 times higher than male athletes. These injuries in female athletes continue to be the largest single problem in orthopedic sports medicine. There is little research available that identifies when female lacrosse players are most at risk for an ACL injury, so the purpose of this study was to identify in which period and setting are these athletes most at risk. This was studied with a Qualtrics survey that was shared to lacrosse players at various DI, DII, and DIII schools over social media. It was hypothesized that the incidence of ACL injuries in collegiate lacrosse players is highest during regular season games. Approximately 27% of the collegiate players sampled in our study reported tearing their ACL at least once, and the major findings supported our hypothesis. The results of this study can be used to identify when ACL prevention programs should be implemented and utilized during the lacrosse season.

# GABRIELLA HERBERT

STATEN ISLAND,  
NEW YORK

BIOLOGY



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...

I wanted to challenge myself by not only attaining higher education but by learning new skills, especially in research.

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Deans List 2019-2021; Margot Warters Scholarship Recipient 2020-2022; Conducted research with Dr. Hicks in 2022.

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Meeting my peer mentor and being introduced to the Honors School. From the first day, I felt so welcome. From that day forward, I knew I made the right decision to join the Honors school.

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

After graduation, I plan on attending physician assistant school. Eventually, I hope to become a pediatric physician assistant.

## PEDIATRIC PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION

The role of PAs in the medical field is growing. Although PAs have opportunities to specialize, some may argue that there is not enough specialized education to best prepare PAs for practice in non-primary care specialty fields, including the field of pediatrics. Along with the lack of specialized education for pediatric PAs, the number of pediatric PAs continues to decrease as the population of children in the United States continues to increase. When compared to the amount of general PA programs and fellowships, there are significantly fewer pediatric programs. In this study, data from Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE), Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) for pediatrics by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), and pediatric post-graduate fellowships was used to determine the major differences between general PA programs, pediatric concentrated PA programs, and pediatric post-graduate fellowship programs. The websites and curriculum of six general PA programs were compared to a PA program offering specialized training in pediatrics, the University of Colorado. Though the study produced inconclusive results, it explored if further exposure to pediatrics is needed beyond general PA education to best prepare PAs for practice in the pediatric specialty.

# MORGAN R. KELLY

BRICK,  
NEW JERSEY

**SOCIOLOGY & ENGLISH (CREATIVE WRITING)**



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

The people who mattered the most to me believed in what I could achieve even when I couldn't. I knew joining the Honors School was going to be challenging, but I knew I wanted to take on that challenge because I understood all the good that could come from it. Being here has turned me into a better version of myself both personally and academically.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Inducted into Phi Eta Sigma (2019) and Sigma Tau Delta (2022); worked alongside Dr. Johanna Foster to complete my Honors School Capstone (2021); presented said Capstone at the Honors School Research Conference (2021); survived the COVID semester(s) (2020-2021); I'm striving and working towards earning English Departmental Honors (2022) (stay tuned).

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

I wish I was more involved with the Honors School, and I wish COVID didn't take a year and change away from the face-to-face events and gatherings we could have had. I will always remember having the ability to reach out to peer mentors, and other Honors students, at a moment's notice. One of my fondest Honors School memories has to be making friends and collectively freaking out over deadlines, assignments, and projects together.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

After I graduate, I plan to take some much-needed time off before saddling up and going back to school. I know I want to write novels, but I also know that at this moment in time, I'm not J.K. Rowling or Stephen King, or any seasoned author of the like, so I know that there is going to have to be a backup plan in the meantime. Life has been so exponentially crazy lately that I never had a chance to actually sit down and think about that backup, so I'm going to take a minute to figure it out. Hopefully, in that time, I find some space to write—I have so many ideas and plans that I can't wait to see come to life on paper!

## **ADDRESSING THE MISREPRESENTATION OF THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY ON THE BIG SCREEN**

Same-sex marriage has been legalized for over five years, yet there remain practices of discrimination that affect the LGBT+ community daily. Micro-aggressions oftentimes go unnoticed while the lack of LGBT+ representation in entertainment media is harder to ignore. This isn't to say that representation is non-existent, but rather, to say that it is often far and few between and that what is present, is often highly stereotypical, discriminatory, and dangerous to the individuals of this vulnerable community. This Honors Capstone sought to address the misrepresentation of the LGBT+ community in the media and sought to bridge three of the gaps I found present in what is seen—or not seen—on big and little screens based on extensive research into the topic and under a queer theoretical lens. The three main gaps present in LGBT+ media representation centered around a lack of character identity, an increase in stereotypical behavior, and an increase in typically overused plot lines. To combat and address these themes, I drafted a screenplay of my own where characters who vary in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc, break the boundaries of LGBT+ gender and relationship stereotypes and attempt to navigate real-life as "out" members of the community at large.

# MAKAYLA LASTER

BROWNS MILLS,  
NEW JERSEY

## COMMUNICATION

with minors in Legal Studies and Health Studies



### I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...

To challenge myself academically, I wanted to be a part of a community that motivated me to excel to my fullest potential in and out of the classroom.

### NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

4.0 GPA

Chi Alpha Epsilon Honor Society

Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society

Dean's List Recipient

EOF Scholar

EOF Graduate Achievement Award

Student Ambassador

Hawk TV News Associate Producer

Hawk TV News Anchor

Rock 'n' Raise Charity Livestream Host

U.S. Senator Candidate Interviewer

### FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Creating a capstone project where I got the opportunity to present my research through a video presentation.

### PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

I will be attending Rutgers Law School.

### LOVING DOGS, EATING PIGS

Animals are treated differently depending on the social norms and culture of an area. In America, some are eaten while others are kept as companion animals. The purpose of this project is to bring awareness about the contradictory beliefs that some people hold about meat-eating. This problem is addressed because many people are not conscious of their inconsistent behavior of eating certain animals, while expressing love for other animals. This capstone project will include video demonstration of some defense mechanisms described by Dr. Melanie Joy. Major findings include that people choose to eat meat while neglecting the thought of animals being killed as a way to feel comfortable about their food choices. The social norm to eat certain animals could be changed if the world stopped using defense mechanisms and justification methods for their actions. This project is intended to cause people to reconsider their dietary choices after becoming aware of the meat paradox, which is caring for animals yet consuming them.

# JEANNETTE LOMBARDI

MARLBORO,  
NEW JERSEY

**ANTHROPOLOGY**  
with minors in Archaeology and Biology



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...

I wanted to see what opportunities would be available through the Honors School, like social functions, living with like-minded students, and possible research opportunities, which I was able to get involved in. The support system provided by the Honors School is an additional perk that I really liked and wanted to be able to make use of, especially during my first year at Monmouth.

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

I was part of Phi Eta Sigma, the National Honors Society, and Lambda Alpha, the National Anthropology Honors Society. I had extracurricular roles in the Student Government Association (SGA) as Homecoming Chair, as vice president for the History and Anthropology Club, and as secretary for the Sustainability Club; I also worked as a peer tutor, an Honors School peer mentor, and tour ambassador at Monmouth. I presented twice for the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) in October 2021 on anthropological and biological research; presented at the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference (MAAC) in March 2022; and presented for the Northeast Regional Honors Council (NRHC) in April 2022. I also participated in archaeological field research in Morristown, NJ and Sandy Hook, NJ between 2021 and 2022. I conducted research on the effects of microplastics on a beach renourishment in Deal, NJ during Spring 2022. Lastly, I conducted an Anthropology thesis on the effects of sexual dimorphism in the construction of femininity and masculinity, which was presented in April 2022.

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

My fondest memory was of the Honors School trips to Orlando and Philadelphia for the conferences this year. These were great opportunities to not only present my undergraduate research, but to get to know and bond with other students in the Honors School who I may not have met otherwise.

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

After graduation, I will be attending Syracuse University to pursue my Master's degree in Biomedical Forensic Science. Eventually, I am looking to utilize the skills I have learned throughout my undergraduate and graduate education in the field of forensic anthropology.

## AGREEMENT IN SEXING AND ESTIMATING STATURE IN HUMAN SKELETAL REMAINS: DO THE BONES AGREE IN AN INDIVIDUAL REGARDING SEX AND HEIGHT?

Forensic anthropology involves the application of anthroposcopic and anthropometric techniques to analyze human skeletal remains. This thesis outlines the assessment of a set human skeletal remains for characteristics of sex and stature using forensic anthropological techniques to find whether various bones are in agreement regarding these characteristics. The data for this study was collected using sliding calipers, spreading calipers, a soft measuring tape, and an osteometric board. In addition to the anthropometric data collected for statistical analysis, anthroposcopic data was also used to visually assess the individual. After the data collection period ended, various methods were applied for assessing sex and estimating stature that are used by individuals in the field of forensic anthropology. The sex was concluded to be female and the stature found in the range of 5 foot 5 to 5 foot 6 inches as determined by the majority of the results that were in agreement. Albeit being affected by some limitations, this study contributed to knowledge in the application of assessment methods for these two characteristics and aided in finding how well various bones agreed regarding the sex and stature of the individual.

# JENNIFER LOSAVIO

OLD BRIDGE,  
NEW JERSEY

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (ACCOUNTING)**



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL ...**

To push my self academically and engage in intellectual conversations in topics beyond my major.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Obtained an internship through the Accounting Honors Employment Program; Completed and presented my Honors Thesis; Mentee through the Student Enrichment & Engagement through Mentoring Activities Program.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Presenting my thesis and seeing what other honors students have researched.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I will continue my education through my graduate studies at Monmouth University. Also, I will begin an internship with BDO in the summer.

## **SPOTIFY CASE STUDY: HOW SPOTIFY IMPACTS THE WAY MUSICIANS CREATE AND RELEASE THEIR MUSIC**

This thesis revolves around how Spotify is impacting the music industry. I analyzed how Spotify's business practices impact the way artists create and release their music. To do this, I looked at the payment rates per stream that Spotify and other streaming services pay. I also analyzed Spotify's financial data, the "Spotify: A Product Story" podcast, and data relating to the length of pop songs released within the past few years. This case study helps assess how much of an impact Spotify has on the creativity and income of musicians, with the creativity referring to the length of songs released and how that may be changing over time.

# EMILY MALOOL

SCOTCH PLAINS,  
NEW JERSEY

**MATHEMATICS & SECONDARY EDUCATION**



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

To meet more peers in my classes and to further my research in and outside of my major.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Member of KDP Honor Society;  
Participated in School of Science Summer Research Program;  
Received Math Departmental Award.

## **FONDEST MEMORIES OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Living in Beechwood and meeting so many people as well as the trip to Baltimore.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

Next year, I am attending Monmouth University to receive my Master's in special education.

## **FOOD WASTE: IT JUST DOESN'T ADD UP**

Food waste causes economic and environmental problems, which can result in an overall societal crisis if left unresolved. Billions of dollars are wasted each year by the food that people throw away. Associated environmental damage includes millions of tons of food dumped in landfills, the production of methane gas, and a negative impact on climate change. The ideal place to teach people how everyday activities contribute to food waste and how they can make improvements is in school where students can apply math skills to help fight both climate change and food waste. Teaching real world applications by incorporating classroom projects, especially in math settings, will encourage students to develop knowledge and research food waste. The lesson plans created for this project require students to collect and analyze data and learn how to apply curriculum topics such as slope, functions, and graphing to problems they face in the real world. As a result, instead of questioning how they can apply things they learn in school to their real lives, students can see the importance of what they learn, how to become active citizens, and find topics of interests for college majors and careers, while working towards solving a global issue.

# MARY MCGEE

HAZLET,  
NEW JERSEY

**INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES FOR  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS**



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

I wanted to be a part of the family I got a glimpse of when I visited Monmouth. I saw the way the Honors School lifted up and supported their students and knew it was a community I wanted to be a part of.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

President and Vice President of Artists for Change Club;  
Phi Eta Sigma member;  
Honors School Peer Mentor;  
Math Learning Center Tutor.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

The Honors School bowling night. I really enjoyed bowling with my friends, Reenie, Dr. Mezey, and Kate and meeting new people in the Honors School.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

Work as an elementary school teacher.

## **WHAT ARE EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION STRATEGIES TARGETING STUDENTS HAVING VARIOUS LEVELS OF TECHNOLOGY ACCESS?**

Every day students come to the classroom from different lives and different backgrounds. They also come from different levels of access to technology, as well as different technological skill levels. Students who do not have consistent access to technology outside of the classroom will be at a disadvantage in the classroom unless they are given the time, space, technology, and support to foster their technology skills as well as their confidence in the technology skills. Through research done by reading literature, it was found students who do not have access to technology at home have lower levels of confidence when using technology. Lower confidence levels can impact their performance as well as their future and career path. To solve this problem, this unit plan aims to help answer the question: what are effective instruction strategies targeting students having various levels of technology access? To help combat this, teachers should be implementing technology practice into their normal lessons, as well as create an awareness of technology and its presence in the world within the classroom.

# MADELEINE OGDEN

CINNAMINSON,  
NEW JERSEY

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (FINANCE)**



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

To join a community of people who work hard and succeed academically while taking more challenging coursework

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Women's soccer, Phi Eta Sigma honors society, MAAC All Academic Team 3x, Chi Alpha Sigma honors society, Outstanding Student in Finance.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Being able to present my honors thesis and showcase my hard work.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

Attend Colorado State University and play on the women's soccer team while taking master's in finance courses.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA'S EFFECT ON WOMEN'S SOCCER FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL AND BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE**

Social media has taken over communication in the 21st century. The way in which we communicate has a massive effect on all businesses, namely sports in this case. Athletes have had to adjust to keep up in the evolving technological world, and make themselves stand out amongst so many others online. This study examined how social media has affected aspects of sports, such as engagement, specifically within women's professional soccer. The research is relevant from a business perspective because understanding how fans and athletes utilize social media will allow for marketing decisions to be made in order to maximize viewership. Posts made by teams or athletes may work to drive interest, and therefore, viewing, of different sporting events.

# ASHLEY PASTORE

RARITAN,  
NEW JERSEY

## MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGY AND POLICY

with a minor in Information Technology



### I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...

Not only for the rigorous academic preparation but for the tight knit community it provided me as well. Taking multiple honors classes with the same cohort of individuals really made for closeness amongst myself and others within the Honors School. The honors classes themselves, along with the research I conducted for my thesis, also allowed me to push myself and work harder towards an end goal that would help me prepare for any career I choose. Overall, I chose to join the Honors School because of the numerous beneficial opportunities it has provided for me.

### NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Inducted into Beta Beta Beta Biology Honors Society; Research presentation at Atlantic Estuarine Research Society; Served as a PAL leader for Intro to Cell/Molecular Bio and Botany from 2021-2022; Served as a Peer Tutor from 2019-2022; Dean's List Recipient; Member of the MEBP Club; Participated in 2021 Summer Scholars Program.

### FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Living in Beechwood Hall freshman year. I made many friends that year, some of whom I'm still extremely close with, and the dorm always had such fun activities going on in the lobby. Living in a suite with fellow honors students allowed us to feel connected, and it was definitely a lot of fun.

### PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

After graduation, I will be attending Lehigh University in PA to obtain a MS in Earth and Environmental Science. I hope to continue working in the realm of research with a continued focus on coastal ecosystems and their ecological functionality. After my master's I would love to work for an organization such as the NJDEP or USFWS as a research scientist, and hope to pursue any sort of career that allows me to work out in the field.

### EXPLORING GHOST FORESTS: ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF STORM SURGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE ON COASTAL FORESTS

The purpose of this project was to compare the floral and microbial composition of a ghost forest in Catus Island County Park to the coastal forests they once were and the salt marshes they may become. Ghost forests are areas of dead trees that were once a coastal forest, and these are becoming more common along the NJ coast. Not much is currently known about ghost forest ecological function. Utilizing mathematical analysis to quantify plant community diversity along with genomic sequencing and R programming to characterize microbial community diversity, a better picture of these communities within a ghost forest was better able to be described. Ghost forest plant diversity was considered to be much higher than anticipated, and microbial community composition was fairly typical of what was expected. With a full picture of the species found in each treatment and an understanding of their functional role, predictions can be made on the future of these ecosystems and their ecological significance. As climate change ultimately begins to leave its mark on NJ, this project can help ecologists and coastal engineers alike in planning for what is to be expected in coastal forests.

# KURT M. REINHARDT

BRICK,  
NEW JERSEY

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (ACCOUNTING)**  
with a minor in Information Technology



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

After hearing much about the program when deciding where to go to college, I felt that it would provide me with a challenging academic experience that I could learn and grow from. The program also provided an opportunity to join a community of like-minded students who excel in the classroom.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Inducted into Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society 2019; Inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society 2020; worked as Honors School Peer Mentor 2020-2021; Completed Honors Thesis 2021; Won 1st place for presentation in Hess Excellence in Scholarship Series during Student Scholarship Week 2022; Member of Accounting Society.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

The Friendsgiving I went to during my sophomore year was fun. Eating good food and being in the company of students and faculty from the Honors School made it special.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I will be pursuing an MBA in Finance as part of the 5-year program. Additionally, I have a public accounting internship this summer which hopefully will offer a part-time or full-time position afterward. For my career plans, I would like to acquire a CPA license and work for either the public or private sector.

## **HOW WILL BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY AFFECT CURRENT ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS?**

My thesis attempted to answer the question "How will blockchain technology affect current accounting systems if adopted?" Many businesses and financial institutions are investigating the potential of blockchain for the future. If this technology is widely accepted and implemented, it could impact multiple industries. The accounting sector will have to adapt if blockchain becomes a viable option. Accountants will have to understand this technology and how it could change accounting systems and professional duties. This thesis used the case study method. The case studies focus on companies that are currently using blockchain, specifically Walmart, Maersk, and Microsoft.

# KATIE ROEDER

EAST LONGMEADOW,  
MASSACHUSETTS

**BIOLOGY (MOLECULAR CELL PHYSIOLOGY)**  
with a minor in Chemistry



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

I loved the community that it has and the opportunities it gave me in and out of the classroom.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Alpha Psi Omega national honor society;  
Beta Beta Beta national honor society;  
Phi Eta Sigma national honor society;  
Multiple Deans list recipient.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

I loved helping out at the Honors School accepted student day event. It was so much fun talking on the panel and helping to answer prospective student's questions. Plus the event always had the best stuffed French toast!

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I will be attending dental school at Rutgers University!

## **SALINITY'S EFFECT ON MARITIME FOREST GERMINANTS**

As a result of climate change, global sea levels are rising at an alarming rate, causing an increase in coastal flooding and excess salinity. Along the Mid-Atlantic coast, Maritime forest trees are suffering from non-optimal growth rates, suppressed seed germination, and other harmful effects as a result of the influx of salinity. This research focuses specifically on maritime forests along the New Jersey coast to study the effects of soil salinity on forestry generation within these ecosystems. Soil samples from maritime forest saplings were taken from two maritime forests in New Jersey - Gateway National Recreation Area at Sandy Hook and Island Beach State Park – to be analyzed for salt concentration and soil composition. Other environmental growth factors such as canopy cover and competition were also recorded. Salinity was not found to be a predictor of where sapling species germinated, however, soil composition might influence soil salinity. Further research into the interaction between soil composition and salinity, along with methods of seed dispersal and environmental growth factors should be explored to gain a better insight into forestry generation and its future as the sea level continues to rise in the coming years.

# TAYLOR RUPPRECHT

FREEHOLD,  
NEW JERSEY

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
(ECONOMICS AND FINANCE)**



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

For the academic challenge to dive deeper into my major through the honors thesis. This gave me the opportunity to historically look at the Federal Reserve's actions through major crises which have helped me better understand the policies they have been enacting today with the effect of the pandemic. I wanted research experience before moving into my master's program and I could not be more pleased with the work I have done.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

President of Beta Gamma Sigma and Club Soccer; Leon Hess Business School Student Advisory Council Member; Marketing Director of Enactus; Jane Freed Finalist for Best Thesis; Honors School Peer Mentor.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

My best memory is being an Honors School Peer Mentor, as I have been able to help freshmen through the challenges of transitioning from high school to college. This was really important to me because I like being a supporter and I really made it known I was always there if anyone needed help. This was a very rewarding experience, and I am happy to have been able to do this job for three years.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I accepted a job with Prudential, inside of PGIM which is their global asset management business, as an Investment Operations Associate. I am hoping to go abroad with this company in their global rotational program, and when I come back to The United States, I will complete my master's degree. I will also be taking classes to sit for my CPA exam.

## **FOUNDATIONS OF TRUST**

The American economy has never been known to be predictable by any means, but the components that help form the movements in economic systems can, to a limited extent, be foreseeable. Individuals have a profound impact on market volatility, whether by being a single investor or representing a large firm. Investor's impact aligns with the theory of herd mentality, where individuals have an innate characteristic to follow along with trending market derivatives most times without knowing the risks associated with those new and upcoming mechanisms. Analyzing and drawing conclusions from three horrific market crashes that occurred in 1929, 1987, and 2008, offer patterns that have been present over time. These patterns demonstrate individuals exhibit hubris behavior when it comes to investing in financial derivatives that promise great returns. There is also the common theme of Federal Reserve policies being enacted too late or staying constant for too long, which has escalated a financial panic into a recession and/or depression. This study puts forth these findings and applies them to the current economic climate, showing when different ratios and financial indicators are leaning toward market inefficiency, special purpose acquisition companies (SPAC) can serve as the next rapidly growing financial derivative that can ultimately turn a vulnerable market into an economic downturn.

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# BRIELLE SADOWSKI

EDISON,  
NEW JERSEY

**INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES  
FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**  
Teacher of Students with Disabilities



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

Throughout my life, I have always viewed every experience as an opportunity for learning and I have realized how much I love to be challenged. Becoming a member of the Honors School meant that I would face many challenges during my college years but also that I would encounter many opportunities for emotional and intellectual growth. With that, I knew I wanted to join the Honors School.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

During my time at Monmouth, I have been inducted into the Phi Eta Sigma and Kappa Delta Pi Honor Societies. I have also completed my Honors School Capstone Project (in the midst of the pandemic) and received the Spring 2022 Excellence in ISEE Program Award.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

While I have made many fond memories with the Honors School, I will never forget my very first morning as a Monmouth Honors School student walking to the beach at sunrise. Although it was only my first morning at Monmouth, I have never felt a greater sense of belonging than I did in that moment.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

After graduation, I will return to my hometown and become an elementary school teacher. I have always loved to learn and I cannot wait to share that passion with future generations of children.

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING WHILE SOCIAL DISTANCING**

During times of crisis, people begin to reevaluate their priorities in life. During the COVID-19 pandemic, countries worldwide prioritized safety and shut down all non-essential facilities. While a clear line was drawn between wants and needs in some cases, other cases were not so definitive. There was one facility, in particular, that the United States struggled to reopen: schools. Was learning in person more important than safety? While Americans struggled to answer this question, schools shifted to virtual classrooms, making learning extremely difficult. This scramble to educate effectively led to the overemphasis of standard subjects, meanwhile other aspects of education were put on the back-burner. Social-emotional skills, in particular, are known to be critical life skills, but because of social distancing mandates, they were not emphasized as strongly as before. While this issue appeared to be new, there were other times when students and teachers could not gather in a physical classroom, whether they were due to viral outbreaks or natural disasters. By analyzing the impact that these events had on students, in connection to social-emotional milestones and skill-enhancing activities, this project introduces an educational curriculum of practical exercises tailored to the social-emotional development of students learning in remote classrooms.

# DIANA L. TURCIOS

WEST NEW YORK,  
NEW JERSEY

**POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
with a minor in English



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...**

I wanted to challenge myself and be a part of a community of like minded and committed students.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Traveling and working hard with the Debate team and being on the Dean's list.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Going to the Honors School to get treats, merch, and always receiving amazing help.

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

I plan to attend law school and hopefully move towards becoming an immigration attorney.

## **THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE TERM "HISPANIC:" OVERGENERALIZED AND MISREPRESENTED**

The United States has always prided itself on its ability to be a melting pot or a salad bowl. Nevertheless, the idea is that cultures can integrate and assimilate into American society, therefore, creating a stronger and diversified unit. However, the Hispanic community is still perceived as being a separate entity, as opposed to a community that contributes and is part of American culture, society, and politics. The term Hispanic initially was created to identify a community of Spanish-speaking individuals. However, as time passed, this term became immensely overgeneralized to which I believe is the cause for most of the misrepresentation, misconception, and inability to assimilate for the Hispanic community. This in turn causes political ambiguity for the Hispanic community regarding where they stand, how they are represented, and what this holds for their future. In this essay, I use prior scholarly literature to different ways in which Hispanic identity can differ. Whereas I use sources like social media, podcasts, and blogs for uncontained perspectives from individuals of the Hispanic community to showcase their experience with integration and to reference how the Hispanic community is represented. To which I concluded that a lot of the issues that this community has regarding representation, identity, and assimilation have much more to do with the overgeneralization of the term Hispanic and what that means to the individuals in the community and how that translates into American political society.

# GINA-MARIE VERRONE

FLANDERS,  
NEW JERSEY

**CHEMISTRY (BIOCHEMISTRY)**  
with a minor in Information Psychology



## **I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...**

To challenge myself academically.

## **NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH**

Member of women's lacrosse team.

## **FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL**

Presenting my thesis with my friends!

## **PLANS AFTER GRADUATION**

Continue my education at medical school.

## **THE IMPACT OF MEDITATION ON COLLEGE ATHLETES**

Meditation is an ancient practice that dates back to 5,000 BCE where an individual utilizes one of many techniques to bring them to the present moment. The practice improves mental clarity, and trains individuals to learn to focus their attention more effectively. The goal of meditating is to simply be present, allowing the individual to enter a state of mindfulness. Over time, the practice can reduce anxiety, improve levels of focus, improve emotional regulation abilities, and promote a clear state of mind for the individuals. Physiologically, meditation lowers one's heart rate, blood pressure, and increases brain processing abilities. The benefits of meditation can be particularly useful to Division I, II, and III athletes competing at the collegiate level. The immense amount of stress involved in sport participation including countless hours of physical conditioning, skill development, travel, and competition, leads athletes to be more vulnerable to negative mindsets. These demands lead to altered thinking patterns revolved around perfectionism and fear-of-failure, ultimately increasing levels of anxiety and stress. Just before and during competition, an athlete's mental state is the most susceptible to negative states, altering the individual's ability to perform. Practicing meditation is an effective course of action to prevent fears and thoughts from overcoming an athlete. Instead, the mental clarity provided by successfully meditating can guide the athlete into a flow state, where they can perform optimally. A consistent meditation program for college athletes would likely enhance their mental and physiological health over time, specifically reducing their anxiety levels while elevating their mental clarity, improving their ability to achieve a state of flow and compete on game day.

# JO VONDERHORST

BALTIMORE,  
MARYLAND

**CHEMISTRY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
with minors in Biology and Physics



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...

For the opportunity to live with, work with, and befriend individuals as academically driven as myself and to open myself up to new perspectives and new avenues for learning.

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Participated in six department and MU Players club productions (Spring 2019-Spring 2022) as well as stage managed the department production of Cabaret (Spring 2022) and produced the club production of All in the Timing (Spring 2022); worked as a chemistry lab assistant and writing assistant (Spring 2021-Spring 2022); research assisted with the computational chemistry lab (Spring 2020-Fall 2021); inducted into the Pi Alpha Sigma, Phi Lambda Upsilon, and Alpha Psi Omega honors societies; interned for NOAA (Summer 2021) as part of the Hollings scholarship program.

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

My freshman year, living in Beechwood Hall with so many people who have remained some of my best friends throughout my years at Monmouth and will remain my friends well into the future.

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

After graduation, I will be attending law school at the University of Maryland and aspire to work with the EPA following law school.

## CLIMATE POLICY & PUBLIC OPINION: A COMPARATIVE MODEL OF CLIMATE POLICY STRENGTH IN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing the world in the present day. The most recent report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) conveys the grim prediction that unless global carbon emissions are brought to net zero by 2055 and warming of the globe is limited to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, disastrous consequences will result. Despite the urgency of addressing the climate change problem, levels of ambition in the passage of legislation aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change have varied internationally. As reported by the 2022 Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) Report, all 27 EU member states currently sit higher on the ambition spectrum than the United States, which falls nearly at the bottom. Using a quantitative linear regression analysis and multiple single sample t-tests, this report aimed to identify the source of the effective climate policy gap between EU member states and the United States. The results of the analyses conducted refute the proposed hypothesis that political polarization is the major driving force behind this gap and identify two significant causal variables: the percentage of the national border occupied by coastline, and length of the national average work week.

# ALEXA WALLACE

WHEATLEY  
HEIGHTS,  
NEW YORK

**BIOLOGY (MOLECULAR CELL PHYSIOLOGY)**  
with a minor in Health Studies



## I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL BECAUSE...

I wanted to be able to challenge myself not only on the basketball court, but in the classroom as well. Being a part of the Honors School allowed me to do this by diving deeper into curriculum and learning more than I would have if I were not apart of the school. Also, I am a person who loves to be part of something bigger than myself. Being a part of the Honors School gave me the opportunity to do that and to form relationships with other people at Monmouth that I may not have met!

## NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

A part of Monmouth Women's basketball for all four years; A part of Black Student Athlete Huddle 2020-2022; A part of Flight Academy 2020-2022; Research Assistant for Dr. Rhoads 2020-2022; Presented thesis on ethanol withdrawal in adolescents in 2022.

## FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Presenting my thesis. After working on my thesis for several months, it was a pleasure to be able to present the research I worked on with Dr. Rhoads, with my peers, and Dr. Mezey. It was such a cool experience and I am so thankful that I was able to have the opportunity to conduct and present my hard work.

## PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

I am currently preparing myself to apply for medical school this upcoming application cycle. Between now and medical school, I am looking to gain experience in the medical field by working directly with physicians while studying extensively for the MCAT. I have aspirations of becoming a physician, but specifically a neurologist or a pediatrician.

## BIOCHEMICAL ALTERATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH GLUTAMATE RECEPTORS AND LIPID RAFTS DURING ETHANOL WITHDRAWAL IN ADOLESCENTS

Alcohol is the most commonly abused substance amongst adolescents in the United States. This thesis will be analyzing the biochemical changes that occur in the adolescent brain when in a period of ethanol withdrawal. Specifically, this thesis will be focusing on the upregulation of NMDA receptors, an ionotropic glutamate receptor in the brain, and an increase in low buoyant lipid raft fractions, which are lipid-detergent microdomains found in the plasma membrane of cells. This thesis will be using a specific rat strain named the Spontaneous Hypertensive Rat (SHR), which is a rat strain that has been accepted as a model for ADHD in adolescents. In a prior honors thesis, results showed that SHR rats did not exhibit the same behavioral cues associated with withdrawal like the other rats involved in the study. Alcohol research done on SHR rats in particular is beneficial due to the fact results could emulate what occurs in the brains of adolescents with ADHD. This study was carried out using different biochemical techniques including: homogenization, and gel electrophoresis, western blotting.

# ARIEL D. ZAVALA

LONG ISLAND,  
NEW YORK

## CHEMISTRY

with minors in Biology, Race and Ethnic Studies, & Spanish



### I JOINED THE HONORS SCHOOL...

To join a more rigorous academic environment that allowed for more discussion based courses and greater educational opportunities.

### NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE AT MONMOUTH

Phi Lambda Upsilon, National Chemistry Honor Society;

Sigma Delta Pi, National Spanish Honor Society;

Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society;

Summer Scholars Recipient;

Selected to present at 10th National HAB Symposium in Orange Beach, Alabama.

### FONDEST MEMORY OF THE HONORS SCHOOL

Meeting my best friends through the Honors School peer mentor program.

### PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

I plan on working in a research lab after graduation and then pursue a doctorate degree in the near future.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL ON HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM (HAB) TOXICITY IN MONMOUTH COUNTY COASTAL LAKES, NEW JERSEY

Reports of harmful algal blooms (HABs) in freshwater environments have been surfacing nationwide in news, leading to concern among researchers, environmental managers and citizens. Monmouth County's coastal lakes often experience summertime HABs due to nutrient pollution and climate change. These lakes benefit the surrounding communities economically and environmentally, but when HABs occur they pose a serious health hazard, resulting in state regulatory action and a loss of a valuable community resource. The purpose of this research is to gain insight on local HAB characteristics and their relationship to cyanotoxin abundance through qPCR and ELISA analysis. Cyanobacteria is the phytoplankton that causes HABs and are known to produce cyanotoxins e.g., microcystin, saxitoxin, and cylindrospermopsin. Microcystin, a common cyanotoxin, are especially concerning for their contribution to illnesses in humans and animals. HAB toxicity can be influenced by the environment in which they are growing, therefore, microcystin is not always produced by HABs. The coastal lakes of Monmouth County, NJ offer an opportunity for comparative studies on the relationship between freshwater HABs and cyanotoxins, which will be the focus of this study. Evidence indicates that global change to aquatic ecosystems such as rising temperatures, nutrient loads, and CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations will affect the dominance and toxicity of Microcystis.

CONGRATS  
TO ALL OF  
THE  
2022  
HONORS  
GRADUATES!



MONMOUTH  
UNIVERSITY

HONORS  
SCHOOL