

MCB

School of Molecular & Cellular Biology

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Awards Ceremony

May 2021

Biochemistry

Cell and Developmental Biology

Microbiology

Molecular and Integrative Physiology

This program contains an unofficial list of award recipients for December 2020, May 2021 and August 2021. Due to printing deadlines, names of some award recipients may not appear, while names of some students who have not yet completed all degree or award requirements may be included.



UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS AND HONORS

Students Graduating with a Major in the Molecular & Cellular Biology Honors Concentration

Connie Bao	Vijay Nellutla*
Nicole Cast	Eilish Newcomb
Noah Costabilo	Ishani Patel
Zhixing Dai	Tessa Phillips
Jack Gerling*	Aila Rahman
Destiny Henning	Benjamin Ray*
Chen Huang*	Erin Sahn
Rajita Kanapareddy	Elisabeth Schwarzkopf
Kailey Komnick	Brian Tibble
Manasi Lingamaneni	Megan Tomlin
Jordan Machalek	Nisheka Vanjani
Ilber Manavbasi‡	Ravina Vasanwala*
Richard Moraga	Sophie Watts
Allison Narlock	Emma Wu

Oliver J. Bell Merit Scholarship in the Molecular & Cellular Biology Honors Concentration

Muskaan Sawhney

BEST Merit Scholarship for Incoming Freshmen in Biology and Biochemistry

Madison Ardagh	Hannah Hallman
Collin Barnes	Margaret Keilman
Nicholas Beronio	Stav Kramer
Emma Bridgeman	Brandon Snipe
Emma Crawford	Katarina Vrtikapa
Allison Haab	Lily Wenger

Distinction for Excellence in Academics

Connie Bao	Abhishek Pandravada
Kirsten Birk	Mansi Patel
Madelyn Brotnow	Nitiksh Paul
Liana Chidichimo	Benjamin Ray*
Haley Clark*	Elisabeth Schwarzkopf
Zhixing Dai	Euihwan (Eric) Shin*
Nathanlown Dang	Satheeshram Tamilselvan
Isabelle Friend*	Brian Tibble
Aaron Gephart*	Megan Tomlin
Chirag Gopinath	Katelyn Toohill
Destiny Henning	Nisheka Vanjani
Michael Kim	Ravina Vasanwala*
Kailey Komnick	Sophia Watts
Chenyao Ni	Elaina Wilkens
Nathaniel Oommen	Stella Zhao

Highest Distinction for Excellence in Research

Nathanlown Dang Dr. Sayee Anakk

High Distinction for Excellence in Research

Annie Cheung	Dr. Steven Blanke
Matthew Gao	Dr. Thomas Kehl-Fie
Destiny Henning	Dr. Thomas Kehl-Fie
Chen Huang*	Dr. Rhanor Gillette
Rachel Jones	Dr. Steven Blanke
Caroline Kaminsky	Dr. Scott Silverman
Aayush Kaul*	Dr. Aditi Das
Wiktorija Kowalczyk*	Dr. Andrew Belmont
Sean MacAllister	Dr. Steven Blanke
Vincent Prayugo	Dr. Adam Dolezal
Toma Tchernodrinski	Dr. Mary Schuler
Abigail Tierney	Dr. Makoto Inoue
Megan Tomlin	Dr. Michael Spinella
Anna Caroline Vermilya*	Dr. Thomas Kehl-Fie

Distinction for Excellence in Research

Aaron DeSalvio	Dr. James Slauch
Aleyah Hattab	Dr. Sarah Freemantle
Tiffany Jong*	Dr. Nien-Pei Tsai
Nevers Mushimata	Dr. Katy Heath
Allison Narlock	Dr. Rachel Whitaker
Khadeeja Shahid	Dr. Sarah Freemantle
Euihwan (Eric) Shin*	Dr. Hee Jung Chung
Felicia Tan	Dr. Lisa Olshansky

Outstanding Poster Presentation, School of MCB Undergraduate Research Symposium

Allison Narlock Dr. Rachel Whitaker

Honorable Mention Poster Presentation, School of MCB Undergraduate Research Symposium

Ria Ravi Dr. Steven Blanke
Royal Shrestha Dr. Huanyu Qiao

Jenner Family Research Fellowship

Harish Kesavan	Dr. Hee Jung Chung
Niraj Lawande	Dr. C. Christian-Hinman
Veronica Pronitcheva	Dr. Justin Rhodes
Royal Shrestha	Dr. Huanyu Qiao
Jay Sonalkar	Dr. Supriya Prasanth

Berkowitz Research Fellowship

Lina Issa Dr. Daniel Llano

Dawn M. Carlson MD, MPH Research Fellowship for Women in Science

Priya Rao Dr. Mary Schuler

AbbVie Black Business Network + School of MCB SURF

Le'Mark Russell Dr. Rachel Smith-Bolton

Spudich Summer Research Fellowship

David Y. Chen Dr. Supriya Prasanth

School of MCB Undergraduate Research Fellowship, sponsored in part by Dr. Keith Westcott

Emily Tung Dr. Wenyan Mei

School of MCB Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship

Joshua Adisumarta	Dr. Steven Blanke
Sammy Alhayek	Dr. Steven Blanke
Archit Bajaj	Dr. Hee Jung Chung
Neal Dadlani	Dr. Sayee Anakk
Maria Victoria Di Franco	Dr. Supriya Prasanth
Tina (Jeong Won) Han	Dr. Kai Zhang
Bryan Himmel	Dr. Beth Stadtmueller
Jessica Hindenburg	Dr. Vivian Tang
Emma Ibanez	Dr. Justin Rhodes
Kevin Ingram	Dr. Bo Wang
Erica Joo	Dr. Huanyu Qiao
Laura Kilikevicius	Dr. Gene Robinson
Martin Lundy	Dr. Jeffrey Woods
Alfredo Martinez-Ruiz	Dr. Mary Schuler
Michael McHenry	Dr. Erik Nelson
Brendan Rattin	Dr. Jie Chen
Ria Ravi	Dr. Steven Blanke
Faaiza Saif	Dr. Huanyu Qiao
Yiting Song	Dr. Steven Blanke
Yufei Tian	Dr. Xinzhu Yu
Srishti Tiwari	Dr. Erik Nelson
Jan Xavier Uy	Dr. Steven Blanke
Faisal Zaidi	Dr. Steven Blanke

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS

John G. and Evelyn Hartman Heiligenstein Outstanding Teaching Assistant in Molecular & Cellular Biology

Marinos Kalafatis

Julie and David Mead Graduate Fellowship

Liqian Ma

Outstanding Teaching Assistant in Molecular & Cellular Biology

Mohd Tayyab Adil	Angela Dean
Sonya Kumar Bharathkar	Justin Miller
Roy Rodriguez Carrero	Chayanid Ongpipattanakul

* Denotes Fall 2020 Graduate ‡ Denotes Summer 2020 Graduate

BIOCHEMISTRY AWARDS

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS AND HONORS

Highest Distinction

David Kostyra
Cliff Yerby

Dr. Martin Burke
Dr. Michael Spinella

High Distinction

Autumn Brandenburg
Rukkia Liaqat
Alex Lotuzas
Haider Sarwar
Yiren Tu

Dr. Dean Riechers
Dr. Robert McCusker
Dr. David Sarlah
Dr. Yi Lu
Dr. Lin-Feng Chen

Outstanding Student Award

David Kostyra
Dr. Martin Burke

William T. and Lynn Jackson Senior Best Thesis Award

Cliff Yerby
Dr. Michael Spinella

William T. and Lynn Jackson Senior Merit Award for Outstanding Thesis

Autumn Brandenburg
Dr. Dean Riechers

Biochemistry Summer Research Scholarship

Adam Balutowski
Dr. Rutilio Fratti

H. Edward Conrad Summer Research Scholarship

Haolin Luo
Dr. Taras Pogorelov

William T. and Lynn Jackson Scholars in Biochemistry

Vishnu K. Gorur
Dr. Hong Jin

Padbury Family Scholarship in Biochemistry

Kathy De La Torre
Dr. Jodi Flaws

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS AND HONORS

Robert L. Switzer Award for Teaching

Santanu Ghosh
Isaac Kim
Nikita Modi

Herbert E. Carter Fellowship in Biochemistry

Darjan Duraki
Dr. David Shapiro

Charles F. Kade Fellowship in Biochemistry

Huaxun Fan
Dr. Kai Zhang

Westcott Bioscience Fellowship

Christine Devlin
Kaylee Kuzelka

Dr. Erik Procko
Dr. Satish Nair

Lowell P. Hager Fellowship

Sonya Kumar Bharathkar
Dr. Beth Stadtmueller

CELL & DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGY AWARDS

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS AND HONORS

Undergraduate Outstanding Research Achievement Award

Toma Tchernodriniski
Dr. Mary Schuler

Roderick MacLeod Award for Academic Excellence

Toma Tchernodriniski
Dr. Mary Schuler

Tom and Cynthia Cycyota Research Scholarship

Darya Asoudegi
Dr. Supriya Prasanth

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS AND HONORS

Tom and Cynthia Cycyota Research Scholarship

Janhavi Kohle
Dr. Brian Freeman

Tunji Toogun Research Excellence Award

Xiaohe (John) Li
Yo-Chuen Lin

Dr. William Brieher
Dr. Supriya Prasanth

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award

Surabhi Sonam

Graduate Student Platform Presentation Award

Omid Gholamalamdari
Dr. Andrew Belmont

MICROBIOLOGY AWARDS

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS AND HONORS

Dr. Walter A. and Loretta M. Zygmunt Microbiology Scholarship - Summer Research

Jonathan Forrest
James Lopez
Jillian Maier
Olivia Rodriguez

Dr. Andrei Kuzminov
Dr. Brenda Wilson
Dr. Carin Vanderpool
Dr. Steven Blanke

Francis M. and Harlie M. Clark Microbiology Scholarship - Achievement

Annie Cheung
Rachel Jones

Dr. Steven Blanke
Dr. Steven Blanke

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS AND HONORS

Francis M. and Harlie M. Clark Microbiology Scholarship - Teaching

Molly Crowder
Eliot Joya Sandoval
Rouhallah Ramezanifard

Professor Marie Chow Teaching Scholarship

Stefanie Eben
Katie Frye
Ami Seeger

Chester W. and Nadine C. Houston Endowment Fellowship - Excellence

Matthew Georgiou
Dr. Douglas Mitchell

James R. Beck Endowment for Microbiology Fellowship - Excellence

Rouhallah Ramezanifard
Dr. James Slauch

Mr. Chinoree T. and Mrs. Kimiyo Enta Fellowship - Accomplishment

Yidan Zhou
Dr. James Imlay

Mame Shiao Debbie Graduate Student Award in Microbiology - Family Assistance

S. M. Nayeemul Bari
Dr. Asma Hatoum-Aslan

MOLECULAR & INTEGRATIVE PHYSIOLOGY AWARDS

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS AND HONORS

Howard S. Ducoff Award for Outstanding Senior Thesis

Nathanlown Dang
Dr. Sayee Anakk

C. Ladd Prosser Outstanding Achievement Award

Eric Shin
Dr. Hee Jung Chung

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS AND HONORS

Outstanding Thesis Award

Jiaren Zhang
Dr. Hee Jung Chung

James E. Heath Award for Excellence in Teaching Physiology

Daphne Eagleman

TEACHING ASSISTANTS RANKED AS EXCELLENT BY THEIR STUDENTS

For Molecular and Cellular Biology Courses and Biochemistry Courses Taught in Spring and Fall 2020

Mohd Tayyab Adil	Sonya Kumar Bharathkar
Rebecca Androwski†	Monica Lannom
Maxwell Baymillert	Colin Lee
Lindsey Behrenst	Tianyi Li
Allison Boss-Kennedy	Iris Lyu
Andrew Buechler†	Krishna Narayanan
Dustin Buntrock	James Nguyen
Lauren Carnevale	Teak Jung Oh
Daniel Castro†	Chayanid Ongpipattanakult
Arpita Chakravarti	Alexander Palmer†
Yanheng Chen	Paola Párraga Solórzano
Molly Crowder†	Alex Phillips
Page Daniels	Megan Ringling†
Zachary Dewald	Roy Rodriguez Carrero†
Stefanie Eben	Valeria Sanabria Guillent†
Kristen Farley†	Jessica Saw†
Joanne Fil	Rebecca Schneider
Matthew Georgiou	Ami Seeger
Santanu Ghosh	Anushna Sent†
Kevin Gill	Tauseef Shah†
Rebecca Golden†	Savanna Skeeters
Brittney Gorman†	Surabhi Sonam†
Ekaterina Gribkova†	Ian Traniello†
Anshika Gupta	Brady Wells
Eman Hamed†	Tianjiong Yao
Andrea Hernandez Garcia	Shidi Zhao
Logan Hurst	Qi Zou
Marinos Kalafatis†	

† The instructor ratings were outstanding.