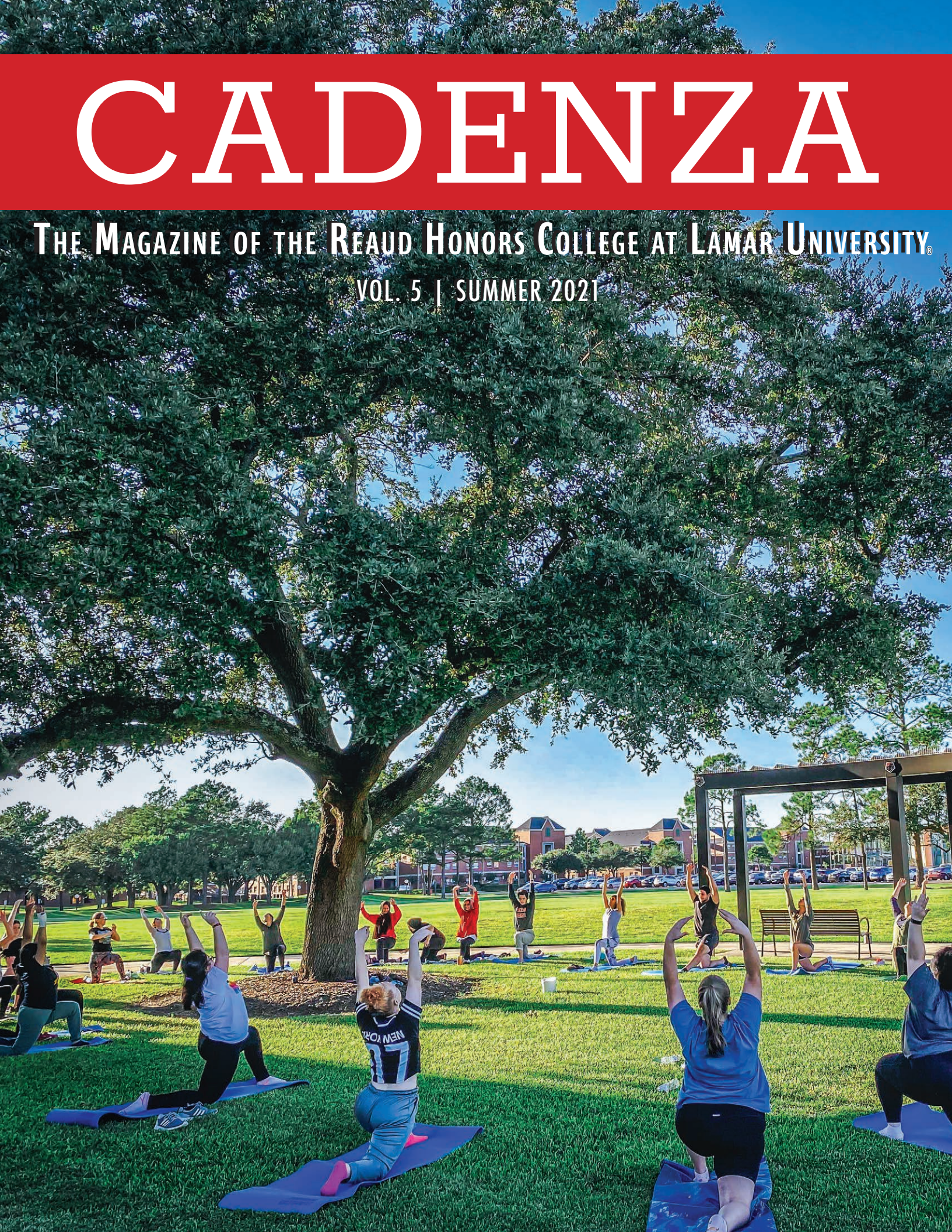


# CADENZA

THE MAGAZINE OF THE REAUD HONORS COLLEGE AT LAMAR UNIVERSITY®  
VOL. 5 | SUMMER 2021







# THANK YOU *Mr. Reaud*

The students of the Reaud Honors College would like to extend their gratitude to Mr. Wayne Reaud. Thanks to Mr. Reaud's generosity, the Honors college has the support it needs to develop its future projects and plans. His donation has provided students with significant educational opportunities, enabling the Reaud Honors College to make an even greater impact on students' lives. Thank you for helping to provide a quality education and college experience to hundreds of students every year.



**Our HSA student leaders** (standing, from left): Vice-President Hannah Abdullah; Social Co-Chair Darya Romashets; Intramural Co-Chair Andrew Zinck; HSA SGA Representative Stephanie Barron; Campus Involvement Co-Chair Marie Arrieta; Social Co-Chair Stefany Rico; Peer Mentoring Co-Chair Kelvin Elgar; and Campus Involvement Co-Chair Jennifer Tsan; (seated, from left): RHC SGA Senator Cade Pellerin; Service Co-Chair Madison Taylor; President Ali Hamza; Intramural Co-Chair Luis Arevalo; Service Co-Chair Annabelle Broussard; and Peer Mentoring Co-Chair Kaylee Goodspeed; (standing in front, from left) Peer Mentoring Co-Chair Menna Elsaka and Secretary/Treasurer Maissa Salibi.

The Reaud Honors College is extraordinarily proud of our **Honors Student Association** leaders, who, beginning in Summer 2020 and throughout the 2020-2021 academic year, overcame challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure engagement with Reaud Honors students remained a priority. They cultivated community by hosting events that ranged from socially distanced Zumba and Yoga gatherings outside the Reaud Honors College to virtual game nights, study sessions, and conversations with alumni, campus partners, and fellow students.

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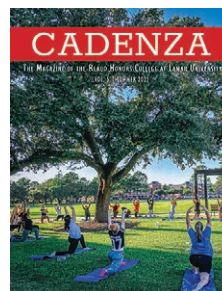
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The Honors Student Association created opportunities for socially distanced gatherings, such as this yoga session outside the Reaud Honors College.

By MEGHAN RAPP

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BY ARIZBETH LOPEZ GARCIA, REAUD HONORS COLLEGE STUDENT

# Cancer, Connection & COVID-19

An Honors alumna's virtual experiential learning program served students and cancer patients during the global pandemic.



Reaud Honors students contributed various projects to help keep cancer patients informed during the global pandemic; the above presents a sample of informational campaigns they created. (Opposite page) Dr. Lindsey Minter (inset) and her Cancer ELP student team (from left): Krystal Le, Menna Elsaka, Arizbeth Lopez Garcia, Jasmin Reyes, Sindi Castillo, and Kaylee Goodspeed.

PROJECTS BY REAUD HONORS CANCER ELP TEAM; PHOTOS COURTESY DR. LINDSEY MINTER AND ELP TEAM

I have never been afraid of a challenge. From the age of eight years old, I faced challenges. My family immigrated from Mexico City, Mexico, to Port Arthur, Texas. This was a 360-degree change for everyone in my family, yet my challenge came in the form of a language barrier. My elementary school did not offer bilingual classes to ease me from my native Spanish to English. My first year was probably the hardest, with me not knowing how to communicate with my teacher or even complete simple tasks assigned to me.

Fast forward to me, Arizbeth Lopez Garcia, studying Biology with a Pre-Med

concentration at Lamar University at the age of 19. When the Reaud Honors College offered students an opportunity to participate in an Experiential Learning Program (ELP) in Summer 2020, I was apprehensive to join.

So was Chemistry sophomore Kaylee Goodspeed, who said, "When I first heard about the Experiential Learning Program, I thought it was too good to be true! Having the opportunity to participate in cancer research is not something I thought would be possible so early in my college career."

Dr. Lindsey (Cauthen) Minter, a Reaud Honors College Alumni Advisory Council member from the

Class of 2007, came up with the Cancer ELP because she noticed the COVID-19 pandemic was restricting access to valuable in-person educational opportunities. Minter earned her B.S. at Lamar in Biology and B.A. in Music in 2007 as a Reaud Honors College graduate; she went on to earn a Ph.D. in Genes and Development from the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center UTHealth Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in 2014.

Biology Pre-Med sophomore Jasmin Reyes was among the Reaud Honors College students seeking a growth experience, saying, "It was the first summer of COVID, and I was



# REAUD HONORS COLLEGE



looking for ways to get involved that were safe. This was the perfect opportunity.”

At the time, Dr. Minter was a scientific consultant with a fully online work environment, which allowed her to use her personal connections and her knowledge of navigating projects in a virtual setting to make this a meaningful experience for students. She partnered with the Reaud Honors College, and seven female students joined as the first cohort for the ELP.

The team focused on addressing the need for clear and unbiased resources for cancer patients by splitting up into three smaller groups, with each addressing two different causes of cancer. During the first week, ELP students got to know each other and familiarized themselves with scientific databases, such as PubMed and Google Scholar, and cancer biology and treatments. A shared file helped keep the group organized and also allowed

for camaraderie. For example, in one folder, we shared funny videos we found. Another folder was dedicated to questions we had about the articles we were reading. Another outlined our tasks for the week.

In the second week, each group began working on their articles. Krystal Le and Menna Elsaka worked on articles regarding Carcinogens and Environmental Factors as causes of cancer. Sindi Castillo and Kaylee Goodspeed wrote articles about Infections and Mutations as causes of cancer. Jasmin Reyes and I wrote articles regarding Inflammation and Obesity as causes of cancer. We met twice a week, peer reviewing each other's work and then editing our articles.

Beyond our group projects, Dr. Minter encouraged us to work on optional “Special Interest Projects.” Many of us used our talents to create other resources that would be

beneficial to our audience. Krystal and Kaylee designed visual aids to actively engage cancer patients. Jasmin created a digital animation that outlined some of the different causes of cancer. These projects were important to us because we wanted to ensure we catered to people who learn visually. “I hope my work on this project educates and informs people the detrimental and damaging effects of carcinogens,” said Krystal Le, a Biology Pre-Med junior.

Another project we worked on was a “What is COVID-19” article, which was written by Kaylee, Jasmin, and me. We wanted to make sure cancer patients had resources available to them that explained COVID-19 and how they could be affected by it. “I hoped to provide cancer patients with important information to keep in mind when attending hospital appointments. I provided them with information over relevant safety precautions and





#### Heading to Orlando

Every opportunity has opened door after door for our student researchers. They built upon their successes in the Cancer ELP and research summit to submit a proposal that was accepted by the National Collegiate Honors Council. They will share their idea for how to reimagine Honors education at the conference this October.

COURTESY NATIONAL COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL

risk associated with contraction of COVID-19 as an immunosuppressed population,” Kaylee said.

Lastly, Krystal, Sindi, and I translated our “What Causes Cancer?” articles to Vietnamese and Spanish. This project was heartfelt for me. I have been translating for my family from the moment I learned to speak English. Yet I know some people do not have someone who can translate for them. Getting diagnosed with cancer is already scary enough, so it was important to me that Spanish-speaking patients understood these resources.

“Multiple barriers between patients and medical professionals are present in healthcare. One of the largest barriers is language,” Biology Pre-Med sophomore Sindi Castillo said. “If patients are not able to understand their doctors or the resources that they are given, the patients are not able to fully understand what their given situation really is like. Being able to be involved in the translations as a special interest project allowed me to help provide a solution to reduce this problem in the healthcare sector.”

After five weeks of dedicated work, our group produced 40 content pieces. Some of our work has been published by the Cancer Guide Research Foundation, one of Dr Minter’s clients.

The skills we gained have been an incredible help in allowing this cohort of Reaud Honors students to be more prepared when looking for

other opportunities to get involved on campus. Before going through the ELP, some of us had no idea how to search scientific databases, and now we can confidently search these databases, which is important for those of us wanting to get involved in research.

“I improved my reading skills by having to digest complex science articles in order to summarize and break down the science in layman’s terms to make it easier for patients who lack a strong science foundation to read,” said Menna Elsaka, a Chemistry and Biochemistry Pre-Med senior.

Developing our skill of communicating technical terms for a general audience was important to us as we all aspire to go into healthcare.

***“Being able to be involved in the translations as a special interest project allowed me to help provide a solution to reduce [the language barrier] problem in the healthcare sector.”***

The ELP has given all of us so many more opportunities. Months after the program came to an end, Reaud Honors College Coordinator Meghan Rapp and Dr. Minter asked if any members would be interested in presenting our work at the Resilience and Recovery Summit at Lamar University. Sindi, Jasmin, and I signed up to create a proposal for the summit, working tirelessly alongside Dr. Minter. When our proposal was accepted, we created our presentation with the goal of inspiring other instructors to create similar experiences for other disciplines. We had a lot of fun finding ways to outline our program for our audience. Although we were nervous on the day of the presentation, we gave it our best and were extremely proud of ourselves.

After our successful presentation, we worked with Reaud Honors College Dean Tilisa Thibodeaux on a proposal aimed at educating Honors colleges about the benefits of ELP through the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference. Our proposal was accepted, and we have been invited to participate in the Ideas Exchange at the conference this October in Orlando, Florida. While it isn’t our first time visiting Florida, we are excited to have this experience as a group. Krystal added, “I am so proud of the hard work that our group accomplished and am excited to participate in the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference



to represent not only Lamar University, but also other women in STEM.”

Aside from academic knowledge, we gained much more. “We also became good friends through this opportunity and remain in contact now, months later,” Kaylee said.

In the beginning, we were at the peak of the COVID-19 lockdown, when meeting like-minded students was nearly impossible since classes were fully online. The ELP allowed us to come together and form the much needed and missed connection between students. Additionally, our Cancer ELP has branched out and is now working with several colleges across the United States, including University of California-Irvine; Rush University; Washington University; and MD Anderson UT Health Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. This collaboration would be unimaginable in a pre-COVID world. Yet now we are able to learn from and connect with students from other states, which is very exciting.

Going into the program, none of us could have ever imagined how much we would learn and grow because of it. We went in hoping to make a difference in the life of cancer patients. We not only achieved that, but also made a difference in each other’s lives.

“Everyone in our group was so driven and hardworking. They would jump at new opportunities. It made me realize that sometimes you can do more than you realize if you just go for it. And that encourages me to push myself to do more even when I am scared to try,” Jasmin said.

We encourage our Reaud Honors peers to seek out and be part of the opportunities the Reaud Honors College provides. As Kaylee said, “All you have to do is take the leap and be part of something bigger than yourself. It may take you out of your comfort zone, but the growth and your final result will be worth it in the end.”



Reaud Honors ELP is RnR Summit’s First-Ever Student Presentation  
Lamar’s Resilience and Recovery Summit accepted student participants for the first time, and those presenters were Biology Pre-Med sophomores Sindi Castillo, Arizbeth Lopez Garcia, and Jasmin Reyes (from left).

PHOTO BY MEGHAN RAPP



BY KYRA ROST, *REAUD HONORS COLLEGE STUDENT*

Alumna Focus | **DR. BETHANY AIENA**

# Helping Others Feel Less Alone

Her homeborn passion for disaster-based mental health heals communities.

In the Houston scene, you might find Dr. Bethany Aiena tasting delicacies from Singapore and Sri Lanka, playing *Animal Crossing*, *Zelda*, or *Witcher*, or solving puzzles. She also enjoys being one with nature and finding new places to explore. She recalled having an awesome time with some of her best friends on a 2017 trip to South Dakota, where they hiked the Crow Peak Trailhead and visited the Badlands, Custer State Park, Wall Drug, and the Devil's Tower. She laughed as she remembered how she had to wear a jacket in the middle of July to watch the fireworks, saying that it was "so strange as a Texan."

Six years earlier, in 2011, Aiena graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a minor in Biology. "Lamar University and the Reaud Honors College helped prepare me for my career by pushing me outside the box and helping me with communication skills," Aiena said.

Both of her parents are LU alumni, and her grandfather worked as an athletic trainer for Lamar's football team. Family influences tied her to Lamar, yet her acceptance as a Mirabeau Scholar (renamed to Presidential Scholar in 2020) connected her with the Honors Program. "Lamar was actually the only college I applied to because I knew that it was the right university for me," Aiena said.

The Honors Student Association (HSA) provided her with one of her first leadership experiences. Aiena developed as a leader and gained communication skills while serving as HSA treasurer her sophomore year and HSA president



Dr. Bethany Aiena is a licensed clinical health psychologist in the Behavioral Health Program at the Michael E. DeBakey Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Houston. (LU inset): She was the proud recipient of the Ann Shaw Leadership Award and the Student Organization of the Year Award, on behalf of the Honors Student Association, for the 2009-2010 year Bethany served as President.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY BETHANY AIENA UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED



Dr. Bethany Aiena enjoys being outside, finding new places to explore, and just being with nature. One of her favorite recent memories is hiking the Crow Peak Trailhead in South Dakota (right) with some of her best friends.

her junior year. She went on to serve as president of Psi Chi, the International Honor Society in Psychology, student representative for the Distinguished Faculty Lecture Series Committee, and a research assistant for the Psychology department. Her outstanding student leadership at Lamar earned Aiena the prestigious Ann Shaw Leadership Award in 2010.

Alongside her Honors peers, Aiena volunteered at the Southeast Texas Food Bank near campus, Girls' Haven, and Triangle AIDS Network (now known as TAN Healthcare), played intramural sports, and learned soft skills, such as business etiquette. Murder Literature, Extremist Literature, History of Rock 'n' Roll, and other Honors courses gave her the opportunity to branch outside of her standard academic work, providing her spaces to collaborate with peers and to use her imagination. Furthermore, she made lasting connections with faculty throughout her undergraduate, graduate, and post-academic life, networking with Dr. Jeremy Shelton, associate professor of Psychology, and Dr. Kevin Dodson, founding dean of the Reaud Honors College.

"Dr. Dodson and Dr. Shelton were instrumental in helping me with graduate school. I credit them a lot," said Aiena, who attended six years of graduate school at the University of Mississippi, ultimately earning her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in 2017.

Aiena remains connected to the Honors college, as she serves on the Reaud Honors College Alumni Advisory Council. She annually meets with fellow alumni members and the Honors college team to get updates on the college and provide feedback.

Today, Aiena focuses her research on disaster-based mental health. She is interested in seeing how communities help one another through natural

disasters, such as hurricanes and other weather events. She further expanded her master's research on the psychological well-being of those affected by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill of 2010, the largest marine oil spill in U.S. history, for her doctoral dissertation, "Meaning in Life as a Moderator of Resilience and Traumatic Stress: A Study of Protective Factors and Sex Differences in a Sample of Mississippi Coastal Residents Seeking Mental Health Services After the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill." Her study demonstrated the importance of positive psychological constructs of resilience and perceived meaning in life as protective factors against the negative psychological effects of a disaster.

Aiena's passion for disaster-based mental health began at a young age. She grew up in Southeast Texas, in Sour Lake, which exposed her to various natural disasters ranging from hurricanes to floods. "Witnessing people's resilience in the aftermath and how communities come together and support each other in times of disaster" is what Aiena says attracted her to become a part of a community of academics. Those working to better understand how communities can prepare for a "not if, but when" disaster before it happens, thus making the recovery process easier during the aftermath of a disaster.

As a licensed clinical health psychologist in the Behavioral Health Program at the Michael E. DeBakey Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Houston, Aiena has worked in the Women's Health Clinic, Hematology/Oncology Clinic, and in the Visual Impairment Services Outpatient Rehabilitation (VISOR) Clinic. She currently coordinates 11 Veteran Affairs programs as the National Coordinator for the National Diversity Video-Telehealth



Seminar for Psychology Residents, while she also serves as a Multicultural/Diversity Committee member. "It is a privilege to get to work with veterans, specifically women veterans," she said.

Aiena is passionate about helping shape diversity through education for future psychologists, particularly through dialogues aimed at educating students on social injustices, social problems, and at advocating for people of color in all spaces. She said, "striving toward cultural humility/cultural competency" is vital to her career in mental health.

She particularly enjoys working with VA trainees on "early career" issues, such as licensure exams and locating the best jobs for them based on their skills. She encourages them to prepare for exams and interviews ahead of time, so they can avoid the stress that comes with cramming in information.

In addition to her work with veterans, Aiena helps train Psychology interns—to "save them the stress and avoid making the same mistakes as I did"—as an assistant professor at Baylor University's College of Medicine, where she hosts yearly lectures on disaster mental health and disaster preparedness. Decreasing procrastination was a big learning curve for Aiena, who





After returning to Lamar University in 2013 to celebrate 50 years of Honors education, where she mingled with former classmates, faculty, and LU President Ken Evans (far left), Bethany Aiena earned her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at the University of Mississippi in 2017 (left).

FAR LEFT PHOTO COURTESY LAMAR UNIVERSITY

experienced her own growing pains as a student, until she understood that getting ahead of an assignment or task will reduce stress and anxiety. Procrastination, poor time management, Imposter Syndrome, anxiety build up, and avoidance tactics are life lessons she shares with as many people as she can.

On March 25, 2021, Aiena gave back to the Reaud Honors community by engaging with students in a wellness conversation, titled “Imposter Syndrome: You Are Not a Fake.”

Imposter Syndrome refers to a pattern of behavior wherein people doubt their abilities and have a persistent fear of being exposed as a fraud, Aiena said, which overrides any feelings of success or external proof of competence.

She shared examples on what Imposter Syndrome might look like for college students, saying, “You could be here at Lamar, making straight A’s, front of the class, living your best life, and there’s still going to be that little voice in the back of your head that says that you’re not really smart; you’re going to be found out; you’re just here because you’re lucky. Yeah, I got this really great scholarship, but it was just luck. I had that one person check over my essay, and that’s why I got that A.”

She emphasized how none of her career opportunities came from someone saying, “Hello, I would like to help you advance in your career.” She said, “It came in the form of volunteer opportunities, asking for things, speaking up, saying,

‘Hey, that sounds like something that would be cool. Can I help with that?’ Imposter Syndrome would tell me I shouldn’t. I really couldn’t contribute to that. They have enough people. You’re just going to get in the way.”

She admitted to the Reaud Honors students that her own Imposter Syndrome had even made her procrastinate on her presentation for the wellness conversation. “Well, you haven’t published on Imposter Syndrome. You publish on these types of things. So what gives me the right? What makes me the expert?”

During her dialogue with the students, Aiena explained that Imposter Syndrome can affect minorities, nontraditional students, and first-generation students at a higher rate, but ultimately affects roughly 70 percent of people. Many students struggle with Imposter Syndrome during their college career.

“It is a topic that I do not often find discussed with college students,” said

***“Lamar University  
and the Reaud Honors  
College helped prepare  
me for my career by  
pushing me outside the  
box and helping me with  
communication skills.”***

Nicole Lavergne, who graduated from the Reaud Honors College in May 2021 with her Bachelor of Science in Speech and Hearing Sciences. “It is so rarely talked about, but so pervasive in young people.”

Revealing her passion for helping others feel less alone in the world by implementing mental health coping mechanisms, Aiena presented Honors students with ways to self-reflect and practice self-awareness. Some tactics she shared: thinking about one’s accomplishments (the Reaud Honors College ePortfolio is a great tool for this), reaching out to a mentor, and, most important, understanding that many others experience feelings of Imposter Syndrome.

“Realizing that I am not the only one who second guesses her abilities when surrounded by high-achieving students was in itself a relief,” said Sophie Boyd, a Reaud Honors Mechanical Engineering sophomore.

Thought record sheets, mindful thinking, and tips on how to identify your own unhelpful thinking habits are some tools Aiena introduced to students. “This discussion helped me understand how to best manage this issue and improve my skills, abilities, and talents in the academic world. I learned tips and tricks on how to better my self-confidence and increase my self-awareness on how to handle stressful situations more effectively,” said Darya Romashets, a Reaud Honors General Business sophomore.

Aiena concluded her Imposter Syndrome session with a powerful message for students: “Prioritize your self-care. And just remember, you are not alone. Your own presenter has Imposter Syndrome a lot of the time, so it’s not just you.”





BY HANNAH NORWOOD, *REAUD HONORS COLLEGE STUDENT*

Alumnus Focus | **DR. WESLEY SMITH**

# A Healing “Superpower”

Determination, sarcasm, and kindness are his tools for taking care of kids with cancer.



Have you ever met a superhero? Dr. Wesley Smith, a Southeast Texas native from Lumberton, offers up a friendly disposition, a devoted heart and a healing “superpower” that saves the lives of children from all over the world. As a clinical fellow in pediatric hematology and oncology at Baylor College of Medicine at Texas Children’s Hospital in Houston, Smith approaches each day with an optimistic attitude, radiating positivity and highlighting every victory along the way.

“I find it mystifying when I cure [kids] from cancer because then they’re going to live their absolutely best life and best self, and they don’t ever have to worry about it ever again,” he said. “For most patients, cure rates for pediatric cancers in the United States and around the world are much higher than they used to be. Obviously, not perfect. But that is the most gratifying thing ever, when our patients come in, ‘I’m free from cancer,’ and ‘I’ve finished my therapy.’ That is wonderful.”

These are the times that feed the fires of his soul, validating his life passion. As much as Smith relishes the positive moments, his profession requires he master a delicate dance between fulfilling highs and heartbreaking losses.

“I take care of kids with cancer,” he said. “A significant number of patients I take care of do die, and they have a cancer that we can’t cure. That’s just something that I have to live with. That’s something that I have to deal with as a person that’s separate from me being a doctor. The hardest thing is losing patients or not being able to help them,

Dr. Wesley Smith is a clinical fellow in pediatric hematology and oncology at Baylor College of Medicine at Texas Children’s Hospital in Houston. (LU inset): Smith served as HSA President, an experience that allowed him to help make Honors a home away from home for his peers and him.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY WESLEY SMITH



As a first-generation college student, Wesley Smith is still most proud of graduating from Lamar University. His biggest champion was his mom, who also shared in his joy of graduating with his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine in 2016 (right), as did his friends (far right).



when that's certainly all that you would ever want for them," he told a group of Pre-Med Reaud Honors College students in Fall 2020.

A decade ago, in May 2011, Smith had just graduated from the Honors Program at Lamar University with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry. A firm believer in the educational enrichment opportunities provided through the Honors enhanced course offerings and alumni network, Smith said, "It was fun to learn about something different that didn't have anything to do with chemistry, biology, or medicine. It was cool to learn something new that I would have otherwise never been exposed to."

Smith's Honors experiences helped shape him as an individual and challenged his understanding of who he was and his role in the world. One of his biggest influences at Lamar was Dr. Kevin Dodson, then-director of the Honors Program. "Dr. Dodson helped me think. That's crucial. He challenged everything I thought I knew about myself. When I challenged myself about it, a lot of it wasn't true. It was up to myself to figure it out."

While academic excellence remained at the forefront of his time at Lamar, Smith left his impact on the Honors Program through his service as the 2010-2011 Honors Student Association President. During his presidency, he led fundraisers, sponsored community service projects, and partnered with other LU organizations to encourage greater student involvement. An

elemental foundation present during his time in the Honors Program, and still evident today, is one of embracing diversity, inclusivity, and equity. "It [Honors] has people from all walks of life and from every demographic, well-balanced between male and female," he said. "It really represented a cross-section of Lamar."

Much more than just a "college experience," Honors introduced Smith to people with whom he built a deep rapport, bolstering true companionship and camaraderie. "I made my best friends from the Honors college. I still talk to them regularly," he said. "That, in no small way, definitely impacted my life. These are friends I will have forever."

Aside from the friendships and relationships fostered at the university, Smith holds Lamar University dear for guiding a young man—whose mother whispered in his ear his whole life, "You will be a doctor"—along the path to becoming a physician. "It just worked out for her that became true," Smith said.

Every journey begins with one small step, and, Smith said, choosing Lamar University as his launch pad into higher education and strengthening that foundation by pursuing enlightenment through Honors will continually impact his life, wherever he goes.

"I'm still most proud of graduating from college," he admitted. "I'm the first

person in my family to do that, so it meant a lot to me. It was a big deal."

Because being a doctor was the only career he had ever considered, Smith said that while finishing his undergrad at Lamar, he had a "complete meltdown, a quarter-life crisis is what I called it."

Feeling he might want to try something else, Smith said that instead of applying to medical school his junior year at Lamar, "I put it off a year, and I worked as a chemist. I did organic synthetic stuff for one of the oil refinery companies in Houston."

His love for chemistry and teaching initially drew him to consider pursuing his Ph.D. to teach college. Yet his year of growth taught Smith that his heart belonged to medicine and helping others live optimally. Confident in that knowledge, he headed to Fort Worth to attend the University of North Texas Health Science Center-Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (TCOM), where he earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine in 2016.

***"I love kids. They're hilarious. They will say whatever comes into their brain. It's just fun. They make work fun."***



After completing his studies at TCOM, he became a Pediatrics Resident at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital/St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Before completing his residency in 2019, he received the Golden Apple Award in 2017 for outstanding service and teaching as a Pediatrics Resident.

Currently, as a fellow, Smith spends countless hours tending to patients and working diligently on research into chemotherapy-resistant mechanisms in pediatric leukemia. His days are long, with 80-plus-hour work weeks commonplace. Yet he wouldn't change a thing, saying, "It is the people who you meet along the way. Patients will impact you differently, and you will remember them forever. All of these relationships push you forward. That is what makes you do it—all of the wonderful people you meet and being able to be a part of their life."

While pediatric oncology harbors sadness and struggles, his love for children overshadows those tough moments. He chooses to focus on the things that go right—successes experienced along the path from sickness to health. He draws strength and inspiration from his patients and their families.

"One thing that I would like others to know is that people often portray themselves in ways that are nice for other people. You don't really know what individuals are going through," he said.

Smith offers others grace and uplifts them throughout their health care journey by being light-hearted and celebrating their personal gifts and talents.

"It's rewarding. You focus on the kids you get over the finish line," he said. "You remember those who you couldn't and take solace in the fact that you did everything you could."

On a Tuesday in October, Smith saw patients in the clinic until 4:00 pm,

listened to a Zoom conference on his way home, and joined a Microsoft Teams conversation at 5:30 pm to speak to Reaud Honors College students about the field of medicine and the application process to medical school.

Deidre Dages, a Biology Pre-Med junior, said, "His talk cleared up some 'myths' about the application process. Grades are a great thing to focus on, but medical schools also value experience. I think that's when I decided to really focus on volunteer opportunities, shadowing, and gaining healthcare experience."

"This has made me want to be a doctor even more," said Jennyfer Zarate, a Biology Pre-Med freshman.

Smith shared valuable real-world examples and firsthand stories about a process that intimidates most participants. Comforted by speaking with someone who has navigated a path similar to one they will travel, the Reaud Honors students expressed gratitude to the alumnus for giving back to the community that had given so much to him.

When asked to describe himself in three words, Smith selected "determined, sarcastic, and kind," saying those qualities serve as powerful tools in his arsenal against cancer.

Exemplifying Cardinal spirit (he still dons Lamar red), Smith lights up a hospital room with his presence, bringing hope to those who are in his care. The children he treats flock to his joyful countenance, while their parents trust in his capacity to administer appropriate medicinal and emotional support.

"My favorite part of being a doctor, for me, is that I work with kids, and they're hysterical," Smith said. "I love being a pediatrician. I cannot say enough things about it. You get a really strong flavor for what things you like as a medical student and what things you don't love. Babies. I love kids. They're hilarious. They will say



Chemistry undergrad Wesley Smith and Psychology undergrad Bethany Aiena became friends during their years in the Honors Program at Lamar University. Both served their Honors peers as HSA Presidents and graduated in May 2011 as part of the largest group of Honors Program graduates, at that time. They are shown above, in 2013, at the 50th anniversary celebration of Honors education at Lamar.

whatever comes into their brain. It's just fun. They make work fun."

Smith loves children so much that he initially considered becoming an OB/GYN because he enjoyed delivering babies. "Turns out, I really just liked the baby," he said. "So I was pretty quick moving into pediatrics after that. It's the best."

No doubt, Smith's passion for helping children lead healthy lives through his treatment and research of childhood blood disorders and cancers will profoundly benefit pediatrics health care.

Kids worldwide understand superheroes come in all shapes and sizes. The fact is, not all superheroes wear capes—some sport white coats and stethoscopes.





By JACOB BREAUx, REAUD HONORS COLLEGE STUDENT

Faculty Profile | **MR. O'BRIEN STANLEY**

# Filming UFO's to Exploring Societal Tensions in Movies

O'Brien Stanley conveys history and popular culture through a Martian lens.

Mars has always been a blank canvas upon which we have written our hopes, dreams, and fears, said Film and Popular Culture Professor of Communication O'Brien Stanley (shown as astronaut), who analyzes the cinema of the red planet with Reaud Honors students to explore social issues.

GRAPHIC ART BY MEGHAN RAPP





*"Sometimes students will hear their aunt or uncle or parents asking, 'How are you going to make it?' There's a lot of different ways to make it if you just follow your passion."*

Film and Popular Culture Professor of Communication O'Brien Stanley started his journey at Lamar University in Fall 1997, nearly a quarter century ago. The road that brought him to Beaumont began at Stephen F. Austin State University, in 1981, where he earned his bachelor's in History and Political Science. A decade later, he earned his master's for Film and Video Production from Ohio University.

A dozen years ago, Stanley was invited to teach at the Reaud Honors College. Ever since, he has taught an Honors Film Theory course, as well as seminars, including "Exploring Mars in the Movies," which he co-taught with Associate Professor of Communication Nicki Michalski this spring.

"Exploring Mars in the Movies" is a seminar that Stanley and Michalski created to share concepts and theories from the book they wrote with Steven Zani and Lane Roth, *Martian Pictures: Analyzing the Cinema of the Red Planet*.

Although Stanley began charting his future by learning history and political science, he said he "always had a love for film." During his junior-high and high-school years, he made short films featuring werewolves and UFO's, which were increasing in popularity at the time. The available technology meant he had to "explain on the cassette tapes...why werewolves were popping up in Nacogdoches, Texas, in 1973, or why UFO's wanted to land [there]."

When he first attended college, he "wanted to be the next producer of *Star Trek*," Stanley said, but his sideways venture to pursue his history and political science degree ended up helping him because "so many times, what makes a film so much more interesting...is how it does connect to history."

After graduating from film school in 1991, Stanley worked in corporate video production, making commercials and informational videos for a few years in West Virginia, before he received a job offer to teach high school video production in Houston, Texas. He taught at that high school for seven years, while teaching at Houston Community College on the side, before he accepted a position at Lamar University.

Once at Lamar, Stanley carried out creative research through documentary filmmaking with other colleagues, such as LUTV Studio Operations Manager Gordon Williams. In Stanley's studies, he has explored how films create a bridge to society and political science. In 2009, he returned to his narrative filmmaking roots, alongside his youngest son.

The father-son duo "cooked up a 30-minute plot about super soldiers who attack a refinery," Stanley said. "They did basically everything but refine oil at this refinery."

This project inspired him to experiment with greenscreen work and single-frame animation. He has also been dabbling in Adobe's After Effects, which, he said, "is a blast."

Some of Stanley's favorite classes to teach are genre based, such as the Marvel Cinematic Universe or Mars films. He hopes to soon try out a class analyzing science fiction and horror. He enjoys reflecting on a genre's popularity and analyzing what the films are trying to say as well as the societal tensions that, as a genre, these films address. "On a deep level, there really is some stuff that the genre may be addressing," he said.

Several of his students described Stanley as one of the most passionate

professors they have ever had. Nathan House, a Class of 2021 Reaud Honors graduate in Chemical Engineering, said that out of all of his Lamar professors, Stanley is "by far one of the best at getting students interested in the subject at hand."

Even in the Zoom-based environment brought about by COVID-19 precautions, House still felt like he was in Stanley's classroom. He said the professor helps students learn by creating an academic space that allows for a "constant dialogue between Professor Stanley and the students in his class."

Similarly, Reaud Honors English sophomore Jeri Wolfe enjoyed Stanley's inclusive teaching style. "Even if you don't know the stuff he's talking about, he tries to include you in the conversation," she said.

While Stanley's classes focus on film, students majoring in other areas gain valuable skills. "One of the things that separates a good engineer from a great engineer is knowing your marketing and knowing how to get a point across well," House said. Through analyzing films in Stanley's class, House learned how to draw attention to topics he wanted to cover, which was particularly useful when designing presentations or doing technical writing.

Aside from film, the main thing Stanley hopes sticks with his students is for them to follow their passion. "Whatever your passion is, follow it," he said. "Sometimes students will hear their aunt or uncle or parents asking, 'How are you going to make it?' There's a lot of different ways to make it if you just follow your passion."











BY ZAID MOHAMMED,  
*REAUD HONORS COLLEGE STUDENT*

# The STUDY OF STEM CELLS

Thought-provoking discussions on a controversial topic for Honors students of all disciplines.

## Stem Cells.

The term can provoke a strong and varied public response. It can elicit curiosity or confusion. It can be hailed as a savior-like futuristic technology or be scorned as a case of humanity overstepping its bounds.

In Spring 2021, Reaud Honors College students had the opportunity to dive into this field and find out what the term means to them because of the Reaud Honors Stem Cell Research Seminar. This foray into an innovative field was led by an innovative Lamar University professor, Dr. Ian Lian.

Associate Professor of Biology Lian has extensive experience in cell biology. He obtained his bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. in the field of Bioengineering from the University of California, San Diego. In between his master's and Ph.D., Lian worked for a biotech company.

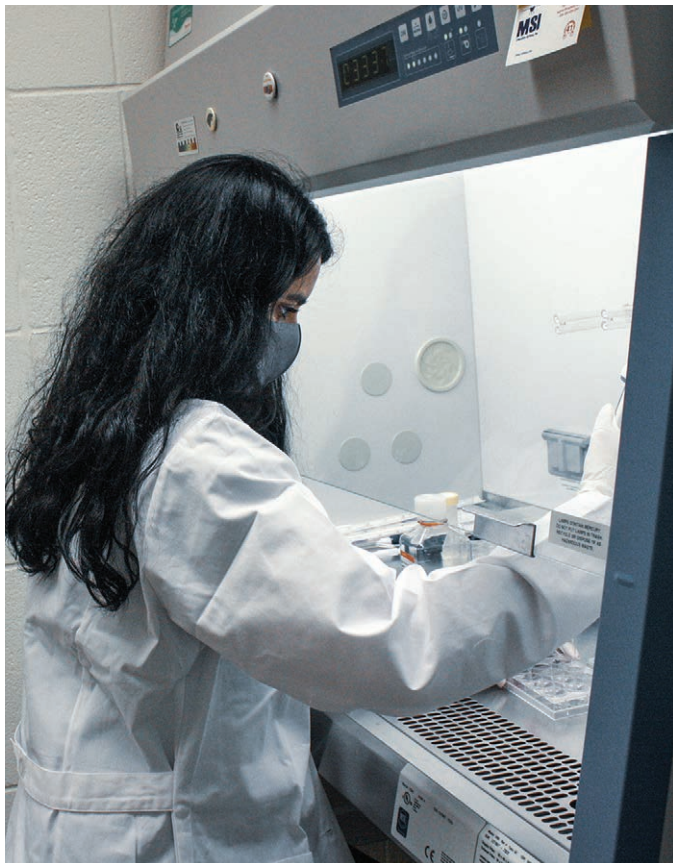
Having focused more on the engineering aspect of the biological sciences, Lian sought to pick up more skills. He conducted his postdoctoral training in cancer and stem cell biology at the UCSD Moores Cancer Center and Sanford Consortium of Regenerative Medicine.

Lian joined Lamar University in 2013 and has taught Anatomy and Physiology, Biomedical Technology, Cell Biology, and Graduate Seminars. He also has a research lab

Biology Pre-Med freshman Zaid Mohammed (left), the author of this feature, works with fellow Reaud Honors student Amber Maredia (far left) in Dr. Ian Lian's Cancer Research lab. This is his third lab research environment, having previously assisted in Dr. Shannon Jordan's Exercise Physiology Lab at Lamar (2019) and in Dr. Gwen Stovall's Aptamer Lab at the University of Texas in Austin (2018). His research experience has earned him the respect of his peers, whom he will represent, in 2021-2022, as treasurer for the Lamar University Undergraduate Research Association.

ALL PHOTOS BY MEGHAN RAPP





Biology Pre-Physician Assistant junior Amber Maredia began her research assistant role in the Department of Biology in September 2019. The lab has taught her aseptic techniques, media preparation, microscopy, plasmid preparation, staining, gel electrophoresis, centrifuge processes, and record growth observation strategies.

that focuses on the applications of interdisciplinary technologies on cancer and stem cells. “Most of my projects are involved in developing some kind of a platform,” Lian said. “Whether it’s the testing or diagnostic platform for cancers or providing some kind of engineering environment that can mimic the physiological conditions of human bodies that’s sort of suitable for cancer and stem cells to grow.”

Over the years, Lian has mentored many college students who have gained valuable research skills. “We have about, I would say, close to 40 research students who have trained under my lab who went down to either professional or graduate schools,” he said.

A current student in Lian’s lab is Reaud Honors College junior Josef Kalathra. On the Biochemistry Pre-

**IPS technology can certainly be a game changer because it provides an alternative to embryonic cells—which have been the primary source of controversy.**

Med track, Kalathra credits the Honors college for exposing him to research.

“The Honors college provides a lot of opportunities for students to get involved in research,” Kalathra said. “They have different conferences and meetings where professors will say what they’re doing for research and that if anyone wants to do research, we are more than welcome to do it. And it’s really good for the professors because

they know that Honors students are diligent and will show up and put in the effort. So it kind of benefits both parties in that way.”

This welcoming culture encouraged Kalathra to talk to professors such as Lian and learn what they do. He started working in Lian’s lab and has begun his own project on “The Effect of Photobiomodulation on Melanoma Cancer Cells.” Kalathra described the project as being a combination of two major concepts.

“Photobiomodulation is essentially controlling the activity of the cell using a specific wavelength of light,” Kalathra explained. “In my case, I’m using near-infrared light, which is around 1000 nanometers per wavelength. We’d like to see if we can kind of affect the ATP production of cells. So that’s the first kind of concept.”

The second concept was a “well researched idea that cancer cells are really, really good at tailoring their cellular needs for cancer,” Kalathra said. “So, for example, they can switch the states of which the mitochondria

is in, in order to make sure that the cancer cell grows at such a high rate of proliferation.”

Kalathra said the goal of the project is to “see if a certain wavelength has a certain effect on these kinds of cells, or maybe a certain time period for a specific wavelength is what increases cell growth. And so based on that data, we can come to the conclusion that, ‘hey, this is the wavelength that we need to be focusing on.’”

This project has applications in biotechnology as it is a collaboration between Lian’s lab and a biotech company in Austin. Kalathra credited his mentor for setting up these connections and ensuring that he has an outstanding research experience.

“Dr. Lian is patient, intelligent, and passionate. [He’s] the keystone of this project. It’s mentors who really enhance experiences like this,” Kalathra said. “While it is possible to do research on your own, if you have someone who’s able to guide you almost every step of the way, then the process becomes infinitely easier. And you end up not only creating a project that’s valuable, but you’re able to learn something. If you have a result that isn’t what they expected, you can always ask them why.”

Lian has enjoyed having Honors students such as Kalathra in his lab, and both parties look forward to continuing their exciting research.

Aside from his extensive cancer cell background, Lian is also familiar with stem cells. Stem cells are unique from other types of cells due to three factors, he said: First, they can self-renew for long periods of time; Second, they are unspecialized cells; Third, they have the potential to become specialized types of cells.



While conducting his postdoctoral research, Lian got acquainted with this emerging field that, he said, “started to evolve around 2006, so we decided to test that technology and try to put it to use for cancer and related research. That’s how I first got into stem cell research.”

His passion and past experience with stem cells made Lian the perfect fit to teach this seminar. He has ties to the author of the titular book for the course—acclaimed researcher Dr. Lawrence Goldstein—as they co-authored a published research article. Lian described the purpose of the course as one that “aims to expose the Honors students a lot more to the scientific development and ongoing research of stem cells.”

One such Honors student in the seminar was sophomore Britney Brevell. “Fascinating” was how she described the course. Majoring in Biology with a Pre-Med concentration, Brevell embraced this opportunity to learn more about her field, saying, “I never realized how vast and expansive the possibilities are when it comes to stem cells. There are so many things that have yet to be learned.”

“One thing I’ve enjoyed learning this semester is the prospective uses,” she added. Brevell is particularly intrigued by the potential future applications of stem cells in the nervous system, saying, “One day, stem cells may become the treatment for many neurodegenerative diseases: Alzheimer’s, ALS, Parkinson’s, etc.”

The students also learned about current medical breakthroughs they did not previously know were related to stem cell advancements.

One example is Hematopoietic stem cell transplantation—more commonly known as bone marrow transplants. This procedure replaces diseased bone marrow by injecting healthy blood forming stem cells.

Another medical advancement resulting from stem cell research is

In Dr. Ian Lian’s Cancer Research lab, student researchers assist in growing cancer cell culture, with some learning laboratory techniques while shadowing upper-level students who conduct projects. When Dr.

Lian (below, at right) earned the 2020 Faculty Mentor Award, he attributed the honor to the success of his mentees.





in vitro fertilization (IVF)—when fertilization happens in a petri dish before being transferred to a uterus. In 1978, the first IVF baby was born. Today, more than eight million babies have been born from IVF, according to the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology.

These stem cell developments were a pleasant surprise to Miguel Arevalo. The Honors sophomore shared that stem cell research is farther along than he ever thought. “I enjoy learning about stem cells because I believe it will be the future of medicine,” the Chemistry Pre-Med student said.

But these new possibilities also bring new challenges. Arevalo said an example of this is the lack of regulations allowing privately funded companies to work on significant projects, such as cloning, with little oversight.

Arevalo appreciated the intellectually stimulating conversations that took place in the seminar as students brainstormed possible solutions to these problems. “I have enjoyed my time in the stem cell seminar especially because they include other Honors students—many of whom are friends and mentors,” he said.

This seminar gave Arevalo greater clarity about stem cell research and improved his understanding. “I used to believe that stem cells only came from human embryos. However, I came to learn that stem cells have many different sources, such as blood, adult body tissues, and fat,” he said.

Arevalo was also deeply engaged in discussions around the ethics of stem cell research. “Embryonic stem cells are extremely useful as they can differentiate into any type of cell in the body,” he said. “However, this is where a question arises: When does human life begin?”

Although advancements have been made, stem cell research remains a controversial topic for many. Lian is keenly aware of this, but he is optimistic

that public opinion will shift. In fact, he shared how the public has already made a shift toward viewing stem cells more favorably.

Lian cited public opinion on IVF as an example. “You can imagine back in the ’70s when that technology first came out, it was highly controversial,” Lian said. “Some questioned if we are sort of playing God by, you know, artificial insemination of the egg outside of the human body, using laboratory procedures, and things like that. This is much less of a sort of controversial issue now that this is definitely a safe and productive procedure.”

The professor also pointed to new advancements in the field that have lessened the controversy.

“Things [public opinions] have definitely changed since 10-15 years ago. One major reason is the advancement of the induced pluripotent stem cell technology,” Lian said. “IPS technology allows us to turn any of the somatic cells like, say, the skin cell in your body, the hair follicle cells in adults, back into the stem cells.”

IPS technology can certainly be a game changer, Lian said, because it provides an alternative to embryonic cells—which have been the primary source of controversy.

“That [IPS technology] means that we no longer have to tap into the field materials or embryonic materials to get stem cells. So that, I think, is one really big advancement in technology that makes the study of stem cells less controversial,” Lian said.

His seminar raised important philosophical and medical points for Reaud Honors students, which served as fuel for thought-provoking discussions. It encouraged critical thinking—a truly interdisciplinary skill.

Although stem cell research was unrelated to Isaac Moreno’s major, Chemical Engineering, it caught his eye.



Reaud Honors students Isaac Moreno, Miguel Arevalo, and Britney Brevell (above, from left) found Dr. Lian’s Honors Seminar on Stem Cell Research “fascinating” and an area rich for cross-disciplinary research. The course deeply engaged them in discussions around the ethics of stem cell research and the new advancements that have lessened the controversy.

“I decided to take the Stem Cell Research Seminar to try and broaden my horizons. It was a nice change of pace from the tables, graphs, and numbers that I’m constantly bombarded with,” Moreno said. “That being said, it was still interesting to see that if you dive deep enough into any subject, there is always going to be a cross of disciplines—from ethical aspects to technological advancements.”

Moreno’s experience is noteworthy because Lian also comes from an engineering background. “Bioengineering is actually fairly interdisciplinary. It is a field in which there are a lot of chemical engineering, bioinformatics, computer science, physical science, mechanical engineering,



fluid mechanics, and some biological science people in there,” Lian said.

Indeed, Lian encourages Honors college students of all disciplines to explore whatever interests they may have regardless of their major.

“Especially in an environment like Lamar where undergraduate teaching is one of our focuses, I would say, definitely take advantage of this small faculty-student ratio here, and the accessibility of the faculty doing research here,” Lian stressed.

His message to students is: “Don’t be afraid to try to...participate or be involved in some kind of research.”

“Try to be a research volunteer, going to the lab at a time or schedule where you could afford without affecting your regular coursework,” Lian said. “And then once you are being trained and are familiar with the particular skill sets that allow you

to expand your projects, then that’s when you can probably start picking up undergraduate research projects under who you are, or even signing up for the research credits under a professor with a specific project in mind.”

Lian’s guidance of students has made him an important figure to look up to on campus, earning him the 2020 Faculty Mentor Award.

Asked to reflect on receiving the award, the professor is appreciative of his students. “I think this is largely reflected on the success of the students who we mentor and not so much on the faculty itself,” Lian said. “A lot of our students who went through the undergraduate research in Lamar went on to very good research programs—either in graduate school or in professional schools.”

Lian admitted his passion for mentoring began when he was

pursuing his bachelor’s degree. “This probably came from my personal experience where I started getting exposed to research myself when I was an undergraduate student back in UCSD around third year. I joined our microbiology lab under the bioengineering department, which again, I’ve benefited a lot. So I feel like this is the type of experience we want to sort of provide,” he said.

His journey from mentee to mentor has given him a unique perspective to ensure that his students at Lamar continue to have enriching experiences, such as this seminar. The Reaud Honors Stem Cell Research Seminar provided this generation of Honors students a window into the future of the field of biology and its endless possibilities.

Indeed, these students will not just be defining terms. They will be defining the future.



## Summer Reads for Reaud Honors



Reaud Honors College students who participate in our Summer Reading program will read the above books and discuss them with their reading clubs in the Fall.



By SHELBY GRAHAM, *REAUD HONORS COLLEGE STUDENT*

# Moot Court History Makers

Advancing beyond what any other LU team has done.







## **FIRST LU TEAM TO COMPETE IN NATIONALS**

*Ali Hamza  
and Katey McCall*

While students worldwide had to learn to cope with and adjust to COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions, the Lamar University Moot Court team made history—surpassing one goal, and then the next, in competition after competition this past fall and into the new year.

Four of our Reaud Honors College students—Senior and Class of 2021 Graduate Katey McCall, Junior Ali Hamza, Junior Brendon Camp, and Junior Maissa Salibi—placed in the season's competitions. Hamza ranked #1 Best Advocate at the University of Texas at Dallas Invitational Moot Court Tournament, and then he topped that by ranking #8 Best Advocate in the nation at the American Moot Court Association National Championship Tournament. This marked the first time in school history that an LU student placed in the top 10 advocates nationally.

The team of McCall and Hamza became the first LU team to compete

in a championship round, then the first to advance to the semifinal round at a regional tournament, and ultimately the first LU team to advance to elimination round at nationals. Camp and Salibi also earned high rankings, including #11 at Texas A&M's regional tournament. All four students took home awards for their Moot Court achievements.

"Clearly this past season was unlike any other and presented the participants with many obstacles," said Craig Tahaney, instructor of Political Science and director of the LU Moot Court program. "It required the team to adapt to the trying circumstances, but the team handled it with grace and used the obstacles to their advantage. Despite the setbacks COVID-19 presented, the team did not focus on the challenges, rather they focused on their high potential and dedication to the competition."

McCall shared some of the advancements the team experienced

while competing virtually via Zoom: "We were able to meet with attorneys, judges, and law students across the nation. Our team was able to meet more often than ever before due to the flexibility virtual meetings allowed."

Yet debating over Zoom was not ideal. "Body language is imperative when

***"Despite the setbacks  
COVID-19 presented,  
the team did not focus  
on the challenges,  
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and dedication to  
the competition."***



advocating,” Hamza said. “On the computer, you don’t get to look into a person’s eyes; you are merely looking at a webcam.”

Camp echoed this sentiment, saying, “I definitely learned that I am not as good of a debater over Zoom as I am in person.”

Whether competing virtually or in person, students dedicate several hours to Moot Court each week, on top of homework, studying, and other activities.

Participating in Moot Court requires a “full-time commitment” to read, write, and prepare for competition day, Camp said. Hamza agreed, pointing out that he spent roughly five hours a week writing briefs.

While McCall, Hamza, Camp, and Salibi all have plans to attend law school, Tahaney shared that many students who join Moot Court aren’t even interested in law school. Adequate advocacy and speaking confidence are the main goals in this competition, skills that are important in many fields.

Moot Court students learn to defend what they have worked so long and hard to gather. They perfect public speaking and the craft of boldness and confidence while advocating for their positions. Students must carry on even if they are unsure of themselves. In each competition that comes their way, they develop the strength that it takes to compete, and to overcome any nerves and anxiety, particularly when one has little-to-no experience presenting oral arguments in front of a judge.

This season’s Reaud Honors advocates started writing briefs



Moot Court competitors show off their awards and gavels they earned in tournaments that took place virtually due to COVID-19. Reaud Honors student competitors included Brendon Camp (second row, at far right) and Katey McCall and Maissa Salibi (first row, from left).

ALL PHOTOS BY CRAIG TAHANEY

in September and competing in October. On competition day, the students appeared before a judge as if they were debating an actual court case.

“You and your partner team up to tackle a fictitious case before a fictitious Supreme Court,” either defending the constitutional rights of the client or arguing their rights were not violated, Camp explained.

Salibi said her favorite skill she gained is the “sense of advocacy. Because even though it is a fake case with a fake person, somewhere out there is someone in a similar situation in a real case. So having the opportunity to help those who can’t help themselves, in the

sense of doing that, that was my favorite part.”

The joy Salibi feels when helping other people is echoed by her peers, who said altruism is a fundamental reason they are pursuing law careers.

Pre-law students who participate in Moot Court become familiar with work similar to what students will do during their first year in law school.

McCall said another advantage for Moot Court students is engaging with legal professionals during the competitions. While writing briefs, she began communicating with her professors at Texas Tech, the law school she will be attending on a full-ride

scholarship in Fall 2021.

Competing at Texas Tech was a first for the LU team. Lamar never traveled there because Lubbock was too far, but due to everything being virtual, students competed in that regional tournament this season.

Being immersed in the Reaud Honors College also helped contribute

***Their Honors courses—  
involving discussions  
that encourage creative  
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provided some of the  
fundamentals needed to  
prepare for the season.***





The first LU student to place in the Top 10 Advocates nationally, Ali Hamza also found time between his oral advocacy preparation to serve as President of the Honors Student Association (HSA). He worked with the HSA leadership team to encourage Honors connections during a challenging time of social distancing, masking, and virtual classes.

to these students' successes, they said. All four shared that their Honors courses—involving discussions that encourage creative thinking, collaborating, and public speaking—provided some of the fundamentals they needed to prepare for the season. Moot Court students learn how to manage their hours of brief and argument preparation, while juggling their work for other courses and for student organizations. These four had already learned time management by participating in a higher level of academics as Honors college students, which they felt gave them an edge in the competitions.

Having coached Moot Court for five years and worked as an attorney prior to teaching at Lamar, Tahaney expressed how extremely proud he is of the students. His favorite part about being a coach, he said, is “seeing the growth of the students and seeing the students find their voice.”

He has watched students expand from having knowledge about constitutional law and Supreme Court cases to then applying that knowledge as they build themselves into better advocates. Tahaney said working with these students gives him “reassurance that our local legal community is going to be in good hands.”

The students said they felt lucky to call him their coach, with McCall adding that the “biggest thing that sets him apart is that he’s in there with you, like in the nitty gritty.”

After working with Tahaney for several years in Moot Court, McCall said that “he is one of my mentors now.”

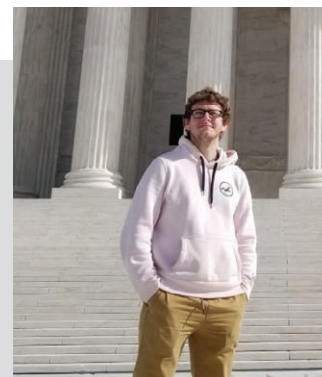
Tahaney is the students’ greatest supporter and encourager, as well as their greatest challenger, and this combination is what has helped them become successful advocates. “Ninety-percent of the time he’s really nice, but he also makes sure we stay on top of things,” Camp said.

“I would have missed out on a lot of opportunities if Mr. Tahaney would have listened to me and not let me compete,” Salibi said.

Hamza urged future competitors to “trust the process” and not let the high levels of stress and amount of work and preparation stop anyone. In the end, he added, all of the ups and downs will work together to set you up for success.

Competing in Moot Court is a challenge that “takes moxie,” McCall said. “It really is how much work you put into it is what you get out of it.”

The students put their all into their competitions this season, and their hard work and dedication paid off, both personally and for their university community. This summer, months after the students had received their awards recognizing their Moot Court achievements, the team of Hamza and McCall landed



### Undergraduate Paper Nationally Recognized by Pi Sigma Alpha

Political Science and Criminal Justice Pre-Law junior Brendon Camp has been recognized nationally by Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Political Science Honor Society, for his undergraduate paper, “Implied Consent: A Review of Judicial Process and Constitutional Law,” which earned Camp runner-up recognition. His essay dissects the 2019 Supreme Court case *Mitchell v. Wisconsin* and the constitutional law precedents surrounding it.

Camp is Vice-President for Lamar Pre-Law Society, President of the Moot Court Association, and an LU Ambassador, and he also represented Reaud Honors in Moot Court and at Model United Nations.

another honor: their well-reasoned arguments earned Lamar University its prestigious ranking as 24th in the top 25 programs for Oral Advocacy of 2021. LU outcompeted Georgetown University and ranked just below College of William and Mary, Yale University, and Duke University—another historic first.

No strangers to challenges, coming from an academic community that supports each other through hurricanes and tropical storms, the Reaud Honors student advocates played the hand the pandemic dealt to them and ended up making Moot Court history for Lamar University.





# Power of Two in Honors

Twin life in the Reaud Honors College offers built-in connection and support.

As first-generation college students, Reaud Honors senior Umera and Class of 2021 graduate Samira Ahmed felt fortunate to have each other during the process, from applying to college all the way through graduation arrangements. That's the Power of Two advantage many of our twin students feel.

You can be polar opposites in some ways—for instance, Jeri and Teri Wolfe are both English majors and have fun playing the ukulele and guitar, yet Jeri also crochets, while Teri enjoys the theatre. The Salibi twins—56 seconds apart in age—share an interest in the arts, in their own way: Political

Science Pre-Law junior Maissa enjoys reading and journalistic writing, while Psychology Pre-Optometry junior Jana spends her free time playing the violin and the piano. While both are stellar students at Lamar, Maissa made herself at home with the Reaud Honors community. Beyond friendships built during her Model UN and Stepping Up experiences through the Reaud Honors College, she helped guide her peers during the COVID-19 virtual academic year as HSA secretary/treasurer.

The Smith twins, inspired by their brother Casey's journey in Reaud Honors, have made the most of their first year at Lamar. Studying Speech and Hearing Sciences, Chloe is a SURF fellow this summer, conducting a cross-sectional study of the portrayal of childhood speech disorder interventions in YouTube videos. Her twin brother Colton, majoring in Chemical Engineering, has already developed professional contacts at ExxonMobil's Beaumont plant and will work at LyondellBasell in Houston this fall for his Chemical Engineering co-op. "This [Spring 2021] is the first semester

Born in their ancestral family barn in Pakistan, the Ahmed twins moved to the USA when they were six. At Lamar University, they enjoyed taking Honors classes together, most memorably the Honors Topic class on Islam. "It was a fun and interactive class with Dr. Kevin Dodson, where we learned many new things about the historical and cultural aspect of Islam," Samira Ahmed said. "And we also made many new friends!"

CHILDHOOD PHOTO COURTESY AHMED TWINS;  
CURRENT PHOTO BY MEGHAN RAPP





that we do not share all our classes together, including high school,” Chloe said. “The best part about being in the Honors college is staying in Campbell, where we are right down the hall from each other. This makes friend gatherings way more fun and convenient.”

Samira and Umera took a “break” from each other in Spring 2021, when Samira walked the graduation stage to accept her Biology degree; Umera is expected to graduate this fall, also with her Biology degree. Yet they have been an inseparable pair for most of their time at Lamar, since sharing a major and Pre-Dental concentration allowed them to take classes together. The twins’ joint journey will continue professionally, as they hope to open a free clinic to spread awareness and dental services to their remote Pakistan village birthplace.

Twin life in the Reaud Honors College has provided built-in partners for connection and moral support, while also giving each individual room to explore their own hobbies and dreams—separate, but together.



Jeri and Teri Wolfe are “mirrored” twins, which is a fancy way of saying Teri is left-handed and Jeri is right-handed. This was their first year at Lamar University. “We’re really into organizations, like HSA and LU

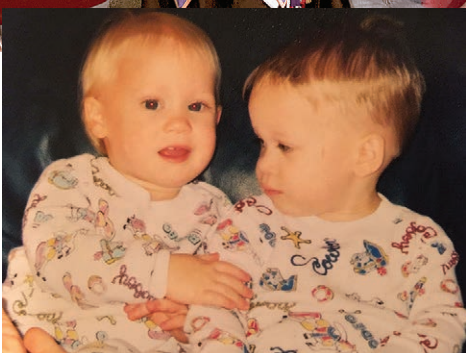
Women in STEM, and we’ve made a ton of friends who we met through Honors. Going into college was a challenging one for us because of COVID-19 and other personal reasons, but I’m glad we don’t have to do it alone,” Teri said. “We’re a power duo! No matter how much we get on each other’s nerves, you most likely won’t see us separated.”

COURTESY WOLFE TWINS



Maissa and Jana Salibi are active in Lamar campus life, particularly as LU Ambassadors. The twins are having fun representing Lamar at events that range from dinner functions where they mingle with alumni to football games where they rub elbows with Lamar’s mascots Big Red and LU while encouraging school spirit.

COURTESY SALIBI TWINS



The Reaud Honors College was excited to welcome into our community Colton and Chloe Smith, twin siblings of Casey (Class of 2020) who just earned his MBA from Lamar this spring. The Smith twins hit the ground running their first year in Honors, with Chloe immersed in undergraduate research and Colton accepted for on-the-job training in the Chemical Engineering field this fall.

COURTESY SMITH TWINS







# The Student Org Journey

Forming a student organization is one of the many exciting ways that Reaud Honors students help create a vibrant LU.

The experience empowers undergraduate students to focus on particular interests, explore opportunities to network, build camaraderie, and contribute personal strengths to create successful team dynamics.

Students' desires to explore shared interests together grew as our campus community dealt with the pandemic and all the social distancing it necessitated. The journey differed at various stages of the pandemic, as shown in the stories shared by three groups founded by Reaud Honors students.

Each student responded to the pandemic with resiliency, compassionate hearts, and inspirational leadership. The Reaud Honors College is proud of the Honors Cardinal spirit of service exhibited by all three student organizations, which is echoed in the many other student organizations that have come before them and those that work alongside them today. Their good works will inspire future leaders.

## Medlife: Spring 2020

LU's Medlife held its first chapter meeting in February, a month before Lamar University switched to online instruction to mitigate risks of the global pandemic.

Founded by five Reaud Honors students—President **Amber Maredia**, Vice-President **Mackenzie Savage**, Treasurer **Bethany Edwards**, Fundraising Officer **Sindi Castillo**, Volunteer Officer **Deidre Dages**—along with fellow LU student, Victoria Rivas, as Social Event Officer.

*"When COVID-19 began, we relied heavily on social media and GroupMe to keep members engaged from home, something that was a challenge for us because we were a brand-new organization that had just gotten started on campus."*

— Medlife President Amber Maredia



First meeting of LU's Medlife chapter

Nurses in the COVID-19 unit at Baptist Hospital hold appreciation baskets made by Medlife students during Summer 2020.



During the 2020-2021 academic year, Medlife students gave back to the community by hosting healthcare career panels (above); making fleece blankets and greeting cards that they donated to a local nursing home (below); and educating others on medical terminology at a Medical Loteria game night (left) that they cohosted with LUHS.

COURTESY LU'S MEDLIFE CHAPTER





# During a Global Pandemic

## Lamar University Hispanic Society: Fall 2020

LUHS formed when LU students took virtual classes, yet lived on campus and could gather virtually or outside with proper social distancing precautions.

Founded by six Reaud Honors students—President **Luis Arevalo**, Vice-President **Isaac Moreno**, Secretary **Jasmin Reyes**, Treasurer **Miguel Arevalo**, Historian **Stephanie Barron**, Recruitment Co-Chair **Sindi Castillo**—along with fellow LU students, Bilda Montoya, as Recruitment Co-Chair, and Judyth Magana, as Fundraising Chair.

### LU'S NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION OF 2021: Lamar University Hispanic Society

*"Through recruiting, community outreach, and cultural celebrations, the Hispanic Society has done an outstanding job since starting in September 2020. They now have 175 members and are consistently recruiting members from all backgrounds and cultures."*

— Todd Shaver, Executive Director of the Setzer Student Center and Recreational Sports



President Luis Arevalo teams up with Big Red to promote LUHS on campus.



LUHS ended the academic year celebrating its recognition as LU's New Student Organization of 2021 (above).

Campus community events LUHS hosted its first year included: Fiesta to recognize Hispanic Heritage Month, a Día de los Muertos Celebración, professional development workshops, and a Medical Loteria game night on the dining hall lawn that LUHS cohosted with Medlife.

COURTESY LAMAR UNIVERSITY HISPANIC SOCIETY



## LU Women in STEM: Spring 2021

Vaccinations became available in Southeast Texas and on Lamar campus in spring, when LU Women in STEM formed.

Founded by five Reaud Honors students: President **Britney Brevell**, Vice-President **Stephanie Barron**, Secretary **Melody Youwakim**, Treasurer **Hannah Norwood**, and Social Media Coordinator **Cassandra Leal**.

After introducing the group during International Women's Week in March, LU Women in STEM participated in LU's Big Event in April, the biggest student-run, one-day service project across Beaumont.

COURTESY LU WOMEN IN STEM



BY MEGHAN RAPP, REAUD HONORS COLLEGE COORDINATOR

# White House Recognizes Honors Student Association

HSA Service chairs and volunteers earn President's Volunteer Service Award.



Proudly holding the bronze President's Volunteer Service Award, HSA Service Chairs Madison Taylor and Annabelle Broussard (above, from left) successfully encouraged their HSA peers to dedicate their time, energy, and hearts to help lessen hardships that many Southeast Texans experienced during the pandemic.

ABOVE PHOTO BY MEGHAN RAPP;  
VOLUNTEER PHOTOS COURTESY HSA

The White House and AmeriCorps have recognized Lamar University's Honors Student Association (HSA) with the President's Volunteer Service Award and bronze medallion to honor the students' dedicated community service, most notably at the Southeast Texas Food Bank.

In a letter from the White House, HSA Service chairs and student volunteers from the Reaud Honors College were congratulated, stating: "Over this past year, you have served as a model of the American spirit. Your many hours of service have strengthened the bonds of cooperation and trust that bring people together,

while helping to address some of the greatest challenges of our time."

With the impact of COVID-19 and Hurricane Laura presenting an even greater challenge for the one in five Southeast Texans who faced food insecurity in our community in Fall 2020, Reaud Honors students stood out among the Southeast Texas Food Bank's faithful volunteer base, through their meaningful service to improve the lives of community members.

"The date we planned on going was the day after Hurricane Delta hit Southeast Texas, and I really thought the Food Bank was going to cancel, but I am glad they did not," said Annabelle



Broussard, co-chair of HSA's Service Committee and a Reaud Honors Chemical Engineering sophomore.

"We only had a few students back out because of the storm, yet the majority still volunteered," Broussard said. "Helping with School Tools was such a great experience because the woman in charge that day, Mary Simon, explained why School Tools was so important in our community. My mom teaches in BISD, so I know how hard it can be for educators to get the supplies they need to teach. I have seen how much time and energy teachers put into their lessons, so playing a role, even a small one, in ensuring that teachers are able to get the things that they need meant a lot to me."

*"The community got to see college students, many of whom had just evacuated themselves, give back and really make a difference."*



#### Hurricane Laura Relief

Luis Arevalo, Miguel Arevalo, Marie Arrieta, Deidre Dages, Kelvin Elgar, Kaylee Goodspeed, Ali Hamza, Stefany Rico, Madison Taylor, Judith Vega, and Andrew Zinck



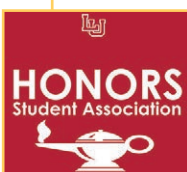
#### Southeast Texas Food Bank & School Tools

Haya Alani, Miguel Arevalo, Stephanie Barron, Halli Blank, Britney Brevell, Annabelle Broussard, Phillip Foster, Reagan Jones, Stefany Rico, and Kyra Rost



#### Hope Women's Resource Clinic

Hannah Abdullah, Samira Ahmed, Umera Ahmed, Miguel Arevalo, Stephanie Barron, Halli Blank, Britney Brevell, Viviana Denova, Phillip Foster, Kaylee Goodspeed, Krystal Le, Avery McLain, Kyra Rost, Madison Taylor, Judith Vega, and Shelby Williams



Thank you, to all the Reaud Honors students who joined HSA in helping the SETX community during a challenging pandemic year. Student volunteers are listed with each service showcase.





**Food Service Project with ASCE**

Karime Abdeljalek, Sophie Boyd, Annabelle Broussard, Natalia Doiron, Camille Fam, Avery McLain, Kyra Rost, Madison Taylor, Jennifer Tsan, and Lily Yoder

Heavy rain, high winds, and storm surge did not deter the following HSA members who volunteered at the Southeast Texas Food Bank, on October 10, working with the School Tools program and helping assemble food boxes for seniors: **Haya Alani** (Chemistry Pre-Dental senior and Class of 2020 graduate); **Miguel Arevalo** (Chemistry Pre-Med freshman); **Stephanie Barron** (Biology Pre-Med sophomore and HSA's SGA Representative for Spring 2021); **Halli Blank** (General Studies freshman); **Britney Brevell** (Biology

Pre-Med sophomore); **Phillip Foster** (Electrical Engineering sophomore); **Reagan Jones** (Biology Pre-Physician Assistant freshman); **Stefany Rico** (Psychology sophomore and HSA Social Events co-chair); and **Kyra Rost** (Sociology junior).

With compassionate hearts and community spirit, HSA students gave back this academic year in so many ways: Hurricane Laura Relief in Orange, Texas; Southeast Texas Food Bank; Hope Women's Resource Clinic; Cardinal Pantry Food Drive; Food Service Project with the Lamar

chapter of American Society of Civil Engineers; Nutrition & Services for Seniors; and at LU's Big Event.

Broussard's service partner, Madison Taylor, a Reaud Honors College Biology Pre-Physician Assistant sophomore, led HSA's first service event, the Hurricane Laura Relief effort in Orange. From the beginning of their student leadership journey, Broussard and Taylor partnered together to coordinate service events for HSA students to participate in. The two planned and organized the relief effort, collaborating with various LU organizations to recruit student volunteers for the two-day event. Yet Broussard could not attend; she was quarantining for COVID-19 at the time. Taylor stepped up to show tremendous leadership that weekend.

"It was my favorite experience," Broussard said. "The community got to see college students, many of whom had just evacuated themselves, give back and really make a difference."

Taylor's favorite service experience this academic year came when HSA volunteered at Hope Women's Resource Clinic in Beaumont to help rebuild a new Hope House for pregnant homeless women. "It was one completely out of my comfort zone, and I had to facilitate it from top to bottom," Taylor said. "I got a chance to speak with the adults running the event, coordinate our HSA members, and then we got to demo a house. It was a great turnout and for a rewarding cause."

"They were amazing," said Jeanette Harvey, executive director of Hope Clinic. "What a great help. They worked hard and had a great attitude. We were






*“Nothing discouraged our students from caring about others and wanting to contribute, however they could, to make a difference—not a pandemic, not a hurricane, not a winter freeze.”*

able to completely gut the inside and prepare it for the rebuild.”

The student-led HSA provides experiences that promote the growth and development of Reaud Honors students, through various committees that include peer mentoring, campus involvement, social events, intramural sports, and service.

“The Reaud Honors College is immensely proud of Annabelle and Madison, and all of our students this academic year who focused their time and attention on other people’s needs. Nothing discouraged our students from caring about others and wanting to contribute, however they could, to make a difference—not a pandemic, not a hurricane, not a winter freeze,” said Meghan Rapp, coordinator at the Reaud Honors College, who served as HSA’s advisor this academic year, while the college awaited its future dean.

This spring, Lamar University welcomed Dean Tilisa Thibodeaux, a former AmeriCorps member herself, who has already begun advising the upcoming year’s HSA leaders.

The White House’s recognition of HSA honors the time, energy, and care each Reaud Honors student volunteer devoted to help lessen hardships that many Southeast Texans experienced during the pandemic. In a challenging year for many, these volunteers endured, with open hearts and hands. 



Nutrition & Services for Seniors

Sophie Boyd, Annabelle Broussard, Natalia Doiron, Camille Fam, Avery McLain, and Lily Yoder



LU’s Big Event

Sophie Boyd, Annabelle Broussard, Avery McLain, Darya Romashets, and Shelbie Williams (\*NOTE: Reaud Honors students also volunteered with various student organizations across campus, as many are in leadership roles outside HSA.)



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# CHANGEMAKERS

**“One of my favorite aspects of Lamar University is the Honors college.**

**Being a part of the Honors college has allowed me to experience a lot of new opportunities. I also love the community that we have at LU. I have felt welcomed and have met a lot of great students and faculty who are all very supportive.”**

*—Tiffany Tran, TSUS Student Scholar*



Before President Ken Evans wrapped up his final days on campus this summer, he presented Reaud Honors Biology Pre-Dental senior Tiffany Tran with her TSUS Student Scholar board resolution. Tiffany earned this honor, which comes with \$5,000 toward educational expenses, based on her outstanding academic achievement and scholarship, leadership abilities, and contributions to Lamar University and the Southeast Texas community.

Tiffany entered Reaud Honors College as a freshman and has remained active throughout her college career. She is a founding member of the Reaud Honors College Model United Nations team, represented Reaud Honors College as SGA Senator, and has served her Southeast Texas Community as an ex-officio board member for the Seafarers' Center of Beaumont through the college's Stepping Up initiative, in partnership with the Southeast Texas Nonprofit Development Center. In just three semesters, Tiffany earned the credit hours required for Reaud Honors College graduate status.

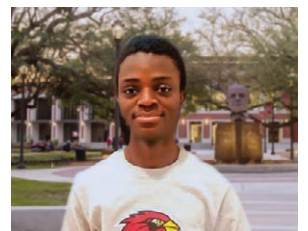
Tiffany will continue to dedicate herself to the LU community as the Student Government Association President in 2021-2022. She aims to work ambitiously with her team to make LU student vision a reality.

Tiffany told LUTV News, “I think honestly that’s the beauty of SGA is when everybody is very collaborative. We can work together and think of new solutions to help campus be a better place for all.”

## SGA LEADERS

The Lamar student body elected the following Reaud Honors students (shown from top right) to be their voice in Student Government Association in 2021-2022:

Tiffany Tran, President;  
David Williams, Vice-President;  
Ayo Oni, Senior Class Senator;  
and Tomisin Egbewale,  
Sophomore Class Senator.  
The College of Arts & Sciences  
appointed Stephanie Barron as  
Senator, while Honors Student  
Association members elected  
Cade Pellerin as Reaud Honors  
College Senator and Shelby  
Williams as HSA Representative.



*\*Our Changemakers feature offers an assortment of Reaud Honors students to share an overview of how they imagine, innovate, impact, and inspire our campus community each year. This is not a comprehensive list. Our students contribute in many meaningful ways, and our college is proud of each and every one of our Honors Cardinals.*



# Leadership

## Kaylee Goodspeed, Chemistry Sophomore:

Future LU Ambassador and voted by her Reaud Honors peers as President-Elect of the Honors Student Association.

## Ayo Oni, Chemical Engineering Junior:

Elected as Texas Zone Chairperson on the regional board for the National Society of Black Engineers, Region V, which represents 10 states, as well as Mexico, Central America, South Africa, and the Dominican Republic.

## Jason Chambliss, Computer Science and Game Development Junior:

StickerTalk, the business Jason began at the age of 14, became an official licensee of Lamar University and can sell LU products. Incorporated in 2012, StickerTalk offers 15,000 unique stickers and magnets sold on the Internet all over the world. On LU campus, Jason served as eSports President in 2020-2021.

## Stefany Rico, Psychology Sophomore:

As the lead Peer Health Educator for the Student Health Center, Stefany maintains the center's social media marketing plan and initiated Wellness Wednesdays in Fall 2020. She was joined by RHC peers Chloe Smith and Amber Maredia in spring.

## Line Ydi Recinos, Biology Pre-Med Sophomore:

Earned the prestigious Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Visionary Leader scholarship from the Office of Global Diversity and Inclusive Excellence. In pursuit of her dream of becoming a pediatrician, Line Ydi stays active on campus with AMSA and MEDLIFE and off campus as a volunteer translator for patients who cannot communicate with medical professionals due to a language barrier.

## David Williams, Mechanical Engineering Junior:

In addition to being the SGA Vice-President-Elect, David was hired in Fall 2020 as the Student Orientation Coordinator for New Student & Leadership Programs. While overseeing the leadership programs, David started Workshop Wednesdays and a monthly Leadership Launch. He also wrote and directed orientation skits for student orientation leaders.



## LU AMBASSADORS

*Reaud Honors students named LU Ambassadors in 2020-21:*

Luis Arevalo, Taliah Belcher, Annabelle Broussard, Brendon Camp, Sindi Castillo, Natalia Doiron, Kelvin Elgar, Menna Elsaka, Isaac Moreno, Stefany Rico, Mackenzie Savage, and Ryan Shugart

*Ambassadors joining team in 2021-22:*

Miguel Arevalo, Stephanie Barron, Britney Brevell, Rylie George, Kaylee Goodspeed, Zaid Mohammed, and Madison Taylor

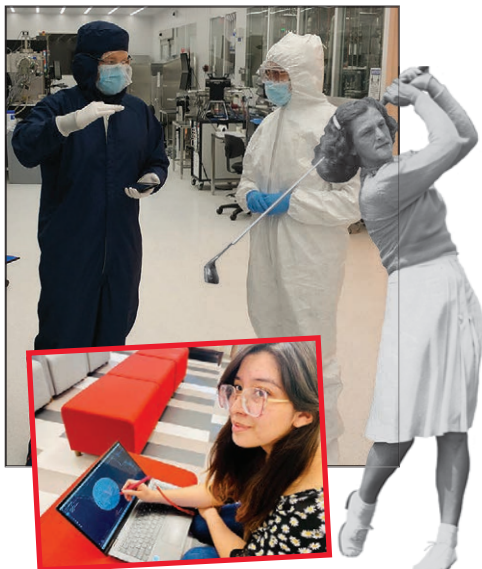
## 2021-2022 HSA OFFICERS

Honors peers elected Kaylee Goodspeed, Marie Arrieta, and Darya Romashets to lead the Honors Student Association as President, Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer. Casandra Leal and Zaid Mohammed will lead Community Engagement; Muhammad Jabbar and Saniya Shahzad, Service Committee; Madison Taylor and Jennifer Tsan, Campus Involvement; Miguel Arevalo and Dakota Emerson, Intramural Sports; Zachary Patterson and Line Ydi Recinos, Social Events; and Stephanie Barron, Sindi Castillo, and Hannah Norwood, Peer Mentoring. Senator Cade Pellerin and Representative Shelbie Williams will represent the Reaud Honors College and Honors Student Association, respectively, in LU's Student Government Association.



Imagine. Innovate. Impact. Inspire.

# CHANGEMAKERS



BABE ZAHARIAS INSET PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION



## Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity

Reaud Honors students presented their findings at the following conferences during 2020-2021.

**O.U.R. Expo 2020** (rescheduled to Fall 2020 due to pandemic): Sindi Castillo, Viviana Denova, Menna Elsaka, Donna Fleming, Daniel Quispe, and Kim Tsan. **O.U.R. Texas STEM Conference 2020**: Grafton Conger, Menna Elsaka, and Cindy Rodriguez. **GCURS at Rice University 2020**: Menna Elsaka. **HASBSEB Conference 2020**: Viviana Denova and Aurora Maldonado. **O.U.R. Expo 2021** (clockwise, from top right): Viviana Denova, Kyra Rost, Maissa Salibi, Kelvin Elgar, Katelyn Maxwell, Nathan Rose, and Katherine Correa.

### Award-Winning Research

"Best Video Presentation in STEM," O.U.R. Expo 2020, given to Mechanical Engineering senior **Daniel Quispe** for R.E.U. project at Northwestern University: "The Effects of Yarn Variations on Triaxial Braid Composite Fabrics," the same solar cells efficiency project that earned him a spot in the prestigious and highly competitive Posters on the Hill event in Washington, D.C.

"Runner-up in Best STEM SURF Presentation," O.U.R. Texas STEM 2020, given to Chemistry and Biochemistry Pre-Med senior **Menna Elsaka** for project: "Effect of Akkermansia muciniphila on Intestinal Epithelial Cell Integrity upon Interaction with Other Common Gut-Bacteria."

"First Place in Best Undergraduate Research Presentation in Non-SURF" HASBSEB 2020, given to Social Work senior **Aurora Maldonado** for McNair project: "Perceived Barriers to Persistence in Higher Education: The Intersectionality of Acculturation and College Self-Efficacy of Latinx/Hispanic Students."

"Best Presentation with a Regional Focus," from the Center for History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast, HASBSEB 2020, given to Management Pre-Med senior **Viviana Denova** for project: "Role of Small and Medium Enterprises on the Economy of the Alicante Province and the Southeast Texas."

"First Place in Best Poster Presentation: Early Phase Research," O.U.R. Expo 2021, given to Sociology junior **Kyra Rost** for poster: "Attitudes and Misconceptions of the Black Lives Matter Movement."

"Best Presentation with a Regional Focus," from the Center for History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast, O.U.R. Expo 2021, given to **Viviana Denova** for project: "The Financial Impact of COVID-19 on Small and Medium Enterprises in Southeast Texas."

"Third Place in Best Presentation: Advanced Research Level," O.U.R. Expo 2021, given to Political Science junior **Maissa Salibi** for project: "Mail-In Voting."

Biology Pre-Optometry and Studio Art Drawing senior **Katherine Correa** received two O.U.R. Expo 2021 awards—"Best Presentation with a Regional Focus," from the Center for History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast, and "Third Place in Best Presentation for O.U.R. Sponsored Research"—for project: "The Babe Zaharias Medals: Exploring Methods of Replication for a Promising Non-Contact Based Approach."

### LOOKING AHEAD

Reaud Honors students conducting undergraduate research this summer who will present their findings in 2021-2022.

**DAVID J. BECK FELLOWS:** Frederick Donahey and Alexis Sturrock. Fellows receive up to \$10,000 in research support and academic scholarships covering tuition, books, fees, and on-campus room and board. A 1961 Lamar University graduate and 1999 Distinguished Alumnus, David J. Beck is a Port Arthur native and founding partner of the Beck Redden litigation firm in Houston.

**PRESIDENTIAL FELLOWS:** Ali Hamza and Mason Munoz. Fellows receive up to \$10,000 in research support.

**O.U.R. SURF FELLOWS:** Alexander Bahrim, Cesar Delgado, Viviana Denova, Tomisin Egbewale, Nyah Sciarilla, and Chloe Smith. Fellows participate in 10 weeks of summer research and receive a \$2,000 stipend, \$1,000 in research support, and \$500 in travel support.

**RONALD E. MCNAIR SCHOLARS:** Kacie Dawson, Viviana Denova, Kyra Rost, Ryan Shugart, and Kadie Sloane. Scholars participate in six weeks of summer research and receive a stipend of up to \$2,800.

### LURA

Reaud Honors students who will represent Lamar's undergraduate researchers as leaders in O.U.R.'s Lamar University Undergraduate Research Association:

Menna Elsaka, President  
Viviana Denova, Vice-President  
Zaid Mohammed, Treasurer





**“As soon as I arrived, people in the College of Engineering and Reaud Honors College helped me set up a game plan for how to be competitive for these types of programs.”**

*—Tyler Martin,  
NSF Graduate Research Fellow*

#### **NSF GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOW Tyler Martin, Mechanical Engineering Graduate:**

Tyler earned a five-year National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship that provides three years of funding, consisting of a \$34,000-a-year stipend and full coverage of tuition and fees. Tyler credits LU mentorship for helping pave his path to success. He joins Reaud Honors alum **David Quispe** (Electrical Engineering, Class of 2019) as an NSF graduate research fellow.

Tyler's Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering will be fully funded while he attends Rice University. He plans to research how to design stronger materials for extreme conditions, such as in space, and hopes to eventually work at a national laboratory or NASA research group.

## **Awards & Recognitions**



#### **FIRST NANCY EVANS SCHOLAR TO GRADUATE Aurora Maldonado, Social Work Graduate:**

Aurora exemplifies the qualities of LU's former first lady through her commitment to service leadership, including serving as ex-officio board member for Boys' Haven of America through our college's Stepping Up initiative. Aurora Maldonado will attend the University of Houston to pursue a Master of Social Work, after which she hopes to work in the areas of medical and school social work, child welfare, and immigration services. She eventually would like to pursue a Ph.D. in Social Work.

#### **PHI KAPPA PHI FELLOW & OUTSTANDING SENIOR WOMAN Katey McCall, Political Science Graduate:**

Katey represented her Honors community and Lamar University in numerous leadership roles, including as TSUS Student Regent and as LU's first student chosen as a Texas Civic Ambassador to the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life. In recognition of her exceptional undergraduate journey, Katey received the Bess Gentry Award for Outstanding Senior Woman, accompanied by \$1,000, from the Division of Student Engagement. Phi Kappa Phi also recognized her with an \$8,500 national fellowship. Katey will pursue her law degree at Texas Tech University School of Law on a full scholarship beginning in Fall 2021.



#### **ANN SHAW LEADERSHIP AWARD Luis Arevalo, Chemical Engineering Junior:**

Earning a \$1,000 award for fostering a spirit of teamwork and excelling in leadership, Luis served his Cardinal community as president/cofounder of Lamar University Hispanic Society; Intramural Sports co-chair of Honors Student Association (HSA); historian and recruitment officer of Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers; and member of the President's Task Force on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity. In conjunction with HSA, he helped replant native trees in the Big Thicket and, during hurricane recovery efforts, aided families in Orange by distributing supplies and removing debris from homes.



## **SENIORS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

*Reaud Honors students recognized  
as 2021 Seniors of Significance:*

**Hannah Abdullah, Samira Ahmed, Joissy Grimaldo, Aurora Maldonado, Tyler Martin, Katey McCall, Todd "TJ" Senters, Alexis Sturrock, and Yen Vu.**



**DAISY IN  
TRAINING  
Naomi Raczkovi,  
Nursing Graduate**



**SOCIAL WORK  
STUDENT OF  
THE YEAR  
Alexis Sturrock,  
Social Work Senior**

**#MASKUP  
STUDENT  
DESIGNER  
Emily Robinson,  
English Senior**







## Honors Conference

At the National Collegiate Honors Council's 2020 virtual conference, **Austin Alexander** (Chemical Engineering junior, shown above) presented his poster, "The General Principles and Functioning of Quantum Computers."

At the Idea Exchange, **Annabelle Broussard** (Chemical Engineering sophomore), **Edward Doan** (Chemical Engineering senior and graduate), and **Jasmin Reyes** (Biology Pre-Med junior) presented on "Home for the Holidays," a recruitment program jointly developed by the Reaud Honors College and LU's Office of Recruitment. Students return to their high schools to share their unique experiences in the Reaud Honors College.

Reaud Honors College Alumna **Rebekah Maxwell**, LU's Director of Scholarships, participated in a panel discussion, "Closing the Loop from Honors Student to Honors Professional."

## STEPPING UP CIVIC LEADERS

The following Reaud Honors students served as ex-officio members on the boards of local nonprofit organizations through our Stepping Up: Civic Leadership Initiative.

### *Nutrition & Services for Seniors:*

**Sindi Castillo** (Biology Pre-Med Sophomore)

### *United Way MSJC:*

**Edward Doan** (Chemical Engineering Graduate)

### *CASA of the Sabine Neches Region:*

**Morgan Dollar** (General Business Junior)

### *Ubi Caritas:*

**Bethany Edwards** (Nursing Junior)

### *Spindletop Center:*

**Nicole Lavergne** (Speech and Hearing Sciences Graduate)

### *Downtown BMT Cultural Arts District:*

**Maissa Salibi** (Political Science Junior)

### *YMCA of SETX:*

**Erin Taylor** (Nursing Junior)

### *Beaumont Children's Museum:*

**Andrew Zinck** (Finance Junior)

## Peer-Reviewed ePortfolio Publication

### **Jack Dolce, Management**

### **Pre-Optometry Graduate (Fall 2020):**

Co-wrote and edited a peer-reviewed publication accepted by the only eP journal in North America, based on his contributions as the Digital Learning Research Assistant for the Reaud Honors College's ePortfolio program. The article, "Graduate Students' Perceptions of Factors that Contributed to ePortfolios Persistence Beyond the Program of Study," was published in *IJeP* (2021, Volume 11, Number 1), which is indexed in EBSCO, ERIC, and a variety of other databases.



## HONORS PROFESSOR OF THE YEAR



**Dr. Christopher Martin** earned special student recognition as Honors Professor of the Year by the Honors Student Association.

Dr. Martin is an Associate Professor of Organic Chemistry at Lamar University, where he began to work after receiving his Ph.D. from Ohio State University in 2004. Martin served as a co-primary investigator on a nearly \$1 million research grant funded by the National Science Foundation for "Students Advancing through Involvement in Research Student Talent Expansion Program

(STAIRSTEP)," which the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board recognized, in 2013, with its Star Award.

Honored in 2018 with the Lamar University Faculty Mentor Award, Martin has mentored 40 undergraduate students in research, presented his work at five national meetings, and published with undergraduate co-authors in peer-reviewed journals seven times. His research students include Beck Fellows, McNair Scholars, medical physicians, Ph.D. chemists, and Ph.D. biologists.

He has written or co-written 26 peer-reviewed publications while at Lamar. Since 2007, Martin has also actively collaborated with faculty in LU's Chemical and Mechanical Engineering departments studying industrial flaring using a variety of computational simulations.

His current research interests include studying the unusual molecular rearrangements that furanones undergo upon exposure to light that may have implications for the pharmaceutical industry.

*Imagine. Innovate. Impact. Inspire.*

# CHANGEMAKERS



# Alumni News

## Reaud Honors College Alumni Advisory Council

Chair Alisa Hicklin-Fryar **2002**; Jenny Achilles **2003**; Bethany Aiena **2011**; Carolina Ramirez Cardenas **2010**; Danny Chand **2002**; Josh Daspit **2004**; Stephanie Cryer **2005**; Daniel Grooms **2002**; Christine Felix **2011**; Valerie Juarez **2011**; Lindsey Cauthen **2007**; Kristeen Reynolds **2016**; Kayleigh Romero **2013**; Brittany Ross **2011**; and Brandan Still **2006**.

**Josh Daspit, 2004:** Recognized with 2021 Presidential Award for Excellence in Service; named a Top 40 Under 40 LGBTQ leader by *Business Equality* Magazine for his work as Management assistant professor at Texas State University and as founder of Parco Enterprises, which created a “bulletproof” panel backpack in response to Pulse nightclub shooting.

**Aimee Lieby, 2004:** Promoted to Product Integrity Advisor at ExxonMobil in Beaumont.

**Jennifer Albrecht, 2006:** Recognized as Top 40 Under 40 by the Southeast Texas Young Professionals Organization.

**Lindsey Cauthen, 2007:** Hired as Principal of Career Services at Baylor College of Medicine.

**Courtney King, 2009:** Promoted to Global Director of Planning at TodayTix Group in New York City.

**Caitlin Kruger, 2009:** Hired as Marketing and Communications Manager at Metrocrest Services in Farmers Branch, Texas.

**Tony Sarda, 2009:** Hired as Director of Undergraduate Admissions at St. Mary's University of San Antonio.

**Rajiv Jaini, 2010:** Hired as Enterprise Strategy Consultant at USAA.

**Carolina Ramirez Cardenas, 2010:** Contributed to Cardinal community by hosting a dialogue, “Young People for Inclusion and Dignity Through DACA;” is the Deputy Director of State Partnerships at Movement Voter Project.

**Laura Whitmire, 2010:** Hired as Director of Admissions at Notre Dame High School in St. Louis.

**Sophie Wilmore, 2010:** Hired as AVP Credit Risk Analyst at Broadway Bank in San Antonio.

**Brittney Zenos, 2010:** Graduated from Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Program at University of Texas Medical Branch.

**Bethany Aiena, 2011:** Contributed to Honors community in an Alum Chat, “Imposter Syndrome: You Are Not a Fake;” is a Clinical Health Psychologist in Houston at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center.

**Amanda Lilley, 2011:** Hired as Assistant District Attorney for Garfield County, Oklahoma.

**Rebekah Maxwell, 2011:** Received Rotary Club of Beaumont's 2021 Spirit of Rotary Award.

Contributed to Honors community as panelist for “Closing the Loop from Honors Student to Honors Professional,” at virtual 2020 National Collegiate Honors Council Conference.

**Wesley Smith, 2011:** Contributed to Honors community in Alum Chat with Pre-Med students about the medical school journey; is a clinical fellow in pediatric hematology and oncology at Baylor College of Medicine at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston.

**Carly Wright, 2011:** Hired as Principal's Secretary at Bridge City High School.

**Chelsea Barnard, 2012:** Promoted to Vice-President, Engineering at Goldman Sachs Personal Financial Management.

**Elisabeth Maxwell, 2013:** Completed the Open Water Scuba Instructor Certification from the Professional Association of Diving Instructors; is a research associate at University of Maine's Darling Marine Center and an assistant instructor in the Scientific Diving Program.

**Kayleigh Romero, 2013:** Hired as 12th Grade Path, College, Career Teacher at Beaumont Early College High School; is pursuing Ed.D. at Sam Houston State University.

**Christine Zabala, 2013:** Graduated with Ph.D. in Literacy Studies at University of Colorado-Boulder and awarded “Outstanding Graduate Award for Teaching” by the School of Education.

**Danielle Ellis, 2015:** Graduated with M.D. from University of Texas Health Science Center.

**Lindsey Darby, 2016:** Graduated with M.A. in Public Relations from Ball State University.

**Christopher Hagner, 2016:** Awarded the NextGen Under 30 Award in the Sports and Outdoors category by *ion Oklahoma* Magazine; is a Business Intelligence Analyst for the Oklahoma City Thunder NBA team.

**Ayah Hamza, 2016:** Graduated with D.O. from the University of North Texas Health Science Center and is working at UTMB Health Children's Hospital.

**Jacob Martin, 2016:** Hired as an attorney at JTM Tech Law, specializing in NFT, in Malibu, California.

**Kara Timberlake, 2016:** Hired as Marketing/Communications Manager for the McFaddin-Ward House Museum in Beaumont.

**Kelli Creel, 2017:** Graduated with D.D.S. from the University of Texas Health Science Center Dental School.

**Aaron Lavergne, 2017:** Hired as Mechanical/HVAC/Controls Estimator for MacDonald-Miller Facility Solutions in Houston.

**Skylar Murphy, 2017:** Promoted to Health and Safety Regional Coordinator at International Paper Corporate Center of Excellence in Beaumont.

**Dani Sanders, 2017:** Hired as attorney at Wilson Elser Law Firm in Beaumont. Contributed to Cardinal community as a panelist for LU's Pi Sigma Alpha's “Law School Informational.”

**Progga Chirontoni, 2018:** Hired as Waste/Wastewater Engineer at HDR Engineering in San Antonio.

**Ryan Sherer, 2018:** Graduated with J.D. from Texas Tech University.

**Shelby Whitehead, 2018:** Promoted to FCC Contact Engineer at ExxonMobil in Beaumont.

**Cade Johnson, 2019:** Contributed to Cardinal community through LU Moments podcast by sharing his journey of earning a Master's in Business from LU and his medical school experience now at McGovern Medical School at UT Health-Houston.

**Victoria LaFleur, 2019:** Awarded Joe Rudd Scholarship and Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation Scholarship; selected as new student liaison for Tarrant County Young Lawyers Association; is attending Texas A&M University School of Law.

**Maria Azpilicueta, 2020:** Hired as engineer at the ExxonMobil Beaumont Refinery.

**Patricia Correa, 2020:** Hired as Junior Designer at Razorfish in Austin.

**Jordan Curl, 2020:** First LU student awarded a Phi Kappa Phi fellowship (\$8,500), in Summer 2020; is pursuing his Doctorate in Medicine at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine.

**Kaily Garcia, 2020:** Graduated with M.B.A. from Lamar University.

**Bra'ah Hamdan, 2020:** Graduated with M.B.A. from Lamar University.

**Omar Hamza, 2020:** Awarded the Love of Learning Award from Phi Kappa Phi; is attending Texas A&M College of Medicine.

**Govin Kaggal, 2020:** Contributed to Cardinal community as a panelist for LU's Pi Sigma Alpha's “Law School Informational;” also was commencement speaker for TALH's Class of 2021 Commencement Ceremony; pursuing J.D. at University Alabama School of Law.

**Brody McBee, 2020:** Hired as 6th Grade Math Teacher at Bob Hope School; is pursuing D.D.S. at University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston.

**Linda Pham, 2020:** Hired as math teacher at Harmony Science Academy in Beaumont.

**Marcus Rodgers, 2020:** Hired as engineer in aircraft operations division at NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston.

**Hannah Rumsey, 2020:** Inaugurated a new LU Moment podcast series, “What Can Your LU Degree Do for You?” She discussed her years at LU, her research in Spain, and her new job as financial analyst at ExxonMobil.

**Casey Smith, 2020:** Graduated with an M.B.A. from Lamar University and hired as Outreach Recruiter at Lamar Institute of Technology.

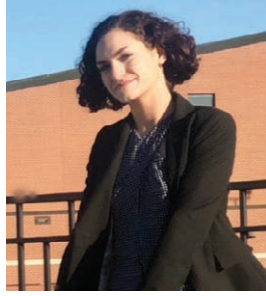
**Melissa Torres, 2020:** Received a full-tuition scholarship for the AuD program at Rush University in Chicago.



## 2020 – FALL GRADUATES



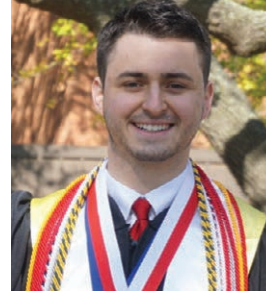
Haya Alani



Riley Almufti



Edward Doan



Jack Dolce



Luke Hanson



Madeline Hiebert



Fizzah Khan



Megan Murphy



Nguyen Nguyen



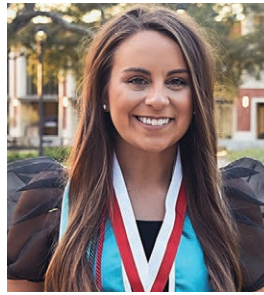
Naomi Raczkovi



Adriana Robinson



Hannah Rumsey



Makenzie Sattler



Dashonda Shepard

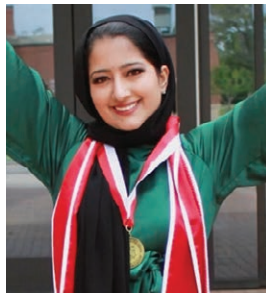


Kennedy Smith

## 2021 – SPRING GRADUATES



Hannah Abdullah



Samira Ahmed



Abbey Brown



Megan Fisher



Donna Fleming



Chase Gordon



Grace Granger



Joissy Grimaldo



Nathan House



Nicole Lavergne





Aurora Maldonado



Tyler Martin

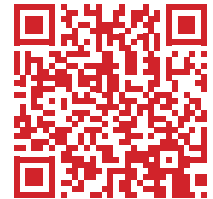


Katelyn Maxwell



Katey McCall

Celebrations of our Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Reaud Honors College Graduates are available as:



Tommy McPhee



Trinity Morris



Brooks Pettit



Daniel Quispe

Videos on RHC's YouTube Channel



Nathan Rose



Cody Sasser



Sarah (Colon) Schuler



Todd Senters

Biography albums on RHC's Facebook. Click on Photos to view each album.



Erin Sims



Yen Vu



Michael Whitman



David Yeakey

Not Featured (upon request): Marycarmen Perales and Emma Walther



# HELLO *from our new Dean*

Dear Reaud Honors College Alumni,

Beginning in March 2021, I have had the honor and pleasure to serve as the Dean of the Reaud Honors College (RHC) at our beloved Lamar University. Prior to taking the role as Dean, I had the privilege to serve in the RHC as the Director of Digital Literacy since 2017, also as an assistant professor in the College of Education and Human Development since 2015. In the College of Education, I co-constructed and served as Coordinator of an M.Ed. program in Digital Learning and Leading, while leading and directing the inaugural Community Education Initiative, a grant and partnership between Apple, Inc. and Lamar University.

So many wonderful opportunities came from the RHC during my time as Director, and I cannot describe how wonderful it is to serve the most outstanding students on our campus! I am inspired by the spirit of commitment our students have given to our Honors college, the university, and to the broader community and surrounding areas where many of our students live. Our students thrive to imagine, innovate, impact, and inspire other Cardinals, the community, and the world around them. Our role in the RHC is to help our students be successful in graduate school, their professional careers, and their lives.

## History and Background

The Reaud Honors College officially became a college in 2013 and was named after Mr. Wayne A. Reaud, a 1971 Political Science alumnus from Lamar University. As a result of his generous support and commitment, the RHC has grown to approximately 350 students overall, with competitive scholarships

offered to top-ranking graduates in their high school classes. Many of our RHC students live on campus, in their own wing, the Scholars Tower, in Campbell Hall, and earn Presidential, Southeast Texas Legends, Smith-Hutson, McMaster, and Cardinal Elite scholarships, to name a few. In every sense of the word, our students have made our Honors college what it is today by building meaningful connections and leading as they serve others in a variety of ways.

## Goals and Outcomes

After I joined the Reaud Honors College in late spring, our team has been working diligently to fulfill our big, audacious goal, and we need your help to make our big picture plans a reality.

## Big, Audacious Goal

Become the most desired and influential Honors college program in the state of Texas and beyond.

As an Honors college, we are working toward defining our pathway moving forward to strengthen and build our own unique student-centered Honors college where our students innovate and impact the world around them by acting on their WHY, determining how they want to get there, and, most important, deciding who they want to become.



Dean Thibodeaux is committed to building community with all of you, having cultivated a love for Southeast Texas and Lamar University by building a home in nearby Orangefield with her husband, Ben, and their six-year-old son Micah and seven-year-old daughter Sadie. She looks forward to listening and learning from you, her Reaud Honors College family.

BY BREE ELLE PHOTOGRAPHY



# Imagine • Innovate • Impact • Inspire

In his 2009 lecture “How Great Leaders Inspire Action,” Simon Sinek said, “...achievement comes when you pursue and attain what you want; success comes when you are clear in pursuit of WHY you want it.” It is my hope that our RHC students reflect on their learning journey and identify their passion and inspiration along the way. We hope they will articulate this in everything they do and every decision they make, and, most important, learn to inspire others the way they have been inspired.

## WHY

We inspire students to transform their passion into their purpose through rigorous academics, innovative research, and service leadership.

## HOW

To do this, we offer high-impact educational experiences by supporting significant learning environments that offer choice, ownership, and voice through authentic learning opportunities.

## WHAT

We prepare successful college graduates who have their choice of top-tier graduate schools and influential careers where they will impact and inspire others through their leadership and innovation.

## IMAGINE. INNOVATE. IMPACT. INSPIRE.

We hope to inspire our RHC students so they understand that although success may not always come easy, they can dig deep and become a positive deviant, even if that means stepping away from what they have always done. Life will consistently test one's perseverance, but grit and persistence will help move the needle on their most wildly important goals. We hope our students lead as they serve others and spend time building relationships with all kinds of people, especially with those who are different than they are. And above all, listen intently and care about others on their learning journey because those we invest in could very well become an integral part of our journey along the way.

It is also important that we share our own statement of WHO we are as the Reaud Honors College. As always, we invite you to join us as we reimagine our future to become the most desirable and influential Honors college in all of Texas and beyond.

Our door is always open, and we invite all of you to stay connected with us and share your inspirational stories with our students and graduates.

*-Dr. Tilisa Thibodeaux*

Tilisa Thibodeaux, Ed.D.  
Dean, Reaud Honors College &  
Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities  
Assistant Professor, College of Education & Human Development



Your team at the Reaud Honors College and Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities: (from left) Dean Tilisa Thibodeaux, Bruce Hodge, Karen Corwin, Kim Vizena, Meghan Rapp, and Andrew Strange.

BY LAMAR UNIVERSITY





REAUD HONORS COLLEGE

**LAMAR UNIVERSITY**

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## *Connected Alums*

*Cadenza* showcases some of the outstanding achievements our Reaud Honors students accomplished this past year at Lamar University. You may recall a similar experience during your time in Honors, and we hope your memories will encourage you to give back to support our students in their academic journeys or to serve in a capacity that would ultimately be mutually beneficial for both you and our students.

We invite ALL of our alums to get involved:



- **AlumChats:** Share professional expertise with RHC students – you choose topic
- **AlumNet:** Network with other alumni by region and/or major
- **Mentoring Alums:** Work with students or recent graduates by field of study
- **Experiential Learning Program:** Serve as leads for RHC students who assist with your research
- **Honors Cardinal Spirit:** Unleash your inner Cardinal by joining us for homecoming and assisting with parade float/tailgate

Stay connected to Honors: [tilisa.thibodeaux@lamar.edu](mailto:tilisa.thibodeaux@lamar.edu) or [mrapp@lamar.edu](mailto:mrapp@lamar.edu)

