



Biomedical  
Research  
Infrastructure  
Center

WSSU  
Biomedical  
Research  
Center



National Institute for General Medical  
Services  
Research Initiative for Scientific  
Enhancement Program

VOLUME 2, FINAL ISSUE

SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES

### NIGMS RISE Scholars 2020

#### Spring and Winter 2020

Tania Bellinger	Biology
Kamiya Bridges	Biology
Anijah Carter	Biology
Alysa Dempsey	Biology
Kelsey Douglas	Biology
Jada Graves	Biology
Muslimah 'Naomi' Isaac Roberts	CLS
Joseph Lightsey	Biology
Dajia McKenzie	Exercise Science
Timothy Nixon	Biology
Mykasia Simpkins	Biology
Sheldon Smith	Justice Studies
Terrance Smith	Computer Science
Erica Weaver	Biology



Top left to right 2020 Grads: Erica Weaver, Tania Bellinger, Kamiya Bridges, Anijah Carter, Ariana Baker, Sheldon Smith

Bottom left to right 2021 Grads: Dexter Perkins, Dustin Sellers, Dominique Jones, Felicia Grimes, Nia Blake, Kemoni Long, Tyler Chisolm

### NIGMS RISE Scholars 2021

#### Spring and Winter 2021

Ariana Baker	Biology
Ciarra Nicholas	Exercise Science
Dexter Perkins	Exercise Physiology
Dominique Jones	Biology
Dustin Sellers	Exercise Science
Felicia Grimes	Chemistry
Hassan Mohammed	Biology
Jalen Bethea	Computer Science
Jessica Edwards	Biology
Kemoni Long	Biology
Kierah Risdon-Langdon	Chemistry
T'ea Cameron	Chemistry
Tyler Chisolm	Psychology
Zakayla Hamilton	Biology
Nia Blake	Computer Science

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Dr. Mamudu Yakubu, Director of Grants  
Biomedical Research Infrastructure Center  
115 S. Chestnut Street, Room 267  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101  
336.750.2544, 336.761.5897  
yakubuma@wssu.edu



Dr. Jill Keith, Center Director  
Biomedical Research Infrastructure Center  
115 S. Chestnut Street, Room 271  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101  
336.750.2213, 336.761.5899  
harpij@wssu.edu

# NIGMS RISE Graduates 2022

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VOLUME 2, FINAL ISSUE



(Left) Janeva Wilson, received her BS degree in Psychology and will begin her graduate career at the University of Texas at Austin in their M.Ed program in Education Policy and Planning.

(Right) Kira Lanier, received her BS degree in Biology and will apply to graduate school in the fall of 2022. She is excited about continuing her lab work at WSSU to enhance her laboratory research portfolio.



(Left) Nichele Deese, is scheduled to receive her BS in Chemistry in December 2022 she will apply to graduate school at that time.

## NIGMS RISE Scholars 2021-2022



From left to right above: Mina Perez, Nichelle Deese, Janeva Wilson, Kira Lanier, Alex Chavez

From left to right below: Kira Lanier, Janeva Wilson, Alex Chavez, Nichelle Deese, Mina Perez







*“Increasing the participation of underrepresented minority (URM) students involved in biomedical/behavioral research”*

The National Institute of General Medical Services - Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (NIGMS-RISE) program at WSSU consists of a multi-stage training model, grooming underrepresented undergraduate students, starting in their freshman year and continuing through to their senior year, with the focus on increasing the number of students entering and completing graduate education in the biomedical sciences. The RISE program at WSSU has a primary focus on biomedical/behavioral sciences, combined with an approach of garnering incoming freshmen to participate in activities, aimed at maximizing the students' academic performance, helping with their professional development, as well as informing them of the benefits of pursuing research-related careers in the biomedical sciences. Students are trained to develop research laboratory skills and are exposed to the expectations of graduate-level education.

First Name	Last Name	Major	Academic Status
Nia	Blake	Computer Science	Senior
Alex	Chavez	Exercise Science	Junior
Nichele	Deese	Chemistry	Senior
Kira	Lanier	Biology	Senior
Mina	Perez	Chemistry	Sophomore
Janeva	Wilson	Psychology	Senior

BRIC Research “Where Science Is Infectious”



## SUMMER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE 2021

**Nichele Deese** worked with Dr. Guo in the Chemistry department. They continued his research of sulfur containing heterocycles. To finish the research project for sulfur containing heterocycles, they purified the compounds collected in Dr. Guo's Organic Chemistry 2 lab class for the CUR-TP project. The CUR-TP project infuses the Organic Chemistry 2 lab classes with experiments pertaining to the research projects of the Chemistry research faculty. The final synthesized compounds for the previous project were cataloged. The CUR-TP project was part of the previous research project of synthesizing sulfur containing heterocycles. Nichele is a senior chemistry major.

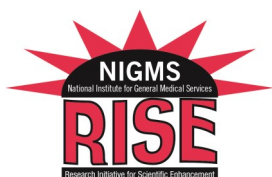
Synthesis of complex heterocyclic molecules, including both unnaturally and naturally occurring targets, has had tremendous impact on the development of chemistry, biology, and medicine. Sulfur containing heterocycles and selenium containing heterocycles are rich in biological activity. The goal is to develop efficient asymmetric carbon-carbon bond formation reactions for heterocycle synthesis.

The new research project using selenium consists of the same techniques and background information as Dr. Guo's research of sulfur containing heterocycles. Selenium is in the same group as sulfur on the periodic table. The new project is to synthesize various compounds containing selenium by using techniques that will greatly increase efficiency.

While participating in research on campus during the summer, Nichele attended the language departments STAR Talk program for Chinese immersion. She received a certificate of completion at the graduation ceremony held on campus. Join us in congratulating Nichele on her achievements during 2021 summer. She is a 2022 WSSU/R.I.S.E. graduate; we look forward to hearing of future endeavors.



Nichele Deese working on summer project in laboratory



The National Institute of General Medical Services - Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (NIGMS-RISE) program

*“Increasing the participation of underrepresented minority (URM) students involved in biomedical/behavioral research”*



BRIC Research “Where Science Is Infectious”

## SUMMER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE 2021



**Mina Perez (Left)** Summer 2020, took the initiative to apply for Howard University and Winston-Salem State University’s collaborative internship ‘Online Summer Research Experiences on Nanoparticles.’ She was able to learn the synthesis of nanoparticles, spectroscopy techniques, and multiscale simulations from quantum, atomistic, and continuum scales. She used various spectroscopic techniques including surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS) to detect chemicals and amino-acids. Mina also performed simulations for synthesis of gold and silver nanoparticles to be complexed by amino-acids and peptides.

## SPRING 2022 SEMINAR SERIES

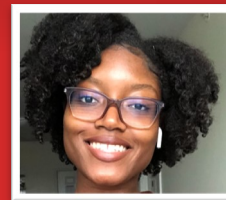
January 18	Opening Session, Welcome by R.I.S.E. Director Dr. Yakubu and Mrs. Alvita Byers
January 25	Bryan A. Wilson, PhD, MBA Senior Consultant - Clinical Science, Halloran Consulting Group, Inc. Talk Topic: <i>STEM Leading Edge: The Importance of Developing A Scientific Executive Mindset</i>
February 1	Kineka J Hull, PhD, MS, MSPH (Former BRIC Coordinator) Research Public Health Analyst, RTI International   Clinical Assistant Professor Talk Topic: <i>“Are you Marketable? Making space for your skillset and passion.”</i>
February 8	Jamila Green, MA (WSSU & MARC U*STAR Alum) Community Engagement Manager, YWCA Central Carolinas Talk Topic: <i>“Life After Undergrad.”</i>
February 15	Zipporah Foster, M.S. (WSSU & R.I.S.E. Alum) Operations and Recruitment Coordinator, Frankel Staffing Partners Talk Topic: <i>“Do's and Don'ts - The Post Grad. Journey”</i>
February 22	Closing Session remarks by Dr. Yakubu and Mrs. Alvita Byers, Graduating Senior’s Recognition

The purpose for the **Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students** is to move the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) forward, it's crucial that there is more diversity, which means the inclusion of minorities, veterans and people with disabilities working in these fields. The first ABRCMS hosted by ASM in 2001, was founded to encourage minority, first-generation, veteran, and disabled students to pursue higher education in STEM. Today, ABRCMS is one the largest professional conferences for underrepresented students. ABRCMS also provides program directors and faculty the tools they need to help their students succeed. Due to the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus the four-day conference was virtual. Below are some highlights:

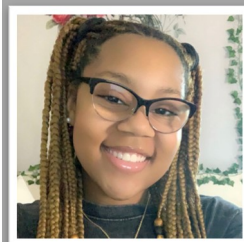
- ◆ 2,100 virtual presentations were given by undergraduate and postbaccalaureate students. 401 awards were given to presenters for exceptional ePoster presentations. Zoom scientific and professional development sessions which included 'virtual chat' sessions for students. Over 400 virtual exhibit booths for networking and mentoring opportunities. Zoom plenary speakers, conference programming tracks for undergraduates, graduates & postdoctoral scientists, and non-students
- ◆ Three R.I.S.E. students presented at the 2021 Virtual ABRCMS event, they are showcased below.

#### Nichele Deese, Senior Chemistry Major

I presented a poster on The Synthesis of Thiochromones via the Intramolecular Friedel- Crafts Acylation Reactions at ABRCMS 2021. Friedel- Crafts Acylation reaction is a useful technique used to add an acyl group to the benzene ring and in expanding aromatic compounds into larger molecules. The project investigated intramolecular Friedel crafts acylation for the synthesis of sulfur containing heterocycles-thiochromones. Friedel- Crafts Acylation is a useful technique for the yield of two component coupling heterocycles and also prevents further acylations. The electronic effects on the intramolecular Friedel- Crafts Acylations were investigated. 3-(4-fluorophenylthio)propanoic acid underwent intramolecular Friedel crafts isolation smoothly to deliver the desired sulfur containing heterocycles-thiochroman-4-ones. The electronic effects on the intramolecular Friedel- Crafts acylation showed that electron withdrawing groups and donating groups work well while electron donating groups had higher chemical yields that were observed and the electron withdrawing group offering lower chemical yields, which was all consistent with what we learn in the lab textbook. This research was added into the curriculum for organic chemistry II lab as part of the CUR-TP project. The CUR-TP project connects faculty research activities to the curriculum. Our yields were affected by the participants in the CUR-TP project having no experience or varying levels of experience in organic synthesis. I gave thanks to WSSU as well as the NIGMS RISE and the NSF HBCU-UP for their generous financial support.



#### Kira Lanier, Senior Biology Major



I presented on "Rats' Reliance on Episodic Memory and Familiarity." Animal models of memory are easily manipulated to provide valuable insight into psychological and physiological interactions. Rodents are specifically useful in studying memory in humans. Therefore, the advancement of episodic memory in rats can lead to the advancement of episodic memory research for humans, especially in neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease. To get a better understanding of this research, I participated in a summer research internship at Indiana University in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences. My research focused on animal models of cognition and the impairment of cognitive processes. The specific project aimed to study episodic memory and/or relative familiarity cognitive processes in non-diagnostic trials from olfactory memory assessments. The objective was to evaluate accuracy in diagnostic and non-diagnostic memory assessments in order to investigate contributions of episodic memory and familiarity in non-diagnostic trials. I want to say thank you to the NIGMS RISE for making my research possible.

#### Mina Perez, Sophomore Chemistry Major

I presented on "Molecular Structure and Properties of Heterocyclic Compound: Quinolone." Under the guidance of Dr. Yi, Mina was able to conduct research that consisted of substituting the carbon atom with a nitrogen atom to determine if the molecular structure of Quinolone would improve its bioavailability or bioactivity of the molecule. To further investigate, the newly substituted Quinolone AB initio theoretical methods were used for simulation of the ground (S0) state, and the configuration interaction singlet (CIS) method for the excited (S1) state in order to obtain the lowest conformational isomer. Significant structural changes were found in the molecule when excited to the higher energy level.

Physical chemistry was used to determine the excitation of electrons by using Frontier Molecular Orbitals Platt notation. I was able to formulate my research opportunities by incorporating theoretical and computational research. I want to thank the NIGMS RISE grant funding for making my research possible.





## Alex Chavez, Exercise Science Major

Title: "Using Quantum Espresso to determine Silicon and Carbon Lattice Constants"

Discipline: Biological and Physical Science



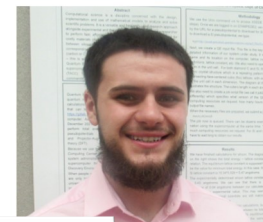
Alex Chavez presenting research



Alex Chavez presenting research



Alex Chavez presenting research

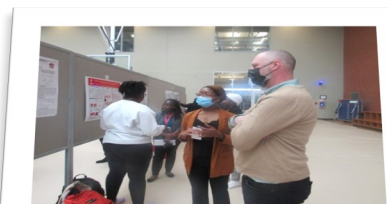


Alex Chavez Exercise Science

## Nichele Deese, Chemistry Major

Poster Title: The Synthesis of Thiochromones via the Intramolecular Friedel- Crafts Acylation Reactions

Discipline: Biological and Physical Science



Nichele Deese presenting research



Nichele Deese presenting research



Nichele Deese presenting research



Nichele Deese Chemistry

## Kira Lanier, Biology Major

Title of Poster: Rats' Reliance on Episodic Memory and Familiarity

Discipline: Biological and Physical Science



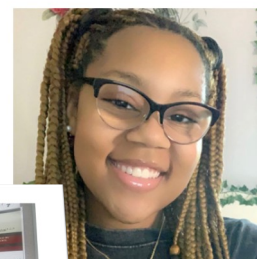
Kira Lanier presenting research



Kira Lanier presenting research



Kira Lanier presenting research

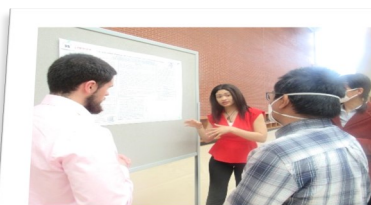


Kira Lanier Biology

## Mina Perez, Chemistry Major

Topic: "Using Quantum Espresso to determine Silicon and Carbon Lattice Constants"

Discipline: Biological and Physical Science



Mina Perez presenting research



Mina Perez and Alex Chavez presenting research



Mina Perez Chemistry

# Where Are They Now?

## MARC & MARC Affiliate Graduates:

**Tierra (Rudd) Terry, MA** is presently the head coach for Virginia Union University's Women's Basketball Program. She was part of the RIMI grant program which was housed in the Biomedical Research Infrastructure Center.

**Shalonda (Dr. Lonz) Ingram, PhD** is a Postdoc- Neuropharmacologist-Scientist at Vanderbilt Univ. She was part of RIMI grant program, which was housed in the Biomedical Research Infrastructure Center.

**April Harris,** is currently a Cytogenetic Technologist at Atrium Health. She was part of RIMI grant program, which was housed in the Biomedical Research Infrastructure Center.

**Antentor Hinton, Jr., PhD** is a Assistant Professor at Vanderbilt University.

**James Johnson, PhD** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis.

**Lassiter Speller, PhD** is a Assistant Professor of Psychology at Eastern New Mexico University

**Tempestt J. Evans, DDS** is a General Dental Practitioner. She is currently the Director of the Mashpee Wampanoag Indian Health Service Dental Clinic.

**Jasmine Richardson, PharmD** is a Pharmacy Manager at Walgreens.

**Ramine Alexander, MA, PhD** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences in the College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences at A & T University.

**Ashley Taylor, PhD** is a Senior Scientist - Products Research Haircare at Procter & Gamble

**Samantha Rae, EdD, MPH** is Owner and Chief Executive Officer of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion DSRD Consulting.

**Jacqueline Jackson, MS** is a Production Scientist for Promega.

**Kamedra McNeil, MA** is a Forensic Scientist II at the DC Department of Forensic Science in Washington, D.C. She is also the Chief Interior Designer- Meme's Moxie | Realtor- Murrell Inc.

**Jamila Green, MA** received her Master's Degree, in Community Social Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Currently she is the Community Engagement Manager for YWCA Central Carolinas.

**Ashley Moore** is Clinical Studies Coordinator.

**Manuela Rigaud, MA, BSN** is a Staff Nurse at NYU Langone Health.

**Jatyra Rivers, MSPH** is a Team Lead, Project Management at Sermo.

**Joab Odera, PhD** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Duke University.

**Domonique (Battle) Koomson, MS** is a PA-S2 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Co-Chair, NCAPA

**Ashlee Clark, MS** received a Master's degree in Biomedical Sciences and Neuroscience at Wake Forest University Health Sciences.

**Edie Pettiford, MS** is a Specimen Accessioner for LabCorp.

**Keren (Pereda) Ferris, MPH** She is a Clinical Research Manager at Wake Forest Baptist Health.

**Tari Cox, MA** is currently a Sr. Market Research Analyst at Honest Data, Inc.

**Amari Lewis, PhD** is currently a Sociable Computer Scientist at the University of California San Diego.

**Jason Riley, LMSW** is currently a Clinical Social Worker and the Diversion Assessment Specialist at Assured Family Services.

**Shaina Yates, PhD** received her PhD May 2021 from Wake Forest University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. She is currently a General Science Manager.

**Lanazha Belfield** is currently a Molecular and Translational Scientist 5th Year PhD Candidate Yale Ciencia Academy Cohort 2021-2022.

**Beverly Dosso, MS** is currently CLIA Certified Quality Assurance Specialist at Curative.

**Anne Lenzo, MS** is currently a junior Embryologist. She received her Master's degree from Northwestern University.

**Tiffany Dean** is currently in the Masters program in biology at NC A&T. She is a scholar of The North Carolina Translational and Clinical Sciences (NC TraCS) Institute at NC A&T. Upon completion she anticipates applying to the NC A&T PhD program.

# Where Are They Now?

## RISE Graduates:

**Kiara Vann, PhD** is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at CSEO at Vanderbilt University.

**Taylor Harris** is currently in her Fifth year in the PhD program at the University of South Florida in Tampa with her area of focus is Analytical Chemistry.

**Remi Royal, MA** received a double Master's degree one in Psychology and Integrative Biology and the second in Secondary Education with certification Biology. She is currently a Biology Teacher at Lincoln Heights Academy.

**Kimberly Hunter, MA** is currently the Assistant Director of Graduate College Data Analytics at University of Illinois at Chicago.

**Ejiroghene Arhagba, MA** is currently a Senior Chemist at Arizona Polymer Flooring.

**Dr. Anthony Dixon, MS** Is an Occupational Therapist, practicing in North Carolina.

**Ebone Evans, MD** is a Resident Physician at the University of Minnesota.

**Georges Guillaume, MD** is currently an Ophthalmology Resident at the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinic.

**Ashley Tucker, MA** is currently a Recapitalization Transaction Specialist at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**Victoria Sedwick, MS** received her Master's degree in Biomedical Sciences and is currently a PhD candidate in the Biomedical Sciences PhD program at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

**Khala Clemons, MS** is currently a Clinical Research Recruitment Advisor.

**Eric Pridgen, MA** is currently a Associate Senior Analyst for Mercer.

**Zipporah Foster, MS** is currently an Operations and Recruitment Coordinator for Frankel Staffing.

**Sierra Sledge MPH, CHES** is currently the Director of Health Education at Hemophilia of Georgia.

**Thomas Fair** is currently a graduate student at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM).

**Nataleigh Austin** is currently a Pharmacy student at Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy.

**Nmyia Collins** is currently a Registered Behavior Technician.

**Zakayla Hamilton** is currently a Treasury Chief Financial Officer Intern.

**Dexter Perkins** is currently in the Masters of Science Pre-Health Program at Wake Forest University. Also, President of Better Health Research Clinic, LLC.

**Dustin Sellars** is currently in the Masters of Science Pre-Health Program at Wake Forest University. Also, President at MAD Scientist Research Lab, LLC.

**T'ea Cameron** is currently in the Chemistry & Biochemistry PhD Program at UNC-Greensboro.

**Tyler Chisolm** is currently in the Masters of Science in Population Health Sciences Program at Duke University. Also, President, The Life Shop, LLC

**Timothy Nixon** is currently in the Cancer and Cell Biology PhD Program at the University of Cincinnati.

**Tania Bellinger** is currently a PhD candidate in the Pharmacology PhD Program at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

**Sheldon Smith** is currently in the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program here at Winston-Salem State University.

**Kamiya Bridges** is currently in a postbac position with the National Institute of Health.

**Erica Weaver, MS** is currently a Clinical Studies Coordinator 1 at Wake Forest Baptist Health.

**Ayanna Brooks** is currently in the PhD Program at Delaware State University.

**Dynasty Parker** is currently in the Chemistry and Biochemistry PhD Program at the University of Texas at Dallas

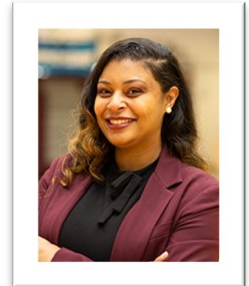
**Lakhia Fuller** is currently a DVM graduate student at the North Carolina College of Veterinary Medicine in Raleigh, NC.

**Nia Blake** is currently in the Master's of Science Program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.



# Where Are They Now?

Virginia Union University's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and Community Wellness has named **Tierra Terry** as the ninth head coach in the history of the VUU Women's Basketball Program on June 16, 2020. "Coach Terry is the right coach to continue the winning spirit of our Lady Panthers Basketball program," said Athletic Director Felicia Johnson '02. "Our goal is to grow our student athletes to be successful in the classroom and on the court," said Joe Taylor, Vice President of Intercollegiate Athletics and Community Wellness. "Coach Terry will keep our program competitive and we look forward to celebrating many championships under her direction." She was the first of our RIMI grant participants to matriculate into a master's program and excel in the area of athletics.



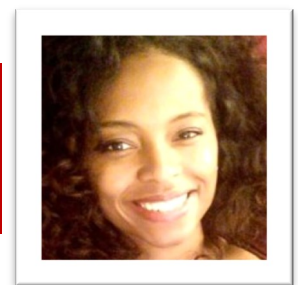
Tierra Terry



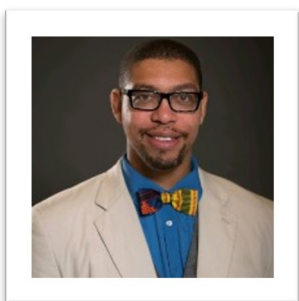
Shalonda (Dr. Lonz) Ingram, PhD

**Shalonda (Dr. Lonz) Ingram, PhD**, defended her thesis in September 2021 and is currently a Postdoctoral Research Associate at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Lonz was part of the first RIMI grant program student group at the BRIC. She came full circle in receiving her undergraduate degree in Biology at WSSU and then defended her PhD thesis at the PTCRC Bldg in the BRIC Core Lab.

**April Harris**, is currently a Cytogenetic Technologist at Atrium Health. She helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine that is used world-wide. She was one of the first of our RIMI grant program student group to advance to genetic research.



April Harris

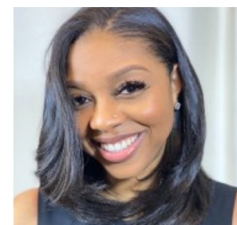


Antentor "A.J." Hinton, Jr., PhD

**Antentor "A.J." Hinton, Jr., PhD**, is currently an Assistant Professor at Vanderbilt University. He has received three awards earned in just the past month. Hinton, who is currently a Burroughs Wellcome Fund and Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow, has recently secured a Visiting Postdoctoral Fellow Appointment at Mayo Clinic, where he conducts research in collaboration with Dr. Jeffrey Salisbury. Dr. Salisbury a world-renowned cell biologist who runs Mayo's Central Microscopy Core. He was also awarded the UNCF and Bristol-Myers Squibb Ernest E. Just Postgraduate Fellowship in the Life Sciences. Named in honor of pioneering African-American biologist, academic, and science writer Dr. Ernest Everett Just—one of the most prominent African American scientists of the twentieth century. Finally, in recognition of the inclusive community Hinton cultivates in the Abel Lab, the UI's Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity in the Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has awarded him a 2019–2020 Diversity Catalyst Award.

# Where Are They Now?

**Samantha-Rae Dickenson, EdD, MPH**, also known as, 'Dr. Sam Rae' is a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) strategist. She led the development of the DEI Strategy for Goodwill Industries International and supported over 156 Retail Goodwill stores across North America. Dr. Sam served as the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Principal Strategist for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In her role as Principal Strategist, she managed the Black Employee Portfolio during the global crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. She has also worked as a consultant to develop Save the Children's first-ever 3-year DEI Strategy in 2019. As a Senior Accreditation Specialist, she assessed compliance with accreditation policies related to cultural competency, diversity and inclusion, and financial planning for public health graduate and undergraduate schools/programs. Her work has been featured in Forbes, and she has been a guest on the Roland Martin show. She was a panelist on the General Assembly's 'Womxn at Work series and Consciously Unbiased's breaking down bias. Dr. Sam received her certificate in Diversity & Inclusion from Cornell University. She was the youngest graduate from the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program at UNE, where she received her doctorate in Education. Her research focused on the effects of racial microaggressions on Black female government workers' work performance and methods to reduce microaggressions in the workplace. Her research has led her to include Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome, intersectionality, and unconscious bias in her research.



Samantha-Rae Dickenson, EdD, MPH



Lassiter Speller, PhD

**Lassiter Speller, PhD**, is currently an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the Eastern New Mexico University. While attending The Ohio State University, he received the Fall 2009 – Summer 2010 Graduate Enrichment Fellowship, was awarded the Summer of 2011 the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Fellowship, achieved a Fellowship in the Department of Psychology Fall 2009 – Summer 2015. He was an awardee of the Fall 2016 - Summer 2018 NSF Grant Research Assistantship.

The Mashpee Wampanoag Indian Health Service Dental Clinic reopened last month under the new direction of **Dr. Tempestt Evans, DDS**. Improving oral health in her community is a top priority for Dr. Evans. As a citizen of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, she is excited to give back and advance the oral health of the Mashpee Wampanoag as well as that of other federally recognized tribal members.



Dr. Tempestt Evans, DDS

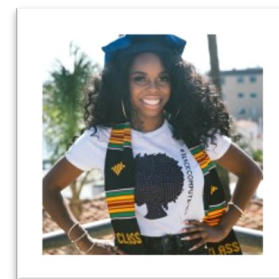


Tania Bellinger

March 2022 **Tania Bellinger** officially became a doctoral candidate in the UNC Pharmacology Program. Tania was a RISE chemistry major.

# Where Are They Now?

**Amari N. Lewis, PhD**, was awarded in April 2021 the Best Paper Award at the 7th International Conference on Vehicular Technology and Intelligent Transportation Systems; *B-ETS: A Trusted Blockchain-Based Emissions Trading System For Vehicle-To-Vehicle Networks*. During her graduate studies she was selected by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research as a 2018 Fellow, along with the GEM PhD Associate Fellowship. In 2017 she was awarded the LSAMP Bridge to Doctorate Fellowship. In April 2022 Dr. Lewis became a member of the Association for Computing Machinery.



Amari N. Lewis, PhD



Kiara T. Vann, PhD

**Kiara T. Vann, PhD**, while working on her PhD she received the REHSS Co-Program Directorship in 2022. She was the 2021-2022 Society for Science Advocate Program Awardee, along with the Society for Science Mini-Grant. She was named among the 1,000 inspiring Black Scientists in America 2020.

Dr. Vann was an Invited Researcher in the Multimodality Short Course at the Athinoula A. Martinos Center for Biomedical Imaging, in Charlestown, Massachusetts in 2016. She was a Graduate Reviewer on the panel of the SRCO Special Topics Meeting on Technology & Media in Children in 2016. She was also a sponsored guest through the Fulbright

Association at the 38th Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA. The 2015 NEURAL Conference chose her for a travel award recipient at the University of Alabama-Birmingham. She received the 2013 Outstanding Achievement in Biochemistry Award, presented at Morehouse School of Medicine. Dr. Vann is also first author on the below scientific publications:

Publisher: Behavioural Brain Research. Volume 337, 30 January 2018, Pages 246-251 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.bbr.2017.09.014>. **Kiara T. Vann** and Zhigang Xiong. "Acid-sensing ion channel 1 contributes to normal olfactory function."

Optogenetics in Studies of Neurodegenerative Diseases. Publisher: Int J Physiol Pathophysiol Pharmacol. 2016 Apr 25;8(1):1-8. eCollection 2016. Review. **Kiara T. Vann** and Zhigang Xiong



Lanazha Belfield

**Lanazha Belfield**, is currently a Molecular and Translational Scientist 5th Year PhD Candidate and has been selected for the Yale Ciencia Academy Cohort for 2021-2022.

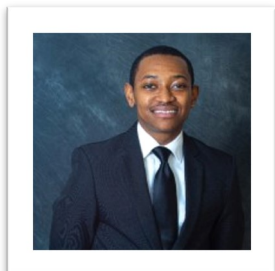


Ashley Taylor, PhD

**Ashley Taylor, PhD**, was featured in an article published by her alma mater Louisiana State University for her work at Johnson & Johnson as a senior analyst. The article commended Dr. Taylor for, "Helping shape and define promotional best practices to reach revenue targets for brands within J&J."



# Where Are They Now?



Tyler Chisolm

Since graduating from Winston-Salem State University, **Tyler Chisolm** is a fellow in the Race and Professions Fellowship in the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University. He is a Research Assistant in the department of Population Health Sciences at Duke School of Medicine.

**Prestigious research society recognizes NIEHS trainee Kamiya Bridges, who studies reproductive and developmental biology at the institute, is making the most of her opportunities.**

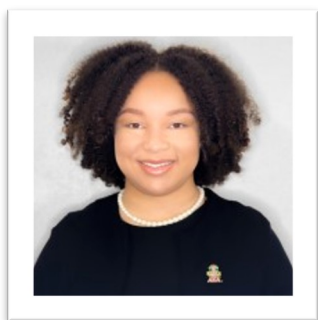
NIEHS postbaccalaureate fellow **Kamiya Bridges** has received a 2021 Burroughs Wellcome Travel Fellowship for Underrepresented Minority Trainees and Junior Faculty from the Society for the Study of Reproduction (SSR). The award comes with \$1,200 to attend the SSR annual meeting Dec. 15-18 in St. Louis, Missouri. The theme of the conference is "Reproductive Biology: Solutions for Adult Disease." Bridges will present a poster, virtually and in person, on her work, which examines links between the protein RUNX1 and ovarian cancer. She plans to attend a trainee-mentor luncheon as well as sessions on reproductive cancer and growing tissues and organs in vitro. "This will be my first professional conference in person," said Bridges, who works in the NIEHS Reproductive Developmental Biology Group, which is led by Humphrey Yao, Ph.D. "I'm really excited about meeting people in the field," she added. "I've gained a lot of confidence at NIEHS, and I'm excited about what the future holds," said Bridges.

## A quick study who shows initiative

"I'm not surprised that she earned this award — she truly deserves it," noted Barbara Nicol, Ph.D., who has mentored Bridges at NIEHS. "It will give her a tremendous first experience in a major international meeting." Bridges, who grew up in Charlotte, North Carolina, and attended Winston Salem State University, said coming to NIEHS in 2020 was a big transition. Please join us in congratulating Kamiya on such a great achievement.



Kamiya Bridges



Ariana Baker

After graduation 2021 **Ariana Baker**, completed a Cancer Biology internship via Wake Forest Baptist Health. She is currently employed with ProPharma Group as a Pharmacovigilance Specialist.