

GINSBERG FAMILY AWARDS



Undergraduate Awards for
Leadership, Service, and Scholarship



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The Ginsberg Family Awards have a rich campus history, originating as the Meyerhoff Undergraduate Excellence Awards in 1993. They held this name for 26 years, distributing scholarships to hundreds of exemplary student leaders. In 2018, the Ginsberg family took on the awards in an effort to continue to recognize the impact of outstanding student leaders on the broader campus community. Created in honor of the late Dean of Students Paul Ginsberg (Dean of Students from 1970 – 1987), the Ginsberg Family Awards continue today in an effort to recognize and honor Paul's commitment to enhancing the student experience throughout his time as dean.

Each year, 25 undergraduate juniors and seniors across campus are recognized for their contributions in the areas of leadership, service, and scholarship. The awards are distributed by 24 campus units, demonstrating the broad-reaching impact these student leaders have had across the UW-Madison campus and community.

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Student Affairs

Katie Kalvelage

Associated Students of Madison

Academic Major(s): Nursing

Katie has been involved with ASM since her first semester on campus, and has found ways to integrate what she has learned in ASM with her passion for nursing. Katie has served on the Healthcare Advisory Board for three years as a Shared Governance Representative advocating for increased mental health resources for students and making UW a tobacco-free campus. Katie brought her commitment to public health to her role as the Student Activity Center (SAC) Governing Board Chair this year, and it became the perfect opportunity for her to use her knowledge of health policy in a new way. The SAC was able to offer dedicated study space to students who have an accommodation on file, and reservable study space to the student body. Katie has shown a commitment to mentoring other students, and to ensuring that everyone she works with knows they are part of a team.

Grace Plunkett

Center for Leadership & Involvement

Academic Major(s): Information Systems; Management

Grace maintains an impressive 3.8 GPA while holding leadership positions in several organizations including Delta Sigma Pi and Information Systems Society. In addition, she has extensive involvement on her involvement on campus and in the community. Throughout Grace's time in CfLI, she has eagerly taken on a variety of responsibilities that showcase her dedication to student involvement and leadership. She has served as an Organization Development Consultant Team Member and as an Undergraduate Leadership Certificate Advisor. Grace's maturity and growth throughout her time with CfLI has been evident through how she engages with her leadership and social justice development plans and how these skills are carried into her other work. Her commitment to holding herself, her peers, and the UW community accountable to build a more inclusive campus and student experience shines through in her work and her leadership philosophy.

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Student Affairs

Sanjana Kumar

Center for the First-Year Experience

Academic Major(s): Communication Sciences and Disorders

As a Study Skills Coordinator with the Greater University Tutoring Service, Sanjana helps students acquire time-management, motivation, and study and learning skills. Sanjana is also a research assistant in an educational neuroscience lab, conducting behavior sessions with children for the Longitudinal Analysis of Mathematical Brain Development & Abilities project. Sanjana wants to become an audiologist so every person has the opportunity to communicate with peers and loved ones. Sanjana is an advocate for the Deaf community and non-verbal languages with which they communicate, and has the utmost respect for Deaf culture. As Study Skills Coordinator, Sanjana considers how to best support students with diverse learning needs and provide accessible programs and resources. Also, as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Chair for the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA), she collaborates with committee members to develop projects and events that promote DEI within NSSLHA and UW-Madison's Communication Sciences and Disorders Department.

Lezlie Meyers

Dean of Students Office

Academic Major(s): Spanish; Legal Studies

Lezlie works for the Dean of Students Office and also the graduate school as a student desk staff member. Lezlie is also a tutor for the Greater University Tutoring Services on campus and enjoys helping other students. Lezlie studied abroad in Madrid, Spain and has a passion for the Spanish language. Lezlie was a Spanish teacher for Future Language Professionals and taught students from 6 to 10 years old. Lezlie has volunteered at St. Vincent hospital as a clerical assistant and also volunteers at a Family Court Clinic as a new client intake processor. Lezlie is dependable, has a great work ethic, strong critical thinking and always has a positive attitude. These qualities have made Lezlie a valuable asset to the Dean of Students Office and the university community. Lezlie is moving to Spain in September and will be teaching English.

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Student Affairs

Travis Winger

Gender & Sexuality Campus Center

Academic Major(s): Nursing

Travis is a fifth-year nursing student with a minor in religious studies and will graduate in May 2021. Travis has worked as the Learning Community Program Assistant for Open House, the gender and sexuality learning community in Phillips Hall, since Fall 2017. Travis, being a proud and true Sagittarius, has the ability to build and foster sincere, genuine and dynamic relationships with quite literally anyone they come into contact with. In doing so, Travis finds effortless ways to relate with fellow badgers. Travis moves through his work, personal life, and studies with an anti-racist and justice-centered framework, always centering the lives and experiences of QTBIPOC. Over the course of the current semester, they worked as a COVID-19 case and contact tracer with the Grant County Health Department. Travis plans to work as a RN in Madison for a few years then return to obtain an MSN specializing in transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) care.

Lynn (Shu) Liu

International Student Services

Academic Major(s): Computer Science; Math; Statistics

Lynn is a junior with senior standing majoring in Computer Science, Math, and Statistics. She is the Activity Chair of ACM-W Women in Computing UW-Madison Chapter, an Academic Coach at the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Educational Achievement, and recently submitted her first paper as a second author with Prof. Aditya Akella. Among several outstanding front-runners, Lynn clearly articulated how her impressive academic achievements have influenced her journey as a student. Throughout this journey, her dedication to developing her leadership skills through service within the context of our diverse campus and community is what stands out the most about this accomplished awardee. As a female leader in STEM fields, she described her drive to use her own experience to bring others up alongside herself and be an example of how passion can fuel excellence.

Dylan Hogan

McBurney Disability Resource Center

Academic Major(s): Kinesiology- Exercise and Movement Science

Dylan has extensive volunteerism in the community, volunteering with several organizations including UW Hospital's emergency department. Dylan plans to pursue a career in medicine and spoke of how his own experiences with a disability have influenced his career choice. "My life experiences have prepared me for a career in medicine, not only with medical knowledge, but with the opportunity to share my experiences as a patient with a chronic illness. I am grateful for the care I have received from many great doctors and nurses, and I aspire to have a similar positive impact on the lives of others." His volunteering with UW Hospital has given him the opportunity to have a positive impact and helped him realize that "being a health care provider involves much more than ordering tests and prescribing medications. Truly caring about what you do and bringing empathy and compassion to every interaction is crucial in health-care, but also valuable in any setting."

May Wojt

Multicultural Student Center

Academic Major(s): Gender and Women's Studies

May has served as a leader in a number of student organizations including Multiracial Student Union, Japanese Student Association, and a member in many others as well. She has served as an intern in the MSC in various roles including cultural programming, operations, and social justice, and has been a key team member in the remote and transition semesters. She is someone who uses her voice for justice, and advocates for herself and others through sharing her ideas, insight, and example, especially for students of color on the UW Madison campus. The MSC has been honored to work with May, and watch her develop into the leader that the world needs right now- her willingness to be helpful to all, her passion for social justice for all, and her meaningful relationships and connections that she creates with everyone she meets, is just a couple of ways that May has made an impact on the MSC and the UW-Madison campus.

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Student Affairs

Thida Chong

Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life

Academic Major(s): Finance; Investment and Banking; Cert. in Developmental Economics, Spanish Studies for Business Students

Thida will graduate in May 2021 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree and certificates in Developmental Economics and Spanish Studies for Business Students. During Thida's undergraduate career, Thida has served in a number of leadership roles within Fraternity & Sorority Life including President and Finance Chair of the Kappa Gamma chapter of Sigma Lambda Gamma National Sorority, Inc. and Treasurer of the Multicultural Greek Council. As a leader in the fraternity and sorority community, Thida leads by example and works tirelessly to foster spaces within the community in which individuals feel valued and respected. Thida has built a legacy that will be felt, remembered, and celebrated within her chapter, the Multicultural Greek Council, and beyond.

Maggie Navarre

Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards

Academic Major(s): English; Journalism

Maggie is a junior majoring in English, Journalism, and finishing a certificate in Criminal Justice. She is on track to graduate in Spring 2022, and has plans to attend law school in the future. Maggie is currently interning in the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. She has shown a strong interest in learning both the processes in our office, as well as the impact they have on students. Maggie has been able to engage with our academic integrity program and has helped students reflect on their decision making as well as the impact of those decisions. We are happy to have Maggie continue working in the office over the summer while she studies for the LSAT. Maggie previously served in the role of Vice President of Chapter Relations and Standards of Alpha Chi Omega where she worked to uphold the Code of Conduct. She is further involved on campus as a member of the Pre-Law Society.

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Student Affairs

Breanna Carley

Recreation & Wellbeing

Academic Major(s): Communications Sciences and Disorders

Not only has Breanna excelled in the classroom, achieving a 3.95 GPA and completing an honors thesis project investigating Parent Perception of their Child's Speech Intelligibility Compared to a Naive Listener's Perception, but she has also dedicated countless hours helping others. A leader within the speech, language, and hearing community, Breanna serves as an Inclusion Facilitator with United Cerebral Palsy of Dane County, a Peer Mentor for the National Student Speech-Language Hearing Association, and a Literacy Tutor with GiGi's Playhouse. Outside of academics and service work, Brenna finds time to work at the Wisconsin Intelligibility, Speech, Communication Laboratory assisting with clinical speech therapy sessions with children with motor disorders aged birth-18 and at Recreation & Wellbeing as a Youth Instructional Programs Lead compiling emotional, nutritional, physical, and social wellness activities for a 5-week Special Olympics fitness program.

Chris Tait

University Veteran Services

Academic Major(s): Health Promotion and Health Equity

Chris Tait is a 50-year-old, Marine Corps veteran who transferred from Madison College after earning degrees in Information Technology, Liberal Arts, Health. He wants to help create healthy communities by using this knowledge to integrate people, activity, and technology together in creative ways. Chris is also focused on addressing diversity and equity issues in Madison. He does this through helping veteran, transfer, and non-traditional student populations. Chris is active in veteran organizations, and works as a Transfer Student Coordinator in the Transfer Transition Program. This fall, he is working with a team to create a Tau Sigma chapter honor society for transfer students. Chris is a husband and father of three daughters; they are a major part of his college experience and greatly motivate him to perform academically. He also credits Wisconsin GI Bill for giving him this opportunity. He will apply to a graduate program after a gap year to be with his family.

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Student Affairs

Lily Miller

Wisconsin Union

Academic Major(s): Horticulture; Community and Environmental Sociology; Cert. in Middle East Studies

The leadership skills of integrity, inclusive engagement and fostering connection and community can be felt through the entire WUD organization this year and that is due to the dedication and dependability of Lily E.A.F. Miller, the 20-21 Wisconsin Union President. Lily began her involvement with the Wisconsin Union as a Summer Art Coordinator, later becoming an Art Associate Director, and then Director. She also worked as a Garden Intern with the West Madison Agricultural Research Center. Throughout this service, Lily has built a reputation as a caring, prepared, and authentic student leader. This year the Wisconsin Union faced unprecedented challenges that caused us to rethink how we serve our community and recommit deeply to why that work is needed now more than ever. Lily served on the Wisconsin Union Leadership Team, as governing board chair, and as chair of Directorate, the student programming board. Through this, Lily has guided the organization through the challenges of the year with grace and an emphasis on self-care.

Schools and Colleges

Haley Sisel

College of Agricultural & Life Sciences

Academic Major(s): Biology; Cert. in Global Health, Gender and Women's Studies

Throughout her undergraduate career, Haley has sought opportunities both in and outside of the classroom to be immersed in the Wisconsin Experience. Volunteering with Badger Volunteers, UW Health, and Gio's Garden taught her the value of community engagement and the importance of leading with empathy, humility, and a desire to learn more about others with different experiences. Following her tremendous experience with Gio's Garden, she became a Respite Provider for a middle schooler with Autism and ADHD. She has also prioritized inclusivity on campus by attending the Social Justice Leadership Retreat. This has been an important awareness piece as she serves the University as both a Tour Guide and a House Fellow (and previously as CALS Ambassador functioning in a variety of leadership roles). She will make a profound impact in the future as a public health practitioner.

Tea Jackson-Strong

College of Engineering

Academic Major(s): Geological Engineering; Geology & Geophysics

As a tutor at the Undergraduate Learning Center, Tea works to support, mentor, and advocate for underrepresented first-year students who came into college less prepared in math than other engineering students. She creates a welcoming environment where students feel heard without feeling censored, comfortable asking questions without feeling shamed, and sharing their college experience frankly without feeling judged. Additionally, Tea independently worked on the Math Review project for Math 171, 217 and 221. Tea also worked as a SOAR peer advisor and served on numerous student panels for the College of Engineering events. She has held leadership positions in the Association for Women Geoscientists, the Epsilon Delta Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, the National Society of Black Engineers, and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society.

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Schools and Colleges

Amanjot Yadev

College of Letters & Science

Academic Major(s): Psychology; Neurobiology; Gender and Women's Studies; Cert. in Health and Humanities

Amy has applied what she learned in the classroom to an extensive array of extracurricular activities. This is evident with her work as an English tutor in which she strives to support students using culturally sensitive and respectful pedagogies. This past year, due to the pandemic, her volunteer time shifted to mostly online but she formed strong connections with others. She volunteers as a crisis counselor with Crisis Text Line supporting individuals facing difficulties, and is a Badger Spill student supporter helping students on campus with various challenges commonly seen in college. She and another student co-founded a registered student organization called STEM Students for Social Justice that aims to provide a space for students to learn about systems of oppression in STEM fields while doing advocacy work. STEM Students for Social Justice recently donated COVID-19 care packages to the Porchlight organization and created a COVID-19 vaccine infographic.

Mukadas Abdullah

College of Letters & Science

Academic Major(s): Psychology

Mukadas has had the privilege to serve the campus and community in many ways and fully embrace the Wisconsin Experience. As the African Students Association Special Events Coordinator, during Fall '20 she carried the important responsibility of planning an event focusing on the mental health of BIPOC students. In addition, as the religious fellow for the Center for Religion and Global Citizenry, she engaged in interfaith dialogue, presenting on Islam - the world's second-largest religion - and tackling Islamophobia. Mukadas served as a Student Ambassador for the Middle East Studies Program, and volunteered and worked at the Child Development Lab on campus. Mukadas, deeply proud of her Afghan heritage and culture, has found that her most meaningful experience has been serving as a volunteer and translator for an Afghan refugee family in the Madison area, a true act of paying it forward.

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Schools and Colleges

Shehrose Sharania

School of Education

Academic Major(s): Health Promotion and Health Equity

Through her academics, Shehrose became passionate about exploring the intersections between health, policy, and civic engagement. Consequently, she has served as an intern with the Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health where she facilitated workshops around reproductive health and mental health to Wisconsin youth and volunteered as a tutor at the Literacy Network where she teaches health literacy and English as a Second Language to immigrant/refugees. She was selected as the 2020 Newman Civic Fellow due to her work in advocating for alleviating health disparities. As a health equity enthusiast, Shehrose will be pursuing her Master of Public Health in Health Administration and Policy at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. As a first-generation college student, she is grateful to the Posse Foundation for giving her a chance to attend UW-Madison where she was able to uncover her passion for improving the healthcare system.

Amani Omari

School of Human Ecology

Academic Major(s): Human Development & Family Studies; Communication Arts: Communication Sciences & Rhetorical Studies

Amani is committed to improving healthcare for everyone. As an advocacy intern with AARP Wisconsin she drafted a policy stance to advocate for policies and programs to close the health care gaps for underrepresented groups. She had personal experience as a volunteer with Urban Triage, whose mission is to elevate Black families facing healthcare challenges. Amani made the most of her college experience as a congressional intern for Congresswoman Moore, and volunteering with the Child Development Lab working with the 3-5 year old classroom. Amani continued her interest in local government by researching and writing about Wisconsin government and legislative policies with the Daily Cardinal. These experiences and many others have directed Amani to attend law school, where she plans to advocate for their community as a healthcare attorney.

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Schools and Colleges

Luba Laska

School of Nursing

Academic Major(s): Nursing

This past year, Luba has served as Co-president of Healthcare Inclusion Initiative, an organization that works to eliminate healthcare inequities by helping to educate future healthcare professionals about various marginalized groups' experiences interacting with the medical system. She firmly believes that every person deserves to be treated with dignity and constantly works at developing respectful and open communication skills, as demonstrated through her volunteer and clinic work. Luba helps with meal preparation and distribution at The Beacon, a day resource center for those experiencing homelessness. She also volunteers at New Friends through the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, building friendships with older adults via regular zoom calls. Additionally, Luba is a COVID Vaccine volunteer with UHS. As a student nursing assistant at UW Health Urology Clinic, Luba works with many different patient populations, including incarcerated patients through the weekly inmate clinic. She is truly a leader in her cohort and hopes to pursue nursing graduate studies to become a certified nurse anesthetist.

Nate Verhagen

School of Pharmacy

Academic Major(s): Pharmacology & Toxicology

Nate has contributed to the community via his service with Our Lady of Hope Clinic, American Family Children's Hospital, UW's Adapted Fitness program, and Camp Kesem, a summer camp for children with parents affected by cancer. He has also been a leader within the PharmTox major and one of its most enthusiastic ambassadors, attending many prospective student events in the past year and always willing to share his contact information with students who want to learn more. Many new students have been referred to the major because of Nate's passion and outreach, including those in his student organizations! Nate has balanced his service and leadership to the major, UW-Madison, and the greater community with his commitment to academics – he has maintained a 3.9 GPA and excelled in graduate-level coursework.

Aina Athirah Ab Latip

Wisconsin School of Business

Academic Major(s): Actuarial Science; Risk Management & Insurance

Aina has been involved in the Malaysian Student Association during her time as a Badger, and served as External Director for a full year. Aina also served as an ASM representative on the Campus Diversity and Climate Committee. That position is indicative of Aina's passion for helping others and making a difference in her surrounding community and in her numerous volunteer engagements as a Badger Volunteer. As an international student from Malaysia, Aina cares deeply about bringing what she's learned from her Wisconsin Experience back to her home country. After graduation, Aina will work with Petronas, a Malaysian government-linked oil and gas company. On a small scale, Aina hopes to introduce a centralized volunteer opportunity, similar to Badger Volunteers, to provide resources and opportunities for employees to participate in leadership and service opportunities that interest them. This infrastructure does not currently exist there, so Aina is hoping to lead the way and inspire others to follow.

Campus Units

Tamia Fowlkes

Division of Diversity, Equity and Educational Achievement

Academic Major(s): Political Science; Journalism; Cert. in Gender & Women's Studies, Leadership

Tamia is a recipient of the Powers-Knapp Scholarship with the Mercile J. Lee Scholars Program within DDEEA. Tamia is a motivated, energetic, and compassionate servant leader. Her journalistic passions stem from a passion to inform and educate her peers and community. Tamia has written for the Wisconsin State Journal and Madison Commons. She serves as the Big 10 Voting Challenge Intern for the Morgridge Center and as an Andrew Goodman Ambassador for the Andrew Goodman Foundation. These positions have heightened her passions about politics, education, writing, and activism, and she is excited to continue growing as a writer and leader. Her career trajectory has remained consistent since her freshman year, "to obtain a position in public service or journalism, two careers that would allow me to serve as a representative voice for oppressed and marginalized communities."

Danielle Wendricks

Morgridge Center for Public Service

Academic Major(s): Community and Nonprofit Leadership; History; Cert. in Education Policy Studies

Dani has dedicated her college experience to connecting campus and community and making the work of Morgridge more accessible to the Madison community. She has advised countless students on volunteer opportunities, led workshops on responsible civic engagement, supported professors in implementing community based learning approaches in their classrooms, and supported logistical programming at the UW South Madison partnership. She currently serves as the Internal Director of the Open Seat Food Pantry where she organizes volunteers to staff three weekly food distributions across campus, and she also serves as an intern for the Literacy Network. Dani says, to pay it forward, wherever life takes her, she will work intentionally to foster spaces where community can flourish.

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Campus Units

Sabrina Ruedinger

University Housing

Academic Major(s): Elementary Education; Special Education

Sabrina has worked for University Housing Dining and Culinary Services since her freshman year on campus at Carson's Market. She began there as a Team Member in the fall of 2017, was promoted to a student supervisor in April of 2018, and is currently serving as the Head Student Supervisor at Carson's Market. She has seen Carson's through many changes throughout the pandemic as Carson's closed to the public and took on the task of providing food to students in quarantine. This entailed creating and learning different tasks, procedures, training, and scheduling with the student employees Sabrina supervised. Sabrina was instrumental in helping think through different scenarios and resolve issues. In the greater Madison community, Sabrina has been involved as a peer mentor for Neighborhood House working with their learning assistance program for children ages 7-13. She was a recipient of the Spring 2021 University Housing Recognition of Outstanding Student Employees Award. Next fall, Sabrina is hoping to start her first year of teaching in elementary school.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is no small feat to support an awards program that is as far-reaching and impactful as the Ginsberg Family Awards. We extend our deepest gratitude to the Ginsberg family, who continue to advance and enhance the student experience at UW-Madison.

“Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe that the great state University of Wisconsin should ever encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone truth can be found.”

-UW President Charles Kendall Adams (1894)



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