

BioNews Commencement Edition

May 2021

*Congratulations
Biology graduates!*



*Arman Azad
Derek Benson
Reginald Brewster
Stephanie Calderon
Evan Daisy
Emma Flynn
Hildi Gabel
Eleanor Hollers
John Hsu*

*Eric Jung
Emily Lachtara
Ang Li
Samantha Liu
Zachary Miller
Cameron Mitchell
Isabelle Ouyang
Isiaha Price
Danielle Reed*

*Jordan Rhodeman
Samantha
Rothberg
Alicia Ugenti
Shreya Venkat
Addisyn Wall
Lindsay Yue
Samuel Zhang*

Biology students complete honors thesis work

We want to acknowledge the hard work of these members of the Class of 2021 in the completion of their honors thesis: **Derek Benson, Stephanie Calderon, Eleanor Hollers, John Hsu, Eric Jung, Samantha Liu, Samantha Rothberg, Alicia Ugenti, Lindsay Yue and Samuel Zhang.** This is a monumental achievement in a normal year, and even more so this year. Congratulations!

Schotté Prize for best thesis in Biology

The Biology faculty are pleased to award the Oscar E. Schotté Prize for best senior honors thesis to **Samantha Liu '21**. Her thesis is entitled “Characterizing the upstream and downstream regulatory pathways of CrbSR.” It was tough to pick only one winner for this award, as there were many excellent theses submitted. Congratulations Samantha!



Sawyer Prize winner

Steven Yu '23 is the recipient of the 2021 Sawyer Prize. This prize is given to an outstanding sophomore on the basis of their success in both introductory and advanced courses, as well as other aspects of life in the Biology Department. Congratulations to Steven!

Daisy wins Fulbright ETA

Congratulations to Evan Daisy '21, who will be traveling to Taiwan this year as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant! Read more [here](#).



Biology awards for student research and conferences

Every year the Biology Department awards funding to students to complete independent research projects or attend academic conferences. These funds come from the James R. Elster Award, the Oscar E. Schotté Scholarship, and the William C. Young Prize, and are usually divided among several students. This year the awardees are: **Yuen Azu '22, Luis de Pablo '22, Zach Jonas '22, Eric Jung '21, Andrea Mirow '22, Isiaha Price '21, and Alicia Ugenti '21**. Congratulations to all of them!

Biology Fellows at the Moss Quantitative Center

We are thrilled to share that **Mickey Jackson '21** will be the new Biology Fellow at the Q Center next year. Mickey – who is from Colorado, likes being outdoors, and recently started keeping a fish pond – will be taking over for **Emily Ma '20**. A big thanks to Emily for all her help last year! Students, be sure to connect with Mickey next year and spread the word about the Q Center's Biology Fellow.

Baby Ronan!

Please welcome the newest member of the Biology family: Ronan Christopher Purdy Boyd! As you can see, Ronan is adorable and has a curious spirit. We can't wait to meet you, Ronan! A huge congratulations and hug to proud parents Alix Purdy and Brian Boyd.



Congratulations to Edwards and Ragkousi

Profs. Marc Edwards and Katerina Ragkousi reached the important faculty milestone of reappointment, and are both poised to begin their full year of sabbatical, during which they will be conducting research full time. We wish them all the best for the coming year!



Good news from the Hood lab

Prof. Hood is an author on two new publications. The [first paper](#) appears in the journal *Evolution*, on the specificities of pathogen host range comparing experimental results with distributions in wild populations, and is entitled "From generalist to specialists: variation in the host range and performance of anther-smut pathogens on *Dianthus*." The second is a historical paper in the *Archives of Natural History*, on the encouragement/discouragement of Lydia Becker to engage in science in the Victorian era. [That paper](#) is entitled "John Leigh, Lydia Becker and their shared botanical interests." Congratulations Michael!



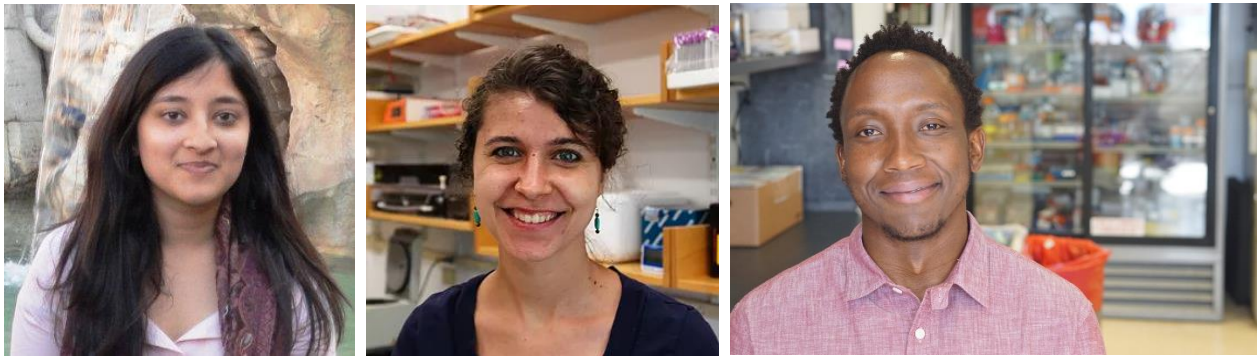
Alumni news

There are several newly-minted PhD's among our Biology alumni. A mammoth congratulations to these members of the Class of 2013!

Ipsita Agarwal '13 completed her dissertation in the Department of Biological Sciences at Columbia University. The title of her dissertation was "Disentangling mutation and selection in human genetic variation: promises and pitfalls."

Emily Jackson '13 completed her dissertation entitled "Evolution of large palindromes on the primate X chromosome" in the Department of Biology at MIT.

James Murithi '13 completed his dissertation entitled "Dissecting the mechanisms of resistance to antiparasitic compounds in *Plasmodium falciparum*" in the Integrated Program in Cellular, Molecular, and Biomedical Studies at Columbia University.



From left: Agarwal, Jackson and Murithi.



If you have anything to share for the next BioNews, please send it to Ethan Clotfelter (edclotfelter@amherst.edu)