



Grad Rebel Advantage Program

Congratulations to our incoming 2021-2022 Mentors

UNLV | GRADUATE
COLLEGE



THE GRAD ACADEMY

BRIANNA RIVERA



**Masters Student,
School of Public Health –
Epidemiology &
Biostatistics**

Adviser: Dr. Brian Labus



Academic Bio

Brianna is a graduate student working on earning her Masters in Public Health with a concentration in Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Her interests are in infectious diseases and injury prevention. She has 1 published manuscript and 3 manuscripts in the process of publication from her research work in the past two years. She is currently working on her thesis on Vector-borne diseases and is helping with the current COVID-19 pandemic as a manager on the UNLV Contact Tracing Team.

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

I want to be a Grad Rebel Advantage mentor because I was part of the program as an undergraduate student, and it helped me prepare for graduate school. I want to be able to share my experience and help undergraduate students get a better understanding of graduate school that will help them decide if they want to pursue a graduate degree and prepare for their next steps.

CHRISTIE RA



**M.A. Student,
Department of Criminal
Justice**

**Advisor: Dr. Margaret
Kennedy**



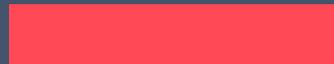
Academic Bio

Christie Ra is in her second year of graduate school in the Criminal Justice program. She graduated with her B.A. in Criminal Justice at UNLV as well. The focus of Christie's research is on human trafficking of children and the possible risk factors children face when being exploited. She chose UNLV Grad School because of the amazing professors and staff members in the CRJ program!

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

Christie chose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor because of the impact other mentors had on her during her undergrad career. She received the help when she most needed it and want others to feel the same enthusiasm. Christie wants to help her mentees identity skills, gain new knowledge, and develop goals in their academic and personnel lives. She's excited to be a part of this program and create new relationships!

CHRISTINA BERKE



MFA student, Creative Writing

**Advisor:
Maile Chapman**



Academic Bio

Christina Berke is a teacher and a writer.

She is currently working on an intergenerational memoir about her Chilean heritage, including the 1973 military coup, through the lens of body image, interpersonal violence, and self worth.

Research methods include interviews, archives, and close readings of nonfiction books. She holds a BA from UC Berkeley and an M.Ed. from UCLA.

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

Universities can be lonely places and students can often feel overlooked. Mentorship is important in order to foster relationships and help them feel like they can succeed not just as a student but as people.

CLAUDIA CHIANG-LOPEZ



Ph.D. student, Cultural studies, International Education, and Multicultural Education Department

Advisor: Dr. Tonya Walls, Dr. Chris Clark



Academic Bio

Claudia is a lecturer for Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies and for the College of Liberal Arts First-Year Experience program. They are an Institute for Teachers of Color Fellow and a CARE Advocate on campus. Their research focuses on QPOC in education and pushed-out student experiences.

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

As a first-generation immigrant and student, Claudia knows how important it is for students to have mentors who can share resources and information. As a 2-time graduate of UNLV (Communication, M.A., '19, Multidisciplinary Studies, BA, '17), they are very familiar with UNLV resources, supports, and opportunities and are excited to share that knowledge with students.

DANIEL PEREZ



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

Advisor: Dr. Karen Harry



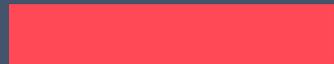
Academic Bio

Daniel is a sixth-year anthropology doctoral candidate, emphasizing in archaeology. His research focuses on anthropological approaches to understanding identity through prehistoric ceramics in the North American Southwest. Daniel chose UNLV because of the strong research emphasis the Department of Anthropology has placed in the prehistory of the Grand Canyon.

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

Daniel chose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor to provide guidance to students who have been provided an opportunity previously unavailable to himself. Furthermore, he is interested in providing undergraduate students the insights he has gained in preparing for and succeeding in graduate school.

ERIC FRIES



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

Advisor: Dr. Arlen Chase



Academic Bio

Eric studies the archaeology of ancient Maya settlement patterns to understand how communities change over long periods of time. His work focuses on western Belize, where Maya people had to adapt to deal with powerful neighbors. He chose UNLV because of the university's commitment to supporting graduate research.

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

Eric chose to become a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor in order to share his experience gained across three graduate programs, and pass on some of the mentoring he received himself. He hopes to help his mentees find programs that will give them strong and consistent support throughout their graduate careers.

GODSON EBENEZER ADJOVU



**Ph.D. student,
Department of Civil and
Environmental
Engineering and
Construction**

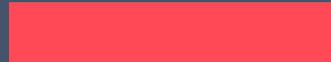
**Advisor: Dr. Sajjad
Ahmad**



Godson Ebenezer Adjovu is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction. He received his bachelor's and master's degree in Civil Engineering. His research focuses on remote sensing applications in water quality monitoring. He is the current Treasurer of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) here in UNLV. He chose to have his education in UNLV because of the many prospect in the field of water resources engineering in Las Vegas coupled with the valuable research, teaching and professional experience he hopes to earn as a Graduate Assistant in UNLV.

He chose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor to guide undergraduate students by providing them needed mentorship based on his experience as graduate student to aid them in future graduate studies. He hopes to help undergraduate students navigate their way into graduate school.

HOWARD K. KEMPLE JR.



**Master's in Management
Information Systems
Student, Department of
Management,
Entrepreneurship, and
Technology**

**Advisors: Dr. Han-Fen Hu
and Dr. Greg Moody**



Academic Bio

Howard has a diverse work and school history. He worked retail, janitorial, IT, and military in private, government, union, and contractor positions. Currently, he is completing a Master of Science in Management Information Systems and holds a UNLV B.S. in Business Management to combine intricacies of technology, business, and people.

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

My desire to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor is because I've been there. Dropping out of UNLV after my freshman year and going back after establishing family and work experience affords me a different perspective to help undergrad students navigate and avoid the pitfalls I experienced. It is a learning experience to balance family, career, school, and military requirements. My experience and degree work hand in hand in multiple work and school environments. I want to help traditional and non-traditional undergraduates understand the process and mentor them as they work toward their own future goals.

JENNIFER FLETCHER

**Ph.D. Student,
Department of
Educational Psychology
and Higher Education.
Learning Sciences
Program.**

**Advisor: Dr. Rebecca
Nathanson**



Academic Bio

Jennifer is a second year Ph.D. student, who is also a Graduate Research Assistant in the Office of Learning Analytics. Jennifer is currently working on research projects in the areas of Juvenile Justice and Education. For Jennifer's thesis she plans to focus on Juvenile Justice and Literature learning.

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

Jennifer wants to help students who wish to attend graduate school get into the program of their dreams. The process of applying and starting graduate school can be stressful and intimidating. Jennifer wishes to help students navigate the pathway to graduate school and hopefully eliminate some of the stress along the way.

KYLE CRUZ

**Kinesiology w/ emphasis
in Exercise Physiology
student, Department of
Kinesiology and Nutrition
Sciences
Advisor: Dr. James
Navalta**



Academic Bio

He is a 2nd-year master's student in the Kinesiology program. His current research focus is validating metabolic equipment and collecting sample data for his thesis entitled "Sight Deprivation and Metabolic Effects While Performing YMCA Bench Press Test." UNLV's tier-one research will prepare his ambitious route to be accepted into a Ph.D. program.

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

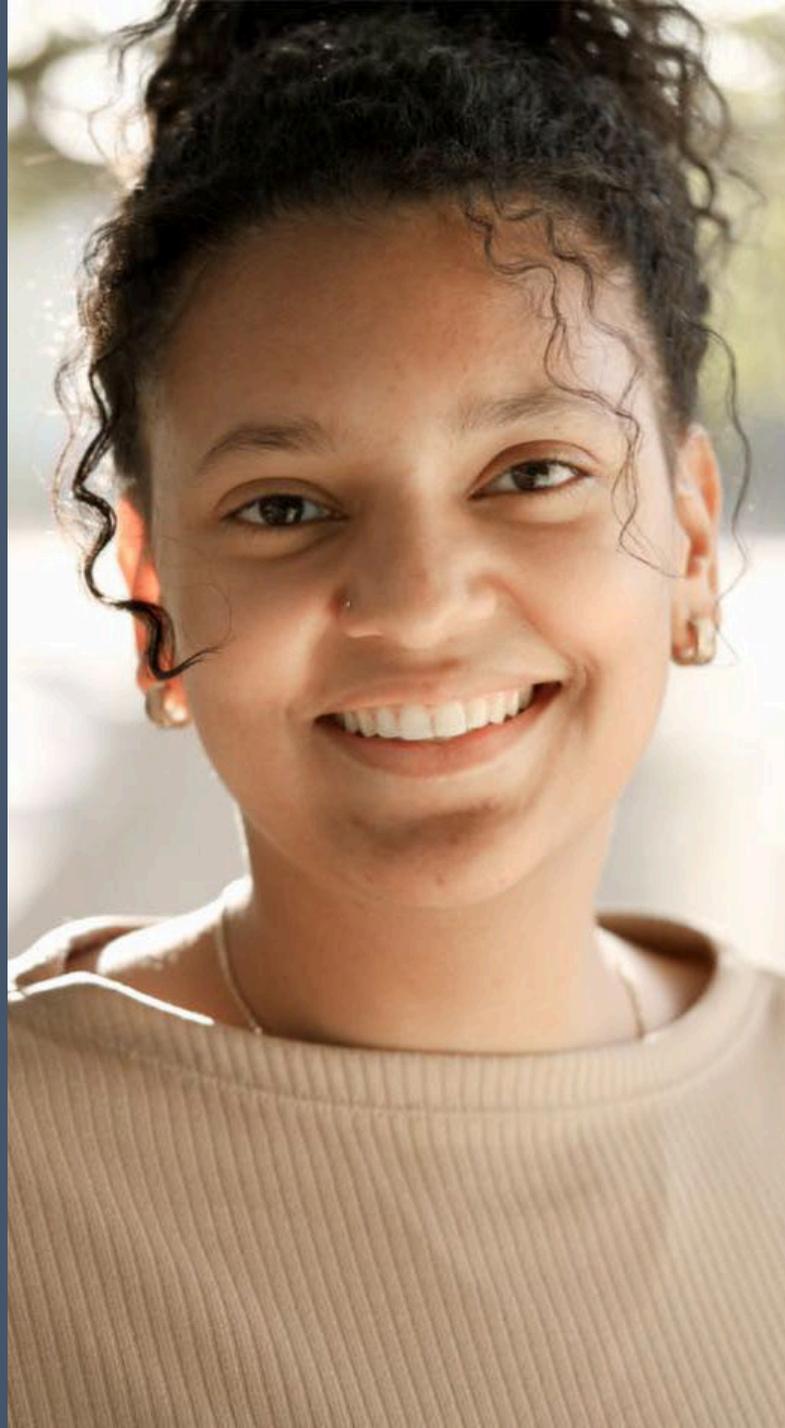
He chose to be a mentor because he believes in leading by example. His military service, research at UNLV, and help from fellow peers understand that you do not need to do everything independently. He hopes you will ask questions and form your own opinions to help you achieve your academic and personal goals.

MONICA CASUSO



**Master's student,
Department of Social
Work**

**Advisor: Keishmer
Cardoso**



Academic Bio

Monica is a recent graduate with a Bachelor's of Science in Human Services from the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Starting Fall 2021, she will be continuing her educational and professional career as a student in the Masters of Social Work program at the School of Social Work. Monica would like to focus the next few years in her degree program to sharpen her skills and develop effective techniques in the areas of student retention, students success, and student well-being.

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

Monica chose to be a mentor because she believes that having a support system is a valuable resource for students at any level of their educational career. With the assistance of a mentor, Monica navigated and overcame various obstacles in her journey to applying to Graduate School. Monica would like to use her experience to assist other students in their journey to achieving their educational goals as her mentor assisted her.

MONICA CHAIREZ



**Executive Masters in
Business Administration,
Department of Executive
Education**

Advisor: Nikkole Liesse



Academic Bio

Monica Chairez earned the Kenny Guinn Millennium Scholarship to attend UNLV. She is a graduate of the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs with a degree in Journalism and Media Studies. After eleven years as a journalist Monica enrolled into the Executive MBA program in the Lee Business School to advance her study of communication's role in business.

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

Good mentors are an integral part of leadership development. According to a Gallup Poll 70% of team engagement is directly related to the quality of the manager or team leader. Mentorship gives a first-hand experience of what leadership should look like. It is a multi-functional role that helps in the overall development of a person. And those people are our future leaders.

MORGAN STARNES



**MBA Candidate, Lee
Business School**

Advisor: Dr. Lisa Davis

Morgan Starnes is in her second year of the Lee Business School's MBA program. She graduated with her BS in Business Administration from the University of Oregon in 2016. Upon deciding to further her education, UNLV's network of alumni and community members is one of the reasons she decided to become a Grad Rebel.

As a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor, she looks forward to the opportunity to serve as a mentor to current UNLV undergraduates weighing their next steps by advocating for continuing education and the multitude of programs offered by the UNLV Graduate College.

She understands the weight of the decision to pursue a higher education and looks to serve as a resource to prospective students within her role as a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor. With a cohort of undergraduate students, she hopes to be a source of guidance, encouraging fellow Rebels to strive for more while sharing the importance of continuing education at a higher level at the UNLV Graduate College.

WARREN FORBES



**Ph.D. student,
Interdisciplinary
Health Sciences**

**Advisor: Dr. Janet
Dufek**



Warren Forbes is a PhD student in the Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Department with his research interest being in Biomechanics. He obtained his Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in Kinesiology from California State University Fullerton.

Warren's current research interests center around analyzing lower extremity landing biomechanics of athletes who have sustained a sports-related concussion. The goal of his research is to decrease lower extremity injury risk in the sports-related concussion population.

Warren wanted to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor to have a positive impact on undergraduate students. He hopes to share his graduate school experiences to help inform students about the amazing opportunities that grad school has to offer and to help them transition into being a successful graduate student.

YAZMIN E. MARTINEZ



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

Dr. Wolfgang Bein



Academic Bio

Yazmin is a non-traditional/LatinX/woman in the STEM field of computer science. She attended UNLV for her undergraduate degree. She has over 10 years of professional working experience as a systems programmer/analyst. She returned to UNLV to research intelligent learning algorithms.

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

Yazmin wants to continue developing her abilities to mentor students. She wants to share her academic experiences in hopes that attendees can use her lessons learned to apply to their own academic paths.



Grad Rebel Advantage Program

Congratulations to our incoming 2021-2022 Co-Mentors

UNLV | GRADUATE
COLLEGE



THE GRAD ACADEMY

DARLYN MAGAÑA

**Undergraduate student,
Department of Liberal
Arts, Psychology and
Family Studies**

**Advisor: Dr. Brandon
Eddy**



Academic Bio

Darlyn is a first generation fourth year undergraduate student majoring in Psychology and Family Studies. She is a part of the UNLV Honors College and a McNair Scholar. Darlyn is currently doing research on PostPartum Depression in African American fathers. She chose UNLV because of the diverse group of students.

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

Darlyn decided to become a mentor because as a first generation undergraduate student she gained knowledge on financial aid, school admissions, graduate programs, and several other information regarding higher education while completing this program. She hopes that her mentees learn and increase their confidence about applying to graduate school.

AARON CHENG



**Undergraduate Student;
School of Life Sciences
and College of Liberal
Arts**

Adviser: Tina Vo Ph.D.



Academic Bio

Aaron is a 4th year double major in Cell and Molecular Biology and Psychology with a minor in Neuroscience. Aaron is currently interviewing for M.D./Ph.D. and M.D. programs across the nation.

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

Aaron chose to be a Grad Rebel Advantage Mentor because he feels that having a good mentor is one of the most influential aspects of an undergraduate career. He hopes that he can make the journey through undergrad easier for his mentees.