



U-ENGAGE 2024-2025 YEAR END HIGHLIGHTS

Undergraduate Academic Engagement



A Year of Growth, Exploration, and Impact

As we wrap up another incredible year, I'm excited to share the momentum and milestones we've achieved in Undergraduate Academic Engagement at UNC. Our programs continue to foster curiosity, leadership, and real-world impact across disciplines, creating a vibrant community of learners and leaders. Under our umbrella are diverse, cross-disciplinary programs that shape students into scholars and changemakers. These include:

- Honors Program
- Interdisciplinary Studies: Student-Designed B.A.
- Leadership Studies
- McNair Scholars Research Program
- Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Works
- National Scholarships and Fellowships
- ROTC Programs – Military Science & Aerospace Studies

This year, our signature event—the Student Showcase of Artists and Scholars—was a huge success, bringing together 245 student presenters from every UNC college. The Honors Program remains our largest and fastest-growing initiative, reaching a record-high 356 students—a 10% increase from last year. Across all U-Engage programs, we're thrilled to celebrate 56 graduating seniors whose achievements reflect the depth and diversity of our academic community. We're also proud to partner with programs like the revitalized President's Leadership Program and the Daniels Scholars, all of whom will be honored at our annual U-Engage Banquet.

Success at U-Engage goes far beyond academics. Our students are deeply engaged in their communities, applying their knowledge through service, leadership, and experiential learning. We recognize just a few of these outstanding students through the Director's Civic Engagement Awards and the Phelps Family C.A.P. Award—but their stories represent a much broader wave of impact.

On a personal note, one of the year's most rewarding projects for me was helping launch our very first Honors Program faculty-led study abroad course. Thanks to a Schulze grant and the vision of Dr. Sara Hendrick, we offered an "International Business in Greece" course that culminated in a Spring Break trip abroad. With generous support from donor Paul Heidger, we provided full and partial scholarships for 12 students—many of whom had never traveled internationally before. In total, 16 students participated, and we're incredibly grateful to the Office of Global Engagement for helping bring this opportunity to life. Looking ahead, we're already planning next year's study abroad "Olympics in

Society" with a Spring Break trip to Italy in Spring 2026. Stay tuned!

To our students, families, faculty, staff, and generous supporters—thank you.

Loree Crow, Executive Director, Undergraduate Academic Engagement

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U-ENGAGE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Undergraduate Academic Engagement ("U-Engage") Faculty Advisory Council ("FAC") includes faculty who provide leadership and feedback on curriculum and programming for the Honors Program, McNair Scholars Research Program, & Office of Undergraduate Research. The FAC provides feedback and guidance in developing and revising the curriculum requirements and new courses for programs that are housed in Undergraduate Academic Engagement.



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Michael Kimball,
College of Humanities &
Social Sciences



George Junne
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Business



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College of Natural and
Health Sciences



Angela Vaughan
College of Education and
Behavioral Sciences;
UNIV101 Coordinator



Janice Dickensheets
College of Performing
and Visual Arts; Editor of
Undergraduate Research
Journal



Thomas Endres
College of Humanities
& Social Sciences;
Leadership Studies
faculty representative



Sara Hendrick
Monfort College of
Business, Honors
Instructor
Representative



Jordan Garcia
McNair Scholars
Research Program
Assistant Director and
Instructor



Clare Bolon
Student Representative;
Student Honors Council
President

Ex-Officio Members: Loree Crow, Executive Director for U-Engage, Krista Cauffman, Director McNair Scholars Research Program, Sheridan Snapp, Student Affairs Assistant Director Scholarships and Leadership (PLP Program Representative)

HONORS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

The Honors Ambassador Program is an initiative that was started in the Spring 2024 semester. The purpose of the program is to connect new Honors students, both First Year and transfer students, with more seasoned Honors students. There is a lot to navigate when starting college, so we wanted to create a support system for new students where they had people they could reach out to with questions and for advice about the Honors program and UNC as a whole.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, our ambassadors not only helped support new Honors students, but they have also assisted in our recruitment initiatives over the course of the year. We are thankful for our 2024-2025 Honors Ambassadors and are excited for the future of this program!



Dominik Valouch



Jordan Brownhill



Evyenia Gillen



Lindsey Faehrich



Indigo Peppard

U-ENGAGE ACTIVITIES



HONORS CONNECT

The UNC Honors Program is firmly grounded in the concept of holistic student development. Honors Connect is an integral part of the Honors Program as it offers fantastic opportunities for students to connect with their communities. Within the program, we offer a number of workshops and events each year. These events can help students develop socially and emotionally, expose them to new skills and concepts, and provide knowledge that cannot necessarily be found in a classroom. This year through Honors Connect, students learned about the college "hidden curriculum", important ways to manage political anxiety, how to dance the Shim Sham, and so much more. Thank you to all the students who showed up to these events and participated. Your support and enthusiasm meant the world!

WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

FALL 2024

- Best Kept Secrets of College
- Managing Political Anxiety
- Coffee with the Profs
- Disturbing the Peace film
- Colloquium: Building the Peace - Dialogue as process for Conflict Transformation
- Graduate School Workshop Series

SPRING 2025

- Queer Representation in TV & Film
- Shim Sham with Samantha Finken
- Financial Literacy Workshop with Dr. Berlinda Saenz
- From Surviving to Thriving in the 21st Century: A colloquium with Dr. Chelsie Romulo and Dr. Mike Kimball
- TED-ish Talks

EVENT SPOTLIGHT: TED-ISH TALKS

TED-ish Talks is a unique event where Honors/U-Engage students share their passions and interests with their peers. This semester's awesome line-up included:

- Instinct Over Intellect by Amber Rogers (keynote speech)
- "Spending" My Time: A Year in 17,520 Cells by Dominik Valouch
- Basics of Aquaponics by Isabella Strader
- Breaking the Myth: How Lifting Weights Transforms Women's Bodies by Katie Gruwell
- My Broken Dancing Heart by Jorie Burnes

POINTS

Each event is worth Honors Connect points, which can get students additional perks. Here are the points benchmarks that students can achieve:

- **1 Point:** Eligible to complete First Year and Capstone Honors
- **5 Points:** Eligible to apply for Honors scholarships + gets a free swag item
- **10 Points:** Eligible for Priority Registration
- **15+ Points:** Receive Exclusive Honors Reusable Tote Bag

HONORS ACTIVITIES

STUDENT HONORS ACTIVITIES COUNCIL (SHAC)

SHAC's mission is to build the Honors community through fun, relaxing, and supportive events. The Student Honors Activity Council (SHAC) had an exciting year of activities and involvement. Fall 2024 welcomed new officers in leadership with Clare Bolon as President, Casey Moran as Vice President, Bella Petramala as Secretary, Parker Coffelt as Treasurer, Alyssa Baker as the Student Outreach Chair, Anwei Forgues as the Fundraising Chair, and Lily Myers as SHAC's Advisor.

Fall activities included a Bob Ross paint along, a poetry slam night, a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu self-defense workshop, and SHAC's annual Fall bake sale fundraiser. The executive officers for SHAC have adjusted to their positions well and have been creating a welcoming and friendly environment at SHAC's weekly meetings. Lujan and Brown Halls' Residential Assistant, Maren German, frequently attends the meetings to provide ideas and assistance to SHAC events. Alison Larson also joined as a general body member, sharing her experience and ideas with the group. Spring brought more fun activities, starting with a Crafternoon session to kick off the semester. A Spring-cleaning presentation was given to help students new to the housing experience prepare for moving out. Throughout the whole year, SHAC ran a book club, run by Bella in the Fall and Alyssa in the Spring. Finally, SHAC finished off the year by helping with the Honors banquet and running our annual goodie basket silent auction.



SHAC OFFICERS



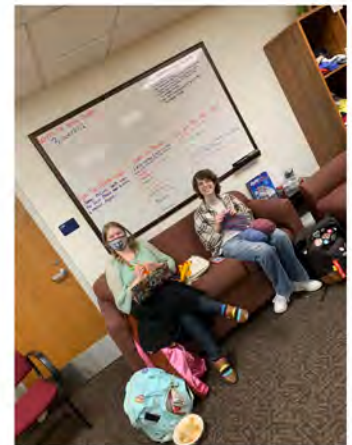
President
Clare Bolon



Vice President
Casey Moran



Treasurer
Parker Coffelt



Secretary
Bella Petramala



Student Outreach Chair
Alyssa Baker



Fundraising Chair
Anwei Forgues



Advisor
Lily Myers



FIRST YEAR HONORS EXPERIENCE

ABOUT THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

First Year Experience, within the University Honors Program, offers incoming students interdisciplinary analytical skills and academic groundwork within a supportive cohort, integrating seamlessly with their regular studies. Through Honors Connect, students interact with faculty and peers beyond the classroom, enhancing their holistic educational experience.

MEET VENN

Venn Ludchack has always been an academically inclined individual, so when they first did research on UNC, they knew it was the perfect college to suit their needs. Shortly after, they discovered the Honors Program, and they knew they would fit in. In high school, Venn was very involved in three honors societies, many academic extracurricular activities, Advanced Placement and Honors classes, and more, so they wanted to continue getting involved after graduating. They graduated with a 3.95 weighted GPA and knew they were destined for higher education. One of the most prominent factors in deciding on a college to commit to was the Honors Program that UNC offered, as Venn could continue their involvement at the university and live in a residential living community on campus with other like-minded individuals. When they first got to college, they were a nervous freshman who had their life completely changed, but they quickly warmed up to the campus and started to make new friends, many of whom are in the Honors Program. As the semester progressed, Venn learned a lot about the various events being hosted by honors; they could attend events that interested them and explore new areas. Venn has really enjoyed being in the Honors Program so far, especially with the Research project in University 101. Venn loves that they can continue to be an academic scholar and have many open opportunities, including additional scholarships and leadership experience. They are eternally grateful to everyone they have met so far and the support system they have. Venn plans on continuing with Honors until they graduate because they feel at home here. Being in Honors was one of the best choices Venn could have made.

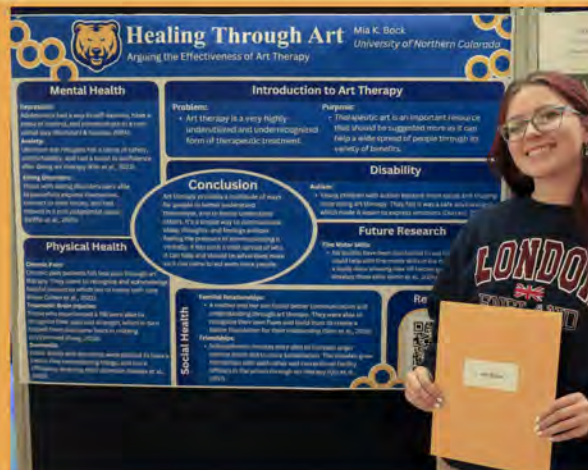


CONGRATS FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE COMPLETERS

Praise Akpokiere
Hazel Anderson
Maelyn Barber
Brandi Bassett
Nat Beaumont
Mia Bock
Kate Bosch
Kate Byrne
Mylee Cross
Hailey Cuevas
Lilly Curtis
Reagan Dantzer
Skylar Endes
Kate Farnham
Geraldine Garcia Castellanos
Olivia Guerrero
Westen Hanes
Dexter Hanna
Lilyrose Hill
Jallia Johnson
Arrow Jones
Elizabeth Joseph
Nora Kamholz
Eryn Kelly
Nicole Lague
Kyle Landwehr
Wyatt Lindell
Venn Ludchack
Lindsay Luger
Tivoli Martinez
Echo McLeod
Taylor Mearing
Braden Mease
AJ Melgoza
Olivia Moad-Estrada
Jamie Murphy
Connor O'Brian
Abby Peebles
Taylor Pumphrey
Alia Roberts
Jackson Rohleder
Ella Rosa
Aqira Rouillard-Maldonado
Ava Salz
Melesse Sanders
Ava Schrag
Brendan Scruggs
Payton Shelley
Riley Simmons
Emerson Smith
Isobel Sprenger
Isabella Strader
Eden Trujillo
Savannah Tuck
Audrey Vannelli
Trinity Vidal
Zoe Wiley
Liv Willers
Alili Zucker

UNIV101 POSTER WINNERS FROM HONORS

- Mia Bock: 1st
- Westen Hanes: 1st
- Tivoli Martinez: 2nd
- Evelyn Lo: 2nd
- Ashley Clement: 3rd



UNIVERSITY HONORS

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

The University Honors Program was launched last year as a revamp of our previous two-tier program. The program nurtures exceptional students with enriched courses, research opportunities, faculty support, and peer community, fostering a culture of academic excellence and recognition. It encourages students to elevate their academic standards, fostering critical thinking, independent learning, and engagement in research or creative projects.

MEET RYAN

Joining the University Honors Program started out as a personal challenge for Psychology major, Ryan Shinazy, something to prove he was serious about learning and ready to push himself. Over time, that challenge became something deeper. The program's high expectations encouraged Ryan to take more control over his education and think hard about what it means to really add something new to the field of psychology. One of the biggest turning points for Ryan was doing the literature review for his honors thesis.



It was tough at first, not just because of the workload, but because it meant shifting from simply learning to actually contributing. That experience changed the way Ryan saw academic work and gave him more confidence in his own ideas and academic contributions. Classes like HON 351 also made a big impact. Hearing different perspectives challenged Ryan's thinking and reminded him that the best ideas often come from combining different points of view. Balancing Honors work with regular classes was not always easy for Ryan. The open-ended, self-driven nature of the University Honors Program required strong time management and the ability to handle uncertainty. But it also helped Ryan build skills he might not have developed in a more traditional program, like staying committed to a long-term project and learning to adapt when things got messy. Along the way, support from mentors made a big difference. Faculty like Dr. James Kole helped turn big ideas into real projects, and program leaders like Loree Crow and Corinne Wieben offered both practical advice and much-needed encouragement during tough moments. Looking back, Ryan's advice to others is simple: know why you want to join Honors, because it does take effort and planning. But if you enjoy learning, value independence, and want to grow in unexpected ways, the program might be exactly what you're looking for. As he put it, "It's a marathon, not just a résumé bullet point. Some of us finish not because we had to, but because we could."

SPOTLIGHT ON CONFLUENCE OF CULTURES: COSTUME & IDENTITY (HON182)

From Clare Bolon, Honors Program Student and Honors Council President

Dr. Endres does a phenomenal job at engaging students by apply critical thinking and communication skills to the topic of cosplay and clothing. He works hard every class to make sure discussion can be open and inclusive for all student voices. Many times discussing ways students can use communication to connect with others. The assignments seem to be enjoyable, with group presentations that have class involvement before the lecture portion. The required reading, *My Costume, Myself* written by Dr. Endres does a fantastic job of discussing the various avenues of cosplay and dress that people can choose to wear, either for special occasions or daily life. I have greatly enjoyed auditing this class and am grateful for the opportunity for continuing to acquire knowledge of clothing and the art of dressing.

HONORS COURSES 2024-25

ELECTIVES

- UNIV 101: University 101 Honors sections with Dr. Angela Vaughan and UNIV 101 Instructors
- HON 180: Great Ideas in Context: "Love, Death & Destruction: Legacies of Industrialization through Cold War" with Instructor Nakeeza Wilson
- HON 180: Great Ideas in Context: Endurance of Transitory Narrative: Spoken, Lived, and Printed Stories with Instructor Andrew Meyer
- HON 182: Confluence of Cultures: Costume & Identity with Dr. Tom Endres
- HON 200: Honors Connections Seminar II: Cultures of Consciousness with Dr. Mike Kimball
- HON 395: Honors Special Topics: Sultans, Eunuchs & Harems with Dr. George Junne
- HON 395: Navigating International Business in Greece with Dr. Sara Hendrick
- HON 395: Honors Special Topics: Healthcare in the Holocaust with Dr. Darcy Copeland
- HON 492: Honors Internship or Study Abroad
- LEAD 200: Strategic Leadership with Instructor Trish Jolly

CAPSTONE

- LIB 251: "Research as Inquiry" with Prof. Rachel Dineen (FA24) or Dr. Annie Epperson (SP25)
- HON 351: "Honors Project Design" with Dr. Corinne Wieben
- HON 451: "Honors Research Thesis" with Dr. Corinne Wieben

HONORS ABROAD

HON 395 NAVIGATING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS IN GREECE

For Raegan Dantzer, studying abroad in Greece was more than just taking classes at another college course—it was an opportunity to fully immerse herself in a new culture. “It seemed more immersive, interactive, and educational to me,” she shared. Though initially nervous, Raegan said the experience “exceeded my expectations... I had the time of my life.” One of her most meaningful memories? “Sitting on the beach for hours talking to classmates I had never talked to before... now I have new friends,” she recalled.

The trip also reshaped her vision for the future. “I really enjoyed the smaller town of Napflio,” she said. “The community feel, the walkability, and the slower pace of life... I would love to live in a place like that.” Her visit to an electricity company in Greece confirmed her passion for sustainability. “Talking to the marketing manager about how he uses his career to push green vehicles was inspiring. It was amazing to hear and very motivating in terms of where I want my future career to go.”

But it wasn’t without challenges. “It is challenging to be in another space with a language you do not know,” she admitted. And as someone who thrives on structure, “the biggest challenge was letting myself just live in the moment.” Still, she encourages other students to take the leap. “Go for it! Take the chances to explore the smaller, less touristy areas... they are the best. And go in with no expectations so it is the best trip of your life.”

HON 395 was taught by Dr. Sara Hendrick Assistant Professor of Management and organized through the Office of Global Engagement and included a 7 day trip to Athens and Naplio, Grece over Spring Break. 75% of the students received significant funding through the Barbara Heidger International Travel Awards.



RESEARCH ABROAD: ALISON IN GHANA

When Anthropology major Alison Larson set out to explore the relationship between dance, music, and community in Ghana, her journey began not in a classroom, but in a local drumming circle in Fort Collins. What started as a casual research idea soon became a transformative experience abroad, all thanks to a surprising suggestion from a fellow drummer. “At first, I thought he was joking,” Alison recalled, “But then he told me he and his wife could help me get to Ghana through CSU, and I realized—this might actually be possible.” With support from the University Honors Program and the Office of Undergraduate Research, including a Fall 2023 OUR grant, Alison made it happen.

Her ethnography-based project came to life not through readings or lectures, but by living and breathing alongside the communities she was studying. Being immersed in another culture brought unique challenges, from unfamiliar dialects and body language to adjusting to a more direct way of communication. “You don’t get used to it—you get comfortable with being uncomfortable,” Alison said. But that discomfort opened doors to deeper understanding and personal growth. Traditional classrooms couldn’t have taught the adaptability, courage, and openness she developed while navigating life in Ghana. More than just a project, this experience shaped Alison’s future academic goals, likely becoming the foundation for a graduate thesis. To other Honors students considering research abroad, Alison’s advice is simple but powerful: expect the unexpected. “It can be exhausting to step outside your comfort zone, but staying in it can be just as draining. Give yourself grace, and know what you’re after.”



HONORS INTERDISCIPLINARY AND UPPER DIVISION HONORS PROGRAM

HONORS INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM

ABOUT HIP & UHP

The Honors Interdisciplinary Program was designed for students entering UNC as first year students or sophomores who were motivated to participate in self-directed learning, to explore new ideas, and challenge one's self and others to move outside the traditional boundaries of single discipline approaches to thinking. This program was offered through catalog year 2022-2023.

The Upper Division Honors Program provides Honors students the opportunity to engage in an in-depth study or independent honors project of their choice. Upper Division Honors Students work individually with a faculty mentor and strengthen their research, writing, creative, and presentation skills. This program was offered through catalog year 2022-2023.

MEET SAMANTHA

For Samantha, the Honors Interdisciplinary Program (HIP) stood out from the beginning because of its diverse academic opportunities. She was intrigued by the variety of classes offered outside of her major. One of her most memorable experiences in HIP was

the course Confluence of Cultures, which included participation in the Soliya program—a virtual exchange with students from Europe and the Middle East. "I loved getting to learn more about other cultures," she reflected. "That class really helped set me up for a good experience studying abroad later on and fueled my desire to go abroad." She credits HIP with helping her grow both academically and personally. She shared, "I feel like a more rounded student because of what I am learning in HIP." Samantha encourages current students to fully engage with the broader Honors community: "Do your best to get involved outside of your classes, go to workshops and SHAC events, and be intentional with your relationships."



UPPER DIVISION HONORS PROGRAM

MEET DIEGO

When Diego joined the Upper Division Honors Program (UHP) at UNC, he wasn't entirely sure what to expect, only that it felt like a chance worth taking. Drawn in by the opportunity to conduct original research, Diego took on a project exploring how technology-based

interventions could improve college students' eating habits and overall health. It was his first time doing research, and it definitely pushed him out of his comfort zone. From recruiting participants to navigating the writing process, he learned how to ask for help, collaborate with faculty, and tap into resources he hadn't used before. Along the way, he not only built valuable research and communication skills, but also grew more confident in himself as a student and scholar. Looking back, Diego says the program shaped him into a more resilient and curious student. His advice to others? Don't let fear hold you back. UHP is an opportunity to dive into something meaningful and come out of it with skills, confidence, and a stronger sense of who you are as a scholar.



MEET CLARE

Clare Bolon was initially hesitant about joining Upper Division Honors, but after testing the waters with HON 351/LIB 251 she was sold. Clare says, "Though

being in UHP and writing a capstone is a lot of work, it was work I was passionate about and loved. I wouldn't change the time and energy I put into my project because it became something I am proud to say I have completed." For Clare's capstone she looked at the lack of pockets in womenswear to see how it could affect daily life. She is known across campus as "The Pocket Lady." But she doesn't mind because, "just by people knowing that fact about me, it's spreading the idea and concept of pockets better than anything I could say about the topic." Clare's advice to those starting out in UHP is, "You will feel every emotion on the spectrum about your project, that's normal. All the resources and mentorship are here, sometimes they are just not visible from where you are."



MCNAIR SCHOLARS RESEARCH PROGRAM



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The McNair Scholars Research Program prepares high-achieving first-generation/income-eligible students and students from underrepresented populations for graduate study. They are funded by a TRIO grant from the United States Department of Education to preserve the legacy of scholarship of Ronald E. McNair, Ph.D., the second African American to fly in space.

Through the McNair Scholars Research Program, students will complete an independent undergraduate research project guided by a faculty mentor. Students have conducted research across a variety of disciplines, including psychology, biology, math, philosophy, nursing, anthropology, sociology, political science, and speech language pathology.

McNair seniors are currently in the process of receiving graduate school acceptances and planning for their post-undergraduate academic pursuits. Their students have been accepted into graduate schools across the United States, including the University of Vermont, University of Oregon, George Washington University, University of Washington, University of Montana, University of Wyoming, SUNY Buffalo, and University of Northern Colorado.

SPOTLIGHT ON A RESEARCH MENTOR

MEET DARREN

McNair Mentor and University Library Associate Professor, Darren Illet, serves as the Library Liaison for the McNair Scholars Research Program providing general research support for all McNair Scholars. Additionally, Darren serves as a capstone advisor for individual students, including this year's graduate Olivia Contreras, with her project: *The Influence of Queer Identities on Community Formation*.



From one of Darren's advisees:

"Dr. Illet is the most patient and understanding person I have ever worked with while also pushing me to be the best scholar I can be. Even though my research was out of his field, we went out of his way to educate himself to be a better mentor for me. Additionally, he helped me learn to set boundaries and understand better what I needed from an advisor in the future. He has been more helpful than I could ever express!"



INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES AND THE SCHULZE ENDOWMENT

ABOUT THE INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES STUDENT DESIGNED MAJOR

The Interdisciplinary Studies Bachelors of Arts is a program that allows students to design their own major in subject areas of the arts, sciences, and everything in between. Students can design their course of study based on a future career path or even a particular topic. ISSD students work closely with faculty advisors to complete their program and apply what they've learned toward a major research project before graduation. Previous student-designed majors have included Art Therapy, Feminist Studies, International Education, Sports Analytics, and Sports Psychology.

SPOTLIGHT: SCHULZE CHAIR

The Robert O. Schulze Chair for Honors & Interdisciplinary Studies provides vision and oversight for the curricular programs within Undergraduate Academic Engagement.

These include the Interdisciplinary Studies: Student Designed B.A. and the curricular components of the Honors Program. The Schulze Chair teaches HON 351 and HON 451, provides leadership for the Faculty Advisory Council, recruits faculty to serve as instructors for honors courses, and provides guidance and support to Honors Program students pursuing an honors capstone. Dr. Corinne Wieben, a Professor of History and longtime supporter of interdisciplinary work, is the current Schulze Chair, serving since 2022.



BUILDING THE PEACE: U-ENGAGE COLLOQUIUM

U-Engage, with funding from the Schulze Endowment, hosted a colloquium in Fall focusing on teaching skills for dialogue about complex issues. Visitors from Israel attended the event to talk about their experiences in the organization Combatants for Peace. The event was led by Dr. Mike Kimball and his ANT292 Culture and Conflict course students. Over 30 students attended the colloquium and related film screening.



SPOTLIGHT: CHLOE SMYTH



When Chloe Smyth began at UNC she originally hoped to go into medicine as a forensic pathologist, and majored in Chemistry with a minor in Forensic Pathology. During her studies she discovered a new interest in anesthesiology.

Chloe needed a specific set of requirements to get into an anesthesiology program, a blend of biology and chemistry courses. The needed coursework was outside of the traditional majors. So, she applied for the Interdisciplinary Studies program where she could create her own major in Pre-Anesthesiology and continue on her chosen career path.

LEADERSHIP STUDIES

ABOUT

Leadership Studies at the University of Northern Colorado defines leadership as a process of social influence which develops the capacity of a human community to ring forth new realities.

As our definition brings to light, Leadership Studies is about harmonizing individual leadership skills and characteristics with the communities we're a part of (UNC, local, global). This integration happens through engaged, active learning whereby students are given tools, support, and opportunities to pursue change that is self-driven and socially informed. We recognize that in order for students to participate in and meaningfully contribute to modern society, they need to be well-versed in critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and collective collaboration; this holds across disciplines and majors. UNC offered the Leadership Studies Minor and the President's Leadership Program in 2024-2025 Academic Year.

NEW in 2025-2026 UNC will offer a 12-credit Applied Leadership Certificate program.

SPOTLIGHT:

LEAD 100: FUNDAMENTALS OF LEADERSHIP TAUGHT BY DR. JARAE FULTON

LEAD 100 is the beginning to an in-depth discovery of leadership studies. Students devote time to exploring leadership styles and characteristics while also analyzing influential leaders of history.



As a smaller cohort of students devoted to leadership, they share and work off of each other's skills. Learning how to work well with other leaders builds a strong foundation to grow into the best leader you can be. LEAD 100 offers stepping stones to remember what empowers you to be the strongest leader in your field.

MEET JORIE



As a graduating senior with a B.A. in Criminal Justice and minors in Psychology and Leadership Studies, Jorie Burnes has worn many hats during her time at college—including as a member of Honors Interdisciplinary, Upper Division Honors, and Presidents Leadership Programs. But one of the most meaningful aspects of her academic journey was her involvement in Leadership Studies, where she found both personal growth and a strong sense of community. Reflecting on her most memorable moments in the program, Jorie emphasized the importance of connection: "Everyone has different leadership styles," she said. "We were such a small group of people, and it was interesting because we ended up becoming close friends because we knew we could rely on each other for different things." Jorie's interest in leadership was inspired in part by her father, who holds a doctorate in the field. I saw how beneficial it could be in the long term," she explained.

"Of course, other minors are important, but leadership is something you will always benefit from. Jobs always look for people who are leaders, and if you can be a leader, you can work with people better."

One class that stood out to Jorie was LEAD 492, which connected coursework with real-world service. "In this class, we got to incorporate who we found in our job fair within the class," she recalled. "I found this clothing volunteer shelter for women. We were excited to do a clothing drive, so this worked out perfectly! It was nice to be more involved, go outside my bubble, and not have the usual course load." When asked what advice she would offer to students considering the program, Jorie's passion was clear: "Leadership will always be so important. It is so easy to do something like this—why wouldn't you do something so wonderful? It shows people you are willing to dive deep into something and study and practice."

As she prepares for her next chapter in criminal justice and mental health, Jorie carries forward the relationships, confidence, and hands-on experiences that Leadership Studies helped her build. Jorie also received a \$10,000 Phelps Family C.A.P. scholarship award for her contributions, achievements, and her propensity to pay it forward.

PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The President's Leadership Program (PLP) is a two to three year leadership development program that first year undergraduate students apply for during their first or second semester at UNC. PLP students participate in cohort-based curricular and co-curricular activities and receive an annual scholarship of at least \$3,000 a year.

Students in the program complete 12 credits of leadership courses that includes LEAD 100, LEAD 200, LEAD 492 or an elective, and LEAD 497 by the time of graduation (PLP students also have the option of completing the Applied Leadership Studies Certificate and those in Academic Years 2024-2025 or earlier may pursue the Leadership Studies minor.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in 1-3 leadership workshops per semester and participate in a UNC or community organization. Additionally, a key component to PLP is mentorship. Students receive a peer mentor during their first year of the program and a professional staff and/or community mentor in their second year of the program. During their last year, students serve as peer mentors to the new PLP students and plan and present leadership training for other UNC students.

Photo from Building the Peace Colloquium, in which PLP students participated in Fall 2024.

2024-2025 PLP COHORT

Breanna Bailey*
Ana Barraza Cordova
Sarah Blair*
Marjorie Burnes**
Amber Camacho
Valencia Camacho-Barron
Chloe Clark
DJ Galery
Claudia Hernandez*
Madison Huffman
Cydney Larranaga
Joseph Mestas**
JoJo Montoya
Danielle Neufeld
Portia Nyarko
Bella Petramala
Betzy Sanchez Flores
Jordyn Schild
Aryanna Schiwart
Stephane Sizov
Eh Thaw Soe

*Fall 2024 Graduates

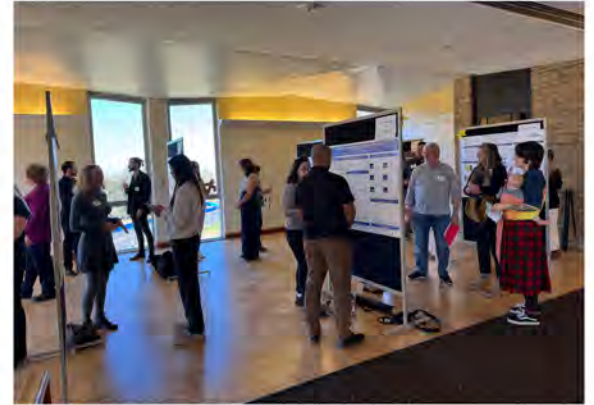
**Spring 2025 Graduates

OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH & CREATIVE WORKS

FALL SYMPOSIUM

The Fall Undergraduate Symposium, held November 14, 2024, recognized students engaged in research, creative and other scholarly projects. UNC's Annual Research Excellence Award competition was held in conjunction with the Symposium. Additionally, all students who presented at Symposium were considered for funding to present at the National Conference of Undergraduate Research. Twenty four students were selected to present at Symposium.

Research Excellence Awards: Poster: Daphne Alexander, Chemistry. Oral: Aliyah Archer, Anthropology.
Honorable Mentions: Emma Melendez, Kira Villareal, Tey Hairston-Chase, Jo Weaver-Douglas



RESEARCH AND CREATIVE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

MEET ALIYAH

Aliyah Archer's research journey was sparked by her curiosity and previous hands-on work with an X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analyzer. "I was inspired by my previous work with the XRF and wanted to see what all it could do that felt relevant to current issues," she said. That curiosity led her to an intriguing question: Could everyday spices contain harmful metal contaminants?

Working closely with Dr. Hamilton in the Anthropology lab, Aliyah began to shape her own research path. Her process involved reviewing literature, identifying the most commonly used spices, and researching which metals were most prevalent and how contamination occurs. Fortunately, her results showed no harmful levels of metals—but the data and literature she gathered still offered valuable insights.

Her hard work paid off—Aliyah was named the winner at Fall Symposium. This experience has left a lasting impression on her academic path. "It's definitely been another encouragement to keep moving forward with my research and really helped to drive me further into exploring the connection between anthropology and public health."



WESTERN REGIONAL HONORS CONFERENCE



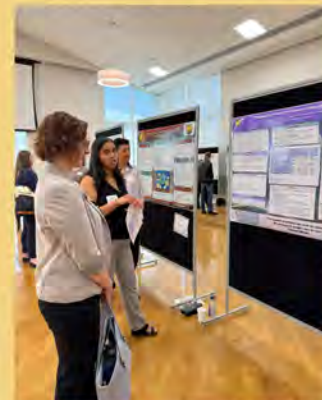
The Western Regional Honors Conference was held at Metropolitan State University in Denver, Colorado in April. With the location so close to home, and with the additional financial support from Student Government Associations, we were able to send 15 students to present and attend sessions with other honors students. Attendees: Kiarah Bojorquez, Clare Bolon, Yasmin Berumen Martinez, Jorie Burnes, Tonjala Galery, Tey Hairston-Chase, Alison Larson, Ryan La Tourrette, Madison Liechti, Casey Moran, Carter Norris, Atlas Ojendiz, Indigo Peppard, Jordan Robinette, Victoria Rule (not in order pictured)

OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH & CREATIVE WORKS

STUDENT SHOWCASE OF ARTISTS AND SCHOLARS



UNC's Student Showcase of Artists and Scholars, formerly "UNC Research Day," brings together research, creative and scholarly works for one day of undergraduate and graduate presentations. The Student Showcase highlights UNC's commitment to undergraduate and graduate student research, scholarly and creative endeavors. Students presented their posters, oral presentations and visual arts. Over 240 presenters were in attendance with an additional 300+ faculty, staff and guests.



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

This year, eight University of Northern Colorado (UNC) students presented at the National Conference of Undergraduate Research, held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Each of these students were funded to present their impressive research, with thanks to the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) and McNair Scholars. These students had note-worthy research projects that carried them to this conference were: Jorie Burnes, Daphne Alexander, Aliyah Archer, Kira Villarreal, Clare Bolon, Jo Weaver-Douglas, Emma Melendez, and Tey Hairston-Chase (not in order pictured).



OUR GRANTS

OUR offers Research & Creative Works grants each semester (Fall, Spring and Summer). Grants are available in the following categories: research/creative endeavor supplies; research/creative endeavor stipends; conference or performance; professional development (i.e. trainings, workshops, master classes, professional organizational fees).

In Fall 2024, OUR awarded over \$9,000 in funding to undergraduate students partaking in research and creative works. In Spring 2025, OUR awarded over \$6,000 in funding to undergraduate students partaking in research and creative works. Over 70 students applied for Office of Undergraduate Research funding in the 2024-25 academic year. OUR was able to fund a little less than half of these students.

WORKSHOPS

The Office of Undergraduate Research held informational and transformative workshops during the 2024-25 academic year. These workshops were catered towards student development in research and creative works. Some notable ones included: IRB 101, Poster Perfect, Getting Started in Research: NHS, Getting Started in Research: HSS, Scholarships, Fellowships & REUs, and Graduate School Preparation.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

EUGENE D. AND PEGGY J. KOPLITZ SCHOLARSHIP

MEET JORDAN

The Koplitz Scholarship is for the student with the strongest Honors Thesis/Capstone Proposal. Jordan Robinette was selected for her



proposal titled "Pandemic Preschooling: Exploring the Link Between Supplemental Education During the Pandemic and Academic Performance in the 2023-2024 School Year". Jordan writes that, "Children undergo significant developmental changes between the ages of three and five, and these early years lay a critical foundation for future growth and learning. The COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread disruptions to education in Colorado, with schools and learning environments facing unprecedented changes." Jordan is looking specifically at the correlation between the amount of supplemental education provided by parents to their preschool-aged children during the pandemic and those children's academic performance in the 2023-2024 school year. Jordan did this by conducting a cross-sectional correlational survey with parents of children currently aged seven to nine, who were between three and five years old during the pandemic. Participants were recruited through online platforms and flyers distributed at public, government-sponsored locations such as recreation centers and libraries. The survey asked parents about how much supplemental education they provided during the pandemic and gathered data on their child's academic performance according to their current grade level. Jordan hopes that her research will provide critical insights for educators, policymakers, and families regarding best practices for fostering resilience and mitigating future educational disruptions in times of crisis.

PHELPS FAMILY C.A.P. AWARDS

MEET CARTER

Through their personal adversities, Carter Norris has made a commitment to reimburse the mutual aid given to them. Carter is doing this by majoring in Secondary History Education with a minor in Special Education to reach their goal of becoming a teacher that can impact student lives. They say, "The CAP values represent the ideals that I would like to continue to move with, contribute to my communities, achieve my goals and the goals of others, and pay it forward to the next generations." In all aspects of their life, Carter aims to ensure everyone has an equal voice and opportunity. As a teacher Carter is "truly dedicated to developing an equitable and compassionate classroom for all students that enter through my door. My goal to make all students feel heard, seen, and supported."



MEET YASMIN

To Yasmin Berumen Martinez help means, "if you have the skills, you use them to help others." As they pursue a career as a physician assistant, this value drives their passion for service. Volunteering with organizations like Solida de Sol and César Chávez Sunrise Bus has allowed Yasmin to empower others through English as a Second Language classes and support vital health programs for agricultural workers. These experiences remind them of the importance of giving back, especially to communities like the one that supported their family. Yasmin says they, "plan to combine my passions for science and medicine with a lifelong commitment to service. Whether through patient care, community outreach, or mentoring, I aim to honor the lesson my parents taught me: to contribute where I can, strive for achievement, and pay it forward"

DIRECTOR'S CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AWARD NOMINEES



KAIDEN PRICE

Honors Interdisciplinary Program

Community Involvement: UNIV101 CL (3 semesters); volunteer with NoCo Humane Society, Greeley Students for Palestine, and Go On And Learn.



MARJORIE BURNES

Honors Interdisciplinary Program, Upper Division
Honors Program, Leadership Studies

Community Involvement: Co-Head for clothing drive for Leanna's Closet, Honors Peer Mentor, UNIV 101 CL



KIRA OTT

University Honors Program

Community Involvement: Food Bank Volunteer, Animal Friends Alliance Foster and Volunteer



DIEGO MAZARIEGOS ESPINOSA

Upper Division Honors Program

Community Involvement: Weld Food Bank, CMOM, Project Connect



SAMANTA FLORES VELAZQUEZ

Upper Division Honors Program

Community Involvement: Project Connect, COMOM Dental Clinic, Children's Hospital CO Flu Clinic Vaccine Volunteer



JO WEAVER-DOUGLAS

McNair Scholars Research Program

Community Involvement: United Way of Weld County in Greeley, Marcus Garvey Cultural Center, Black Women of Today, Catalyst Social Justice Retreat Planning Committee



BETZY SANCHEZ

President's Leadership Program

Community Involvement: Board member of Immigrant Hope Greeley, Greeley Area Chamber of Commerce, and Weld Food Bank and Union Colony Schools; Founder of Empowered Leader



MADISON LIECHTI

McNair Scholars Research Program

Community Involvement: Life Stories Child and Families Advocacy, Substitute Teacher for Weld RE-4, Sexual Assault Awareness month coordination at Aims Community College

CONGRATULATIONS U-ENGAGE GRADUATES!

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DAPHNE ALEXANDER - HIP

Major: Chemistry

Plans after graduating: Graduate School

Activities and Awards: American Chemical Society (demo officer), Anthropology Club, NCUR (2025), UNC Fall Undergraduate Symposium (2024), RMBAA (2024), UNC Student Showcase (2024), Beulah M. Moses Science Fund, First Place Poster Presentation at the Fall Undergraduate Symposium, Dean's List of Academic Distinction (2023, 2024, 2025), Excellence in Chemistry Awards (Analytical Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, General Chemistry), CSU REU



MADELYN BIGGERS - HIP

Major: Biological Sciences and Chemistry

Plans after graduating: PA school at College of St Mary in Omaha, Nebraska

Activities and Awards: Community Service Chair for Bear Catholic, President and Founder of the UNC Students for Life, Volunteer at the UC Health Greeley Hospital Emergency Department, Volunteer Greeter at the Pregnancy Resource Center, Research Assistant in Dr. Patrick Burns's Bovine Lab, Certified Pharmacy Technician



DALEN BODINE - HIP

Major: Communication Studies

Activities and awards: Dean's list.



CLARE BOLON - HIP & UHP

Major: Anthropology and Entrepreneurship

Thesis Title: The Missing Void: Womenswear, Lack of Pockets, and its Effect on Daily Life

Plans after graduating: Employment; Possibly governmental or biological anthropology

Awards and Activities: Co-founder of Tailored Textiles, President of SHAC, NRHH member, RHA general body member, SGA senior senator, Presented at research day for 2 years, (presented at the Western Regional Honors Conference and NCUR), Presidential scholarship, Honors scholars fund (2022-24), Research excellence at Fall symposium (2024), Figure Skating club (2022-2023)



MARJORIE BURNES - HIP, UHP, PLP, & LEADERSHIP MINOR

Major: Criminology & Criminal Justice

Thesis Title: Perceived Success of Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs from the Perspective of Felony Offenders in Northern Colorado

Plans after graduating: Work with mental health correctional facilities

Awards and Activities: Student Honors Activity Counsel (secretary, treasurer, vice president, president) and Criminal Justice Society (president), Student Showcase for Artists and Scholars 2024 and 2025, Research Day 2023, Academy of Criminal Justice Society 2025, Western Regional Conference 2025, and National Conference for Undergraduate Research, Presidential Scholarship, UNC Legacy Scholarship, Phelps Family CAP Award, Presidents Leadership Program, Criminal Justice and Criminology Honors Excellence Award, Dean's List (2022-current), Leadership Studies Honors Excellence Award, Gold Key Mortar Board Acceptance, Magna Cum Laude Honors, Co-Head for clothing drive for Leanna's Closet, Intervention Community Corrections Services Intern, Honors Peer Mentor, Honors University 101 class leader

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YIZHU (NANCY) CAO - ISSD & HONORS CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Major: Interdisciplinary Studies: Student Designed Major - TESOL and Education

Thesis Title: The Role of Translanguaging Plays in Chinglish Problematic Idioms

Awards & Activities: President of Japanese Language and Culture Club, Undergraduate research poster presentation, Teaching Assistant in ESL classroom at IRC



CHRIS CARRILLO-RAY - HIP

Major: Biological Sciences



OLIVIA CONTRERAS - UHP & MCNAIR

Major: Psychology

Thesis Title: The Influence of Queer Identities on Community Formation

Plans after graduating: Graduate school for social psychology

Awards & Activities: Sociology Club, McNair Conference UNM, Over 70 hours spent serving the community, Bears Cheer



HAILEY ERDBUEGER - UHP

Major: Criminology & Criminal Justice and Philosophy

Thesis Title: Extralegal Factors Influencing Judicial Perceptions of Defendants with Mental Illness

Plans after graduating: Law School

Awards & Activities: Alpha Phi Sigma Criminal Justice Honor Society, Philosophy Department Outstanding Student - Honors Convocation, Colorado Public Defenders Office Intern Investigator



LINDSEY FAEHNRIK - UHP

Major: Biological Sciences

Thesis Title: The Impact of EMDR Therapy on Past Suicidal Ideation: Lived Experiences of Young Adults

Plans after graduating: PA school

Awards and Activities: NHS ambassador, Honors student ambassador, Volunteer for UC Health, Volunteer for Project Angel Heart, First Generation Student First Generation Student Scholarship, Barbara Heidger International Learning Award, Dean's List of Academic Distinction



SAMANTHA FINKEN - HIP

Major: Theatre Studies

Plans after graduating: Plans on joining A Christian Ministry in the National Parks

Awards & Activities: The Crucible (Secretary), Cru, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, Dramatug for *The Government Inspector*, *Information for Foreigners*, and *42nd Street*; ASM CDA Summer Theatre and Stage Manager for *Ink & Paint*, Christ Community Church, Office Assistant for U-Engage, Company Member of Colorado Dance Collective, Study abroad in Cork, Ireland

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SAMANTA FLORES VELAZQUEZ - UHP

Major: Nursing

Thesis Title: The Recovery of Self-Esteem in Eating Disordered Patients

Plans after graduating: Nursing

Awards & Activities: Student Nurses Association- Secretary, Presenter at Research Day, Reisher Scholars Program, Stryker Leadership Program Scholarship, Published Article in *Ursidae*, Project Connect, COMOM Dental Clinic, Children's Hospital CO Flu Clinic Vaccine Volunteer, Dean's list, CHE/TRIO participant—first generation



TONJALA GALERY - MCNAIR & HONORS CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Major: Communication Science and Disorders

Thesis Title: Analyzing Readiness: Do current speech-language pathologist majors attending UNC feel equipped to work with people who use nonmainstream English dialects post-graduation?

Plans after graduating: UNC SLP graduate program

Awards and Activities: BWOT (Treasure), Western Regional Honors conference at MSU, Stryker Leadership Program, Reisher Scholar, Immigration and Refugee center, MSU, UW, AT Still, OUR GRANT, Presentation award, CNA



PAYTON GREENE - HIP

Major: Nursing

Plans after graduating: Employment at UC Health



JESSICA GUERRA - HIP, UHP, & MCNAIR

Major: Psychology

Thesis Title: Understanding the Interactive Effect of Mindfulness Practices and Sleep Quality on Nightmare Frequency and Severity

Plans after graduating: Clinical Psychology terminal degree

Awards and Activities: Orientation Administrative Assistant, Baylor University McNair Conference, University of New Mexico McNair Conference,



KATIE HANEY-OSBORN - HIP

Major: Software Engineering

Plans after graduating: Plans on working after graduation

Awards and Activities: Member of the CEO club, helping to create their websites, Employed at Holmes dining hall for 2 and a half years



AMY JENKINS - HIP

Major: Psychology

Plans after graduating: University of Georgia Law

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MEAGAN LAMONTINE - HONORS CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Major: Chemistry

Thesis Title: Bridging the Gap: DNA Profiling and the Pursuit of Justice for Indigenous Women and Girls.

Plans after graduating: Employment in a crime lab and photography

Awards & Activities: Phi Theta Kappa, Joann and Donald Harris Scholarship, Colorado Multitribal Scholarship, Pharmacy technician at UC Health



CAROLINE LAPRADE - HIP

Major: American Sign Language English Interpretation

Plans after graduating: Working as an educational interpreter in a K-12 setting

Awards & Activities: Internship at Bayou City Interpreting, Poetry works published at Mistake House



ALISON LARSON - UHP

Major: Anthropology

Thesis Title: The Traditional Performance of the Ewe and Others Alike

Plans after graduating: Graduate School at CSU for Anthropology

Awards and Activities: Student Honors Activity Council 2025, Student Showcase '24, Gifts from Ghana '24, Fall Symposium '25 Western Regional Honors Conference '25, Ghana Community Engagement Project (CSU 2024), Internship at History Colorado for summer of 2023 and 2024



OLIVIA LEARNED - HIP

Major: Nursing

Plans after graduating: Working as a nurse

Awards and Activities: Delta Zeta Sorority (Diversity, inclusion and belonging chair, academics chairwoman), Deans honor roll 2023-2024, 3 years as a certified nurse aid in hospital



MADISON LIECHTI - HON & MCNAIR

Major: Criminology & Criminal Justice and Psychology

Thesis Title: Understanding Attitudes and Burnout Among Juvenile Justice System Professionals

Plans after graduating: Graduate school

Awards and Activities: University 101 Research Night, Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) Annual Meeting, Invited speech Life Stories Child & Family Advocacy Gala, Western Regional Honors Conference, Gabriel E. Gallardo Research, Student Leadership & Advocacy Symposium, Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Annual Meeting, Student Showcase, University of Northern Colorado, Dean's Honor Roll April 2024, McNair Scholarship, HSS Preparing Students for Careers Scholarship, Office Of Undergraduate Research & Creative Works Grant, Intern at Life stories Child and Family Advocacy, Phi Sigma Criminal justice, PSI Chi



MAILE LINDSAY - HIP

Major: Elementary Education

Plans after graduating: Graduate School and Teaching

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MARIA LONGORIA SIERRA - HIP

Major: Human Services and Health Sciences

Plans after graduating: Attending Montana State University for a Masters in Dietetics

Awards & Achievements: Kappa Delta Chi Sorority Inc, Vice President and Service Officer, Stryker Scholar



DIEGO MAZARIEGOS ESPINOSA - UHP

Major: Nursing

Thesis Title: Interventions of Eating Habits and Healthy Behaviors

Plans after graduating: plans on going to graduate school and working as a nurse

Awards & Activities: Research day presenter, Deans Honor Roll 2022, 2023, 2024, Weld Food Bank, CMOM, Project Connect, Soccer



EMMA MELENDEZ - UHP & MCNAIR

Major: Biological Sciences

Thesis Title: Metabolic Disease and Bones: Trace Element Abundance in Skeletons with Evidence of Metabolic Disease

Plans after graduating: plans to attend UCCS for Master's in Biology.

Awards & Activities: Pre-health Professionals Club, Rocky Mountain Biological Anthropology Association Annual Meeting, Annual McNair Scholars meeting, Student Showcase, NCUR, Provost Scholarship, Colorado Student Grant, Research Excellence Award Finalist, Fall Undergraduate Symposium, Honorable Mention Fall undergraduate Symposium, McNair Scholarship, McNair Award, Robert E. McNair Research Program, Undergraduate Research Grant (August 2023-January 2024), Assistantship with LEAP Scholars, Research Assistant, Student Ambassador (Office of Admissions), New Student Orientation Leader



JOSEPH MESTAS - HIP & PLP

Major: Music Business and Applied Mathematics

Plans after graduating: Gap year before further education

Awards & Activities: Student Government Association (PVA Senator, Recording Secretary, Student Body President), PVA Sibs (Vice President), John C. Bromley Scholarship (2023-2024), Phelps Math CAP Scholarship (2024-2025), Jerry Tanner Leadership Scholarship (2024-2025), Student Employee of the Year nominee (2023), Boettcher Student Leader of the Year Finalist (2025), Development Fellowship - National Repertory Orchestra (2024), Pride of the Rockies Marching Band (2021), Robert & Ludie Dickeson Presidential Prize for Leadership Award (2025)



ATLAS OJENDIZ - HON

Major: Music

Thesis Title: ADELANTARTE: Bridging Gaps for Minority Artists: A Model for Community Equity

Awards & Activities: Reisher Scholar, Christopher G. Calvin Memorial Scholarship, PHI THETA KAPPA, Entrepreneurship Week Poster Showcase Winner, Non-Profit: Alianza NOCRO

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KIRA OTT - HON

Major: Human Services

Thesis Title: Literature as a Tool for the Introduction of Mental Health to Children

Plans after graduating: Plans on attending grad school

Awards & Activities: Fall Symposium Presenter, College of Natural and Health Sciences Academic Scholar Award Recipient, Food Bank Volunteer, Animal Friends Alliance Foster and Volunteer, Columbine Health and Rehab Facility Intern, Mortar Board Honor Society Member



HEATHER PADILLA - HON

Major: Sociology

Thesis Title: How community involvement with at-risk youth will benefit veterans with PTSD.

Plans after graduating: Plans on attending graduate school

Awards and Activities: Mason Grace Scholarship, Speech and Debate Coach Frontier Secondary School, Member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars



ZACURA PEDRO - UHP & MCNAIR

Major: Criminology & Criminal Justice

Thesis Title: Police Officers and Mental Health

Plans after graduating: Plans on attending graduate school

Awards and Activities: Academy of Criminal Justice Conference, Gabriel E. Gallardo Research, Student Leadership & Advocacy Symposium



INDIGO PEPPARD - UHP

Major: Physics with an Emphasis in Engineering

Thesis Title: Creasing as a Candidate Mechanism of Foveal Pit Formation

Plans after graduating: Plans on attending graduate school

Peer Mentor for Honors Program 2022-2023, Ambassador for Honors Program 23-24 & 24-25



KAIDEN PRICE - HIP

Major: Psychology

Plans after graduating: Plans on continuing education in Alberta, Canada

Awards & Activities: Memberships: Psi Chi (2024-25), Earth Guardians (2023-24), Unified Sports (Spring 2024), Climbing Club (2023-25), Ultimate Frisbee (2022-25), Spectrum (2021-2023), Garden Club (2022-25), Greeley Students for Palestine (2024-25), SHAC (2022-23), UNIV Class Leader (2022-24), Spectrum Secretary (2022-25), UNC Student Showcase of Artists and Scholars 2025, UNC Fall Symposium, UNIV101 Research Day 2021, Attendance at Rocky Mountain Psychological Association 2025, Colorado Student Grant (2021-25), On Campus Bear Den Award (2021-22), UNC 1889 Founders Grant (2021-22), Bender, Marty & Don Scholarship, Graduating summa cum laude, Dean's List, volunteer with NoCo Humane Society (Spring 2025), work with Go On And Learn (2022-24), Internship with GOAL Program (Fall 2023), research internship with the School of Psychological Sciences (Spring 2024), accepted for research with the ornithology department on female birdsong in red-winged blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) (Summer 2025), Unified basketball (Spring 2024)

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ELICIA RAMU - HON

Major: Psychology

Thesis Title: Student Veterans Attitudes Towards Mental Health Issues and Treatments

Plans after graduating: Plans on attending graduate school



TRISTAN RANGEL - HIP

Major: Nursing



JORDAN ROBINETTE - UHP & MCNAIR

Major: Psychology

Thesis Title: Pandemic Preschooling: Exploring the Link Between Supplemental Education During the

Pandemic and Academic Performance in the 2023-24 School Year

Plans after graduating: plans to attend graduate school

Awards & Activities: Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated (President and Vice President), Fall Symposium, Western Regional Honors Conference, The Student Showcase of Artists and Scholars, Rocky Mountain Psychological Association, Gabriel E. Gallardo Research, Student Leadership & Advocacy Symposium, 2025 Psi Chi RMPA Regional Research Award, Turning Point Intensive Outpatient Therapy



GAYANNA VICTORIA RULE - UHP & MCNAIR

Major: Psychology and Sociology

Thesis Title: Support for Caregivers of Loved Ones with Mental Health Illness

Plans after graduating: plans to attend graduate school

Awards and Activities: Western Regional Honors Conference presenter



APRIL RUMMARY LAMB - HON

Major: Psychology

Thesis Title: Sleep Restriction and its Effects on Mood

Plans after graduating: plans to take a gap year to play basketball and volunteer before attending Grad school

Awards and Activities: Presented at the Carolina Undergraduate Social Sciences Symposium (2024), Volunteered to teach Spanish to local elementary school students, UNCO Women's basketball team



REBECCA SANCHEZ - UHP

Major: English

Thesis Title: Trapped in Polygamy: English Women Converting to Mormonism and Living in Polygamous Marriages in 1850's Utah

Plans after graduating: Plans to attend UNCO for her graduate degree in English

Awards & Activities: Editor/President-In-Training for The Crucible, Intern as Honors Program writer.

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BETZY SANCHEZ-FLORES - PLP & LEADERSHIP MINOR

Major: Communication Studies, Minor in Leadership Studies

Plans after graduating: plans to attend graduate school and expand their business BV Virtual Services, and work at Immigrant Hope Greeley

Awards & Activities: President's Leadership Program, President's Transfer Award, HWWC Leadership Award Honoree, BizWest Women of Distinction Honoree, COSI, Board member of Greeley Area Chamber of Commerce, Immigrant Hope Greeley, and Weld Food Bank, President Hispanic Women of Weld County (21-22), Greeley Creative District Board Member (19-22)



ISA SCHULTE - HIP

Major: Elementary Education

Plans after graduating: plans to become a teacher

Awards & Activities: Cumbres Scholar, Future Teacher Club Treasurer, Climbing Club, Cumbres Scholarship, IATSE Scholarship, Practicum at Billie Martinez Elementary and Shawsheen Elementary, Worked for UNC housing



RYAN D. SHINAZY - HON

Major: Psychology

Thesis Title: Understanding Loneliness in the Digital Age: Implications of Social Media Use

Plans after graduating: Plans on attending UNCO Clinical Mental Health Master's Program

Awards and Activities: The Lightsaber Guys of UNC, Presidential Transfer & PHI THETA KAPA Scholarships, Integrative Care Collective



CHEYENNE SMITH - UHP & MCNAIR

Major: Biological Sciences

Thesis Title: Investigating L(2)03659: What a lethal gene can tell us about stemness and differentiation.

Plans after graduating: Plans on attending graduate school

Awards & Activities: Vice President of Tribeta, NHS Academic Scholar Award, NMDP drives



CHLOE SMYTH - ISSD

Major: Interdisciplinary Studies Student Designed Major

Pre-Anesthesiology program.

Plans after graduation: Pursuing entrance into M.D. school for anesthesiology.



ALEXA TRIDEN - HIP & UHP

Major: Psychology

Thesis Title: Investigating The Influence of Mental Illness Stigma on Juror Decision-Making

Plans after graduating: Plans on attending graduate school

CONGRATULATIONS U-ENGAGE GRADUATES!

HIP = Honors Interdisciplinary Program

PLP = President's Leadership Program

McNair = McNair Scholars Research Program

UHP = Upper Division Honors Program

HON = University Honors Program

ISSD = Interdisciplinary Studies Student Designed Major

CHRIS WALKER - HIP

Major: Biological Sciences

Plans after graduating: plans to get their masters in Biology at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque

Awards & Activities: Tribeta (secretary), Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience (2024), Student Showcase of Artists and Scholars (2022, 2024), NHS Student Research Celebration (2024), Colorado Field Ornithologist Annual Convention (2024), Tribeta Western Region-I Annual Conference (2024), Tribeta National Conference (2024), Americal Ornithological Society National Conference (2024), Front Range Student Ecology Symposium (2025), CAP Grant (2024), OUR Grant, John Gapter Memorial Scholarship (Fall 2024-Spring 2025), Chemistry Excellence Award (2022), Dean's List, Tribeta District Conference 1st Place (2024), Tribeta National Conference 1st Place (2024), McAuliffe STEM School 1st Grade Class presentation, NMDP Tabling Events, Horticulture internship at the Westminster Butterfly Pavilion, Archaeological Field Assistant, Tutor, Supplemental Instructor, Ornithology Research Assistant (2022), Ornithology Field Assistant (2024)



JO WEAVER-DOUGLAS - UHP & MCNAIR

Major: Sociology, minors in Anthropology and Africana Studies, Certificate in Equity & Inclusion

Thesis Title: "I don't think I mattered": Factors That Cause Black Students to Leave UNC

Plans after graduating: Plans to attend graduate school and work

Awards & Activities: Black Women of Today (President), Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. (President), Queer/Trans People of Color (Affinity Group Leader), Black Student Support Network (Curator), Catalyst Small Group Facilitator, National Conference for Undergraduate Research, Gabriel E. Gallardo Student Symposium for Leadership & Advocacy, Fall Symposium, Showcase of Artists & Scholars, Office of Undergraduate Research Grant, Stryker Scholarship, Julia Klug Scholarship, OUR Research Grant, Student Employee of the Year Nominee, Certificate of recognition for Africana Studies, United Way of Weld County in Greeley, Marcus Garvey Cultural Center Volunteer, Gender & Sexuality Resource Center, Center for Women's & Gender Equity, Black Student Support Network, Artist showcased in Black is Punk Exhibition (2022) & the Amateur Hour Exhibition (2023) & Black Arts Fest Curator & Artist (2023)



EVELYN WENDLAND/BROWER - UHP

Major: Anthropology

Thesis Title: Who was Skull #0025336? A Forensic Anthropological Analysis of Human Remains

Plans after graduating: plans to attend graduate school for biological anthropology

Awards and Activities: President of Anthropology Club, RMBAA, Deans List



NICOLAS ZUNIGA - UHP & MCNAIR

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Thesis Title: Determining The Causation of Microphthalmia in Cannabidiol Treated Zebrafish Embryos

Plans after graduating: plans to attend graduate school

Awards and Activities: Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity-Secretary and Standards conduct Chairman, Tri Beta- biology scholar member, 2024 UNCO Fall Symposium, Gabriel E. Gallardo Student Symposium, OUR Research Grant-Stipend, University of Northern Colorado Academic Scholar, LEAP summer Mentor, LEAP Honors and McNair Panelist, Former NCAA University of Northern Colorado Wrestler



DONOR & SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION



DANIELS SCHOLARSHIPS

Bill Daniels established the Daniels Scholarship Program because he loved sharing his good fortune with "young people with talent and drive." Since 2000, the Daniels Scholars program has awarded scholarships to more than 5,400 Daniels Scholars for a total of over \$275 million.

Bill Daniels was a born entrepreneur, widely considered one of the great business visionaries of the twentieth century. Bill achieved phenomenal success by working hard, passionately following his instincts, acting with ethics and integrity, and treating everyone around him with respect and fairness.

Born in Greeley, Colorado in 1920, Bill spent his early childhood in Omaha, Nebraska and later, in Council Bluffs, Iowa. As his family struggled through the Great Depression, many of Bill's values related to work and personal responsibility were formed.

The man Bill had become proved to be a fine naval officer and fearless combat pilot in World War II. He was awarded the Bronze Star for "heroism, courage, and devotion to duty" as he made repeated trips to rescue wounded shipmates after a devastating enemy attack on the aircraft carrier USS Intrepid. Bill also served during the Korean Conflict. He was instrumental in pilot training for the U.S. Navy during their transition to jet aircraft and retired a decorated Commander.

Bill began his business career by opening an insurance agency in Casper, Wyoming. Driving home from New Mexico in 1952, Bill stopped for lunch in Denver. A boxing match flickered on a small black and white screen behind the bar. It was Bill's first encounter with television, and he was captivated. He learned many small towns — including Casper — did not have access to TV. As a result, Bill started building Casper's first cable system, which launched January 1, 1954. As one of the earliest pioneers in cable television, Bill would go on to own and operate hundreds of systems across the country. The firm he founded, Daniels & Associates, operated these properties and brokered many of the deals that shaped the industry. Bill provided significant support to innovative education efforts.

Bill spent his final years laying plans for the Daniels Fund, and detailing the specific direction that guides its operation. When he passed away in March of 2000, Bill's estate transferred to the Daniels Fund, forming its base of assets and making it one of the largest foundations in the Rocky Mountain region. The Daniels Fund continues Bill Daniels' legacy of compassion and generosity across Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming through the Daniels Fund Grants Program, the Daniels Fund Scholarship Program, and the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative.

Bill Daniels Values:

- Ethics and integrity
- Honesty
- Respect for people
- Loyalty and reliability
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Belief in the free enterprise system
- Patriotism and dedication to community
- Commitment to excellence
- Etiquette

UNC's Daniels Scholars:

- KeeLei Burrows
- Lucero Cervantes Andazola
- Bailey Cheezum
- Tessa Davis
- Brinlyn Dukes
- Peyton Hendricks
- Elise Kruger
- Chase Lainez
- Yovahn Quinones
- Jensen Renquist
- Desmond Sandoval
- Zoey Vandembark
- Anders Wolle
- Isabelle Zuniga

DONOR & SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION



AMY SMART MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Amy (Wilcox) Smart was born on August 16, 1969, and grew up on a family ranch 20 miles outside of Douglas, Wyoming. After attending a one-room school until the eighth grade, she attended Douglas High School and graduated in 1987. When it came time for college, the easy thing for Amy to do would have been to follow her parents' and brother's footsteps and remain in Wyoming for college. Instead, Amy chose to forge her own path and create her own legacy by traveling out of state to attend the University of Northern Colorado.

Amy created a lasting legacy at UNC. While studying communications and journalism, she also was a member of the varsity track team, was a member of Mortar Board and Golden Key National Honor Society. She graduated in 1991. Amy later returned to her alma mater, UNC, as UNC's Associate Director of the President's Leadership Program. She was extremely passionate about the program, mentoring numerous students and impacting the lives of everyone with whom she connected. After a battle with cancer, Amy passed away in December of 2006.

The Amy Smart Memorial Scholarship Fund was created by Amy's family to provide scholarships for students in the President's Leadership Program at UNC. The endowment is a lasting gift to UNC that ensures Amy's legacy will live on forever at the University and with the President's Leadership Program.

- 2024-2025 Scholarship Recipients: Bella Petramala, Danielle Neufeld, and Portia Nyarko

JOHN C. BROMLEY SCHOLARSHIP



The President's Leadership Program was founded through an El Pomar grant in the spring of 2000. With the help of UNC's President, Hank Brown, John Bromley was the first Program Director and the main creator of the Presidential Leadership Program. John brought Amy Smart, a former student of his and a UNC alumnus, on board to help with the administrative side of the program, as he tackled the curricular side. The inaugural class of PLP scholars began the program in the fall of 2000. John's wife, Susan Bromley, started the John Bromley Memorial Scholarship Endowment to continue John's passion for the President's Leadership Program in 2009.

- 2024-2025 Scholarship Recipients: Aryanna Schiwart, Bella Petramala, Danielle Neufeld, and Portia Nyarko

THOMAS SUTHERLAND LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

In June 1985, professor Thomas Sutherland was working at the American University of Beirut. In 1991, he finally returned home to Fort Collins to a hero's welcome after spending six years as a hostage in Lebanon. His determination and courage during his captivity was recognized and celebrated the world over. Sutherland and his family – his wife, Jean, and his daughters Ann, Kit, and Joan – spent the years following his return (as well as a substantial portion of the multimillion-dollar settlement he received from the frozen assets of the Iranian government) building a legacy of advocacy and philanthropy locally and around the world. Tom and Jean's careers and community involvement made them beacons of joy and positivity throughout Northern Colorado. This scholarship was established to recognize leadership at the student level at UNC.

- 2024-2025 Scholarship Recipient: Chloe Clark



WILLIAM S. GARNSEY III SCHOLARSHIP

William Smith Garnsey III was born November 5, 1911, in Montana where his father was manager of the Great West Sugar Beet factory, Bill spent the last thirty years of his life giving back to the country and the community that had given him so much. He was elected to the school board, as well as the State Senate and became a respected and admired member of the State Republican Party.

It is in loving memory of William S. Garnsey III that this scholarship was established.

- 2024-2025 Scholarship Recipient: Aryanna Schiwart



DONOR & SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION



EUGENE D. AND PEGGY J. KOPLITZ SCHOLARSHIP

Dr. Eugene Koplitz, Professor Emeritus of Educational Psychology, came to UNC in 1958 and studied mental processes of advanced intellects. Because of his experience in gifted education, the task of establishing an Honors program was given to Koplitz. In only a year and a half, Koplitz established the UNC Honors Program with partnership in 19 departments on campus as well as establishing the Honors thesis tradition that still stands to this day as one of the more rigorous Honors thesis requirements in the state. As founder of the UNC Honors Program,

Dr. Koplitz began a tradition that centered on the intellectual development of many of the University's top students. Throughout his professional career, Dr. Koplitz presented research papers at international, regional, state, and local levels, and he made a large impact on all he met and taught. Sadly, Dr. Koplitz passed away in early September 2017 and is survived by his wife, Peggy, his children David and Stephanie, and five grandchildren. The Koplitz Scholarship is for the student with the strongest Honors Thesis/Capstone Proposal.

2024-2025 Koplitz Scholarship Recipient: Jordan Robinette, Psychology



MARIE LEIGH LIVINGSTON & HONORS SCHOLARSHIPS

Dr. Marie Leigh Livingston is Professor Emerita of Economics at University of Northern Colorado. She came to Colorado in 1979 to work for the Economic Research Service, U.S.D.A. and began her career at UNC in 1985 after earning her Ph.D. While at UNC, she was Professor and Chair of Economics, and served as Director of several interdisciplinary programs, including the University Honors Program, International Trade and Relations (now International Affairs), and the Life of the Mind Program. With specializations in water resources and international

economics, she worked extensively in Central Europe and has been a visiting professor at University of Minnesota, University of Frankfurt, and University of Madrid. In 2009, she was a Fulbright Senior Specialist at the University of Economics in Prague. The Livingston scholarship is designated for a strong Honors student with preference for students with an interest in Economics or International Affairs.

2024-2025 Scholarship Recipient: Riley Blaylark, Sociology

The Honors Program Scholarships were established by Dr. Marie Livingston while she was the Director for the Honors Program at UNC. This scholarship is awarded based on a student's progression through the honors curriculum, high academic achievement, and evidence of civic engagement.

2024-2025 Scholarship Recipient: Parker Coffelt, Biological Sciences

GREGORY E. HOLMAN & DEBRA K. HOLMAN SCHOLARSHIP

Greg and Kaye Holman's love of students and belief in the power of education to transform lives strongly guides how they give of their time and talents. As recipients of a variety of grants and scholarships over the course of their academic careers, Greg and Kaye hope to support other first generation students through the establishment of the Gregory E. and Debra K. Holman Scholarship. In directing their support towards Honors students, the Holmans recognized the students Kaye had worked with in her time at UNC were students like the Holmans themselves, who had a passion and a commitment to academic excellence and the capacity and drive to serve others and the natural world.

**2024-2025 Scholarship Recipient: Yasmin Berumen Martinez,
Biological Sciences**



DONOR & SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION



BARBARA HEIDGER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Barbara Jane Heidger (Hyslop) entered UNC (then Colorado State College) as a member of the newly inaugurated Honors Program, then under the direction of Professor Eugene Koplitz. There she met fellow Honors student Paul Heidger, who she later married. Barbara's academic excellence and devotion to her field (international relations) led her to work abroad with Columbia's Teachers for East Africa during the completion of her Master's coursework. She taught at a residential boys secondary school in Kericho, Kenya for two years, teaching world

history and researching the development of political parties, which had just begun in Kenya in 1964. She continued to be involved with the local and international community, sponsoring the Model UN Program and assuming a leadership position to welcome and resettle refugee families from Southeast Asia. It is sincerely hoped that this scholarship bearing Barbara's name may assist students at UNC to reach their life goals and full potential. Barbara passed in 1994, and is survived by Paul and their two daughters, Julie and Lisa. This scholarship is designated for an incoming first year student who is interested in international studies.

2024-2025 Scholarship Recipient: Reagan Dantzer, Business Administration



PAUL HEIDGER SCHOLARSHIP

Dr. Paul Heidger '63 was part of the first UNC Honors class of graduates, where he met Barbara. Barbara and Paul married shortly after she returned from Kenya. Until he retired in 2012, Paul taught for 38 years at the University of Iowa, where he was a professor of Anatomy and Cell Biology. After retirement, he continued to work closely with UI students, working as a student adviser for an undergraduate research training program. He led an accomplished path of service and dedication to his profession and his students. This scholarship recognizes a first year Honors student who is in the natural sciences.

2024-2025 Scholarship Recipient: Skylar Endes, Biological Sciences

BECKY R. EDGERTON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Honors Program is pleased to recognize the generosity of Ronald K. Edgerton who provided the gifts to create this scholarship in memory of Becky Edgerton to perpetuate excellence in the University Honors Program. Dr. Ron Edgerton was Director of the Honors Program from 1985 to 2000. Becky Edgerton (April 22, 1941-December 17, 1999) loved poetry, opera, and good movies; the New York Times Book Review and The New Yorker magazine, good literature, wine, and conversation; feminist theory, loyal friends, and her family. For her, reading was a way of life, and she read just about everything. She published poetry and taught in the Honors and Life of the Mind programs. Following is a short excerpt from a poem wrote by Becky that embodies the soul of the Becky R. Edgerton Award:



*Birthdays,
Because I once came close to
Death,
are thoughtful times for me.*

*Another wrinkle 'round my eyes,
A new gray hair or two,
These little things I do not mind –
They mark the passing time.*

*So on my birthday I look back,
In retrospect rejoice
For this year's human joy and pain
I might well not have had.*

*And knowing this is "extra" time,
I want to Search . . . and wait.
And thus unhurried, love,
give, grow
Throughout each extra year.*

The Becky R. Edgerton Memorial Scholarship is for an honors student with a meritorious thesis who also exhibits the highest level of intellectual curiosity.

**2023-2024 Recipient:
Madison Gremillion, Biological Sciences
2024-2025 Recipient To Be Announced
at Banquet**

DONOR & SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION

PHELPS FAMILY C.A.P. AWARDS

BOB AND BONNIE PHELPS



Championed by UNC friends Bob and Bonnie Phelps Family, the C.A.P. Awards recognize students whose lives demonstrate an exceptional and exemplary personal commitment to:

Contribute... by volunteering time and personal skills, talents, abilities, experience, and passion around issues in service to the community.

Achieve... by displaying a bias toward action and performance, overcoming obstacles and setbacks, and accomplishing goals.

Pay-it-forward... by impacting the lives of others in meaningful and positive ways through random and planned acts of kindness, caring, and "giving back."

The Phelps have chosen to generously invest their money, time, and expertise into growing and enhancing the UNC experience for many of its students. Inspired by the impact a UNC education offered their son, Brian Phelps '12 (BA-Communication Studies), the Phelps have become life-long supporters of UNC and its students. Bob and Bonnie have supported students at UNC through the creation of several endowed scholarships and awards, including the Phelps Family C.A.P. Awards to recognize annually three students who exemplify these key principles.

With a background in small business ownership preceded by decades of corporate experience in human resources management, Bob Phelps knows personal financial decision-making can trouble many people throughout their lives. With encouragement from the Phelps, UNC has integrated a Personal Financial Literacy course into its Liberal Arts Core, affecting a positive impact on the financial health of students that extends far beyond their beginnings at UNC. The impact of the Phelps' acts of kindness and generosity has been immeasurably impressed upon UNC's students as well as upon the communities in which they will go on to thrive.

2025-2026 \$10,000 Scholarship Recipients:

Carter Norris, History Education

Yasmin Berumen Martinez, Biological Sciences

THANK YOU, DONORS!

Thank you, again, for supporting U-Engage with our mission:

Undergraduate Academic Engagement (U-Engage) provides enriching individualized opportunities and multidisciplinary cohort programs for students to fully engage in their academic pursuits. U-Engage fosters a culture of academic excellence and intellectual curiosity that welcomes all students and empowers dynamic communities of researchers, leaders, creators and scholars, who are poised to make a positive impact in the world.

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