Nnaoma Agwu, University of California Irvine

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Nnaoma Agwu is a 3rd Year PhD Candidate in Biomedical Engineering at the University of California, Irvine. He obtained his B.S. in Bioengineering specializing in Medical Devices with a minor Mechanical Engineering from Santa Clara University. He proceeded to work for Medtronic to launch the next generation of surgical navigation, StealthStation™ S8 and 3D Systems-Healthcare to provide 3D printed surgical fixtures to clinicians from CT data.

Nnaoma later obtained an MS in Biomedical Engineering from Saint Louis University where his thesis focused on the design of a novel steerable port delivery system for neurosurgical tumor ablation. His current research focuses on the development of pediatric heart valves for patients with congenital heart defects. With the IRIS valve, a growth accommodating transcatheter pulmonary heart valve replacement, he plans to provide early care to young patients with pulmonary valve dysfunction.

Michelle Argy, University of Miami

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Michelle Argy, a Chilean native, is completing her bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering at the University of Miami. A dedicated student and researcher, she is engaged in interdisciplinary projects at the Diabetes Research Institute. She is engaged in design of experiments, optimization of procedures, conducting biocompatibility analysis of biomaterial scaffolds in in vitro models and in vivo stages, and data analysis. Michelle has interned in the Research and Development department of miRScientific, a biotech startup that pioneered a revolutionary non-invasive diagnostic method for prostate cancer. There, she laid the groundwork for future research endeavors that will potentially enhance the diagnostic methodologies developed by the company. Michelle also excelled in leadership at Bet-El, a premier non-formal education Jewish youth institution. Guiding educators and organizing top-tier events, she also redesigned the annual curriculum, engaging meaningfully with stakeholders at all levels. Michelle demonstrated academic excellence, earning both prestigious spots in the Provost Honor Roll and the Dean's List. She is interested in leveraging her experience in startups and research and development while pursuing a meaningful career in biomedical industry.

Jonathan Bryan, Binghampton University

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Jonathan Bryan has Caribbean roots and was raised in New York. He is currently a student at Binghamton University in Upstate New York, where he focuses on the study of biology and pharmacy. Experiencing healthcare systems abroad profoundly impacted his career path, fueling a passion for healthcare and the pharmaceutical industry.

Having personally witnessed and experienced the limitations in accessing top medical care, Jonathan is driven by the goal of ensuring universal access to high-quality healthcare, without discrimination based on nationality. He firmly believes in the inherent right of every individual to receive proper care, and his ambitions extend beyond personal achievement, aiming for a more profound impact. Furthermore, Jonathan's enthusiasm for learning and teaching is evident, with teaching being a particularly strong passion. He finds immense reward in sharing knowledge and facilitating the learning of others. This desire to help is a driving force for him, motivating him to make a positive contribution whenever possible.

During his free time, Jonathan enjoys playing golf alongside his twin brother. He is also an avid traveler, having journeyed to East Asia for the purpose of teaching English to children and spreading the Gospel. This experience enriched his perspective and strengthened his commitment to making a difference.

Wyat-No-Kwe (Leticia) Cervantes, Purdue University

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Wyât-no-kwe (Leticia) Cervantes is a senior chemical engineering student with a deep passion for sustainability, alternative energy, medicine, and indigenous community involvement. Hailing from the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, she embraces her heritage and seeks to integrate traditional wisdom with modern scientific advancements as well as make sure indigenous people have a voice in the field of STEM. Currently pursuing her Bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering at Purdue University, Wyât's academic journey has been marked by her commitment to uplifting the indigenous community at Purdue and mentoring underrepresented communities in STEM

Throughout her studies, Wyât has engaged in cutting-edge research projects focused on perovskite solar cell technology, showcasing her ability to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world problems. Within her recent summer internship, she worked with Eli Lilly in the bioproduct R&D department for process development of parenteral products. Her dedication to promoting inclusivity and diversity in STEM fields is evident through her involvement in various campus organizations and initiatives aimed at encouraging underrepresented groups to pursue scientific careers such as NSBE, AICHE, AISES, SACNAS, and LSAMP.

When she's not immersed in her studies, Wyât enjoys brazilian jiu-jitsu, volleyball, swimming, and learning languages, which provide her with friendship and a way to clear her mind. Her unique perspective as an indigenous individual enriches her approach to chemical engineering, reflecting her strong belief in the power of education to drive positive change. Wyât is thrilled to contribute her insights and experiences to the program, fostering an environment where diverse voices can thrive and innovate.

Chinyere Charles Okezie, University of South Florida

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Chinyere Charles-Okezie is a first-year master's student in Biomedical Engineering at the University of South Florida. She completed her bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering from the same institution in May 2023. Currently, she serves as a Teaching Assistant for the Biomedical Engineering Lab II course, focusing on biomaterials, cell, and tissue engineering.

Chinyere's academic interests include CAD software utilization, biomaterials research, and the development of implantable cardiovascular devices. Beyond academia, Chinyere engages in various activities including tutoring, managing a small hair braiding business, and actively participating in powerlifting and other forms of strength training.

Nadjali Chung, Vanderbilt University

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Nadjali Chung is an analytical chemist with specialties in mass spectrometry, a few of its coupled techniques (i.e., liquid chromatography and ion mobility), and their application in untargeted studies. She is currently a 7th year PhD candidate in the Department of Chemistry at Vanderbilt University, expected to graduate by Summer 2024. She received her Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry in 2017 from the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Nadjali has always felt called to use science to help others and initially attended university to pursue a career in pharmacy. However, Nadjali found her passion for research in 2015. Working in a Mass Spectrometry and Medicinal Plant Research Group, Nadjali learned about the early stages of drug discovery and began realizing the cycle of influence between everyday life and basic sciences research.

While in graduate school at Vanderbilt University, Nadjali has expanded her coupled-mass spectrometry expertise from application spaces to method development. After gaining experience with protein characterization, her focus shifted to challenges associated with the analysis of small molecules, especially lipids. From evaluating the utility of safer-to-handle solvents for botanical extractions to working to improve analytical capabilities of lipid fingerprinting, much of Nadjali's research experiences have remained in line with her calling. She believes that the development of new technology and methods to improve analytical capabilities will in turn improve efforts towards precision medicine; and she is committed to the continued pursuit of related work and experiences.

Outside of research, Nadjali is an active member of the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCChE), both locally and nationally. She continually works to lower the barrier of entry into professional spaces for scientists of color, serving to be a resource to other underrepresented individuals regarding navigating academic spaces and gaining exposure to nontraditional career paths early in their academic careers.

Megan Doldron PhD, University of North Carolina Greensboro

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Megan S. Doldron, PHD is a dedicated scientist and educator whose journey has been marked by a passion for cellular research, a commitment to education, and a drive to make a positive impact in the field of environmental health science. Born with a curiosity for the natural world, Megan embarked on her academic journey at Hollins University, where she pursued a double major in Biology and Dance, accompanied by a minor in Psychology. She continued her education at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, obtaining Masters Degrees in Science Education and in Biology and delving into research on the evaluation of natural antioxidants for the reduction of organic dust-mediated oxidative stress and inflammation. The pinnacle of Megan's academic journey came with her pursuit of a Doctor of Philosophy in Environmental Health Science from the University of North Carolina Greensboro. She undertook groundbreaking research on the cellular and epigenetic effects of cannabinoid exposure on bronchial epithelial cells. Her work shed light on the intricate interplay between environmental factors and cellular responses, contributing valuable insights to the field of environmental health science.

Megan's dedication to scientific enquiry is evident in her diverse research roles. As a Postdoctoral Research Scholar at the Oak Ridge Institute for Science & Education and the US Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense, she has led the development and execution of protocols, conducted health-related studies, and played an integral role in the advancement of scientific initiatives. Her expertise extends to skills such as cell culture, DNA/RNA extraction, protein analysis, and more. Megan's dedication to science, education, and leadership is further exemplified by her involvement in various extracurricular activities. Her proficiency in West African dance and American Sign Language showcases her commitment to communication and inclusivity. Additionally, her publication contributions to the Sage Encyclopedia of Surveillance, Security, and Privacy reflect her engagement with interdisciplinary perspectives on societal issues.

Annella Durand, University of Miami

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Annella Durand is an incoming Associate scientist at Pfizer and a recent graduate from the University of Miami with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Engineering. From a young age, Annella has been fascinated by the intersection of technology, research, and healthcare due to the direct impact on the quality of life of so many individuals. Hailing from a medically underserved community in the Caribbean, Annella is passionate about utilizing innovations in healthcare to target health disparities.

Throughout her undergraduate experience at the University of Miami, Annella has centered herself in spaces that have allowed her to grow academically and professionally and has participated in several engineering and research projects at the University of Miami and other institutions like the University of Alabama at Birmingham. These experiences among others have allowed Annella to develop her guiding ethos based on consistent adaptability and resilience. Outside of academic pursuits, Annella was also involved in various extracurricular and on-campus involvements like the Homecoming Committee and the National Society of Black Engineers. Annella also recently completed service as a teaching fellow for the Breakthrough Miami Collaborative, an Americorps immersion program catered to mentoring and tutoring middle school and high school students from underserved backgrounds. These experiences have aided Annella to develop strong interpersonal skills and a passion for making a positive impact on the community. In her free time, Annella enjoys utilizing creativity and problem-solving while writing and working on knitwear projects. Annella is overall excited to further explore the world of medicine and technology dedicated to the development of life-saving solutions.

Kimberly Hernandez, Columbia University

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Kimberly is a 6th year PhD candidate in the Neurobiology and Behavior program at Columbia University. Originally from Southern California, she got started in research while attending California State University - Long Beach, where she was a NIH MARC scholar. As part of the program, she worked in a neuropsychopharmacology lab. After receiving her Bachelor's in Psychology, she moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan to work in a research lab for one year as a PREP scholar at the University of Michigan to aid in her transition to graduate school.

As a graduate student, her thesis is focuses on investigating the role of social memory in pair-bond formation using behavioral and electrophysiological approaches. Over the last several years, she has strengthened her expertise in electrophysiological methods and developed advance approaches to understand the encoding of social information in the brain. Over the summer, she completed an internship in the Real World and Data Analytics team at Otsuka Pharmaceuticals, where she applied analytical tools to understand biological datasets. She hopes she can apply the skills she has gained to make an impact on neurotechnology advancements that can improve the lives of individuals suffering from neurological disorders and diseases. During her free time, Kimberly loves to visit art museums, cook and run long distances.

Jade Houston, University of South Florida

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Jade Houston is a dedicated scholar currently pursuing a master's degree in Biomedical Engineering at the University of South Florida. With a strong foundation in STEM disciplines, Jade is an active member of the Biomedical Engineering Society at USF, where she consistently contributes to the development of research and development projects highlighted annually at the USF's Engineering Expo.

Jade's deep-seated interests lie in the domains of prosthetics, medical devices, research and development, and bioelectronics. Her commitment to these areas is a testament to her unyielding passion for solving medical problems. Beyond her academic endeavors, Jade takes pleasure in various hobbies, including table tennis, engaging in arts and crafts, and immersing herself in the beauty of nature through an active lifestyle.

Aissah Kaba, University of California - Berkeley

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Inspired by shows like Cyberchase, Aissah has been drawn to solving problems from a young age. Her desire to directly impact people's lives and serve the greater good led her to pursue biomedical engineering. Biomedical engineering allowed Aissah to join her passion for engineering with her commitment to healthcare. Strongly motivated to act, Aissah is dedicated to using her engineering mindset to make a difference. Driven to expand her skillset, Aissah pursued a Master's degree in translational medicine at UC Berkeley. During her professional program, she learned how to successfully take bench-top research and other early-stage products to market, using clinical, technical, and business insights. Aissah now aims to break into the Med Tech industry, aspiring for roles in product development or product management.

In her leisure time, you can find Aissah dancing, catching a bite to eat with friends or watching anime.

Kacey King, Morehouse School of Medicine

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Kacey King was born in Jamaica and raised in South Florida. She is a Spelman College transfer, Georgia State University Graduate, where she received her Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (BIS) in Biomedical Science and Enterprise in May 2022, making her a first-generation college student. She has earned a Master of Science in Biotechnology from the Morehouse School of Medicine. She has completed internships at The University of Georgia, Spelman College, and Brown University through the Summer Research Early Identification Program, The Center of Global Health and Innovation, and GlaxoSmithKline.

In 2021, Kacey became a published scientific author for a paper titled "Antimicrobial Resistance Profiles of Human Commensal Neisseria Species." She is the reigning Miss Phi Beta Sigma for the Pi Alpha chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc at Georgia State University. In the previous year, Kacey was the Chief Operations Officer for the Miss Georgia Excellence Scholarship Pageant. Kacey has twice presented at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists (ABRCMS). She has over 1000 community service hours volunteering with the First Ladies Youth Leadership Foundation, The Elite School of Etiquette, Truth, the Atlanta local food banks, and more. In her free time, she mentors for the First Ladies Youth Leadership Foundation, teaches elementary children etiquette, reads for her local book club, and runs her business, KKfitness LLC, where she trains her clients to have a healthy fitness journey and lifestyle. She aspires to be a global change agent.

Karen Lopez, University of California - Irvine

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Karen Leonor Lopez is a first-generation Latina and a fourth-year PhD Student in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of California, Irvine. She is the first in her family to enroll in a graduate degree program and the first woman in her family to study engineering. She earned a bachelor's degree from San Jose State University in 2020, and a master's degree from UCI in 2023. She has 6 years of research experience, and 6-months of industry experience at the Irvine-based microfluidics startup, Kino Discovery.

In her first year as a graduate student, Karen took an active role in the BME Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, intending to improve the mental health of her fellow graduate students during the COVID-19 pandemic. In her second year, she was appointed Treasurer of the Graduate Association of Biomedical Engineering Students (GABES) and established the BME PrePair Mentorship Program, a quarter-long program designed to match current students with incoming graduate students to help create a sense of community and improve interdepartmental connections. During her third year, she accepted the role of President and continues to improve the graduate student experience in the BME Department at UCI.

Some of her hobbies include making scientific illustrations on Procreate, sketching, hiking, and powerlifting.

Jenan Mahmoud, PharmD, Texas Tech University

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As a dedicated pharmacist and healthcare consultant, Jenan Mahmoud brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in optimizing healthcare delivery and patient outcomes. With a Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) from Texas Tech University Health Science Center, Jenan possess a strong foundation in pharmaceutical sciences and clinical expertise.

Jenan has conducted engaging presentations on diverse topics including clinical trials diversity, drug shortages, and pharmacy school debt. She is also a recipient of numerous scholarships including Endowed Phonathon Scholarship, Abilene SOP Scholarship, and more. Not only does she excel in the classroom, but has engaged in a variety of community initiatives including Medication Cleanout, St. John's Episcopal Science Fair, and COVID vaccine clinics.

With a passion for improving patient care, a track record of leadership, and a commitment to community service, Jenan is dedicated to making a positive impact in the field of pharmacy and healthcare consultancy.

Jairo Maldonado Contreras, Georgia Institute of Technology

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Jairo Maldonado is nearing the completion of his Robotics PhD at Georgia Institute of Technology (GT). His research seeks to improve the control of lower-limb prostheses using machine learning techniques. Before arriving at GT, Jairo earned a BS in Mechanical Engineering at California State University Long Beach (CSULB). During his undergrad, he conducted rehabilitation research at CSULB and the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and completed robotics-focused projects at NASA, MIT, and the MIT Lincoln Laboratory.

Jairo is interested in using his skillset to develop medical technology for the benefit of others. He looks forward to learning more about the medical technology industry through the SMDP program. In his free time, Jairo enjoys playing soccer through the GT Men's Club Soccer Team. He is determined to win on and off the field.

Kaitlin Mann, Hult International Business School

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Kaitlin was born and raised on the island of Oahu in the city of Honolulu. She works in the financial services industry as a Client Relationship Management Analyst at Cambridge Associates, an asset management and investment firm in Boston, Massachusetts. She received her Bachelors in Business Administration from Hult International Business School in 2023.

Prior to graduating, she spent her summer as a rising senior as a finance intern at Edwards Lifesciences in Irvine, California. During her internship, she had an amazing and supportive manager that introduced her to new people allowing her to learn about the various roles within the company. Through this, she had the opportunity to shadow a project manager within the research and development department, which enhanced her interest in project management. Her time at Edwards was filled with unique development opportunities, relationship building, and overall played a pivotal role in discovering her passion towards the medical device industry and project management.

Sherri Ivana McLamb, Medical University of South Carolina

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Sherri Ivana McLamb is currently a third-year pharmacy student at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. She is an Early Assurance student and fulfilled her undergraduate requirements at Jacksonville University, where she was an active member of the Women's Track and Field team, specializing in hurdling and jumping. Besides sports, Sherri Ivana has a passion for cooking, sewing, and reading books.

Sherri's academic pursuits have led her to develop an interest in industry pharmacy and helping underserved communities. She participates in various pharmaceutical organizations, including the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) and Industry Pharmacists Organization (IPhO). Recently, her team ranked as a runner-up in the Eli Lilly Business Pitch Competition while working with SNPhA. Sherri desires to pursue a career in pharmaceutical industry that aims to address health disparities and serve underrepresented populations.

Janai Minga, Texas Southern University

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Janai Minga is a Doctor of Pharmacy Candidate at Texas Southern University. Originally from North Carolina, Janai served as the chapter president for TSU Student National Pharmaceutical Association and on the Accreditation Council for Medical Affairs National Student Chapter Communications Committee at Texas Southern University. During her first year of pharmacy school Janai served as 2020-2021 Miss Texas Southern University during the COVID-19 Pandemic. As Miss TSU, Janai used her platform, "Becoming Evidence" to establish an academic mentorship program for undergraduate students tailored to their academic needs.

With a focus on Oncology US Marketing, Janai Minga has consistently delivered notable accomplishments and contributions such as, top scholar in the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College Member, Boehringer Ingelheim Sales Summer Intern, Baylor College of Medicine Oncology Clinical Research Intern, and many more. Janai's dedication to pharmacy has garnered recognition L.E.A.P at Lilly Business Competition Award at the NPhA/SNPhA National Conference. Janai Minga is committed to furthering pharmacy knowledge and fostering collaborative relationships.

Anthony Ortega, University of California - Berkeley

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Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, Anthony Ortega is a dedicated and forward-thinking young professional with a passion for innovation and medical devices. With a Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering from Columbia University and a Master's in Translational Medicine from UC Berkeley & UC San Francisco, Anthony briefly worked at Abbott Diabetes Care within R&D, where he supported scientific research on continuous glucose monitoring. During his college journey, Anthony actively engaged in research projects focused on wearable devices and artificial intelligence in healthcare. His dedication to improving patient care through cutting-edge devices is evident in his coursework and projects. He has a passion for merging engineering, science, and healthcare, which drives his academic pursuits and career aspirations. As he embarks on his professional journey, Anthony is excited to apply his skills in research, product design, and other sectors of medical device development to enhance the quality of healthcare. In his free time, Anthony enjoys reading, watching/playing sports, baking, and listening to music.

Kayla Pena, The City College of New York

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Kayla Peña recently graduated at the top of her class from the Master's in Translational Medicine program at the City College of New York. She received her bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering in 2022 from the City College of New York. Kayla's career background is diverse, including wetlab research and medtech startup internships. She worked in a biological soft matter mechanics lab, a vascular and orthopedic tissue engineering lab, and a biomechanics lab. Kayla has participated in multiple design challenges and has completed a one-year undergraduate senior design project along with a masters-level biodesign capstone project. She is currently interning at SurgiVance, a startup aiming to bring rapid diagnosis to the point of care by developing diagnostic imaging technologies using advanced optics.

Kayla has a strong interest in 3D printing, not only for work but also as a hobby. Her CAD skills allow her to design medical technology prototypes and fun side projects for her hobbies. One of Kayla's personal interests is sustainable farming and cheesemaking. Kayla hopes to pursue a side career as a cheesemaker in a creamery that prioritizes regenerative agriculture to feed their animals.

Karla Robles, Tennessee State University

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Karla graduated from Middle Tennessee State University in 2018 with two Bachelors of Science in Biochemistry and Computer Science where she received the full-tuition Diverse Representation and Educational Access at MTSU (DREAM) scholarship. During her undergraduate years, she completed two NSF funded research experiences at the University of Pittsburgh in Computational and Systems Biology and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. The next year, she went on to Clemson University to work as a computational research specialist in the Department of Bioengineering. Karla is a recipient of the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship and is currently pursuing a PhD in Engineering and Computational Science from Tennessee's only state funded HBCU, Tennessee State University (TSU).

Prior to transferring to TSU, Karla began her graduate studies at the #1 nationally ranked PhD in Biomedical Engineering at The Johns Hopkins University. Her research is the fruit of a multi-institutional collaboration and NIH-funded U54 pilot project between Meharry Medical College, a historically black medical school, TSU, and Vanderbilt University. In her work, she develops and characterizes sustained-release microcapsules for the immunotherapy of ovarian cancer using electrohydrodynamic atomization (EHDA). Ovarian cancer, like many cancers, has lower survival rates in women of color when compared to white women.

A sustained-release therapeutic can reduce the number of dose administrations, and this work will be particularly impactful for patients for whom frequent access to healthcare is a difficulty. As a scientist and engineer, she plans to continue to investigate health disparities and to design therapeutics for women's diseases. In her career, she wants to build up inclusive communities where immigrants, people of color, members of the queer community, people with disabilities, and anyone with a fight to fight is celebrated. Karla is an Ecuadorian immigrant and a first-generation student - she enjoys writing, crocheting amigurumi, and serves as a volunteer English instructor for adult Latinx students.

Taylor Rodman, University of South Florida

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Taylor Rodman is a first-generation college student from North Carolina. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry with a minor in mathematics from Winston-Salem State University (WSSU). During her time at WSSU she was an MBRS-RISE fellow and subsequently a SURP fellow (Boston University) and an REU fellow (Miami University). Taylor is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of South Florida, where she's pursuing her PhD in computational chemistry.

In her time at USF, Taylor has been awarded the NSF FGLSAMP, NSF EAPSI, Florida Education Fund McKnight Dissertation, and GEM National Consortium fellowships. For the EAPSI & GEM fellowships, she was able to travel to Kwansei Gakuin University (Sanda, Japan) and Los Alamos National Lab (Los Alamos, NM), respectively, to conduct research for a summer. Taylor is now in the dissertation writing stages of her degree with plans of completing her program in December 2023. In her spare time, Taylor enjoys playing competitive tennis, reading mystery or dystopian novels, and spending time with her family.

Daniel Shah, Georgia Institute of Technology

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Daniel Shah is a PhD student in the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology and Emory University. He received his BS in Mechanical Engineering from Kennesaw State University in Marietta, Ga. Thereafter, he worked in manufacturing for two years before attending the University of Georgia's MS program in Biological Engineering as a GEM Fellow. He currently is a Southern Educational Regional Board (SREB) Fellow and a recipient of the NIH T32 Cell and Tissue Manufacturing Training Grant. Daniel is also a recipient of the Georgia Tech President's Fellowship. He serves as a graduate mentor to several undergraduate students in the Botchwey Lab, has mentored high school students through the ENGAGES program, and mentored several REU students through NSF's CMaT summer research experience.

Outside of the lab, Daniel enjoys time with his family, playing basketball, cooking and traveling!

Salim Siraj, University of California - Berkeley

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Salim Siraj obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in biochemistry from Arizona State University in 2020. His initial aspirations of becoming a clinician changed as he gained more experience working with medical device design and manufacturing. He attended the University of California, Berkeley and completed a graduate master's degree in bioengineering, focusing specifically on translational medicine. As a graduate student, Salim worked as a clinical engineer in the development of novel surgical simulation models at startup company Zeda in the Bay Area. His research interests include surgical robotics and the utilization of 3D printing and virtual reality in simulating complex medical procedures. He hopes to pursue roles in product management and business development as he continues his journey in the medical device industry.

Shyanthony Synigal, University of Rochester

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Shyanthony Synigal received her BS in Biomedical Engineering with a concentration in Pre-Medicine from Louisiana Tech University in Spring 2017, where she graduated cum laude. While at Louisiana Tech, Shyanthony volunteered in an integrated neuroscience lab doing social and behavioral tests in mice, but then pivoted to researching speech processing in humans at the University of Rochester. She will receive her PhD in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Rochester in August 2023 and is hoping to transition into industry, using neurotechnology to treat people with neurological diseases and disorders.

Shyanthony is a Louisiana native who enjoys traveling, weightlifting, music festivals, and tending to her plants.

Brandon Ugbesia, University of South Florida

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Brandon is a second year PhD student in the department of engineering at the University of South Florida. He is in the process of conducting research centered around protein engineering and retina degradation. He is currently GEM fellow, Mcknight Scholar, and Sloan scholar. He attended University of Massachusetts Amherst for his B.S and became a LSAMP and ACS scholar on the way. He hopes to make medicine more affordable for impoverish communities.

Mercy Zhou, UTHSC College of Pharmacy

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Mercy Zhou is a third-year pharmacy student at the University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy (UTCOP). She holds a bachelor's degree in general studies with a minor in psychology from Indiana University. Mercy has a strong passion for advancing patient care and is eager to join the pharmaceutical industry. Her goal is to apply her pharmacy experience and knowledge to enhance patient care and become an innovative leader in the industry.

Throughout her pharmacy school journey, Mercy has been actively engaged on campus. Holding leadership positions, including serving as Vice President of the Christian Pharmacist Fellowship International, and Power to End Stroke Chair of the Student National Pharmaceutical Association. Beyond her academic pursuits, Mercy has an entrepreneurial mindset and plans to start her own company in the future. Her participation in the Scientist Mentoring & Diversity Program (SMDP) is driven by her desire to further expand her understanding of the pharmaceutical industry, providing her with valuable insights to navigate this market effectively.

Mercy enjoys cooking, taking walks, and traveling.