Grad Rebel Advantage Program

Congratulations to our incoming 2018-2019 Mentors
Claudia Chiang-Lopez

Master’s student, Department of Communication Studies
Adviser: Dr. Jennifer Guthrie

Academic Bio
Claudia has presented her prior research at national and regional conferences. Her passions include immigration reform and the prevention of interpersonal violence. Her thesis focuses on community and meaning making around fear of victimization. She chose to attend UNLV, as she is deeply invested in bettering the Las Vegas community.

What did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?
As a first-generation immigrant and college student, Claudia is aware of the importance of good mentors. Without her own mentors - Stine Odegard, Dr. Smedley-Lopez, and Dr. Guthrie - to guide her in her service work, research work, and education, she wouldn’t be where she is now. She hopes to bring her mentees resources, support, and guidance on their journey to grad school.
Dory A. Mizrachi

Academic Bio

Dory is currently a 5th year Ph.D. student in the Public Affairs program. Her research focuses on intimate partner violence, repeat victimization, police policy, and prevention tools to reduce the risk of intimate partner homicide. Her additional research interests include family law, victim advocacy models, and family courts as a conduit for access to justice and community resources, particularly for women.

What did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

Dory has a passion for helping people, as well as a knack for relating to people. In addition to her academic achievements, skills, and genuine empathy for people, she has earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from UNLV. Thus, she would enjoy the opportunity to share her perspective and experiences with mentees.
JOHN OLAWEPO

Ph.D. student, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health
Adviser: Dr. Jennifer Pharr

Academic Bio
John Olawepo is a second-year doctoral student in Public Health (with Global Health focus) in the School of Community Health Sciences. His research interest borders around how to use implementation science methods to solve maternal and child health challenges. Diversity and the opportunities for academic growth attracted him to UNLV.

Why did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?
John volunteered to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor because of his belief in developing community engagement and vibrant student bodies. Being a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor will allow him to impact the community by supporting younger minds in the pursuit of their dreams.
Kristyne Wiegand

Ph.D. candidate, Department of Kinesiology
Adviser: Dr. Julia Freedman Silvernail

Kristyne’s background is in Sports Medicine. Her master’s and PhD degrees are in Kinesiology, specializing in biomechanics and biostatistics. Kristyne’s academic interests include biomechanical, psychological, and physiological factors of injury development and progression. Kristyne chose to study at UNLV because of the faculty in Kinesiology and research being conducted here.

What did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

Kristyne had limited access to research in her undergraduate degree, and learned quickly in graduate school that having more experience would have been very beneficial. Kristyne hopes to instill a sense of intellectual curiosity in the students she mentors, and help them find their path.
Linda Kyriannis

Ph.D. student, Department of Teaching and Learning

Program Adviser: Dr. Boone

Academic Bio
Linda chose UNLV College of Education Learning & Technology program because of her interest in technology and its application to aid the learners in various age range. She would like to utilize technology and incorporate it into the classroom to enhance the learner’s experience with self directed learning.

Why did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?
Linda has been actively involved in the UNLV Graduate College’s Certificate Programs for Teaching as well as Research and found it to be rewarding and would like to further contribute to UNLV by being a mentor to other students. She hopes to help undergraduate mentees navigate change and be able to adjust to college life and the rigor of academic studies, as well as transitioning from college to work successfully.
Linsey Belisle

Ph.D. student, Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

Academic Bio

Linsey is a second year PhD student in the Criminal Justice and Criminology department. Her research interests include corrections, evidence based practices, and harm reduction. She received her masters degree in Criminal Justice and focused on the long term outcomes of juvenile drug courts for her thesis research.

What did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

I am excited to be a part of this program because I believe that learning from peers is extremely beneficial. I went through the process of applying and choosing graduate school programs. I am happy to be able to share my experiences with graduate school and the process with others.
Maurica initially studied Elementary Curriculum & Instruction, but decided to switch programs due to her passion for urban communities. With this being her final year, she will be creating an innovative solution to an urban issue, utilizing the design thinking process, and possibly presenting to potential donors.

What did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

Maurica decided to become a mentor because she has a heart for helping others, specifically students. She has firsthand knowledge and experience with the stress and uncertainty of post-graduation, and desires to be of assistance to students. Maurica hopes that her mentees increase their confidence in themselves, gain a sense of direction for future endeavors, and build impactful relationships w/in the cohort.
Rafael Oganesyan is a political science doctoral candidate focusing on voter behavior in developing democracies. His work has appeared in French Politics and Journal of Common Market Studies. Currently, He is completing his dissertation analyzing voter behavior in the post-Soviet space.

What did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

Rafael chose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor to provide guidance and vital assistance in choosing a graduate program, navigating through graduate school, networking at the academic and non-academic environments, and gaining a regional (and national) reputation as a field specialist.
Stephanie Molina

Ph.D. student, Department of Health Physics and Diagnostic Sciences
Adviser: Dr. Steen Madsen

Stephanie is a doctoral student in the Interdisciplinary Health Sciences program. 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.

What did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

As a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor, she hopes to communicate the value of a UNLV graduate education while encouraging and assisting undergraduate students navigate the path to continuing their education.
Stephanie Willes

I am a non-traditional college student and earned my undergraduate degree in Communication Studies from UNLV. I love the environment on campus, both in and out of the classroom. I have a graduate assistantship in my department which pays for my tuition and provides me a monthly salary. I never imagined getting paid to go to school! My academic interests focus on digital rhetoric, the sharing of conspiracy narratives, and the Internet’s role in making these stories so powerful.

Academic Bio

Master’s student, Department of Communication Studies

Adviser: Dr. Emma Frances Bloomfield

Why did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

Making the decision to go to graduate school was one of the more difficult decisions I had to make in my academic career. Just preparing myself for the GRE gave me much anxiety. But, making the choice to go and then being accepted has been the most rewarding thing for me. I hope to share my stories with my mentees so that they don’t feel alone in the process, while I also guide and support them as needed. If I can do anything to make preparing for graduate school easier for my mentees then I would say we were a successful team.
Tereza Trejbalová

Academic Bio
Tereza is a fourth-year Ph.D. student of Criminology and Criminal Justice at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She obtained her Master’s Degree in Political Science from University of Nevada, Reno.

Her research interests include the death penalty in the US, Africa, and Asia, male victimization and trauma, women in corrections, and human rights. Upon graduation, she hopes to pursue a career in academia.

Why did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?
As a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor, Tereza anticipates learning how to become an effective mentor to better serve her future students and help them reach their goals. Through working with UNLV undergraduate students, she hopes to show them how rewarding going to graduate school can be.

Ph.D. student, Department of Criminal Justice
Adviser: Dr. Emily J. Salisbury
Vanessa Núñez

Vanessa earned her B.A. in Sociology from UCSD in 2008 and recently earned her M.A. in Sociology from UNLV in 2017. She is a community-based participatory research practitioner and focuses on immigration, education, social movements, race and ethnicity, and equitable access to higher education.

Academic Bio

Why did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

Vanessa has found that mentoring has had a huge impact on her own educational pathway. With her involvement as a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor, she hopes to help other students like her navigate accessing graduate programs and provide a space for open and honest dialogue about pursuing a graduate degree.
William graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He is now in his thesis year of his Master of Architecture degree. William will be researching the potential of data-driven urban design, in which data is collected and analyzed to solve urban problems.

What did you choose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor?

William chose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Program Mentor because of his fine arts background. A graduate education in fine arts is often overlooked, but a graduate education can open many new doors for fine arts majors. As a fine arts student, William offers a nontraditional perspective toward graduate education.