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Thirteen Students Awarded Alumnae Undergraduate Research Grants

EVANSTON, Ill. --- The Alumnae of Northwestern University is pleased to honor 13 students who have been named as recipients of the Alumnae Undergraduate Research Grants. Funding for these grants comes from The Alumnae Centennial Endowment for Undergraduate Research, established in 2016 to commemorate the organization's 100th anniversary. The Endowment, administered by the Office of Undergraduate Research, supports students from all academic areas, giving them opportunities to develop and complete independent research and creative projects across a wide range of fields. These students will work with faculty sponsors this summer to explore answers to questions raised by research projects from many fields of study.

“Undergraduate research allows students to take what they have learned in their classes and use it to try and solve problems that they see in the world. They learn creative problem-solving and critical project-management skills across all fields of study. The Alumnae Endowment allows us to expand these incredibly meaningful opportunities to more students, creating an environment where student success becomes the norm,” notes Peter Civetta, director, Office of Undergraduate Education.

“Today, increasing numbers of undergraduates from all disciplines want to pursue research projects on a variety of topics, including music, art history, psychology, biological sciences, Radio/Television/Film, global health, neuroscience, theatre, physics, and journalism. The Alumnae Centennial Endowment addresses this need by making such opportunities available,” notes The Alumnae president Michele Bresler.

Recipients of \$3,500 grants and their sponsors are:

Fiona Asokacitta, junior, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences (WCAS), is studying history and art history. Proposal: *Curating a Shared History: An Investigation into Three Dutch Museums' Permanent Exhibitions on Indonesia*. **Sponsor: Claudia Swan**, associate professor, Art History. Fiona is studying how the way major museums exhibit their objects can be taken as a barometer of cultural and political relations between the two states and their mixed populations.

Tanya Bhargava, freshman, (WCAS), is studying neuroscience. Proposal: *Olfaction: A Potential Biomarker of Parkinson's Disease*. **Sponsor: Thorsten Kahnt**, assistant professor, Ken and Ruth Davee Dept. of Neurology, Feinberg School of Medicine. Tanya is studying biomarkers that may precede the onset of Parkinson's Disease, which if identified could make it possible to begin treatment before the disease worsens.

Kalpita Chakote, junior, School of Communication (C), is majoring in Radio/Television/Film. Proposal: *A Stand-Up Set About The Intergenerational Gap between Indian-American College-Aged Students and their Parents*. **Sponsor: David Catlin**; lecturer, Theatre. Kalpita is creating a comic stand-up set with a goal that encourages the older generation to “examine societal impositions on women.”

Polina Cherepanova, freshman, (WCAS), is studying biological sciences. Proposal: *Measuring the Ability of Individuals to Improve Their Inaccurate Perception of Elbow Torques Through Training*. **Sponsor: Netta Gurari**, research assistant professor, Physical Therapy and Human Movement Sciences, Feinberg School of Medicine. Polina will develop and run a study measuring the misperception of movement a person has—for example after a stroke—and how that can be used in rehabilitative training.

Maggie Galloway, sophomore, Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications (J), is studying journalism and international studies. Proposal: *Reporting on Health Care Tradeoffs From the Perspective of Those Who Have Lived in Both the U.S. and Canada*. **Sponsor: Peter Slevin**, associate professor, Clinical, Journalism. Maggie plans to interview people who have lived in both the U.S. and Canada and ask which aspects of a health care system are most important to them and then write an article with her findings.

Delaney Glassner, freshman, WCAS, is studying Radio/Television/Film. **Ahlaam Modedina**, freshman, (J), is studying journalism. Delaney, who is Jewish, and Ahlaam, who is Muslim, are doing a joint project. Proposal: *Halal and Hillel: Creating Better Female Muslim and Jewish Representation in the Sit-co*. **Sponsor: Brannon Ingram**, assistant professor, Religious Studies. The students will combine their two perspectives of cultures and religions and create a sit-com showing similarities and differences in a “more nuanced and accurate” way.

Morgan Kinsinger, sophomore, School of Professional Studies, is studying pre-medicine. Proposal: *Investigating the Role of Rare Damaging Variants Among Pigmentation-Associated Genes in Parkinson’s Disease Risk*. **Sponsor: Steven Lubbe**, assistant professor, Neurology (Movement Disorders), Feinberg School of Medicine. Morgan will be investigating variants of a broad pigmentation gene group with the goal of determining a potential biochemical explanation for the correlation between Parkinson’s disease and pigmentation paths.

Emily Landreth, junior, School of Communication, is studying theatre, and psychology. Proposal: *My Grandmother Sang for Mussolini - A New Musical Exploring Intergenerational Trauma and Depression*. **Sponsor: David Bell**, professor, Theatre. Emily’s musical will ask questions about healing from trauma—from whether from personal experiences or from those of ancestors.

Frederick Pardoe, junior, (WCAS), is studying physics and integrated science. Proposal: *Determining the Phenomena Responsible for the Creation of Jet-Generating Poloidal Magnetic Fields in the Accretion Disks of Black Holes*. **Sponsor: Sasha Tchekhovskoy**, assistant professor, Physics and Astronomy. Frederick will “classify a recently identified process that results in these field geometries.”

Harlym Pike, sophomore, (WCAS), is studying psychology. Proposal: *Who Can Be Body Positive on Instagram?* **Sponsor: Renee Engeln**, professor of instruction, Department of Psychology. Harlym’s goal for this research is “to promote conversations about the effectiveness and inclusivity of the body positivity movement.

Liana Runcie, junior, (C), (WCAS), is studying theatre and global health. Proposal: *Micronations: Where Escapism Meets Protest And Nations Rise Inside Each Other*. **Sponsor: Laura Schellhardt**, senior lecturer, Theatre, (C). Liana will write a play to “illustrate the relationships between micronations and the rest of the world.”

McKenna Troy, freshman, Bienen School of Music (BSM), is studying voice and opera. Proposal: *The Physiology of Professional Operatic Singing: An Accessible and Well Researched Guide to Creating and*

Maintaining the Ideal Operatic Instrument. **Sponsor: Pamela Hinchman**, sssociate professor, Music Performance. McKenna will research and write about opera singing as a physical activity and the health needs it presents.

The Alumnae of Northwestern University is an all-volunteer organization of women that raises funds for a wide range of projects to benefit Northwestern while sharing the university's academic resources with the community through its Continuing Education Program. Founded in 1916, The Alumnae has given more than \$9 million to the university in the form of grants, fellowships, scholarships, an endowed professorship, funding for special university projects, and summer internships. For more information, visit The Alumnae website (www.nualumnae.org).

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