UOWGS 2020-2021 Award Winners

Karfilis Leadership Award

Rachael Klaiss is a 4th-year Ph.D. candidate in the Physics Department. She studies quantum light emitted from artificial atoms created by defects in 2-dimensional crystals. In addition to her lab work, she is dedicated to improving representation and retention of underrepresented groups in physics and providing supportive structures for marginalized groups in STEM. She does this as Co-President and Mentorship Coordinator for UOWiP (University of Oregon Women in Physics), as the Summer Program Coordinator for The North Star Project, as a member of the ChemREFS (Chemistry Resources for Easing Friction and Stress) expansion into other physical sciences departments, and as a graduate student member of the Physics Department’s inaugural Graduate Student Support Group. As the Physics Department’s first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Graduate Employee, she designed and taught a class during the Spring 2021 term for early physics majors called “Exploring Physics” to teach students how to find their physics community and identity, which are essential to the persistence and success of students from underrepresented groups in physics, including women and underrepresented minorities. She is honored to accept the UOWGS Leadership Award and is grateful it brings attention to the work many in STEM are doing to make their fields more inclusive and supportive.

Kellum Tate-Jones is a fourth-year PhD candidate in the Department of Earth and Sciences. She works in the Hopkins-Davis Vertebrate Paleontology Lab studying the evolution of seals, sea lions, and walruses. During her time at the University of Oregon, she has worked extensively with Rehearsals for Life, the Department of Earth Science IgDEAS Initiative, Sternberg Science Camps, and undergraduate mentoring. During Spring 2021, she served as the instructor of record for ERTH 103: Exploring Earth History, designing a new curriculum that centered principles of environmental justice and scientific decolonization. While procrastinating from writing her dissertation, Kellum enjoys getting overly excited about birds, digitally illustrating said birds, gardening haphazardly, and consuming nerdy books, TV shows, and podcasts by the bucketful.
Travel Award

Alison Chang is a 3rd year PhD student studying homogeneous nickel hydrosilylation catalysis in Amanda Cook's lab. Current industrial applications of this reaction yields products that are incorporated into silicone-based materials that we use in our everyday lives. She intends to unveil the reasons behind the regioselectivity induced by the catalyst she is studying while utilizing an Earth-abundant metal for this chemical transformation. She will present her work at Pacificchem 2021, a chemistry conference, to make connections, gain presentation experience, and gain more chemical knowledge from fields outside of her own.

Parenting Awards

Heather Anderson is a Psychology Ph.D. student in the Learning Lab under Professor Caitlin Fausey. She majored in both Integrative Biology and Psychology at the University of California, Berkeley before coming to the University of Oregon for her graduate education. Her current research in the Learning Lab investigates how the number of adult words infants encounter rises and falls throughout the day and how the amount of speech encountered changes across multiple days. For her dissertation, Heather plans to investigate how variation in infants’ daily environments and activities contributes to development of effortful control, emotion regulation, and language development. Heather teaches Research Methods in Developmental Psychology, for which she received the Psychology Department Distinguished Teaching Award for graduate students. The UOWGS Parenting Award will help ease the demands of parenting while in graduate school.

Stephanie ChenWu Gluck is a doctoral student in the Department of Psychology. Her research addresses how children become socially aware of others’ thoughts, intentions and emotions – a crucial ability for success in the social world—along with the underlying social and cognitive mechanisms that influence such development. Stephanie’s dissertation will focus on mind-mindedness, a person’s tendency to attribute mind-like and intentional qualities in how they represent others. Individual variation in how mind-minded parents are is proposed to facilitate children’s secure attachment and subsequent understanding of others’ perspectives. For her dissertation, Stephanie plans to examine maternal mind-mindedness in a group of high-risk first-time mothers and their children. The support from the UOWGS Parenting Award will offset summer childcare costs and allow Stephanie to supervise undergraduate research assistants on coding of parent-child mind-minded interaction as well as complete data analysis and writing for her dissertation.
Undergraduate Summer Research Awards

Erika Moe is a human physiology major and folklore minor. The UOWGS Undergraduate Summer Research Award will grant her the opportunity to continue working throughout the summer in Professor DuBrow’s cognitive neuroscience lab. Her goal is to investigate the impacts of forced COVID-19 remote learning on college student learning and comprehension. Through this research, Erika hopes to help make the educational system more accessible and beneficial for all students.

Delaney Kleiner is an undergraduate student double majoring in Biology and Environmental Science. Her past research at UO in the Soil-Plant-Atmosphere (SPA) lab explored the impact of Arctic fires on permafrost soils and vegetation. The UOWGS Undergraduate Summer Research Award will support Delaney in continuing to pursue her thesis project, which she will defend next year. This summer, in partnership with the SPA lab and Geomorphology lab, she will work in the field and in the lab to investigate the impact of erosion rates on plant communities in SW Oregon. Delaney is excited to continue her studies at UO and hopes to pursue Environmental Justice based STEM education and climate change research after she graduates.

Undergraduate Transition Award

Nora Kearns is completing a master’s in Bioinformatics and Genomics in the Knight Campus Graduate Internship Program. She also works in the Plesa lab, where she is developing a method to engineer proteins at high-throughput using directed evolution. During her time in the Plesa lab she also developed a computational pipeline which breaks protein-coding genes into smaller domains and identifies the most unique domains as high-specificity antibody recognition targets. Nora ultimately hopes to pursue a PhD in bioengineering and work in biotechnology. The UO WGS Undergraduate Transition Award will offer support over the next several years of master’s and doctoral study, and allow her to continue progressing in research outside of the master’s program.