



**Graduate College**  
*The Graduate Rebel*  
*Ambassadors Program*

**Congratulations to our incoming  
2018-2019 cohort**

# Shaimaa Abdelhaleem



Ph.D student,  
Department of  
Geoscience

Advisor:  
Dr. Wanda J. Taylor



My research is focused on studying the earthquake potentiality in the city of Las Vegas and its effect on the 2 million lives that live in it and the much more people who visit it each year. Communication is a critical aspect of everyday life.

Being a Graduate Student Ambassador will allow me to share my experience in how I developed my research and business skills at UNLV as well as help other graduate student know how to develop their professional skills while being in a research-oriented university and how to make use of the huge amount of learning and development resources UNLV provides.

# Maria Aladjova



**MS student, Clinical  
Mental Health  
Counseling  
(College of  
Education)**

**Advisor:  
Dr. Katrina Harris**



Maria received her BA in Psychology with a Minor in Marriage and Family Therapy and Human Services while competing for the UNLV Volleyball team. Born and raised in Bulgaria, she pursued a Master's degree in Sports Psychology at the National Sports Academy in Sofia. Her research explored the cultural factors influencing motivation amongst Bulgarian and American volleyball players. Once a Rebel, always a Rebel; Maria returns to UNLV for her second Master's degree - in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Her emphasis is on prevention and treatment of addictions. She works as a graduate research assistant at the Family Research and Services and TOPPS lab with Dr. Donohue and at the Gambling, Addictions, and the Microaggression Experience lab with Dr. Wong. As a true Rebel, Maria is looking forward to the Ambassador program as an opportunity to enhance the graduate student community as well as the connections between its members, the Graduate College, and alumni.

# JANNA BERNSTEIN



**Ph.D. student,  
Department of Teaching  
& Learning**

**Advisor:  
Dr. Christine Clark**



Born and raised in the suburbs of Los Angeles in the San Fernando Valley, Janna received her B.A. and M. Ed. from the University of Southern California. Janna's research focuses on how multi-faith public institutions in the Intermountain West are ideal locations to engage in conversations about faith and spirituality and how students experience faith on campus.

As a lifelong learner, Janna is always looking for new ways to engage in professional development opportunities and is thrilled to continue her role as a Graduate Rebel Ambassador!

# CLAUDIA CHIANG-LÓPEZ



Master's student,  
Department of  
Communication  
Studies

Advisor:  
Dr. Guthrie



Claudia Chiang-Lopez is a first-generation immigrant and college student.

She has presented her research at national and regional conferences. Her current research interests include enacting multicultural education, examining community and meaning making around fear of victimization, and narratives around love and violence.

Now in her second year, she has taught speech and interpersonal communication courses.

She is excited to serve as a Grad Rebel Ambassador and connect with the Las Vegas and UNLV communities.

# PATRICK DALEIDEN



**Ph.D. Candidate,  
Department of  
Computer Science**

**Advisor:  
Dr. Andreas Stefik**

Patrick Daleiden is in his fifth year as a Ph.D. student in the Department of Computer Science. He was recently awarded the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees Fellowship which allows him to focus primarily on his research and to complete his dissertation. He has worked for the last four years as a graduate research assistant in the Software Engineering and Media Lab as well as a teaching assistant for Software Engineering and Programming classes. His dissertation research involves creating a behavioral analytics platform to study software development and programming languages in the area of parallelism and concurrency. He conducts studies on human factors impacts of programming language features and parallel paradigms with a goal of making complex programming techniques easier and more accessible for scientists. In particular, he is focusing on massively parallel architectures for high performance and scientific computing like the Cherry Creek supercomputing cluster. In his time at UNLV he has served on the executive board of the student government as Vice President and now for the fourth year as a Grad Rebel Ambassador.

# Eric Fries



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

**Advisor:  
Dr. Arlen Chase**

Eric Fries studies the development of towns and villages in the civilization of the ancient Maya. Working in Belize, his research combines satellite image analysis and spatial statistics with traditional archaeological survey and excavation. As a Grad Rebel Ambassador, he looks forward to bringing attention to the top-tier research conducted by UNLV graduate students, and building connections between the University and the broader Las Vegas community.

# STEPHANIE MOLINA



**Ph.D. student,  
Department of  
Health Physics &  
Diagnostic Sciences**

**Advisor:  
Dr. Steen Madsen**



Stephanie is a doctoral student in the Interdisciplinary Health Sciences program within the Department of Health Physics & Diagnostic Sciences. Through application of her interdisciplinary background (B.S. in Health Physics, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology; UNLV), she is investigating the development of a cell-based drug delivery approach for the treatment of cancers by photochemical internalization, a photonic technique. Her goal is that studying the in vitro efficacy of drug-carrying delivery vehicles will translate to an effective treatment protocol for diffuse brain tumors.

As a Grad Rebel Ambassador, she hopes to represent the graduate college and student body as she communicates the value of a UNLV graduate education with a wider audience.



# ELISHA ODEGARD



**M.S. student, Couple  
& Family Therapy  
Program**

**Advisor:  
Dr. Carissa D'Aniello**




Elisha is a second-year Masters student of Couple and Family Therapy within the UNLV School of Medicine. Her clinical work focuses on combining several therapeutic models, including Internal Family Systems, Emotionally-focused therapy, Solution-focused brief therapy, and Feminist family therapy.

Elisha's clinical interests include intimate partner violence, sexual identity with an emphasis in bisexuality, and restoring intimacy and equity in couple relationships.

As a Grad Rebel Ambassador, Elisha aspires to inform the community about the value of graduate education and mentor future graduate students.

# JOHN OLAWEPO



**Ph.D. student,  
Department of  
Environmental and  
Occupational Health**

**Advisor:  
Dr Jennifer Pharr**



John Olawepo is a doctoral student in Public Health (with a focus on Global Health) at the School of Community Health Sciences, University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV).

His research interest borders around how to use implementation science methods to solve maternal and child health challenges.

He is participating in the Rebel Ambassadors program in order to use his skills to support graduate education at UNLV. He expects to use the knowledge and skills gained from this program to better engage community stakeholders, while also advocating for graduate education.

John Olawepo received his Master of Science degree in Public Health from the University of London, United Kingdom.

**BETH WI**



**Master's in Business  
and Hospitality**

**Advisors:**

**Dr. Michael Mejza**

**Dr. Mehmet Erdem**



Following my passion for making an impact in the hospitality industry, the focus of my research is examining the influence of patron and employee relationships on acceptance of robotics in the workforce and how the level of interactions between customers and service providers can help achieve customer satisfaction.

In my graduate study in business and hospitality, I have been exposed to academic and practical experiences to further explore my capabilities. The Graduate College has provided me with necessary resources to thrive and take my work to the next level at every step of the research process. Together, the student body, fellow students, and I would like to share the opportunity to grow as amazing Rebels. I look forward to serving as a Grad Rebel Ambassador who can contribute to building a strong Grad Rebel community.

# AMBER WOJCIECHOWICZ



**MSN-ED, School of  
Nursing**

**Advisor:  
Dr. Alona Angosta**



I previously received my Bachelors in nursing from UNLV, and am a RN at Summerlin Hospital. My two passions are nursing and teaching. My long term goal is to teach future DNP nursing students.

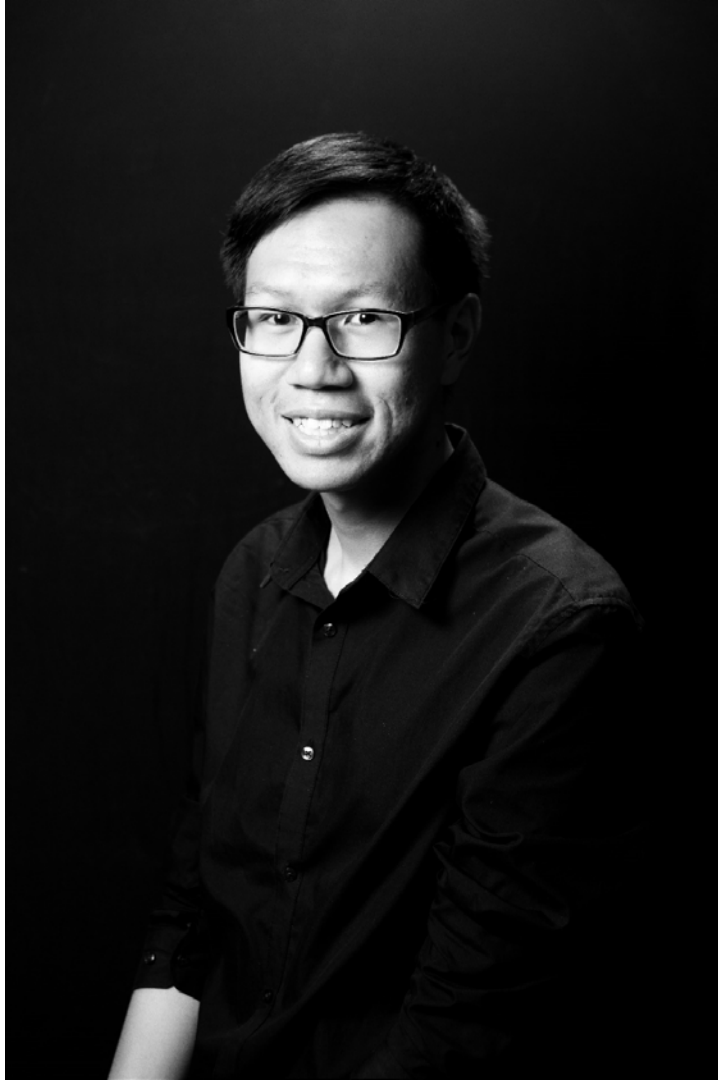
I am currently working toward my masters in nursing education. My program focus is teaching rather than research.

I am excited to have the opportunity to meet new people through the Ambassador program. I truly enjoy working with people and learning from their various life experiences. I also enjoy coaching and mentoring students at all points in their career paths. I hope to provide encouragement and advice to enable students to have the tools they need to succeed.

# WILLIAM ZHENG



## Master of Architecture



My research focuses on data-driven urban development, in which data is collected and analyzed to inform development decisions and solve critical urban problems. In the age of big data and rapid urban growth, it is important that cities are designed with data in mind. Data-driven development can help cities improve quality of life and reduce their ecological impact.

Data can be collected and analyzed for many facets of a city, such as transportation, housing, and safety. In my research, I am exploring opportunities for data-driven development as well as strategies and tools for data collection and analysis.