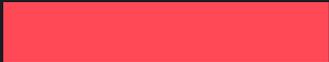




Graduate Mentorship Certification

Congratulations to our incoming
2021-2022 cohort

ANNMARIE JONES



**Ph.D. Candidate,
Department of
Geoscience**

**Advisor: Dr. Stephen
Rowland**



My research focuses on mammalian trackways from 5 million years ago. The fossil record from this time period illustrates a very different Nevadan ecosystem than what we see today. Digital preservation in the form of 3D models help to preserve fossils that are impossible to collect. This creates a permanent record for when these fossils inevitably wear away. We can then analyze these digital models in the lab, and they can also be easily accessed by other researchers.



Paleontology is a discipline heavily influenced by mentor/mentee relationships. As I near the end of my PhD program, I look forward to developing skills through the GCMC program that will help me effectively mentor and guide students interested in the Geosciences.



ASHANA VISWARUBAN



**MHA Candidate,
School of Public
Health**

**Advisor: Erin
Rosenberg**

I am a Master of Healthcare Administration candidate and have been working in the healthcare field for over 3+ years. I have an undergraduate background in Public Health Sciences & Gerontology. I highly value the importance of networking and joining professional organizations to cultivate relationships within the field. My goals include becoming an Executive of an acute care hospital and continuing to serve as a leader throughout not only my career, but my entire life!

Because of the great amount of support I have received from previous and current mentors, I always find different ways to pay it forward. The GMC program is another excellent opportunity to do so! I enjoy serving as a mentor and leader within my community and acting as a positive influence for my peers. Along with going to school and working full time, I am the owner and creator of a consulting business where I assist clients with mentorship and career advancement services. I aim to help others step outside of their comfort zone and teach them that the sky is the limit, especially the younger generation.

With this additional experience, not only will I be able to serve as a resource for others, but I am thrilled to be able to gain new tools that will allow me to continue becoming a strong female healthcare professional.

CATHERINE M PRATT



**M.F.A. Student,
Department of Theatre
Arts**

**Advisor: Brackley
Frayer**



Creating the mood, atmosphere, and environment while bringing out themes and ideas are just part of a lighting designer's work on a theatrical production. Collaboration, creativity, and working with other designers and the director are important aspects of the work completed. As the lighting designer for the musical *Little Shop of Horrors* being produced through the Nevada Conservatory Theatre, my work involves researching, creating, implementing, and documenting the lighting design.



Throughout my career, I have been fortunate to learn and grow under various mentors. Now, as a graduate student and soon to be professional, this certificate program provides opportunities to strength my leadership and mentoring skills so that someday I can become a mentor to young professionals.



CECILIA A. TURMAN

**Doctoral Candidate
Teacher Education
College of Education**

**Advisor
Dr. Christine Clark**



One of the first UNLV students to graduate with a Bachelor's in Interdisciplinary Studies, I soon earned my first Master's in Latin American, Chicano, and Public History and my second Master's in Education from UNLV, my Alma Mater. As a teacher educator, I taught Classroom Management, Online Instruction Methods, Critical Pedagogy and Social Studies for Mid Grades. I research the impact of critical pedagogy and progressive theories in new approaches to program design empowered by technology.

As an educator, I am looking forward to the intellectual success of my students by developing their critical thinking and helping them to face academia, without fear, as the path to high achievement. While teaching in higher education, especially teaching teachers, I see an opportunity to improve my communication with students of diverse backgrounds. Mentoring is a great opportunity to make a difference in someone who trusted me and shared difficulties and positive experiences.

MISSION

***To share with teachers and students
the vision of a better future in a
challenging world.***

DAVID RICE



**Ph.D. candidate,
Department of Physics
& Astronomy**

**Advisor:
Dr. Jason Steffen**

I am a PhD candidate in Astronomy working with Prof. Jason Steffen. I joined the program in Fall 2017. I research the formation and evolution of planets from their interiors to their dynamics through computational techniques. My research incorporates astrophysics and geophysics into an integrated understanding of planetary systems.

I love sharing science with others. I founded and emcee Astronomy on Tap, Las Vegas which shares space-related research through pub trivia events. Prior to UNLV, I graduated from Northwestern University with a bachelors in Physics and Astronomy, and Earth and Planetary Science.

Building a new generation of scientists is important work. I want to work toward better representation of low-income and minority students in STEM fields. The certificate will provide me an opportunity to pursue this goal and build new skills in mentoring as a graduate student.

HOSIA M. TOWERY III



**Post-Professional
Occupational Therapy
Doctorate Student
(PP-OTD)
School of Integrated
Health Sciences
Department of Brain
Health
Advisor: Dr. Donna
Costa, DHS, OTR/L**



My professional development has benefitted from an astounding amount of mentoring, both formal and informal. I am not sure if my desire to help others is derived from my mentorship experiences, my education rooted in a holistic approach to healthcare as an Occupational Therapy Practitioner, or the attributes and attitudes learned from my family. However, I have always tried to share my experiences and knowledge to help others achieve the goals they value.



The challenges of today's educational and professional cultures are continually evolving. Mentoring invests in our community by providing guidance to our future leaders along a path towards successful personal understanding and continued participation in their pursuit of knowledge. Developing mentorship programs is critical to future success in my profession and in enriching the community. I hope to inspire and encourage others to take an active role as mentors, collaborators, and innovators to build and strengthen our community.



JANELLE YASUKOCHI



I was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii. I graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biochemistry at California State University, East Bay. Afterwards, I worked in Fukuoka, Japan to teach English for 3 years. I currently work at UNLV as a Senior RPC Academic Advisor in the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs, and I started my MBA Program in Fall 2020.

I joined the Graduate College Mentorship Certification Program because I am a huge advocate of mentorship. I believe that it is a key component in education because it provides the opportunities to connect with others and enhances the experience outside of the classroom. I also believe that it is important to continue the mentorship process by paying it forward to the next generation.

MBA Student

Advisor: Dr. Lisa Davis

KIT YEE LEUNG



**I.H.S Ph.D. student,
Department of Health
Physics and Diagnostic
Sciences**

**Faculty Advisor:
Dr. Yu Kuang**



Hepatocellular Carcinoma Detection (HCC) is the third leading cause of cancer death worldwide. Detecting HCC at earlier stages could reduce mortality rates 10- to 50- fold. Unfortunately, current strategies for early detection of HCC, including routine CT imaging and alpha-fetoprotein biomarker, are suboptimal. These strategies underestimate disease burden and extent and expose patients to unnecessary morbidity, risks, and expense. This project aims to change the paradigm for early detection of HCC by developing a convenient, clinically translatable multiplexing lipid species biomarker test using patients' plasma.

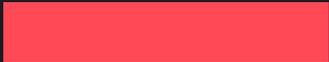


The undergraduate student mentee will perform data analysis on lipidomics profiles, electronic literature search and data extraction from lipidomics studies. I will write the manuscript while the student mentee will prepare graphs and figures.



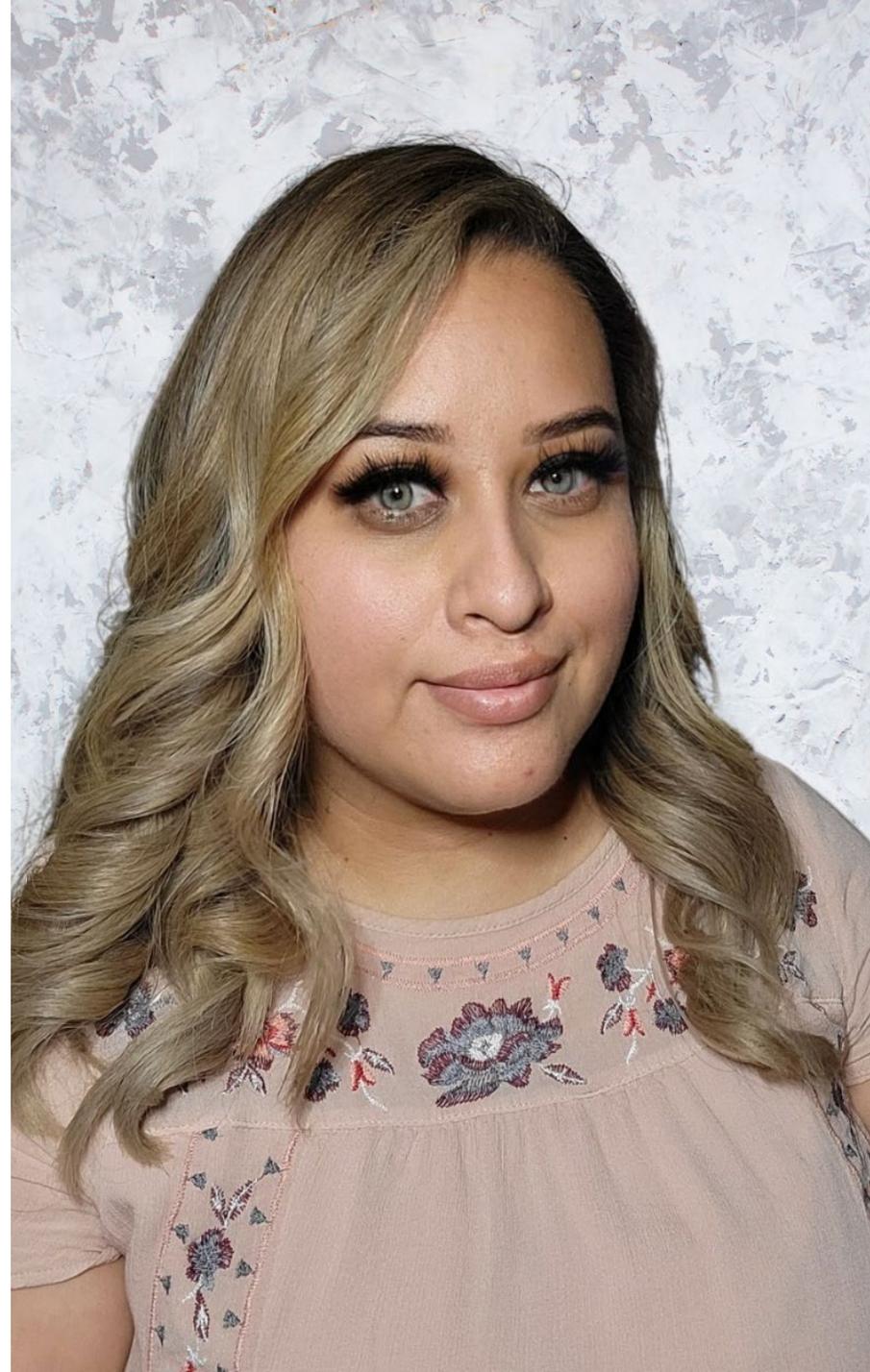
The student mentee will learn about research ethics knowledge, electronic literature search, bioinformatic data analysis technique and data visualization.

LUCERO RODRIGUEZ



**Master of Education
Student - Early
Childhood Education**

**Advisor: Dr. Jeffrey
Gelfer**

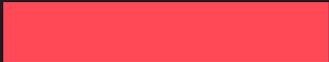


Lucero is focused on finding accessible pathways for those who wish to become teachers.

She has been a facilitator/mentor in a Paraprofessional Route to Licensure Program for the Clark County School District as part of a research study. She wishes to continue to provide assistance and breakdown barriers that are preventing people from becoming teachers. Lucero's primary focus is to increase the diversity of new teaching candidates to reflect the population demographics as much as possible.

Lucero's participation in the mentoring certification program will help her learn how to serve as a mentor in different settings. Her studies previously focused on strategic planning and change management. She wishes to continue to learn and build on those skills and ultimately to empower through education.

MANDY MOUNTAIN



**M.S. student, School of
Life Sciences**

**Advisor: Dr. Daniel
Thompson**



In my research I study the ecology and evolution of Guiliani's dune scarab beetle, a vulnerable insect species endemic to Nevada. My main focus is on how conflict between the sexes impacts fitness, and if variations in population density contribute to plasticity of antagonistic behaviors associated with mating.

By participating in the Graduate College Mentorship Certification program, I hope to improve my communication skills as both a mentee and a mentor, and effectively inspire other first generation college students to participate in research.

NASIM BINESH



**Ph.D. student,
Hospitality
Administration**

**Advisor: Dr. Amanda
Belarmino & Dr.
Robert Rippee**

The reason I applied for this program was all the people who have helped me along the way; From my own mentor at Caesar's Palace, to all the professors that have guided me with their wisdom and kindness through these years. I believe in giving back to society. I think what makes a good mentor is their compassion combined with discipline. I aspire to help enthusiastic students to reach their academic and professional goals.

RYAN N. BOND



**DMA Candidate
UNLV School of Music**

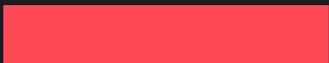
**Advisor: Dr. Timothy
Jones**

Ryan graduated from Snow College with his BMCM (Bachelors of Music in Commercial Music) with an emphasis in Percussion performance, business minor, and music education. He furthered his education by studying at UNLV where he graduated with his Masters in Music in percussion performance, and is continuing his schooling at UNLV as a Doctoral candidate in the Musical Arts.

A few topics Ryan would like to tackle would include, *Learning an Instrument and its effects on scholastic success*, and *Drumming: its effects on physical and mental health (Kinesiology)*. While each of these topics would tackle different sides of music, It is understood that we will only have enough time to work on one. It would be beneficial to allow my mentee to have a say in choosing one of these topics.

I want to be in the Graduate College Mentorship Certification program because I want to have a positive influence on others by encouraging them through school and life. I want to help others achieve success and find meaning. I know it will also help me reach my Dream Career in becoming a Full-Time Percussion Professor with an opportunity to receive tenure. The Mentorship Certification will help me hit all of the goals and marks along the way to my Dream Career.

SABRINA BARAKAT



**Ph.D. Candidate
Department of
Chemistry &
Biochemistry**

**Advisor: Dr. MaryKay
Orgill**

Sabrina Barakat is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry in MaryKay Orgill's research laboratory. Sabrina's research is focused on using qualitative research techniques to examine and improve students' understanding and uses of chemical resonance. Sabrina is also involved in developing a professional development on superconductivity for high school teachers in the Clark County School District.



SAMANTHA SCHAFFER

**M.A. student,
Communication
Studies
Advisor: Dr. Natalie
Pennington**



I am currently a graduate student studying in the Communication department. I graduated from UNLV with my bachelor's degree in 2018 where I focused my studies on adoption communication. In my current studies, I enjoy researching interpersonal relationships and family communication. My particular research interests are parent-child communication patterns and adoption communication. My ultimate goal is to teach an adoption communication course that spreads awareness about adoption and improves communication patterns in families formed through adoption. Throughout my entire education, I have been fortunate to be guided by some amazing instructors and professors. It is important to me that I develop the critical skills necessary to become an awesome teacher and mentor myself. I believe that process begins by immersing myself in a program like the Graduate College Mentorship Certification in hopes of giving my students the mentor they deserve.

SARAH MONIQUE CHANTEH SOMMA



**Post-secondary Career
and Technical
Education
Ph.D. student
Department Teaching
and Learning**

**Advisor: Dr. Howard
Gordon**

From an early age I realized that I wanted to work in education and help people achieve their dreams. A positive disposition paired with great communication skills helps me create environments conducive of inclusion. I have taught secondary and undergraduates alike and helped them develop their own ideas about scientific and social worlds. As well as foster the development of their superpowers and how they can use them as survival tools in the workforce. My research focus is early exposure to STEM and STEAM careers through career and technical education. I am interested in becoming a mentor to learn from mentees and help them identify options and navigate the labyrinth of post secondary education. Research shows that if students have more support in these areas they will be more likely to persist.

SARAH YORK



**Ph.D. student
Department of
Chemistry &
Biochemistry**

**Advisor: MaryKay
Orgill**

Sarah York is a PhD student in the Orgill Research Lab in the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry and was recently awarded the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. Her research focuses on resource development for the implementation of systems thinking in tertiary chemistry classrooms, including how to modify systems thinking activities to address the needs of diverse, traditionally underrepresented general chemistry students. This work expands upon York's most recent journal publication, *The ChEMIST table: A tool for designing or modifying instruction for a systems thinking approach in chemistry education*. Sarah is passionate about educating future chemists and citizens to holistically approach complex global issues.

SCARLETT IGLESIAS HOYOS



**M.S. student, Clinical Mental
Health Counseling**

**Department of Counselor
Education, School Psychology,
and Human Services**

Advisor: Dr. Jared Lau



Scarlett is enrolled in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. She was born and raised in Mexico. Scarlett is a mental health advocate and is passionate about research in multicultural counseling and mentorship.

Nowadays, universities are becoming interested in increasing their diversity and, therefore, the number of minority and first-generation students. Research has shown that these students experience a higher risk of dropping out. She understands the difficulties that international, non-traditional, minority, and first-generation students go through.

Recognizing the crucial part that mentor roles play in educational and professional development has inspired her to become one of them. Part of her cultural background includes collectivism and giving a high value to groups and communities. Consequently, as a future mentor, she hopes to guide students in their efforts to pursue their passions by providing guidance, assistance, and recommendations that facilitate their personal, academic, and professional achievements.

SHEKHAR SINGH



**Ph.D. student,
Computer Science**

**Advisor: Dr. Fatma
Nasoz**

Emotions are a powerful tool in communication and one way that humans show their emotions is through their facial expressions. In the field of Artificial Intelligence, Facial Expression Recognition (FER) is an active research area. Our research focuses on analyzing the image dataset using Machine learning and Deep learning techniques and filling a gap between supervised and unsupervised learning by using Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs). GANs have been extensively used in multiple computer vision applications. We believe that GANs will also be helpful in the face dataset like FER2013 to generate synthetic images and will lead us to address the overfitting issue using data augmentation techniques.

The Graduate College Mentorship Certification is a perfect platform, where I can enrich my life on a personal and professional level. By working with someone less experienced with a different background, I can learn new perspectives. Refining my leadership and communication skills will help me advance my career and I will gain personal satisfaction knowing that I have directly contributed to someone's growth and development.

SURAJ VENKAT POCHAMPALLY



**Ph.D. Student,
Mechanical Engineering**

**Advisor:
Dr. Jaeyun Moon**



PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

We will study the surface interaction between carbon-based porous materials and toxic pollutants soluble in water, resulting in the development of new efficient remediation processes and materials for groundwater recovery, especially at the Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear sites. In this project, we will produce biochar (carbon-based porous matter) from biomass feedstocks, subsequently to modify the biochars to enhance their sorption capability, and finally to use it for effective purification of groundwater from toxic pollutants. My undergraduate mentee, Maaik Parajes, will be helping with the material characterization on Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) and performing some tests like the contact angle measurement test. She will also do a literature review on new materials and methods which support the project.

TAYLOR FLAHERTY



**Ph.D. Student,
Department of
Anthropology**

**Advisor: Dr. Jennifer
Byrnes**



Taylor is a second year Doctoral Student with a focus in Forensic Anthropology. As a queer, gender diverse individual, they hold a lot of passion for LGBTQIA+ reserach and inclusion in academia. For her dissertation research, she is focusing on the structural and lethal violence within the transgender and gender diverse population, while also researching and advocating for gender inclusive methodologies for identifying these decedents within forensic anthropology.

For the beginning of their dissertation research, Taylor and their mentee will be utilizing the Transgender Day of Remembrance database to explore lethal violence in the global transgender population. They will be analyzing the types of violence experienced, fluctuations in violence over time and location, language used to discuss victims, and the overall contribution of systemic and interpersonal violence to their untimely deaths.

Participating in the Graduate College Mentorship Certification will allow Taylor and her mentee opportunities for collaborative research that gives a voice to a disproportionately at-risk population.