



HONORS AWARDS

2023



MONMOUTH
UNIVERSITY

HONORS
SCHOOL



MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY

HONORS SCHOOL

Senior Awards and Recognition Ceremony

May 10, 2023

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dean Nancy Mezey, Ph.D.

Introduction of Honors School Outstanding Service Award

Dean Nancy Mezey, Ph.D.

Remarks from the Outstanding Service Award Winner

Dr. Jennifer McGovern, Ph.D.

Introduction of Awardees

Dean Nancy Mezey, Ph.D.

Dean's Award for Excellence in Honors

Honors Council Award for Best Thesis/Capstone

Remarks from the Award Winner's First Reader

Remarks from the Award Winner

Recognition of Graduates

Dean Nancy Mezey, Ph.D.

Assistant Dean Jennifer Ross, MA

Assistant to the Dean Doris Meyer, MA

Closing Remarks

Dean Nancy Mezey, Ph.D.

2023 HONORS COUNCIL AWARD FOR BEST THESIS/CAPSTONE

All Honors Thesis/Capstone presenters are invited to apply for the prestigious Honors Council Award for Best Thesis/Capstone. This is a competitive and prestigious award that is granted to an honors student who completed their Honors School thesis or capstone during the previous calendar year and that the Honors Council deems to be the most outstanding based on originality of thesis, depth and range of research, clarity of argument, and quality of presentation.

BEST THESIS/CAPSTONE, WINNER

DUSTIN HO '23

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

First Reader: Dr. Tjeerd Boonman

Economic Variables that Contribute to Happiness in
the United States

BEST THESIS/CAPSTONE, HONORABLE MENTIONS

ISABELLA HANNA '23

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

First Reader: Dr. Joelle Zabotka

Second Reader: Dr. Robert H. Scott III

Integrating Big Data Into Non-Profit Organizations: Investigating the Efficacy of ResourceNet Provider Roster at a NJ Care Management Organization

ERICA SANTOS-REYEZ '22

POLITICAL SCIENCE

First Reader: Dr. Joseph Patten

Second Reader: Dr. Stephen Chapman

Can Extreme Violence Against Women Resulting in Femicide in Latin America be Reduced Through Legislative Gender Quotas?

BEST THESIS/CAPSTONE, FINALISTS

JENNA CORDARO '22

PSYCHOLOGY

First Reader: Dr. Michele VanVolkom

The Effect of Personality on Social Media Usage

ANA L. HUERTAS '24

HEALTH STUDIES and BIOLOGY

First Reader: Dr. Kiameesha Evans

Second Reader: Dr. Christina Merckx

Assessing Racial Bias Among Undergraduate Pre-Clinical Students

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.

DÁRIKA LARA-RODRÍGUEZ '23

Design and Animation (Graphic and Interactive Design)

Dárika has been an active and integral member of the Honors School during the last four years. She represented the Honors School at two National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) conferences. Dárika served as co-president of the Honors Student Association (HSA) and organized and coordinated multiple student-focused events, collaborating with and motivating students to participate in honors-related activities. In 2022, at the Spring Art and Design Senior Show, Dárika won a departmental award, Outstanding in Graphic Design and Animation. Dárika's work exemplifies the best of what a member of the Honors School can be.

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD



DR. JENNIFER MCGOVERN

Dr. Jen McGovern is an associate professor of sociology at Monmouth University. She is also currently serving as the Director of the Sociology Program and the NCAA Faculty Athletic Representative for Monmouth. A former collegiate track athlete, her current research focuses on how social inequalities influence sport, health, and fitness opportunities. Her published works and presentations explore how social class, gender, and race influence who gets to play sports and what kind of experiences individuals have in sporting environments.

In her ten years at Monmouth, Dr. McGovern has taught several honors sections of Sociology 101. She has informally advised many Honors students on their thesis projects and served as first or second reader on ten different honors theses. Many of these students have since gone on to excel in graduate school, professional programs, and other careers. Dr. McGovern enjoys working with honors students throughout the many rewards and challenges of the research process; she constantly learns new things from all of her students. Outside of the classroom, Dr. McGovern loves to hike, cook, and garden. She is always looking to learn new routes, recipes and techniques.

DEAN MEZEY PROUDLY PRESENTS

THE HONORS SCHOOL GRADUATES

FROM SUMMER 2022, WINTER 2022, AND SPRING 2023

Emily Adamo
Marlee Butryn
Lejla Canka
Julianna Carletti
Luke Collier
Lilia Crew
Anthony Cross
Sarah Curtis
Emma Cusano
Yosef Davidowitz
Danielle Dempsey
Bryan Derr
Cory Englehardt
Jacob Evenson
Isabella Hanna
Dustin Ho
Jack Holmstrom
Cassie James
Kinneret Kanik
Dayana Khalil
Nico Landino
Dárika Lara-Rodríguez
Mia Lewis

Ava MacMillan
Jessica Martin
Jenna Moley
Ashley Ng
Julia Panebianco
Emily Pawelek
Kiran Ramjisingh
Elisa Ramos
Julian Rebelo
Derek Reina
Giverny Risse
Erica Santos-Reyez
Gabriela Schnur
Arielle Sinicin
Morgan Siracusa
Austin Staulcup
Ava Taylor
Gabriella Vangeli
Jianna Walters
Samantha Walton
Nicholas Yalch
Chiara Zambon

Emily Adamo



MAJOR: Elementary Education & English

HOMETOWN: Middletown, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Inducted into Phi Eta Sigma National Honors Society, Spring 2020
- Sister of Alpha Sigma Tau, Beta Omega Chapter, 2020-2023
- Student Ambassador in Monmouth Admissions Office, 2020-2023
- Honors School Peer Mentor, 2020-2023
- Secretary of ILA Chapter at Monmouth University, 2021-2022
- McKenzie/Van Everdingen Endowed Scholarship Recipient

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because I knew it would give me opportunities to receive a more individualized education here at Monmouth. I knew it would be a really great way for me to get involved both academically and socially in my major and in the school.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School is attending the annual Sunrise Walk each year for the last four years. It was always a fun and exciting start to a new school year!

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Next year, I will be continuing my education at Monmouth by earning a master's degree in Communication. I also plan to spend time substituting to make connections with school communities I am interested in working for in the future.

THESIS: Promoting Mental Health Awareness Through Read-Alouds

Social-emotional learning, or SEL, has become a popular topic in the education field today, as teaching SEL skills in the classroom have been correlated with higher academic success and fewer behavioral issues. An effective SEL framework incorporates five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Many social-emotional learning curriculums teach through the use of literacy, one instance being read-aloud stories. This capstone project draws upon previous literacy and social-emotional learning research to create a read-aloud curriculum which teaches young students about mental health and the skills necessary for managing their thoughts and feelings. This read-aloud curriculum consists of four reading units, centered around topics such as feeling identification, identifying and coping with feelings of anxiety and depression, and empathy. Each unit is made up of two to three repeated interactive read-alouds along with the lessons and activities that accompany them. This curriculum has been designed to be taught at the first-grade level and aligns with NJ Student Learning Standards.

Marlee Butryn



MAJOR: Secondary Mathematics Education

MINOR: Physics

HOMETOWN: Pequannock, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

While at Monmouth University, I am extremely grateful to have been an active sister of Alpha Xi Delta and serve as both Membership Vice President and Chapter President, as well as serve as Vice President of Programming for the Panhellenic Council.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I was beyond excited to meet peers with similar work ethics and goals, as well as expand my knowledge of secondary mathematics education through conducted research.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

In addition to meeting so many amazing individuals within the Honors School, both students and staff, I am beyond grateful to have been given the opportunity to have worked on and complete my project along side one of my best friends, Ava Taylor. I am so excited to see what the future holds for us!

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I am extremely excited and look forward to moving back to my hometown and working at the high school I had attended myself, teaching Algebra I and II to various grade levels.

THESIS: Evaluating and Developing Secondary Algebra-I Curriculum With Attention to Crucial Factors and Methods Affecting Student Achievement and Wellbeing

The purpose of this research and capstone project was to examine multiple factors affecting students' ability to learn mathematics and new ways to teach subject matter to students. As a future mathematics educator, it is crucial to understand the aspects that affect students' mathematical education and ways in which lessons and units would improve their academic achievement in mathematics. The selected project analyzed multiple components that play a key role in how people learn and the ways in which education for secondary students can be improved in creative ways. Sources were examined to explore the effectiveness of various high school mathematics curricula and their emphasis and utilization of creative teaching strategies. The literature review conducted indicates that physical and mental health, the learning environment, classroom management, and creative instructional practices are highly influential factors in teaching mathematics effectively and improving students' academic achievement. The review was used to create curricular materials for secondary mathematics, specifically Algebra I. The ultimate goal was to discover ways to better help students understand conceptual algebra topics and support all individuals in the most effective ways possible.

Lejla Canka



MAJOR: Political Science (International Relations)

MINOR: Legal Studies

HOMETOWN: Old Bridge, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Member of Pi Sigma Alpha (Political Science Honor Society)
- Deans List All Semesters Study Abroad in Washington DC

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I wanted to challenge myself throughout my college experience and excel beyond the average student to the best of my ability.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Having the opportunity to connect with the incredible staff and students through academic classes that we all got to share.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be applying to an international program that allows me to travel around the world and hopefully help aid in the battle towards gender equality through research & NGO work.

THESIS: The Progression of Gender Rights in Eastern Europe: How Globalization Has Advanced Legal Reform in the Balkan Region

The Balkan region has recently experienced a democratic shift in its governments, leading to the increase of progressive legislation throughout many states. This research thesis will analyze the social implications behind this recent change in legal policy within the context of gender rights. It will study the effects of globalization and Westernization and their influence on legal reform in the states of Kosovo, Serbia, Albania, and Croatia. Liberal political theory and feminist theory will also be studied for their impact on the legal institutions of the Balkans. For research methods, this study will conduct an ordinal regression analysis through SPSS in order to establish a relationship between a state's social ideology and its legal reform progression toward gender equality. The study concludes that in each of the case studies, there has been a progressive shift toward gender equality policy that has had a lasting impact on social ideology. While there is still ample progress to be made and necessary policy to be passed, it can be concluded that the post-Communism shift to democracy and Westernization in the Balkans has positively altered public opinion, legal policy, and social ideology regarding gender rights in Kosovo, Serbia, Albania, and Croatia.

Julianna Carletti



MAJOR: Nursing

HOMETOWN: Cherry Hill, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Member of Division I Field Hockey team
- Senior Captain of Field Hockey
- Member of AIV, a Christian fellowship club
- Monmouth University Dean's List 2022 and 2019
- Chi Alpha Sigma Athletics Honors Society
- NFHCA Division I Academic Squad
- America East Commissioner's Honors Roll
- NFHCA Scholar of Distinction

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School to get the most out of my college experience, to challenge myself academically and grow as an individual.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School is presenting my thesis. Being able to share my research which I have been working on for three years was a lot of fun. I also really enjoyed listening to my peers' presentations. Their passion for the projects was evident and it was really cool to learn about new topics that are not often talked about in my field of study.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I will attend graduate school at Fairfield University to obtain a Master's in Nursing Leadership. While taking classes I will also be continuing my athletic career as an athlete on the Fairfield University field hockey team.

THESIS: Distraction Techniques for Minimizing Pain During Pediatric Immunizations

The pediatric population undergoes more needle procedures than any other age group. Vaccinations given through intramuscular injections are required for children to enter the school system in the U.S. Currently, acute pain in the pediatric population is underdiagnosed. Although the physical pain of vaccination is brief, the psychological effects can be long-lasting, especially if the pain is not properly managed. One way to treat pain associated with intramuscular injections is to decrease perceived pain through distraction techniques. This research explored the efficacy of different types of distraction techniques. The existing research was analyzed to determine if distraction techniques are effective at managing pain associated with intramuscular injections in children. It was determined that each child has a different personal preference for distraction techniques depending on their age and interests. Providing children with a toy tailored to their age group minimizes perceived pain.

Luke M. Collier



MAJOR: Chemistry (Advanced Chemistry)

MINOR: Health Studies

HOMETOWN: Freehold, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 3-Year Recipient of the School of Science Dean's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research (2020-2023)
- Department of Chemistry and Physics Awards for Top Performance in General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, and Physical Chemistry
- President of the Chemistry Club (2021-2023)
- Inducted into Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society; Student Tutor and Peer-Assisted Learning Team Leader for all chemistry courses; Served as the campus' Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Technician
- Co-Organized the creation of a Campus-Wide Food and Hygiene Drive

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I was sold on the idea of joining the Honors School by both Nancy Mezey and Reenie Menditto. Although hesitant, it was the best decision I could have ever made. I wanted to push myself to achieve things I never thought were possible. I wanted to surround myself with like-minded individuals, all while receiving a top-tier education.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School would be attending the national and regional honors research conferences, spanning much of the United States. It was always so exciting to not only present groundbreaking research, and connect with other honors students, but to also explore a new city with friends.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be attending the University of Michigan for my doctoral degree in bioanalytical chemistry. GO BLUE!!

THESIS: Influence of Microplastics on Aquatic and Human Ecosystems: A Three-Part Comprehensive Study Regarding Sample Extraction Methods, Speciation of Heavy Metal(loid)s, and Physical Mobility through Wastewater Treatment Plants

Each year, over 380 million tons of plastic added to our planet. Microplastics, defined as plastic fragments less than five millimeters in diameter, contribute to significant pollution worldwide. Due to their size, the ability to extract microplastics from samples has proven difficult. In this study, density separation using saturated salt solutions (i.e., NaCl, NaI) and digestion methods were carefully analyzed for highest extraction yield. It was proven that saturated sodium chloride (NaCl) solution was 96% effective in removing microplastics from various samples. In addition, the interactions between how microplastics interact with heavy metals such as lead (Pb) and chromium (Cr) based on pH are discussed. Varying microplastic samples were subjected to various concentrations of Pb and Cr solutions. It was found via FAAS that at all pH levels (4, 7, 10) both Pb and Cr were able to adsorb onto the microplastic. Finally, although multiple methods of small-scale separation and their limitations are discussed in this study, large-scale implementation of these methods are exhibited at a local wastewater treatment plant. This study allows for further investigation to occur regarding the biogeochemistry of microplastics, as well as provide additional methods that can be applied to additional large-scale operations, such as water remediation systems and industrial WWTPs.

Anthony Cross



MAJOR: Computer Science

MINOR: Mathematics

HOMETOWN: Howell, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES &

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Treasurer of Monmouth Gamers United Spring 2023
- Participated in School of Science Student Research Conference

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

My father attended college here and the Honors School offered me a scholarship, so I decided to come here.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

When I came here as a freshman, there was a walk to the beach very early in the morning that I attended, and I like the beach so that was fun.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation I intend to pursue jobs in the field of computer science while also learning art and music as I would like to pursue jobs in video game development, or maybe possibly go independent.

THESIS: Analysis of Horror Media and the Consumption of It

My question that I wanted to answer is how the world of horror media and humanity interacted. I wondered why, even though fear is usually thought of as a negative emotion, people seemingly like to seek it out and experience it for fun. Fear is indeed an evolutionary advantage, as without it, humanity would not have made it very far. But I wanted to know why people are taking their fear and, as they say, "turn lemons into lemonade." My question is important because, for my ultimate capstone project, I created part of a video game of the horror genre. I researched the connection between people and the horror that they like to consume. I performed significant research into how people consume horror media and wrote a satisfactory plot for my game. I intended to make it a bit more minimalist, with plot details being experienced by looking around rather than have voice acting or anything of the like.

Sarah Curtis



MAJOR: English (Creative Writing)

MINOR: Gender and Intersectionality Studies

HOMETOWN: Middletown, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Worked as an office assistant in the English Department (2019-2022)
- Received the Rising Junior Award from the English Department (2021)
- poetry featured four times in the Monmouth Review (2022-2023)
- Received the English Department Creative Writing Award (2023)
- Worked in an internship for the Banyan Review, an online poetry and art journal (2023)
- Member of Sigma Tau Delta, English Honor Society
- Maintained a 4.0 departmental GPA (a 3.975 cumulative GPA!)

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School to push myself academically and really devote myself to my studies. I knew I wanted to get the most out of my learning experience at Monmouth, and what better place to do that than in honors courses?

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

There are so many amazing memories, but my fondest memory of the Honors School has to be being in Professor Belinski's Honors English course. I was a freshman and it was my first honors class. Her feedback on a paper I wrote was so encouraging, it inspired me even further to pursue my degree as an English major and Honors School student.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I will be continuing to operate my own small business (I'm an Etsy shop owner!). I also plan to continue pursuing a career in the writing field, such as an editor or social media manager at a poetry journal, as I truly enjoyed my internship experience this semester working for an online publisher.

THESIS: The Art of Revision: Revising Raindrops

For my capstone project, I aimed to understand the importance of the revision process in poetry. Revision is an essential part of the writing process that all poems are subject to. In my research, I reviewed the literature of various revision components as explained by acclaimed writers, poets, and scholars. Additionally, I examined various revision strategies, discussions of revision, and writings on poetic craft. I explored the craft elements of poetry as a means to write an effective poem and found it is related to revision as it is during the revision process in particular that poets pay minute attention to how various craft elements work together and separately to create a well-wrought poem that has reached its full potential. I then took this knowledge and applied it to Raindrops, a collection of poetry that I wrote and self-published in high school. I selected twenty poems to perform major overhaul revisions on, and completely transformed and reconstructed my poems. I utilized new knowledge of poetry and revision strategies which I acquired through my studies as an English major with a concentration in creative writing at Monmouth University and my extensive research on the matter for my creative capstone project endeavor. By the end of my project, I had a series of entirely reborn, revised, and enhanced poems.

Emma Cusano



MAJOR: Marine and Environmental Biology and Policy
MINOR: Global Sustainability

HOMETOWN: Monroe Township, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Participated in the 2023 Study Abroad Tropical Island Ecology trip to the Bahamas
- Gave a poster presentation at the Spring 2023 AERS Conference
- Hawk Talk 2023 research presentation
- MEBP Thesis Presentation 2023
- Served as a research assistant for PERL from 2021-2023
- Served as a lab assistant for Botany in Spring 2023
- Worked in the University's greenhouse
- Participated in the Summer Research Program 2021 & 2022 and the Summer Scholars Program 2022
- Awarded the MEBP Academic Achievement Award 2023 and the Outstanding Biology Transfer Student award 2023.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I wanted to pursue undergraduate research, and the Honors School allowed me to do that in a challenging yet rewarding way. I also wished to gain valuable experience in the field and through writing a thesis.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Getting to meet other Honors students and learning about their work. The Honors School has been a great way for me to be a part of a close-knit community, have access to valuable resources, and participate in research that I enjoy!

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I am currently in the process of applying to seasonal/temporary positions within the environmental science field, and have recently applied to one with the National Audubon Society. I plan on attending graduate school within the next 1-2 years to obtain a Master's degree in wildlife conservation.

THESIS: Sea-level Rise Influences Bird and Mammal Populations in Monmouth and Ocean County Coastal Forests

The goal of this project is to assess the differences in wildlife composition and ecosystem services between healthy coastal forests and dead ghost forests in Toms River and Sandy Hook, New Jersey. Coastal forests are ecosystems that serve as crucial habitats for countless plant and animal species. As saltwater encroaches upon a healthy freshwater forest, the salt intake by trees results in their death, and ultimately the functions of the ecosystem change. Field observation and acoustic surveys were conducted to provide data on wildlife populations within the two ecosystems. It was found that that birds of prey and marsh-dependent species were observed within ghost forests where they mainly used dead trees as spots to perch, but no mammals were detected in this ecosystem. Forest-dependent birds were detected more in healthy forests, while marsh-dependent birds were detected more in ghost forests. The absence of mammals within ghost forests is an alarming consequence of climate change and its effect on wildlife populations in coastal areas. The information gathered from this research could be applied to wildlife population studies, and further research regarding ecosystem transitions and subsequent habitat alterations that aim to protect wildlife species from displacement and vulnerability.

Yosef Davidowitz



MAJOR: Computer Science

HOMETOWN: Long Branch, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Secretary of IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), 2021-2023
- Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society
- Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society
- Upsilon Pi Epsilon Computer Science Honor Society
- Department of Defense SMART Scholarship Recipient

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

When I was accepted to Monmouth, I was excited to see that I was accepted to the Honors School as well. I joined the Honors School as a way to strengthen my education during my time at Monmouth while joining a community of other motivated students. Joining the Honors School has allowed me to delve deeper into my studies, both in my major and in other fields that I am interested in, thanks to the honors courses and thesis research.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School is going to see *Wicked* on Broadway in the Spring of 2020. This was my first year at Monmouth and it was a great way to meet new friends. It was also right before Covid started, so it became a very meaningful event before classes went virtual.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After I graduate, I will be attending graduate school at Monmouth to further my education by receiving my master's degree in computer science with a concentration in cybersecurity. After graduating from the master's program in 2024, I will be working for the Department of Defense in Washington, DC.

THESIS: The Potential Impact of the Voting Age on the Environment

There is a growing movement in the United States to lower the voting age to 16. While this may sound like a radical, unprecedented change to the United States' election system, there are already several countries that have lowered their voting age to 16. Proponents of lowering the voting age argue that allowing younger people to vote will let their voices be heard by giving them a way to help fix the issues that matter to them, such as climate change. According to the Yale Environmental Performance Index, which ranks countries' environmental policies based on their commitment to climate change, environmental health, and ecosystem vitality, countries with a voting age of 16 and free and fair elections perform better environmentally than their neighboring countries that do not have a 16-year-old voting age. This paper discusses the potential effect that lowering the voting age can have on environmental issues by analyzing the effects of lower voting ages on environmental policy in countries with 16-year-old voting ages.

Danielle Dempsey



MAJOR: Psychology

MINOR: General Management

HOMETOWN: Hebron, CT

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Member of Psi Chi and Phi Eta Sigma honor societies for academic achievement
- Member of Monmouth University Debate Team and won numerous awards at national competitions
- Sole undergraduate recipient of the Monmouth University Library Research Award for writing done with my honors thesis
- Invited to present research at the Eastern Psychological Association on behalf of the Research III sequence.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because I was looking for a community that would provide support and motivation as I transitioned to a college lifestyle. I wanted to connect with like-minded individuals and get to meet more people!

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Probably Reenie making fun of me my freshman year when I went to the lobby of Beechwood for an Honors School event to steal cookies. She always called me out and made me laugh.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I am working as an ABA therapist at Circle Care Services throughout the summer and into next year. I will then be applying for graduate schools in hopes of pursuing pediatric occupational therapy.

THESIS: Examining Sense of Belonging and Early College Experience of Second-Year University Students as it Relates to Social Isolation and COVID-19.

The purpose of this study was to examine and understand the sense of belonging and college experience of second-year university students as it relates to social isolation and the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a comprehensive qualitative analysis through conducting a focus group interview with university students, primary and secondary topics were identified and coded to understand and analyze themes regarding sense of belonging, and college experience for this population. Participants expressed four main themes: a low sense of belonging, struggling with remote learning, increased quality of relationships with family, and increased quality of pre-existing relationships with friends.

Bryan Derr



MAJOR: Communication

HOMETOWN: Willow Grove, PA

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Sports Industry Club Social Media Coordinator
- Hawk TV Promotions Director and WebMaster
- WMCX FM 88.9 Radio Show Host
- Member of Phi Eta Sigma
- Member of Lamda Pi Eta
- CSIS Journalism Bootcamp Participant
- Kenneth & Ilmae Knapp Scholarship Award recipient
- Writing Award recipient
- Several semesters on Dean's List
- Hawk TV Charity Live Show Producer

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

For the living benefits from being an honors student such as early registration and living in Beechwood.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Meeting my best friends living in Beechwood who I still live with off-campus.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I am continuing my education at Monmouth University, receiving my Master's in communication with an expected graduation date of May 2024.

THESIS: Podcasting: A Deep Dive into the Medium, its Listeners, and its Creation

Among the several different types of media in the world, podcasts have grown in popularity in recent years. A podcast is an audio or audiovisual file that is accessible on the internet via a computer or mobile device with internet capabilities that can be downloaded and enjoyed (Vogele & Gard, 2006). The small independent podcast, Festive Bird Podcast, has been running for over two years now and has been a massive part of our life. In this study, we wanted to define what the ideal podcast looks like, especially within Festive Bird Podcast's conversational genre. The Uses and Gratifications Theory was used as a baseline of what is gratifying to a media user and apply this to find an audience. In addition, autoethnography and statistical analysis were used to look at the current numbers such as trends, viewership, and social media interaction to then apply the findings to the Festive Bird Podcast. We found that a large social media presence, better technology, a mixture of topics between educational and entertaining, use of guests, and consistent uploads were all factors in the growth of an audience and providing the most gratifying product possible for media users.

Cory Englehardt



MAJOR: Communication

HOMETOWN: Brick, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Varsity Football

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I enrolled initially as a freshman and just stuck with it.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

I showed up to my thesis presentation and all the women were wearing suits and I was wearing a t-shirt with shark jaws on it.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be pursuing a career in freelancing and entrepreneurship.

THESIS: The Wanderer

"The Wanderer" is a film that explores the concept of a spiritual awakening. A young man is distraught caught in the transactional existence of the Western world, he must lose himself to find out who he really is. Sometimes the external journey is just symbolic for the internal journey of self discovery. This film focuses on present moment awareness, and cultivating an appreciation for where your feet are. No moment could be better than this one, so just be here, now.

Jacob Ashbrook Evenson



MAJOR: Biology (Molecular Cell Physiology)

HOMETOWN: Egg Harbor Township, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- MU Snowboarding Club, Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society member
- Fall 2021 Dean's List
- Spring 2022 Dean's List

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School in order to stand out in my application to medical school.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School was during my freshman year when we made free pancakes for everyone in the common room of Beechwood.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I intend on taking the MCAT in order to complete my application to medical school. Since it will take about a year for my application to be fully accepted by any school, I will continue to work as an Emergency Room Nursing Technician in the meantime.

THESIS: A Review of the Use of Phage Therapy to Treat Acne Vulgaris and its Implications Across Various Disciplines

Acne Vulgaris (acne) is a common chronic skin disease that can be triggered by an imbalance in the human skin microbiome with an overabundance of the bacteria, *Cutibellum acnes* (*C. acnes*). There are a plethora of treatments currently available to combat this condition but, current treatment for acne is primarily based on antibiotic medications. This has recently raised much concern due to the increasing amount of antibiotic resistant bacteria being driven by the use of these medications. The more effective treatments are also high in price, making them difficult to access and pose a significant threat to the mental health of those who face socioeconomic challenges. A promising solution to these problems is the introduction of phage therapy which uses bacteriophages, a virus that only infects bacteria, as the primary mechanism of action to kill the overabundance of *C. acnes* and return the skin microbiome to homeostatic conditions. It is not only highly effective but also low in price to produce and shows a promising future of being affordable and easily distributed. To support these claims, the available literature of peer reviewed articles were compiled to show the implications of phage therapy across the disciplines of biology, psychology and business.

Isabella Hanna



MAJOR: Business Administration (Management and Marketing)

HOMETOWN: Marlboro, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Editor in Chief and News Editor of The Outlook for the academic 22-23 school year
- Treasurer of the Italian club for the academic 21-22 school year
- Honors School Peer Mentor '20 '21
- Orientation Leader and Peer Transition Assistant '21
- Inducted into the Phi Eta Sigma and Beta Gamma Sigma Honors Societies
- Received the Business Council Award in 2021 and The Outlook Editor of the Year and Journalism-at-Large Award in 2022

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

From the beginning, I knew I wanted to surround myself with a community that would challenge me to pursue the best version of myself, both academically and personally. The Honors School has proven a formidable resource in shaping my capacities as a student and future professional.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

As a Honors School Peer Mentor, we would help the first-year honors students move into their dorms during freshman orientation weekend. This was a great first introduction to the Honors School community; I cherish the memories of bonding with them, as well as my honors mentees.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will return to Monmouth this summer and continue for the next year as a graduate student enrolled in the Leon Hess Business School's MBA program. While pursuing my Master's, I plan to explore new avenues of entering the business-healthcare industry.

THESIS: Integrating Big Data Into Non-Profit Organizations: Investigating the Efficacy of ResourceNet Provider Roster at a NJ Care Management Organization

Non-profits have had to operate increasingly more business savvy to meet the needs of their constituents. This pressure to change is more specifically apparent within the social services industry. Research shows that a popularly adopted strategy is to capitalize upon available data and increase a firm's data analytics effort. This study aimed to uncover whether the claim for integrating for-profit, big data practices into non-profit business models is effective. A survey was distributed to care managers employed within Monmouth County's Care Management Organization (CMO), a non-profit that provides a multitude of behavioral and emotional supports to individuals ages 3-21 and their families, to measure their feelings towards a state-wide database tool, ResourceNet Provider Roster. Upon analyzing the survey results, it was found that ResourceNet Provider Roster has had a positive effect in advancing this CMO's efficacy; however, as the care managers' feelings towards the program were not overly positive, more research should be conducted to determine whether the results are specific to Monmouth County or are applicable to New Jersey.

Dustin Ho



MAJOR: Business Administration (Economics and Finance)

MINOR: Statistics and Information Technology

HOMETOWN: Egg Harbor Township, NJ

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

My attraction to the Honors School came from having the opportunity to be a part of a community that challenges our academic and research skills. Dean Mezey and her office are one of the most approachable and accepting schools at the University. They have created an environment that uplifts and supports students in any capacity. I had the realization of my newfound interest in academic research. I value the creativity of research and how an idea or interest can be dissected and explored. After studying Economic Factors that Contribute to Happiness, I realized how much I enjoyed the process of analyzing and interpreting data. Spending the last four years working on my honors research motivated me to continue in research.

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

My last four years at Monmouth gave me the opportunity and the environment to develop leadership characteristics. I experience invaluable lessons that have made me into the leader I am today. My commitment to becoming a student leader came from Student Government Association (SGA). I was elected as a senator with the responsibility of addressing the concern of the student body and being a liaison between the students and the faculty/administrations on campus. As a senator, I had the opportunity to hold many leadership roles to improve the university. As Chair of Election and Recruitment, I got to inspire and motivate students to be a leader themselves and because of my work in this role, I was awarded Outstanding Senator of the Year.

Also, a large contribution to my interest and development of becoming an impactful student came from the Leon Hess Business School, specifically with the mentorship of Dr. Janeth Merkle. During my first year at Monmouth, Dr. Merkle introduced me to Enactus – a non-profit organization that creates international social projects based on entrepreneurship and the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals.

Being a part of Enactus, I was inspired by Monmouth students and faculty members who had contributed mainly to societal impact. I took that inspiration and under my leadership and Dr. Merkle's guidance, we created the Mentoring Beyond Borders (MeBB) program in an effort of addressing the disparities of career and personal development resources in low-income countries. As Americans, Enactus members and I realize that we have resources and opportunities to help us advance our careers, but other people in the world do not have the same privileges. Under my leadership, I worked with universities in the Philippines to address these disparities.

I want to continue using my leadership roles to make a positive and lasting impact. With the leadership skills I developed during my time at Monmouth, I am confident that my experiences have prepared me to become a successful business leader after graduation.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

I distinctly remember the day I joined the Honors School. It was a sunny and bright afternoon and I went into the Honors School office to get all the information I needed. The day I decided to join the Honors School I had a wonderful welcome and gained so much hope for my future at Monmouth University. I had a purpose and a goal since I joined the Honors School making me excited to be a student on campus. Planning and working toward completing my research thesis for the last four years gave me the chance to grow and develop. I looked back at that day I joined the Honors School after I finished my research and I have so much appreciation for the support and motivation I had from Dean Mezey and her office.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I have accepted an offer and will be joining HSBC as a full-time Global Liquidity and Cash Management Graduate Analyst. I will be working at the Manhattan office in global transactional banking.

Alongside my new position at HSBC, I have accepted and will be attending graduate school at NYU Stern School of Business. I will be joining the NYU Langone MBA program and specializing in banking, finance, and business analytics.

THESIS: Economic Variables that Contribute to Happiness in the United States

This research stems from the desire to move beyond economic measurements of productivity and income to redirect economists and policymakers to focus on social capital and well-being. Through that redirection, I examine variables relating to life satisfaction, financial status, and standard of living to form a model that explains citizens' levels of happiness. I investigate the relationship between household-level economic variables and their self-reported level of life satisfaction (happiness) within the United States to test three hypotheses: 1) Income will increase with happiness because of utility maximization; 2) Income will be a negative quadratic variable because of diminishing returns of utility, and 3) The multivariate regression model will show that there are other factors than income that affect happiness levels. The results of the research support the three tested hypotheses after using multivariate regression analysis to investigate the relationships between happiness and economic variables.

Jack Holmstrom



MAJOR: Business Administration (Economics And Finance)

HOMETOWN: Rockford, IL

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Member of Division I Men's Basketball team
- Captain of Men's Basketball
- MSAAC member
- Chabad club
- Dean's list every semester
- Economics and Finance Academic Achievement Award
- Beta Gamma Sigma international business honors society

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I loved the concept of creating something you are passionate about in the thesis.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Meeting with my first reader every couple weeks to discuss my thesis.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will return another year and pursue a graduate business degree at Monmouth.

THESIS: Financial Literacy Seminar

Recent adjustments in rules from the National Collegiate Athletic Association have created an opportunity for student athletes to be paid for the use of their name, image, and likeness for the first time in the association's history; as a result, student athletes are at a position in time where being financially literate is a characteristic that can make or break their ability to earn amounts that could relieve the many financial pressures of young adulthood. This capstone looked at peer reviewed sources that study relationships between financial literacy and young adults (e.g. young adults' financial literacy rates, correlations between financial literacy rates and financial outcomes, and other factors that affect financial literacy rates in young adults). This review included studies on young adults in general, and particularly those that are educated, because the student athlete is representative of most demographics, majors, and education levels. Overall, this capstone established the need for, and creation of, a seminar on financial literacy that will be used to educate student athletes, students in general, and their parents. Financial literacy is a necessity for student athletes that needs to be improved.

Cassie James



MAJOR: History

MINORS: Communication Sciences and Disorders;
Race and Ethnic Studies

HOMETOWN: Tinton Falls, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Member of the Division I Lacrosse Team
- President of Student Athletic Advisory Committee
Colonial Athletic Association (CAA)
- President of Monmouth Student Athletic Committee (MSAC)
- President of Chi Alpha Sigma Student-Athlete Honors Society
- President of Monmouth University Flight Academy
- Outstanding Scholar Athlete History and Anthropology Department
- Monmouth University Honors School Peer Mentor
- Deans List 8 semesters
- National History Honor Society

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

The Honors School allowed me to find a home away from home. Surrounded by like-minded and hard-working individuals fostered and supported my love for school, and created opportunities for my academic career to flourish!

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My favorite memories of the Honors School include both of our trips for the NCHC to Orlando and Dallas. These trips will forever be the highlight of my college career and I am so thankful I was able to complete them with the best people by my side.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be attending the University of Notre Dame, Mendoza College of Business to get my master's.

THESIS: Investigating the Effects of the Digital (App Based) Experience as a Development Tool for Yielding Academic, Social, and Interactive Success

Technology has impacted the manner in which we communicate, educate, and learn. Investigating the specific effects of peoples' digital experience is essential in uncovering how technology can be a positive presence amongst our society. It has the ability to create academic, social and interactive success. But with these positive qualities that technology brings, the concept is often overshadowed by the abuse of screen time or social media, etc. The present age of students has never known what it is like to be without a phone, computer or even television. As technology develops, so do students' assumptions for a growth opportunity, this experience goes past the customary boundaries within the classroom environment. Understanding how to exploit the academic capability of new innovations is along these lines fundamental for language teachers. In any case, some significant awareness of how these advancements might function within schools has come to the surface. It is important to uncover how the digital experience has affected students' on all fronts, socially, academically etc. Not only has technology affected the stereotypical student, I also aim to uncover the effects of how the digital experience can affect younger children and/or children with disability.

Kiki Kanik



MAJOR: Computer Science

MINOR: Biology

HOMETOWN: West Long Branch, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Student Tour Ambassador
- Honors Peer Mentor
- Student Genetics Researcher
- Club President of CHABAD, NextGen, and IEEE
- Supplemental Instructor
- 2021 NCHC Presenter in Orlando

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

Fun fact! I was working with Dr. Martin J Hicks as an incoming first year student at MU, and he mentioned that my skill set is one that matches 'the Honors Student.' He reached out to Dean Mezey, and the rest is history! I am so proud and honored to be a part of the Honors School, and the guidance and opportunities the Honors School offers is unmatched.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

There are so many fond memories of the Honors School, but I think the top is friendsgiving. In my freshman year it was held in Magill Commons and we all cooked and baked and assisted in organizing it - and I think that is what consolidated my heart with Honors - I felt like a contributing member of the Honors community, and we all just hung out and talked and shared our fondest moments.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be working at Ocean First Bank in Red Bank, NJ as a Data Engineer. I will also be attending the Data Science MS program here at MU!

THESIS: Mobile iOS Application to aid in Mastering Recognition of Amino Acids

This thesis capstone explores the use of mobile applications in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. Mobile applications have gained popularity as a unique platform for delivering STEM education due to their interactive and multimedia-rich features. The literary review examines the effectiveness of these applications in enhancing student learning outcomes, such as engagement, motivation, and understanding of complex STEM concepts. Additionally, the review explores the challenges associated with integrating mobile applications into educational systems, including teacher training, access to technology, and the need for a supportive infrastructure. The findings of this literary review suggest that mobile applications have the potential to revolutionize STEM education by providing an engaging and interactive learning experience. However, successful integration requires careful consideration of the challenges and limitations associated with the use of mobile applications in the classroom. The development of this Capstone Thesis was utilized through the XCode integrated development environment, and Swift coding language. With the successful creation of the application, 'Amino-roids', students will be able to have an interactive and user-friendly application to aid in their amino acid learning.

Dayana Khalil



MAJOR: Biology (Molecular Cell Physiology)

MINOR: Chemistry

HOMETOWN: Brick, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Co-President of Surgical Club
- Academic Excellence Award
- Vice President of Ceramics Club

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I liked the opportunities that it allowed me.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

The thesis presentation and being able to go to Seattle for a Conference with the Honors School's help.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be taking gap years to focus on myself and travel to enjoy life outside of school. Experience new hobbies and such.

THESIS: The Implementation of the Holistic Craft Process to Analyze the Relationship Between Clay, Glaze, and Glass's Chemical and Physical Interactions to Create Unique and Coherent Pieces of Art.

The purpose of this study was to use the holistic craft process to integrate the scientific process along with an artistic process. Art was the focus of the project and therefore guided the research to lead to a final product. The holistic craft process consists of four main steps: forming an idea, designing it, making it, then reassessing. This process allowed for the integration of both the art process and the scientific experimental setup process as well. Research was gathered and compiled in a literature review to explore different topics necessary to understand the fundamentals of clay, glass, glaze, and their interactions. Recycled stoneware clay was used with glass and combined in diverse ways some before and some after firing. Much of this capstone focused on the interactions of glass with different glazes and the reactions that resulted based on the glaze compositions. Techniques were implemented to prevent the excess glass runoff from dripping onto the kiln shelves including the use of coaster. Multiple experiments were run to test different glazes prior to the formation of the final pieces. The holistic craft process allowed for the assessment of the results and reassessment of the experimental process to adjust for future experiments. The information gathered was used to create unique and coherent pieces of art.

Nico Landino



MAJOR: Biology (Molecular Cell Physiology)

MINOR: Chemistry

HOMETOWN: Howell, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Molecular Cell Physiology Academic Achievement Award
- Dean's List for all five finished semesters
- President and Co-Founder of Surgical Club
- Pre-Heath Club, Chemistry Club
- Beta Beta Beta Bio Honors Society
- Alpha Epsilon Delta National Health Preprofessional Honor Society
- Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society
- Two years in the Summer Research Program
- Four semesters in genetics research
- Two semesters in chemistry research
- Four semesters in organic chemistry research

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I wanted to challenge myself.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

The Sunrise Walk.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Applying to medical schools.

THESIS: The Impact of Diet & Genetic Background On Body Size in House Mice From the Americas

In the Americas, body size in house mice (*Mus musculus domesticus*) follows Bergmann's Rule, the observation that body size positively correlates with latitude and distance from the equator. Genome scans and gene expression studies have identified candidates that may contribute to this pattern, but the underlying genetic mechanisms are not yet fully understood. Body size is a complex trait, dependent on the environment, and manipulation of the environment can be used to uncover genetic variation relevant to the trait. In this study, mice from newly wild-derived strains were fed a typical breeder diet or a high-fat diet. In addition, strains were crossed in order to facilitate the identification of specific genetic variants contributing to induced differences in body size. Here, we analyzed body size and growth in these strains (Florida, New York, and Brazil) and crosses (New York x Brazil, Florida x New York) at ten post-weaning under the two treatments. The results of this study suggest that treatment, strain, and in some cases, the interaction, contribute to variation in aspects of body size. These results highlight the potential for gene expression studies of these strains and crosses to uncover new genetic variants contributing to Bergmann's rule in these populations.

Dáríka Lara-Rodríguez



MAJOR: Design and Animation (Graphic and Interactive Design)

MINOR: Art History

HOMETOWN: Westfield, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Recipient of The Dean's Award for Excellence in Honors 2023
- Recipient of the Outstanding in Graphic Design and Animation Award 2022
- Presented at the NCHC 2022 Conference in Dallas
- Performed at the NCHC 2021 Conference in Orlando
- Designed the Monmouth Summer Music and Arts Festival Logo
- Designed the Winning Poster for the Event Regarding Patrick Radden Keefe's Book "Empire of Pain"
- 2021 IGU Symposium Poster Competition, 3rd Place
- Designed the 2020 NRHC (Northeast Regional Honors Conference) Cover Art
- SIGGRAPH International SpaceTime 2020 Students' Competition Finalist Entry
- Vice President of Monmouth University Honors Student Association
- Member of the Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society
- Honors School Peer Mentor

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because of all the benefits it had to offer as well as how it would help me further my education. I knew it would be a community that I wanted to be a part of during my undergraduate career.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

The Honors School provided me with so many fond memories that it is hard to choose just one. However, the majority of my fond memories come from those whom I had connected with at the honors conferences and the people whom I have formed a close bond within the office. In the office, there was never a dull moment. From Dean Mezey who made my days by bringing in clementines and buying the life-changing book "Set Boundaries, Find Peace," surprising Dean Ross with my unexpected arrivals at the office, singing along to "Shallow" with Doris, decorating the office calendar with Graciela, working on saying no with Emily, redesigning the interior layout of the office and then proceeding to play badminton in the office with Mary, to meeting Rowan, who would become one of my closest friends. Every moment I was at the office was always a memorable time, and I would not be where I am today without the people there. They have helped me be where I am today, and I cannot thank each one of them enough for being a part of my college experience.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I will be taking a short break before starting to work full-time. I will be traveling to Switzerland to hike, paraglide, and enjoy new scenery. Once I return, I will be working for the companies SolarReviews and Fixr. I had previously started working for them as an intern this past fall of 2022. But since I was offered a full-time position as a social media marketer and designer, I decided to take it, and I am excited to continue working for them.

THESIS: Finding Home: Climate Change Inducing Loss of Habitat

Climate change considerably affects humans, but it is easy to forget how it also affects the other neighbors that share this planet with us: wildlife. In 2022, due to climate change, summer temperatures rose to a high record in certain areas and have caused wildfires to set off more easily. Wildfires can force people close to the vicinity to move out and relocate themselves. That means the wildlife who live there may also have to find a new home. This capstone explores this concept in a short 3-D animation where a fox sees and lives through the effects of climate-induced wildfire. In this visual narrative, all audiences immerse themselves in his journey and the decisions he makes. It, therefore, creates a connection that is easier to relate to or empathize with. And after seeing this animation, it is easy to see how climate change induces the loss of habitat to animals and not just humans. One must be mindful that this planet is not just ours, but it is theirs too.

Mia Lewis



MAJOR: Health Studies (Health Science Cluster)

MINOR: Biology

HOMETOWN: Hawthorne, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Dean's List
- Member of Alpha Epsilon Delta (preprofessional honor society)
- Member of Omicron Delta Kappa
- Participated in Summer Research Program
- Participated in Student Scholarship Week

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School to not only surround myself with other highly motivated students, but also to immerse myself in a close-knit community. I wanted to continue to push myself academically, while simultaneously meeting new people who share similar goals and aspirations.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

The sunrise walk during my freshmen year was my most fond memory of the Honors School. Aside from being one of the most beautiful sunrises I have ever witnessed, this event truly made me feel that I belonged at Monmouth University and that I was able to share this moment with students who soon became my family.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be taking a gap year to work as a medical assistant at OB/GYN Associates of Bergen County PA. I will then be applying to medical school to become a pediatrician.

THESIS: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Undergraduate Students' Physical and Mental Health

This paper examines how the COVID-19 Pandemic impacted the physical and the mental health of undergraduate students in relation to their exercise habits. It was hypothesized that these individuals would see improvement to their overall health during the worldwide lockdown. It was also hypothesized that individuals' physical and mental well-being would further improve once lockdown restrictions were lifted. Most studies within the literature review revealed that many undergraduate students reported a decline in both their physical and mental health during and even after the lockdown. Survey questions were produced by the investigator and the primary results showed a large portion of participants were female, senior undergraduates that attended a four-year university. Prior to the shift to remote learning, most undergraduates exercised regularly. However during the Pandemic, exercise behaviors decreased, but then slightly increased once the COVID-19 restrictions were removed. Although exercise has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, participants reported a continued and worsening of their mental health during the worldwide lockdown to now. Both the PHQ-9 and GAD-7 further reinforced the results of the investigator created survey. Future research needs to be conducted to assess the long-term impact of COVID-19 on these individuals' physical and mental well-being.

Ava MacMillan



MAJOR: Nursing

HOMETOWN: Manasquan, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

Due to COVID-19, a lot of activities were limited.

However, the pandemic did provide the opportunity for me to administer hundreds of COVID-19 vaccines to individuals along with assessing for adverse reactions.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I strive to push myself academically. The Honors School also provided opportunities to take high level non-nursing courses. This allowed for me to be more balanced as an individual rather than only focusing on nursing.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

I really love how understanding and flexible Dean Mezey was. There were many obstacles I faced in completing both my honors capstone project and gaining enough honors credits while my schedule was filled with nursing classes. Throughout the entire process, Dean Mezey was always available and willing to help determine a plan and solution to ensure I would be able to complete the project and graduate with honors.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

First I will be working at Jersey Shore's Step Down Telemetry unit. I would like to try to move to the Cardiovascular ICU after completing my residency. After working for a few years, I would like to attend graduate school and become either a CRNA school or a nurse practitioner.

THESIS: Importance of Combining Physical and Psychosomatic Treatment in Adult Patients with Medically Unexplained Physical Symptoms

The aim of this paper was to analyze diverse methods of treatment in cases of Medically Unexplained Physical Symptoms (MUPS) and determine what treatment method is the most successful. MUPS constitute over a fifth of all primary care visits a year yet the majority of patients with MUPS report receiving unsatisfactory treatment. A literature review was carried out consisting of 25 peer-reviewed and scholarly research articles. These articles discuss what MUPS is, which populations are primarily affected by MUPS, physician viewpoints, and different treatment methods and how they have affected patients. These articles promote Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or multimodal therapy that combines psychiatric and physical treatment as it produces the best results in adult patients who present to their primary care provider with MUPS. In conclusion, there is evidence that combining treatment produces better outcomes for patients with MUPS. A presentation was then created to increase physician awareness of this population along with how they can improve patient outcomes through focusing on creating a therapeutic relationship and strengthening interprofessional communication and care.

Jessica Lynn Martin



MAJOR: Communication

MINOR: Public Relations

HOMETOWN: Browns Mills, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Head Resident Assistant for the past two consecutive years within the Department of Residential Life 2022-2023
- Public Relations Student Society of America President (PRSSA), 2022-2023
- Lambda Pi Eta Communications Honor Society President
- Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society member

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because I wanted to associate myself with an organization that has my best academic interest at heart. I have always pushed myself to exceed academic expectations, and the Honors School has always supported my determination. While I am proud to represent Monmouth University, I am even more honored to represent the Honors School as I pursue my professional aspirations.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School is the people I have met and the connections I have made. There are many students that I met through the Honors School that I can proudly call some of my closest friends. Being a member of the Honors School is an amazing way to build connections with people you may not otherwise meet.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Attending Graduate school - Location TBD.

THESIS: Living With Social Media: Instagram Compulsion and Mental Health

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of Instagram compulsion on the mental health of young adults, aged eighteen to twenty-one. Negative psychosocial implications associated with excessive social media use have been observed among young adults (e.g. Yang, 2021 and Chua, 2016), a population increasingly prone to social media platform use on their smartphones. This study analyzes the mental imputations associated with the compulsion to engage with Instagram. The overall concept of compulsion in addition to sub-concepts of the social network, social comparison, self-esteem, and physical appearance are discussed. Quantitative and Qualitative analysis were used in this study. Participants from Monmouth University completed electronic surveys. Survey participants were given the option to participate in in-depth interviews. Findings indicate that negative mental health implications were more prominent during teenage years rather than early adulthood. Gender also plays an important role in participants' social networking site (SNS) experience, as women receive more media feedback and experience a burden to maintain an exaggerated narrative and presence. The "Hide Like Count" feature developed by Instagram has been revolutionary in protecting users' mental health and personal profile satisfaction.

Jenna Moley



MAJOR: Health Studies

HOMETOWN: Staten Island, NY

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Inducted in the Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society in 2020
- On Dean's List 2021-2022.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

As a member of honors programs throughout my entire academic life, I joined the Honors School to continue to challenge myself academically. I was also looking forward to being able to complete a full research project of my own, with the support system of the Honors School and all its members.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Ice Cream Social in the honors dorm during my freshman year! It was a great way to meet many of the other great honors students.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation I am planning to continue to build my resume with patient care hours by working in the healthcare field. In the future, I would like to attend graduate school to become a physicians assistant.

THESIS: Undergraduate Major and CAM Belief

Complementary and Alternative medicine (CAM) is becoming increasingly popular in many places, even those who have been partial to modern medicine. CAM is beginning to be integrated into the healthcare field, and other fields of study. With its increasing integration throughout the world, it is important that college students receive proper education about CAM, and that college curricula reflect that. This study evaluated how undergraduate major acts as a predictor for a student's CAM beliefs and attitudes. The study was conducted via Google Forms survey, which was sent out to undergraduate students, of different majors at Monmouth University. The CAM Health Belief Questionnaire (CHBQ), a previously validated questionnaire, was used in the study to measure CAM health beliefs and attitudes. Results found that Political Science, Computer Science, and Health Studies majors had the most positive attitude towards CAM. When looking at school groupings, the School of Science, School of Nursing & Health Studies, and School of Humanities & Social Sciences had the most positive attitude toward CAM. Schools with a positive attitude toward CAM also showed high belief of using CAM therapies in their future career.

Ashley Gabriella Ng



MAJOR: Communication (Media Studies and Production)

HOMETOWN: New York, New York

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Member of WMCX and HawkTV (met such great people)
- Dean's List
- Created, produced, and edited my own podcast
- Completed Honors Thesis Capstone
- Maintaining a GPA of 3.8

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I understand why college is so difficult, but personally I joined the Honors School because I wanted to see how far I could push myself academically. Being able to balance my work and school life was a challenge, but I managed to get through it all. I never thought that I could meet such great people such as the faculty, staff, and students while being apart of the Honors School at Monmouth.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School would definitely have to be the thesis capstone presentation. I was super nervous about it all, but everyone was super nice and reassuring that I would be fine and it felt really fulfilling completing the last of my honor school requirements. Not only that, I never thought that I would be able to complete such a big project and about something I am passionate about made it even better. As for events, I loved the sunrise event that the Honors School had because it allowed me to connect with other students that are apart of this community.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I am currently looking for a job in media. Senior year has really allowed me to find my passion in content creating whether that is in video, audio, or digitally.

THESIS: The Influences of Social Media: Unhealthy Media Habits, Mental Health Issues, and Fake News

Social media has taken the world by storm. With the evolution of social media, younger generations are spending more time social media platforms developing unhealthy and addictive habits. Over time, young adolescents will develop mental health disorders like body dysmorphia which may lead to self-harm physically and mentally. Not only do individuals damage their own image, but the relationships with the people around them. Our media is highly saturated in misleading information, stereotypes, and fake news. With the consumption of deceptive information and scrolling for numerous hours on social media, studies have shown that females tend to deal with these negative effects more than males do. Due to the convenience and accessibility to social media, the way our society communicates with one another has completely changed. As a society, we must figure out a way to maintain our morals and values in social media use while allowing for new advancements to persist.

Julia Panebianco



MAJOR: Biology (Molecular Cell Physiology)

MINOR: Statistics

HOMETOWN: Jackson, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Poster Selected for the Dean's Award of Excellence in Undergraduate Research and Highlighted during Scholarship Week 2023
- TriBeta Honors Society 2023
- Dean's List 2019-2022
- President of Council for Exceptional Children
- Summer Research Program 3 years
- Genetics Research for 3 years
- Presented at School of Science Student Spring Research Conference 2022 and 2023
- Presented at Garden State Undergraduate Mathematics Conference 2022

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I wanted to take advanced classes and participate in special extracurricular activities.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Friendsgiving.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be applying to physician assistant school this spring for the 2024 cycle. I am taking a gap year to strengthen my healthcare experience. I work as an EMT and will be volunteering at Monmouth Medical Center.

THESIS: Differences in Behavior Among Different strains of Wild-Derived House Mice from Different Climates

How animals behave impacts their fitness. Behaviors that have a genetic basis are fuel for adaptation. House mice, *Mus musculus domesticus*, have expanded their range from Europe into North America over the last ~400 generations. Previous research has shown that a variety of traits, like nest size and body size, vary among new wild-derived mouse strains from the Americas. Exploratory behaviors may be important to fitness because they reflect how an organism responds to and engages with their environment. For example, finding mates and avoiding predation depend on these exploratory behaviors. Here, we ask whether these new strains (Arizona, U.S.A (AZ); New York, U.S.A (NY); Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (EDM); Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil (BR); and Florida, U.S.A (FL)) vary in behaviors related to exploration and risk-taking using a light and dark test and an open field test. Comparing exploratory behaviors of mice from different locations may help us understand how they have adapted to life in the Americas. We found differences in behaviors between locations, not sex. Specifically, Canada mice were found to be the most exploratory and active strains compared to the other locations. Future research can focus on larger sample sizes to test whether these differences were consistent.

Emily Danielle Pawelek



MAJOR: Business Administration (Accounting)

HOMETOWN: Sayerville, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society - inducted March 2020, treasurer 2021-2022, president 2022-2023
- Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society - inducted March 2021
- Leon Hess Business School Outstanding Student in Accounting
- Attended NCHC conference in Dallas - November 2022
- Attended NRHC conference in Pittsburgh - March 2023; Honors School Peer Mentor - 2020-2023
- University Student Ambassador - 2020-2023

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I wanted to continue pushing myself academically throughout college, something that was a prevalent opportunity when learning about the Honors School. I knew that the Honors School would be able to help me achieve my goals during my time as an undergraduate student with all of the support and resources available.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

The annual sunrise walks stand out to me as my fondest memory of the Honors School. Being able to participate each of my four years, one as a new student and three as a mentor, is something I'll never forget about the Honors School. It is a special way to end orientation weekend and begin the new school year.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be continuing at Monmouth next year to complete my MBA through the 5-year program. I will be interning with EY this coming summer, as well as working towards obtaining my CPA license.

THESIS: Mass Migration: What Can New Jersey do to Attract Retirees to Stay?

It is a common trend for individuals over the retirement age to find their way out of New Jersey. Living on a fixed income is hard, but living with higher tax rates, like in New Jersey, is even more difficult. Following age groups of individuals born in specific age ranges, it was found that the percentage of these individuals relative to the entire population of the state of New Jersey decreased as time went on. Regarding the population born between 1936-1945, there was an 18% decrease in the population from the 2000 & 2010 Census data, and approximately a 28% decrease in the population from the 2010 Census to the 2019 American Community Survey results. These results are similar for states within the tri-state area, however notable differences are seen in states where retirees find themselves migrating to. New Jersey could also find ways to financially attract retirees to stay in the state, improving the economy of the state, as well. The tax structure of New Jersey has seen slight modifications over the previous few years, but there is more that the state could do to entice their residents to reside in the Garden State after retirement.

Kiran Ramjisingh



MAJOR: Computer Science
MINOR: Information Technology

HOMETOWN: Old Bridge, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Academic Excellence Award
- Vice President of the Upsilon Pi Epsilon Honor Society
- Upsilon Pi Epsilon Academic Achievement Award
- Volunteer at Monmouth's Hawk Hack

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

It seemed like a way to challenge myself.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Working with Dr. Zheng while completing my honors capstone project.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation I will be working as a Software Engineer at Fiserv. While working full time, I will be continuing at Monmouth as a graduate student. I am a part of the Cyber Security track and will hopefully use the skills acquired in grad school to move to a position in Cyber Security Automation.

THESIS: The eSports Statistics Bot

eSports has gained much traction in recent years, bringing to gamers what sports does for athletes. As with any professional sport, viewers want player statistics, and they want them during games and conversation. The objective of this project is to provide these statistics in a convenient and quick manner to players wherever and whenever they need. Discord, the text and voice communication platform widely used by PC gamers, has a feature called bots. These are user-made programs functioning as users that can send messages and join voice calls. The eSports Statistics Bot takes queries from users and displays an information card with data about a requested player, team, or tournament for a specific game. This bot aims to make eSports information readily available on the platform most strongly associated with eSports and PC communication. This proposal will begin with a breakdown of the project, discussing the technologies that have been used and the method for creating the eSports Statistics Bot. It concludes with a Literature Review discussing the likeness between sports and eSports and determines what motivates fans to watch eSports.

Elisa Carmelina Ramos



MAJOR: Biology

MINORS: Chemistry; Latin

HOMETOWN: Runnemede, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Held the positions of President for the Italian Club and Pre-Veterinary Club
- Held the position of Vice President of the Senior Class of 2023
- Inducted into Chi Eta chapter of the Beta Beta Beta Biological Honor Society and served as President of the chapter
- Inducted into the Gamma Kappa Alpha Italian National Honor Society in 2023
- Inducted into the Alpha Epsilon Delta Health Preprofessional Honor Society in 2022
- Inducted into the Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society in 2020

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

I had always been in honors and AP classes in high school and wanted to continue to push and challenge myself. I wanted to take advantage of the resources and networking available from the Honors School. Being involved also allowed me to research a topic I had a lot of passion for and I put my all into.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

My fondest memory is from the first Sunrise Walk we did. It was 4 am and tore myself out of bed in comfy warm clothes, but it was the most beautiful view and funnest experience. I had never seen anything like that and the sky was gorgeous. My favorite picture from that day is still my computer background and I will never change it.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I will be pursuing a career in veterinary medicine. I will be attending Long Island University College of Veterinary Medicine in the fall of 2023.

THESIS: Piloting a Survey to Assess and Analyze Breed Stereotypes and Biases

Currently, certain dog breeds are prohibited by communities in our society, but research has begun to show how human perception has influenced so-called "dangerous dogs" fit for discrimination in legislation. This paper examined how people's perceptions could influence and perpetuate dog-breed stereotypes. It explained cultivated beliefs leading to Breed-Specific Legislation, or BSL, and the negative impact that laws have on the breeds. Within this research is scholarly literature to provide background on BSL enforcement, sociocultural breed exploitation, and comparison of other breeds to targeted breeds. With the theoretical framework of implicit association bias, subconscious associations involving previous mental representations were explained to analyze how implicit association could perpetuate discrimination. Eighty-five participants completed an online survey where they shared characteristics and reactions, chose an image they felt represented the breed's behavior, and took a breed test assessing accuracy in identifying an American Pit Bull Terrier. The results indicated no significant associations between previous impact and stereotypes of targeted dog breeds, and participants were unable to identify the American Pit Bull Terrier accurately. By understanding personal experiences, dog breeds can be understood to propose legislation that encompasses all dogs.

Julian Rebelo



MAJOR: Chemistry

MINOR: Graphic and Interactive Design

HOMETOWN: Keyport, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Inducted into the Phi Eta Sigma and Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Societies
- Inducted into the Sigma Tau Gamma Fraternity.
- Had a poster accepted into the 2021 SIGGRAPH SpaceTime International Juried Student Poster Competition
- Presented a Hawk Talk on my thesis research
- Member of Next Generation Science Club on campus.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because I wanted to be involved in a community of like-minded individuals who wanted to strive both academically and professionally.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My favorite memory from the Honors School was the Sunrise Walks. Every year it felt like a unified tradition, and I really enjoyed being able to experience this.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Post-Graduation, I am going into an online Graduate Certificate program in Forensic Genetic Genealogy through the University of New Haven. I additionally plan to attend the Genealogy Certificate program through Boston University to become a certified genealogist.

THESIS: A call to action: The need for a paradigm shift of current forensic anthropological sex-estimation methods to incite inclusion of transgender and gender diverse individuals

Forensic anthropology is a field that classifies individuals based on their biological sex. However, these current methodologies are structured around a rigid binary system of classification and are not inclusive of transgender and gender-diverse individuals. The objective of this paper was to analyze through a systematic review the biological and physiological characteristics of transgender and gender diverse individuals from the literature through a systematic analysis, and determine how this can cause misunderstandings and errors in relation to forensic anthropological assessments of sex-estimation. Additionally, this paper will understand the impact of the present current cultural attitudes and stigmas towards transgender and gender-diverse individuals, and how it affects the conduct and accuracy of assessments within the forensic anthropology field. Available solutions will then be explored in order to incite a cultural paradigm shift towards better inclusion as a whole for transgender and gender-diverse individuals.

Derek Reina



MAJOR: Business Administration (Marketing)

HOMETOWN: Middletown, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Secretary and Producer of HawkTV

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

Beechwood dorms.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Meeting my closest friends in the honors dorms.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Live, Laugh, Love.

THESIS: Podcasting: A Deep Dive into the Medium, its Listeners, and its Creation

Among the several different types of media in the world, podcasts have grown in popularity in recent years. A podcast is an audio or audiovisual file that is accessible on the internet via a computer or mobile device with internet capabilities that can be downloaded and enjoyed (Vogele & Gard, 2006). The small independent podcast, Festive Bird Podcast, has been running for over two years now and has been a massive part of our life. In this study, we wanted to define what the ideal podcast looks like, especially within Festive Bird Podcast's conversational genre. The Uses and Gratifications Theory was used as a baseline of what is gratifying to a media user and apply this to find an audience. In addition, autoethnography and statistical analysis were used to look at the current numbers such as trends, viewership, and social media interaction to then apply the findings to the Festive Bird Podcast. We found that a large social media presence, better technology, a mixture of topics between educational and entertaining, use of guests, and consistent uploads were all factors in the growth of an audience and providing the most gratifying product possible for media users.

Giverny Aerin Risse



MAJOR: Business Administration

MINOR: Marketing, Management, Decision Sciences

HOMETOWN: Ocean, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Scholarship Week Award Recipient 2022

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because I felt it provided me the opportunity to go the extra step in my education. While standard Monmouth courses are already incredibly insightful, I felt the Honors School and its honors courses offered a bit extra in terms of material, conversation and difficulty which I was drawn to. During my time in the Honors School at Monmouth I have been exceptionally lucky to have wonderful and supportive professors that have enabled me to have excellent conversations, as well as pursue other projects and interests such as my honors thesis, as well as other projects to complete courses as Honors by Contract. Overall, I truly feel that by being in the Honors School I have been able to get the most out of my time and education here at Monmouth.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School was the new student orientation day that I attended in the Fall of 2020. The transition to college from high school seemed very daunting and having this day to meet other students, tour the campus and be paired up with an honors mentor who was there to help guide you through your first year was incredibly helpful in making me feel more at ease. In fact, I am still friends with my honors mentor!

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I am currently planning to continue working for my current employer - Heritage House Sotheby's International Realty in real estate marketing.

THESIS: GroGreen - Addressing Pitfalls in The Conscious Consumption Movement with New Technology

My project discusses the concept of conscious consumerism, where consumers seek to incorporate sustainable living practices into their daily lives. However, many consumers who claim to be environmentally conscious do not actually purchase eco-friendly products or modify their behavior to reduce their environmental impact. This is due to several factors such as brand loyalty, perceived increase in cost, lack of knowledge about sustainable living, and failure on producers' end to market their products effectively. To address this issue, I have created a proposed app that educates consumers on sustainable living practices and helps them identify sustainable products. This app would use common language and be easily accessible to all socio-economic classes. In creating this application, I hope to make sustainable living accessible and understandable for all, in hopes that more consumers will be motivated to incorporate sustainable practices into their everyday lives.

Erica Santos-Reyez



MAJOR: Political Science (International Relations)

MINOR: Public Policy

HOMETOWN: Long Branch, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Recipient of the MacDonald Family UCI Endow Scholarship
- Recipient of the Esther Hymer Scholarship
- Member of the Monmouth University Debate Team
- Participated in the Washington Semester interning at the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

When I found the Honors School everyone was so kind and it immediately felt like a community. Beyond the people, I knew this was a space where I could feel simultaneously challenged and supported while navigating college as a first-generation student.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Being able to connect with Dean Mezey prior to writing my honors thesis. Simply being able to sit down and discuss my ideas with Dean Mezey reminded me why I joined the Honors School, to have a support system throughout my academic career. It was nice being able to have guidance and encouragement while reaching my personal goals.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Currently, I am exploring different aspects of the legal field along with non-profit work as a means of finding a balance within both career paths. Eventually, I plan to further my education by attending law school with the goal of becoming a practicing attorney within an international organization.

THESIS: Can Extreme Violence Against Women Resulting in Femicide in Latin America be Reduced Through Legislative Gender Quotas?

Over the years Latin America has experienced high rates of gender-based violence, femicide, the killing of women because of their gender. Previous scholars contend that the low socioeconomic status of women paired with Latin American machismo culture has created an environment where women are vulnerable to gender-based violence which in extreme circumstances may lead to femicide. Therefore, in seeking to reduce gender-based violence and femicide I examine the effects of legislative gender quotas within Latin American countries as they aim to improve the social status of women by affording them positions in government. I conducted a quantitative study using multivariate regression analysis to examine the statistical significance between the enactment of legislative gender quotas and socioeconomic variables like income inequality, education level, and labor force participation. Among the variables, the study proved statistical significance within the rate of education which reached slight significance with a p-value of 0.100. Considering the data, legislative gender quotas may not be the main solution to reducing gender-based violence and femicide but it does prove promising to improving the social standing of women.

Gabriela Schnur



MAJOR: Biology (Molecular Cell Physiology)

MINOR: Chemistry

HOMETOWN: Lyndhurst, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Tri Beta Honors Society
- Alpha Epsilon Delta Honors Society
- Secretary of the Phi Eta Sigma Honors Society
- Secretary of the Surgical Club
- Peer Tutor for organic chemistry 1 & 2, and microbiology
- Lab Assistant for general chemistry 2 and organic chemistry 1
- PAL leader for introduction to cell and molecular Biology
- Academic Research in biochemistry

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School to find a close group of friends that had the same goals and ambitions that I did.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School would have to be living in Beechwood and meeting friends that I will have for the rest of my life.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I will be working as an emergency medical scribe for RWJBH for a year and then I plan to go on to PA school.

THESIS: The Progression of Gender Rights in Eastern Europe: How Globalization Has Advanced Legal Reform in the Balkan Region

This research is being conducted to explore whether a biosensor can be created to detect 2-Hydroxyglutarate (2-HG), an oncometabolite formed in those who have Acute Myeloid Leukemia, can be made more effective through the process of Systematic Evolution of Ligands by Exponential Enrichment (SELEX). 2-HG is formed in these individuals through mutations in the genes of the Isocitrate Dehydrogenase (IDH1 and IDH2) proteins, which are enzymes used in the tricarboxylic acid cycle as they catalyze the formation of α -ketoglutarate through oxidative decarboxylation of isocitrate. The structures of both α -ketoglutarate and 2-HG are similar; therefore 2-HG acts as a competitive inhibitor of α -ketoglutarate-dependent enzymes. Since 2-HG is present in patients who have Acute Myeloid Leukemia, the levels of this oncometabolite can be used as a diagnostic marker. Aptamers are made of small nucleotide strands that are highly selective and are refined through SELEX to achieve high affinity. SELEX, through the use of the hammerhead ribozyme, will be used to purify the RNA aptamer to detect 2-HG. In its natural form, the hammerhead RNA has three helices and one conserved section of RNA and when folded can completely cleave. It will be explored if an effective RNA aptamer can be made to detect 2-HG and be purified through SELEX.

Arielle Sinicin



MAJOR: Computer Science

MINOR: Finance

HOMETOWN: Marlboro, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Summer Scholars
- Straight A's
- Accepted Student's Panel
- Costa Rica trip
- Six Flags class
- Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because I have always loved being challenged in school and I knew that being a part of the Honors School could give me that at the collegiate level. Some of my favorite classes during college were honors, and completing a capstone was so rewarding. Being a part of something more at college was important to me and the Honors School gave me that as well as a sense of community within academics.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School is presenting my capstone. I was so proud of myself for completing that project and presenting it was so rewarding. With my parents, friends, and professors in the audience it was the perfect culmination for my academic success in college.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation I will be attending graduate school at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken to receive my Master's of Science in Computer Science.

THESIS: Dog Shelters and Rescues

Dogs are the most popular companion animal in America, but the way that many people treat these animals goes against this age-old love for the species. Many dogs are abused in puppy mills or simply abandoned on the streets by people who cannot care for them anymore. Dog shelters and rescues try to rehabilitate as many dogs as they can in hopes of stopping the unethical breeding practices in puppy mills and in hopes of getting dogs off the streets. However, quite often these shelters get extremely overpopulated if people are not adopting dogs, and they themselves have to turn to euthanasia in order to make room for new dogs entering the shelter. This thesis dives into the unethical practices of puppy mills and how the general public is unaware of how many dogs were actually bred in this way. Furthermore, topics such as foster families and the transportation of rescued animals are explained. Also, breed stereotypes play a large role in what kinds of dogs get adopted and what dogs live the rest of their lives in a shelter.

Morgan Siracusa



MAJOR: Communication
MINOR: Communication Sciences and Disorders

HOMETOWN: Tinton Falls, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Participated in Summer Scholars research program
- Member of Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society and Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honor Society.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because it gave me the opportunity to conduct higher level research in an area of study that I was interested in. It also gave me the ability to work with a close group of individuals and added support from the Honors School staff.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Participating in the Sunrise Walk.

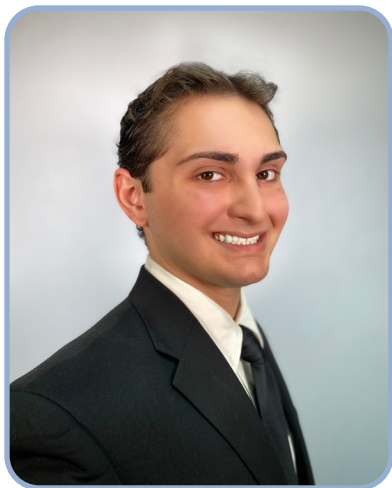
WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

I am attending Kean University to pursue my masters in Speech Language Pathology.

THESIS: The Effects of Parent Implemented Early Intervention Speech Therapy

By reviewing literature and collecting real life data from speech-language pathologists (SLPs) throughout NJ, this paper analyzed the efficacy of caregiver based early intervention speech therapy as well as caregiver perspectives of early intervention. It was concluded that caregivers sometimes struggle to understand the benefits of early intervention or choose not to follow through with a doctor's referral because of a stigma that their child is not perfect, or their personal belief that they know what is best for their child. Another finding from literature is that many SLPs do not know how to incorporate caregivers in their child's therapy because they have not received the proper training and guidance. Included in the paper is an explanation of the theory of early intervention and how it developed into the theory that SLPs use today. This paper discussed ways that SLPs can incorporate caregivers in early intervention with many different techniques. Similarly, the topic of caregiver perspectives is discussed to provide SLPs with an understanding of why so many speech disorders go untreated during such a crucial time in a child's life. The final conclusion from the review of literature indicated that caregiver implemented early intervention proved to be beneficial in the long run for both typically and atypically developing children.

Austin Staulecup



MAJOR: Graphic Design and Interactive Media

MINOR: Business

HOMETOWN: Suffern, NY

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- President of Phi Kappa Psi
- President of Monmouth Review Club

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

To further deepen my knowledge and understanding of the subject matter I chose to study.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Beechwood breakfasts.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Still searching.

THESIS: Using Adobe Aero to Enhance the Comic Book Reading Experience

While the medium of the graphic novel/comic book first attracted controversy for its often violent and mature themes, it has been able to embrace the ability to do so and withstood the test of time to where we are today, using that reputation as a defining style and characteristic. Of course, it would not have been able to grow to where it is today if not for its ability to change with the times. Now, in the age of digitalization, streaming-services, and constant superhero content, the time calls for something different. Enter Adobe Aero. Aero is a newly-launched program built for creating augmented reality experiences. I intended to use this program to allow for elements of the page to “pop out”, for some to bleed into one another, and for them to interact creatively with one another overall. So, if my intentions with augmented reality are interactive storytelling, I needed to present it in a way that shatters overused tropes, typical storylines and common themes. Create something that differentiates from the archetypal set that exists. Something... ULTRAVIOLENT!

Ava Taylor



MAJOR: Computer Science
MINORS: Homeland Security; Geographic Information Systems

HOMETOWN: Marlboro, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Served on the executive board of Alpha Xi Delta
- Won the Dean's Award for two separate projects presented at the School of Science Research Conference
- Finalist in 2023 HawkTank Competition

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

One of the primary reasons I joined the Honors School was to help advance my education. I wanted to be a part of a community which would push me to step out of my comfort zone and take advantage of all of the resources and opportunities given to me by the Honors School.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

One of my fondest memories of the Honors School was the Honors Research Conference. Every student worked so hard to develop their thesis and capstone projects and being able to share that with one another was a very rewarding experience. I am also truly honored to have gone through this experience with Marlee Butryn by my side and to watch her grow and thrive in this program. I am so thankful for all of the memories and friends that the Honors School has brought me.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

My plans after graduation are to utilize my Computer Science degree to get a job as an iOS application developer. I additionally want to continue working to develop my app Fludz which has a pending patent and trademark. I hope that I can one day grow this into my own company and see my app be used across the country.

THESIS: Flood Alert Systems: A Crowd Sourced Data Collection and Distribution Methodology to Provide Realtime Alerts to Public

This study assessed the flaws in the emergency alert systems (EAS) used to notify the public during a weather emergency, particularly flooding. By designing a mobile application that utilizes crowd sourced data, users can report their own flood data and analyze other reported realtime data, so communities have more accurate information about the dangers of a particular flood. Users can see specific areas and streets that are flooded, where flooding may be increasing or decreasing, if there are hazards in the roads, and the depth of the flooded areas all based on the reports of other app users. Working to enhance weather reporting systems can reduce mortality rates and damages caused by natural disasters. Since flooding is typically seen as a non-threatening weather event, alerts for flooding are often dismissed, ignored, and not taken seriously. Receiving data from one's fellow citizens and local community means the information is accurate to the user's specific location. This app is an effective way for information reach the public in the event of a flood.

Gabriella Vangeli



MAJOR: Health Science

MINOR: Biology

HOMETOWN: Hillsborough, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Four-year Member of Division I Women's Lacrosse team
- Member of the Chi Alpha Sigma Honors Society

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

To push myself to receive the most challenging and fulfilling education.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

Finishing my honors thesis this spring with the help of Dr. McGovern.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Attending an accelerated nursing program.

THESIS: Investigating the Risk Factors for Unhealthy Eating and Exercise Habits in Female Athletes

My study surveyed female athletes from Monmouth University and other universities in order to assess what factors were putting female athletes at risk for eating disorder behaviors. I used Qualtrics to evaluate environment, body image, eating and exercise habits. The research showed that female athlete's who had better environments also had better body image, eating habits, and attitudes towards exercise.

Jianna Walters



MAJOR: Interdisciplinary Elementary Education

HOMETOWN: Staten Island, NY

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Received the Spring 2023 Excellence in ISEE Program Award
- Completed my Honors Thesis
- Dean's List.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School because throughout my life I have always strived to take on any challenge. I truly believed that although it would be difficult to balance doing honors credit classes along with my normal coursework, in the end I would look back and see how far I came and feel so proud of myself. I was so right!

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School was presenting my honors thesis because I felt so proud to show off my hard work.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I plan to obtain an elementary teaching job and continue my own education by obtaining a Master's Degree in Education.

THESIS: COVID-19 Related to Teacher Burnout

Burnout occurs when a workplace becomes stressful and unrewarding. Teacher burnout is often seen in teachers who feel they lack resources, feel underappreciated, or feel they can not meet expectations. Burnout usually influences the quality of teaching and performance in the workplace. COVID-19 made 2020 a year full of stress. People had many questions about what the future would bring socially, mentally, and professionally. While burnout was prevalent prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the isolation of COVID-19 could have brought up further feelings of burnout symptoms such as depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion. Now that people have returned to what life was like prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, questions regarding the effects of this period of time are bound to rise. One important question pertaining to teachers specifically, is to what extent have the effects of the COVID-19 teacher burnout lasted beyond the immediate pandemic? This is important as the ramifications of COVID-19 will be felt for years to come. This study finds that teachers' perceptions of their burnout were amplified and qualitatively changed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This suggests that COVID-19 has had a lasting effect on teacher burnout beyond the immediate pandemic and measures need to be taken to address this.

Samantha Walton



MAJOR: English
MINOR: Anthropology

HOMETOWN: Toms River, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Traveled to the literary conference AWP as a guest and the NRHC Research Conference as a presenter
- Presented at two scholarship weeks
- Held various offices in several student organizations

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School to find a sense of community within the wider student body at Monmouth and to take interesting classes that would challenge me academically.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

The Moonlight Walk where we honored the memory of Reenie. It was a beautiful ceremony and it felt like she was able to bring us together as a community even then.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Attending graduate school at Monmouth University as a part of the BA+M program and working as the Peer Mentor Coordinator GA for the Honors School.

THESIS: Walton's Mythology

Mythology has been a constant companion of humanity throughout history; since the dawn of language, we have shared stories to explain the world around us and to teach morals. Ancient Greek mythology is of particular interest for its close relationship to the almighty; the gods interact with mortals directly and exhibit a physical and symbolic importance in their daily lives. By examining these myths, it is possible to determine the morals of those telling them, their view on nature, and the purposes they tell have for telling them. Once examined we can apply the stories to our own modern sensibilities to explain new moral quandaries and teach new ideas through the lens of ancient wisdom. The lessons of mythology are universal and ubiquitous, which is why these stories have been told repeatedly for centuries. This project takes the form of an updated classical dictionary and examines five Greek myths with varying levels of divine involvement to extract the moral lesson and apply it to modern sensibilities. Knowing and understanding these stories, along with the process by which one may examine other myths, is a skill of prime importance to engage with the world and literature. Greek mythology is a cornerstone for many facets of modern society and morality. Learning these concepts at their source is vital to interacting with the world we inhabit on a more nuanced level.

Nicholas Yalch



MAJOR: Finance
MINOR: Political Science

HOMETOWN: Jackson, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Highest Finance GPA for class of 23
- Model United Nations Outstanding Delegate at Oxford University Competition
- President of 4 clubs
- Accepted to attend NEDSI DC conference to present my honors thesis

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined to be around like-minded students who cared about the work they produced as much as I did.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

The annual Sunrise Walk.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

Working at a financial firm.

THESIS: The Ukraine-Russian Conflict and Its Subsequent Impact on ESG Scores and Equity Prices

This research attempts to empirically measure the impact that the Ukraine-Russian conflict crises has had on equity prices as they relate to Environmental, Social, and Governance scores. The conflict has created large financial stressors for the world that have upended the traditional ways of thinking that are now customary in sustainable finance. Data on equity prices and a computed normalized ESG score is collected on the energy sector, aiming to limit the influence of other external factors by remaining as close to the invasion date February 24th, 2022, as measurable. We study whether or not there has been a reversal of ESG from the period before and after the invasion, and if it has been adequately reflected in equity returns. The research reflects the relevance of ESG as a quantified value of firm risk and exposure, as well as helping to set expectations for equity value crises in future geopolitical conflicts using ESG as the main variable.

Chiara Zambon



MAJOR: Health Studies (Exercise Science)

MINOR: Biology

HOMETOWN: Hawthorne, NJ

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Member of Division I Women's Rowing Team
- President of Club Women's Basketball
- President of Club Sports Medicine
- Student Research with Dr. James P. Mack
- Anatomy & Physiology Lab Assistant
- Member of RallyCap
- Member of Best Buddies
- Member of Women's Club Soccer
- Member of Omicron Delta Kappa
- Member of Eta Sigma Gamma

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL?

I joined the Honors School to be a part community of leaders and a to gain experience from the unique opportunities offered.

FONDEST HONORS SCHOOL MEMORY:

My fondest memory of the Honors School was being a Peer Mentor and being able to help freshmen during the Honors School Orientation.

WHAT ARE YOUR POST-GRAD PLANS?

After graduation, I will be working as an Emergency Medical Technician for Holy Name Medical Center in Teaneck, New Jersey.

THESIS: Achilles Tendon Ruptures in Athletes

In college athletes, many different injuries can occur with or without contact. Every injury varies based on the athlete and what the athlete was doing at the time of the injury, which is known as the mechanism of injury. Through research, the whole injury process was shown with a variety of different mechanisms that cause athletes to suffer from Achilles Tendon Ruptures (ATR). A particular injury can be reoccurring due to inflammation and overuse, or the injuries can be one-time acute injuries that tend to be severe. If an athlete has a prior injury to the tendon that had not been fully healed before returning to play, this can increase their risk tremendously for a complete tear. It has been found that any athlete can sustain any type of injury and it is up to how the athlete reacts to treatment to see how long it takes for their body to heal. College athletes are prime examples because they tend to keep playing through their injuries which can make them worse, and this leads to the athlete missing out on more time than they should have originally missed.

**The Dean would like to give a special thank you
to the Honors Council for their dedication and
service to the Honors School.**

Nikita Burrows

Jaime Myers

Pedram Daneshgar

Sanjana Ragudaran

Kevin Dooley

Sean Sterrett

Jason Fitzgerald

Danuta Szwajkajzer

Meg Forney

Francis Valiquette

Geoffrey Fouad

Marina Vujnovic

George Germek

Jeffrey Weisburg

Mary Haspel

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