Grad Rebel Advantage Program
Congratulations to our incoming 2021-2022 Mentees
Class Standing: Senior

Department: College of Fine Arts

Major: Interior Architecture

Academic Bio

Monserrat was born in Mexico but has been a Las Vegas local since her childhood. She's a first-generation college student pursuing a degree in Interior Architecture with a minor in Gender and Sexuality Studies. She's passionate about architecture and design and hopes to continue learning and exploring her creativity.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Monserrat plans to pursue a Master's of Architecture once she completes her undergraduate studies. Her dream is to become a licensed architect and own her own firm one day!
VICTORIA ALEXANDRA ANGULO

Class Standing: Senior
Department: Liberal Arts
Major: Psychology

Academic Bio
Victoria is a native Las Vegan and first-generation college student. She is the vice president of NAMI on Campus, a CARE advocate, and a research assistant at the Interactive Measurement Group. She majored in psychology to understand the mind and how to help those who suffer from mental illness best.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
Upon graduation I plan on pursuing a PhD in clinical psychology. This level of education will allow me to get the most out of how to be a great psychologist and eventually, therapist. I aim to open a private practice and serve the Vegas valley where access is limited.
Academic Bio
Sahar is a local to Las Vegas and a first generation college student. She’s currently the social media chair for UNLV’s Active Minds, a club on campus that aims to break the stigma surrounding mental illness. Sahar chose Psychology as a major to properly advocate for children’s rights and mental health.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
Sahar plans on pursuing a Masters in Business Administration, preferably with a focus in Marketing at UNLV. Further on, she plans on pursuing a Master’s in Public Policy at NYU. In the near future, Sahar plans on pursuing law as a career to advocate for human rights.
REEDELL ARAGON

Class Standing: Senior
Department: College of Sciences
Major: Mathematical Sciences
Minor in Neuroscience

Academic Bio
As a young kid, Reedell has always been interested in two things, patterns and puzzles. When he found out that you can academically study both, mathematics became the obvious path for him. He served as the Vice President of UNLV FinTech and currently works as an Operations Research analyst for an international tech company.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
He is planning on pursuing a master’s degree in Computational Mathematics or Statistics. His main interest is in the field of artificial intelligence. He wants to start a non-profit tech company that uses machine learning for social good; a team of data scientists that create initiatives to solve social issues.
Academic Bio

Vanessa is 21 years old was raised in Las Vegas however she was born in California and moved here when she was one. She is a server in a restaurant but in her free time volunteers at a hospice facility as a caregiver relief.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Vanessa plans on pursuing the Master of Social Work program UNLV has to offer. She wants a real connection with clients and to be the one who helps them instead of just referring them to others who can help them. She wants to be impactful and rememberable to her clients.
**Academic Bio**

Fitsum Ayele is currently a rising senior at UNLV majoring in Psychology and minoring in Management. Fitsum is a first-generation college student with an ardent passion for learning and advancing his education. Fitsum chose psychology because he is drawn to understanding the determinants of human behavior in different settings.

**What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?**

Fitsum plans to pursue a PhD in Industrial-Organizational (I-O) psychology because he is very interested in understanding human behavior and motivation at work, and he is captivated by multilevel theory (ML) approaches to understanding modern organizations. He is fascinated by ML’s systems theory, which can parsimoniously explain behavior in organizations.
Abrianna was born and raised here in Las Vegas, Nevada. She participates in dance classes here at UNLV and gets involved in fitness activities held in the Rec and Wellness Center. Over the summer, she worked as a Summer Camp counselor and will serve as a peer mentor to incoming freshmen this semester.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Abrianna plans to pursue a Master’s in Healthcare Administration following the completion of her undergraduate degree next fall. She will be applying for the graduate program because it will provide the credentials, experience, and further education necessary to become an Administrative Healthcare Director. Additionally, the program will allow her to gain knowledge and experience to pass on to aspiring Healthcare Administration professionals.
Academic Bio

Ally Beckwith was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. Ally has been involved in CSUN Student Government the last two years at UNLV. Currently, she interns as a Student Researcher for the Brookings Institution and the Lincy Institute. She chose her major because of her persistent interest in policy and history.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Ally is interested in learning more about the graduate programs offered that pertain to public policy and political science. She would like to continue researching different policy issues that focus primarily on the local Las Vegas community.
Academic Bio

Rory is from Seattle, Washington. She is currently in her fourth year. While at UNLV, she has been a member of the Mock Trial team, helped create the Political Science Club, and interned for the Borgen Project. Rory chose to study political science because of her love of history.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Rory is planning to study American history in graduate school because she sees the power in connecting what happened in the past with America’s current state of politics. Her ultimate goal is to teach history in a university setting.
NASEEM ESKANDER II BENJELLOUN

Class Standing: Junior

Department: Mathematics & Political Science

Major: B.A Mathematics & B.A Political Science

Academic Bio

Naseem (he/him/his) is a third year student pursuing a B.A in Mathematics and a B.A/M.A in Political Science. He is a first generation American, a third generation Dutch citizen, and holds Moroccan heritage. In his free time he enjoys reading and pursuing his research passions.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Naseem intends to pursue a Master's and a Ph.D. in Political Science with a concentration in International Relations or Comparative Politics. With a great passion for bargaining and voting behavior theories, Naseem hopes to use these degrees to contribute to the field he loves and to inspire students through teaching.
Academic Bio

Arshia is a 4th year Mechanical Engineering student. Arshia is co-founder and Project Lead of RebelSat, a student organization where they will be designing and building a satellite that will eventually launch into space. He chose mechanical engineering as his major because of its broad applicability, but he has decided to focus his efforts on aerospace engineering.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Arshia plans on pursuing an aerospace engineering graduate program so that he can work on the design of spacecrafts such as the Mars Rover or crewed spaceships.
Charlene was originally born in the Philippines. She and her family moved to Las Vegas, NV when she was seven. She is the first generation college student and is currently majoring in Psychology with a minor in Family Studies. She loves learning and understanding about the human behavior and is passionate about helping others. Charlene is currently involved as a research assistant at a Charisma Lab on campus and is also a member of the 1st Generation Club.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Charlene plans to pursue her career in Marriage and Family Therapy and wants to become a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist one day. Charlene loves helping people and making a difference in their lives. She is also passionate about learning different types of family dynamics, couples, and different therapy models that will help them lead to a better and satisfying relationships with others and their families.
LESLEY CASTRO

Class Standing: Junior
Department: College of Liberal Arts
Major: Psychology

Academic Bio
Lesley is a first generation college student who was born in San Francisco, California. She absolutely loves conversing with people and thankfully, her retail job allows for her to come across individuals from all walks of life. Through these interactions, her interest in how others process and respond to certain situations peaked; drawing her into the field of Psychology. Lesley appreciates that Psychology comes to examine the various factors that influence one's behaviors.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
As a current crisis response advocate for SafeNest, this role has only encouraged Lesley to continue her studies to pursue a Masters in Social Work. SafeNest is a non-profit organization that is domestic violence focused. The need of individuals in troubling circumstances has become prevalent to Lesley during her time in this role. As such, she would like to continue to provide resources and support as part of her long term career.
A first-generation college student, Taylor has earned with high honors degrees in video production and journalism prior to his work in communication in a quest to become a storyteller. As part of his work at the College of Southern Nevada, Taylor co-chairs the Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Committee and co-advises the Generation Dreamers student club.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

As a child of the ‘90s, Taylor got to experience the heyday of quality edutainment from the likes of Mister Rogers, Bill Nye, and LeVar Burton. His goal with his Early Childhood Education masters is to shape the future of edutainment for the next generation and beyond.
MAE LING CATAYONG

Class Standing: Junior
Department: Liberal Arts
Major: Psychology

Academic Bio

Mae Ling is a first-generation college student and is a part of the Hixson-Lied Success Scholars and the Service-Learning Honors programs. She started as an exploring major but eventually declared her major in psychology to better understand others and how to make a difference in their lives.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Mae Ling plans on pursuing a master's degree in speech-language pathology because of her interest in language and desire to help others. She is excited to go beyond her undergraduate studies and into a diverse field where she can work with a variety of patients.
My name is Hector Cervantes, I am a Las Vegas local and first-generation college student. I am part of the BETA ALPHA PSI International Honor Society. As well as a member of the Financial Management association at UNLV. I chose a degree in Finance because I have always enjoyed using mathematical skills for problem solving and analyzing data. Being able to pursue a career in the finance sector has always been my goal.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

I plan to pursue a dual graduate degree in MBA (Finance focus) and Quantitative Finance. I believe that the Finance industry is so diverse, applying these graduate programs to my degree will help me excel in all aspects of the Finance business sectors.
As a first-generation college student, Alan’s academic endeavors have been exhilarating yet challenging. Coming into UNLV from High School, he had no clue what to expect and there were a raft of questions that lingered in his mind. As he grasped the college lifestyle, he started to get involved in engineering clubs such as ASME, began tutoring for the CAEO and became active in solar cell research under the NSF. Alan chose his major since mechanical engineering combines analytical thinking, mathematics, and science to solve real world problems.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Alan plans on pursuing a masters degree in aerospace engineering since flight has fascinated him ever since a young age. He has the intentions of applying his engineering expertise in a government agency and/or a military sector.
Academic Bio

Olivia Cheche is a local Las Vegas studying political science and public policy in the Honors College. She also works as a student researcher for Brookings Mountain West, a public policy think tank built in partnership with the Washington, D.C.-based Brookings Institution. This past summer, she interned for the Brookings Institution’s Metropolitan Policy Program.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Olivia plans to pursue either a Master’s in Public Policy or Master’s in Education Policy. She is fascinated by higher education policy and educational equity. Eventually, she hopes to go into a research career that will allow her to advocate for fair policies in higher education systems.
DONALD CHICAS

Class Standing: Senior
Department: Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering
Major: Mechanical Engineering

Academic Bio

Donald is a Las Vegas first-generation student who has always wanted to attend UNLV. He is currently an active member of Engineers Without Borders and Tau Beta Pi. He chose his major because he has always been interested in researching improvements for solar energy technologies.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Donald's interest in research has led him to pursue a master's degree in mechanical engineering. His main goal is to develop a career in academia by being a professor. For this, continuing with his graduate studies is an essential first step in achieving this goal.
CHRIZIEL CHILDERS

Academic Bio

Chriziel moved to Las Vegas from Japan during their sophomore year of high school. After doing a summer internship at UNLV Lied Library, they discovered their passion on archives and librarianship. Chriziel is majoring in English where they learn to analyze and navigate literary texts from a global perspective.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Chriziel is planning on pursuing a Masters in Library and Information Science. They plan on delving deeper in archives, learning about preserving history and making information accessible to all.
Academic Bio

Lily Closson is a proud Las Vegas local majoring in history and anthropology. She is deeply involved within the local and academic communities volunteering for Big Brother Big Sister, Junior Achievement of Southern Nevada, and participating in Phi Alpha Theta, Phi Eta Sigma, and Lambda Alpha. She will study Southeast Asian culture in Thailand prior to graduating.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Lily plans on pursuing a graduate degree in communication studies and a certificate in data analytics. She hopes to use her degrees in an interdisciplinary manner to better represent marginalized communities within the mass media and public affairs.
OPAL COLE

Class Standing: Senior
Department: College of Liberal Arts
Major: African American and African Diaspora Studies Program

Academic Bio

Opal is a native of Santa Monica, California. She has spent her life performing around the world as a Professional Dancer, including dancing in the Black Broadway production of *Black and Blue.* Opal has returned to college to fulfill her other dream of becoming Historical Black Dance Studies Professor.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

My ideal graduate program would be to attend Duke University under the direction of Thomas De Frantz, Head of African American Studies and Black Dance Studies.
Kenneth was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. He moved to Las Vegas, NV in 2019 to attend UNLV. He is an Urban Studies major because of his passion of community service. He is a board member of Global Paint for Charity Inc., member of the 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, and James E. Deacon Scholar.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Kenneth plans to continue to work at Nevada Bio-Hazard Decon Team and Danube Construction as their Director of Operations. He plans to get his Master of Arts in Urban Leadership at UNLV. He believes that this degree will make him a better community advocate and leader.
Class Standing: Senior

Department: Lee Business School

Major: Finance

Academic Bio

Julieann moved to Las Vegas from Guam and is a first-generation college student. She is a board member for the National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS) and First Generation. Her major is Finance because she wants to be a part of that percentage of women in that field.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Julieann wants to join the Business Administration/Management Information Systems Program because as a NCWIT recipient in high school, she saw that it was a career that not many women were going into. She hopes that the takeaways she leaves college with will enhance her career path in the near future.
JOSEPH CUSTY

Class Standing: Junior
Department: School of Integrated Health Sciences
Major: Kinesiology

Academic Bio
Joseph was born in Oahu, Hawaii, and moved here junior year of high school. Since then, he’s loved Las Vegas and everything UNLV has to offer. He is a member of the Pre-Physical Therapy Honors Society, the Kinesiology club, and is also a brother of Pi Kappa Alpha. He chose Kinesiology as a major to learn more about the human body, and to find a fulfilling career as a PT.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
Joseph plans on going to grad school to pursue his DPT and become a licensed physical therapist.