

Pennoni

Honors College

2025 Impact Report

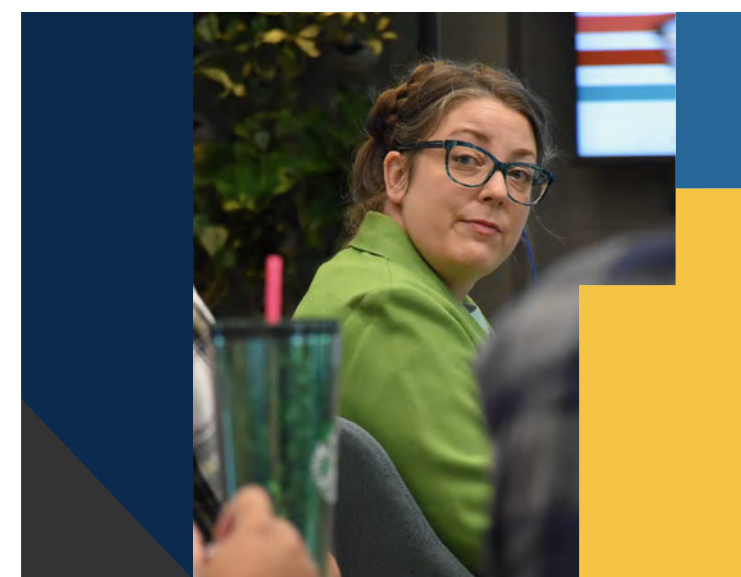
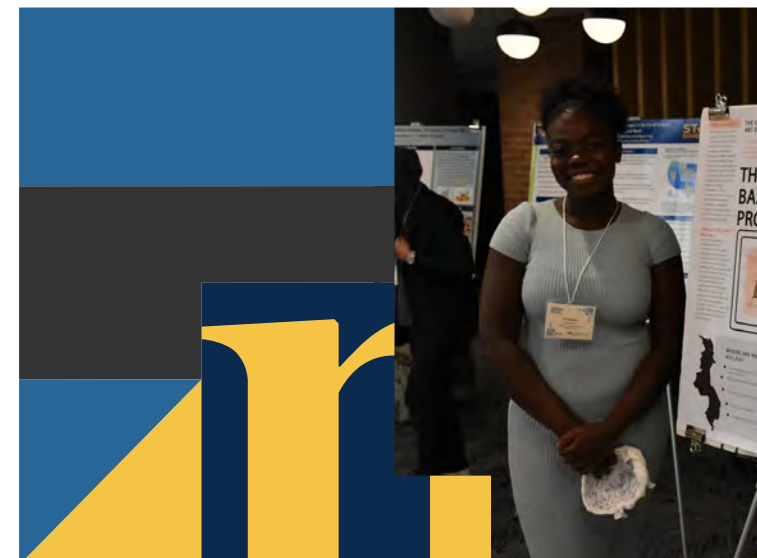
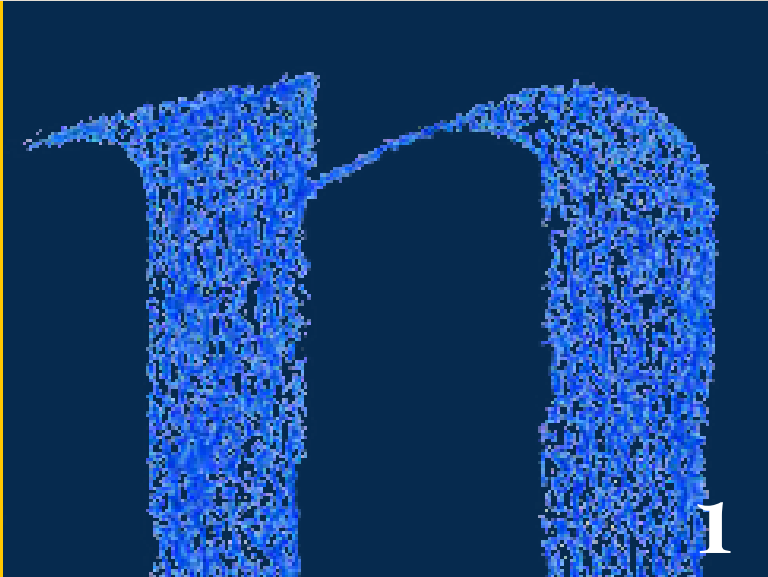


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OUR IMPACT REPORT

Pennoni Honors College enhances the Drexel experience for more than 2,000 Drexel students. Our dynamic Honors Program curricula and our custom-designed major provide truly unique opportunities for interdisciplinary learning and exploration. Our undergraduate research programs deliver experiential learning through hands-on research, scholarship, and creative work. Our fellowships advising program mentors students as they pursue prestigious, global opportunities to explore their work off campus.

Ultimately, the Pennoni Honors College elevates Drexel's reputation, serving as a key resource to recruit and retain highly motivated and ambitious students who graduate and change the world.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, the Pennoni Honors College has reached new heights in its impact while shaping the future of higher education. We are so proud of all that we've accomplished and look forward to continued successes ahead.





A Note From Our Dean

As I reflect on my first year as dean of Pennoni Honors College, I take tremendous pride in all that we have accomplished. Our successes are reflected in the achievements of our students, faculty, alumni, and collaborators, who never cease to inspire and motivate us.

From my first day, we began planning for our future, aligning our work with Drexel's academic transformation and positioning ourselves at the forefront of higher education. Our new strategic plan will ensure that we enhance the Drexel experience for everyone, bolster the University's reputation, and serve as a national model for interdisciplinary learning, institutional collaboration, and student-centered experiential learning.

The impact of Pennoni Honors College is evidenced in many ways. Our students and alumni are achieving tremendous academic, professional, and personal milestones through their involvement in our offerings. Faculty are seeking us out to explore new approaches that will elevate their teaching and research. Nationally, we are recognized as a leader in honors education, recognized for the quality of our programs, our innovative community-building efforts, and our ability to recruit and retain ambitious students who become Drexel's most accomplished alumni.

As we complete an immensely productive and highly successful year, I am energized by everything that we have undertaken, inspired by the dedication of the Pennoni Honors College team, and eager to build on the successes outlined in this 2025 Impact Report.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Neville Vakharina".

Neville Vakharina, PhD
Dean, Pennoni Honors College

Our New Strategic Plan

Over the past nine months, we have undergone a rigorous strategic planning process to steer the college through the next five years. After gathering feedback from our stakeholders, analyzing data and current trends, and reflecting on our values and goals, we are pleased to share our new mission, vision, and values and our pillars of integration, innovation, and enhancement. These in turn support our strategic imperatives to enhance the Drexel experience and the University's reputation and serve as a model for interdisciplinary learning, collaboration, and student-centered experiential learning.

OUR MISSION

Pennoni Honors College cultivates intellectual agency, motivated curiosity, and a conscientious community for Drexel's students, alumni, faculty, staff, and neighbors through collaboration and customization. Integrated across disciplines and campus life, Pennoni delivers innovative academic offerings, student-centered experiential learning, and a space for courageous conversations that welcomes students as their authentic selves, where they are advocated for, respected, and appreciated.

OUR VISION

Pennoni Honors College will shape the future of higher education as a guiding light for interdisciplinary learning, institutional collaboration, and integrative experiences that emphasize student agency and enhance the Drexel experience.

OUR VALUES

Community and Inclusion:

Create culturally competent spaces that welcome all perspectives across the Drexel community, where each person feels safe, valued, and represented, while building long-lasting bonds that extend beyond graduation.

Access and Customization:

Provide resources for students to learn, grow, and build, and empower students to pursue unique, individualized opportunities.

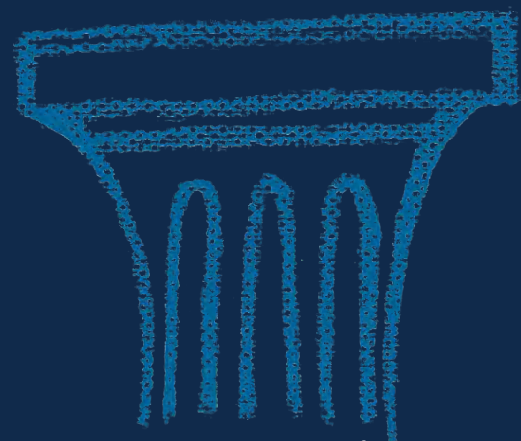
Curiosity and Play:

Balanced education should be rigorous and fun, endeavoring to bring a playful, creative spirit to learning that honors intellectual inquiry and imagination.



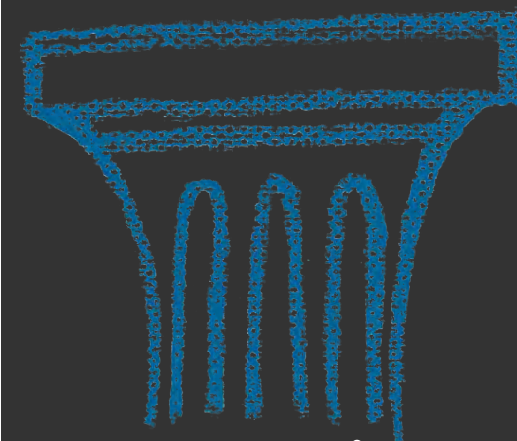
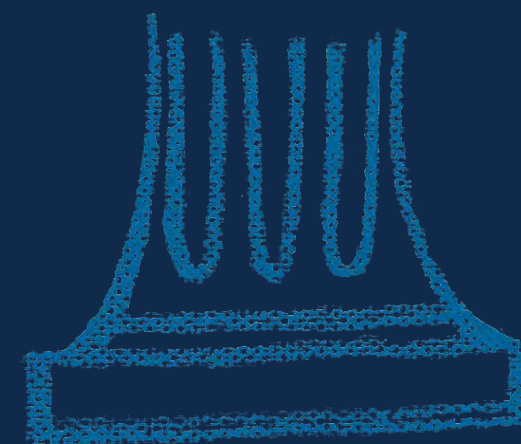
Our Pillars

The Foundations of Our Work



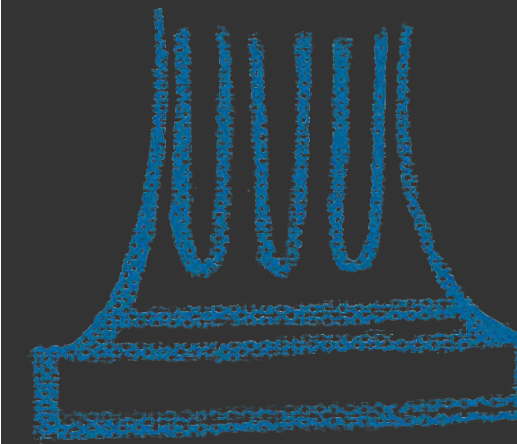
Integration

Pennoni fosters a culture of reciprocity by strengthening collaborative relationships to leverage resources and build capacity throughout and beyond the University. This integrative approach ensures an interconnected, transparent, and enhanced experience for Drexel students, faculty, and staff in a way that continues to bolster the University's reputation.



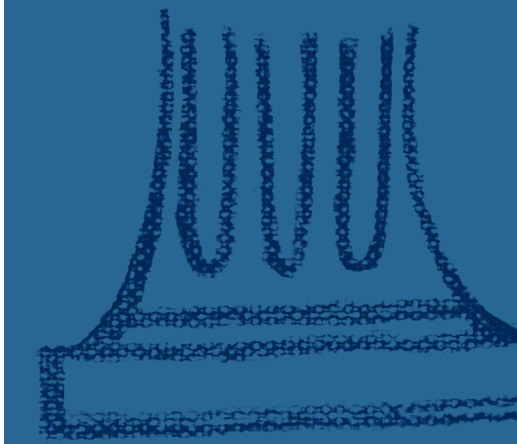
Innovation

Pennoni centers care in our work to reimagine existing practices, develop new programs, and cultivate a supportive space for innovation at Drexel. Through holistic approaches to curriculum development, advising, research, and mentorship, we are a dynamic model for an enhanced educational experience.



Enhancement

Pennoni cultivates a student-centered community that ensures a more connected, celebrated, and joyful experience for all who engage with Pennoni. In building this community, we enhance the Drexel experience and foster belonging for all students, faculty, and staff.



BY THE
NUMBERS

90

*Faculty
Members*

12

Drexel Students and
alumni received
international
fellowships to 13
different countries.

1,594

**Currently enrolled
Honors Students**

94.7% after
graduation are
employed full-time or in
graduate school

215

**Graduation
Numbers for
2024**

Honors: 169

**Honors with
distinction:** 46

15

**Faculty mentored students in the
custom-designed major**

27

**Students pursuing our
custom-designed
major**

128

*Fellowship
applicants*

106

*Faculty and
staff
supported
fellowship
applicants by
providing
feedback and
serving on
review
committees.*

BY THE NUMBERS

17

A record 17 Fulbright US Student Program semi-finalists for 2025-26 grants and a record 17 Gilman Scholarship recipients in Spring 2025

60+

Events and info sessions/workshops that provided information, resources, discussion, and play for more than 300 attendees.

15

Pennoni was recently named one of the 15 best Honors colleges in the country by Town and Country, who showcased our abundant interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary course offerings, support for students pursuing research and applying for competitive awards, and commitment to fostering mentorship and leadership.

41+21

Fellowship Recipients + Honorable Mentions

96%

1-year retention rate for Pennoni Honors students, among the highest in the University

72

Faculty Engaged in Teaching Pennoni Courses representing 39 departments

2x

Accepted students are twice as likely to attend Drexel if they are also accepted into the Pennoni Honors College.

83

Honors and Symposium courses offered, including 7 experiential learning courses

122

STAR Scholars in summer 2024

90 faculty mentors

WELCOMING NEW DRAGONS

Each year, Drexel welcomes students during Welcome Week, a series of events to orient our incoming students, acclimate them to campus life, and get them excited for their Dragon years. Our co-op students, Esther Lee, BS graphic design '25, and Piper Kelly, BS film and television '25, designed SWAG and a marketing campaign to promote Pennoni's Bentley Block Party. Our block party is the first step to building a community, providing support for our students, and offering opportunities to socialize and ensure play is part of their Drexel experience.

**We had more
than 500 people
show up to our
block party!**



COMMUNITY BUILDING



Pennoni Playground

One way we are innovating higher education is by centering joy and play in our work. Yes, we do deliver rigor in our areas of academics, undergraduate research, and processes for fellowships and competitive awards. We believe, however, in the necessity of rest.

Pennoni Playground events are but one way we provide students the time and space to decompress and recharge. We

started the year with a meet-up and mocktails mixer where students could grab a drink and meet each other and staff and ended it with chicken and waffles, both of which had staff serve students something that was handmade — from us to them. In between, we hosted Eagles Trivia (Go Birds!) and a mindfulness event.



Community Fellows

For the past year, Sanjana Bandi, biomedical engineering '27, Samirah Rahman, international business & management information systems '28, Allison Choong, sociology & criminology & justice studies '28, and Lucy Sanchez, civil engineering '28, have worked with the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement and our community partner, West Philadelphia Alliance for Children (WePAC), to obtain their Civic Engagement Leadership Certificates by contributing to library programming that ensures students have access to school libraries.

As part of their work, students designed a postcard campaign. They designed the card for students to illustrate and write what their school libraries meant to them; developed a video tutorial for volunteers and teachers; and collected, counted, and delivered more than 1,000 postcards to Philadelphia's School Board on February 27, 2025.



Aspire Scholars Program

Personal Growth and Professional Development:

This year's Aspire Scholars curriculum gave our cohort a chance to reflect not only on their professional goals but on the personal values that fuel their passions. The first half of our yearlong curriculum featured activities from Charlotte Burgess-Auburn's You Need a Manifesto: How to Craft Your Convictions and Put Them to Work. Cohort members were asked to put their internal values in conversation with their

external sources of inspiration to create a personal manifesto designed to guide their decision-making when approached with uncertainty or challenges.

Students applied the principles of their manifesto to a personal strategic plan with the goal of bridging the gap between their big ideas and practice. This project intended to help students embrace their core values, recognize their agency in decision-making, set goals that honor their internal values, and breathe life into their aspirations.



2024-2025 Cohort:

Ella Adams
communication '27

Caitlin Betson
psychology '28

Kate Buskirk
custom-designed '28

Atoishy Dayve
custom-designed '27

Afomiya Esayas
biomedical engineering '28

Sparsh Gadkari
nutrition and foods '28

Kimmie Huynh
computer science '28

Jamee Islam
biomedical engineering '28

Sonya Kalianda
biomedical engineering '27

Timothy Lao
psychology '27

Emily Liz
law '28

Promise Nkhono
product design '27

Paige Quigley
biological sciences '28

Baden Stickley
civil engineering '28

OUR PROGAMS



HONORS PROGRAMS: The Student Experience

Since Fall 2024, the Honors and Honors with Distinction programs have offered 81 unique courses with over 1,100 enrolled students. These classes range from one-credit Great Works courses to three-credit seminars that allow students to dive deep into a wide range of interdisciplinary coursework.

We provide opportunities for students to explore outside the bounds of majors and disciplines, share and build knowledge with their peers and instructors, and synthesize their learning with a culminating project.

"First term at Drexel I was automatically sorted into an Honors class called The Aging of the Super Star, and that class was incredibly memorable, even in my senior year. I thought it was so wild to go from high school math classes to learning about The Undertaker from WWE and how his story aligns with aging and masculinity. The nuances in that class really laid the groundwork for the way I made choices about my academic career moving forward."

"HNRS courses I take can somehow connect to my major. It sets the seeds about where else I can take my major into different sectors or spaces."

"The Honors experience empowered me to embrace the multidimensional aspects of my identity as a strong, independent woman who can simultaneously embody practicality and vulnerability."

- Honors Medallion
Student Speaker, María
José Rivas Garcia, BS/MS
biomedical engineering '24

"As an engineering student, one of the only ways for me to take engaging courses outside of my major is through the PHC and their activities have kept me sane."

"The one-credit [special topics] courses that I have taken through the Honors College during my time at Drexel have been my FAVORITE classes!"

HONORS STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Sydney Chiang

Honors student Sydney Chiang, hospitality management '27, is currently serving as a student chair on the Board of Directors for the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC). NCHC is the professional organization for honors programs and colleges, supporting honors education and offering professional development, collaboration, and innovation opportunities for faculty, staff, and students. Having started her Pennoni career in her first year through the Program in Civic Foundations, Sydney is now representing the college on a national level. As part of her two-year term on the NCHC board, she is helping plan the next NCHC conference, developing her leadership skills and getting an inside look at the conference planning process. Pennoni funded her trip to San Diego in winter 2025 to participate in the planning meeting. We look forward to attending the conference in November!



CUSTOM-DESIGNED MAJOR

Pennoni's custom-designed major empowers students to pursue individualized courses of study not available to them through existing majors and minors at Drexel. The highly motivated students in this major create interdisciplinary curricula tailored to their specific academic and professional goals, forging their own paths with the support of advisors in Pennoni's Center for Interdisciplinary Inquiry.

Kevin Egan, PhD, who helped launch Pennoni's custom-designed major in 2011 and now teaches core courses for the program, often tells students, "Think like you are lost in a forest." Gleaned from an exhibition by designer Bruce Mau, this imperative encapsulates the ingenuity, creative thinking, and collaboration students must rely on while in the program.

Our graduating cohort of 2025 represents a wide range of students who found themselves in a forest and emerged with more resources than they had when they entered. They have learned the language of multiple disciplines and have translated theories and methods in ways that provide insight into deep and complex questions. Their majors and senior capstone projects are partially supported by a generous gift from our advisory board chair Abbie Dean and show what is possible when students drive their own education — from creating compelling media texts and emotional theatrical productions to building compassionate frameworks and carving space for themselves in their respective industries.

2025 Graduates

Renee Amos

chemistry & science visual communication

Meredith Davies

translational biomedical research

Lillian Fenzil

academic counseling and advising

Rebecca Graubart

neuro-medical studies & global healthcare

Viggo Jabon

entrepreneurial game direction & development

Joao Kulikovsky

glocalized independent production

Camryn McConnell

health advocacy

Mae Merkle

costume design

Karly Naravane

future-focused fashion systems

Francesca Pavluk

social perspectives of epidemiology



Collage by Natalie Rebello

CUSTOM-DESIGNED MAJOR SPOTLIGHT

Mae Merkle

In the spring quarter of their final year, Mae Merkle, as part of their custom-designed capstone, pulled off a tour-de-force at Old City's Neighborhood House. Collaborating with entertainment and arts management major Sydney Schulze, they produced Mortal: In Honor of Being Human, a dance performance that walks audiences through stages of life to encourage them to contemplate the small and unnoticed moments that construct our memories and our lives. They recruited 12 dancers, including four who choreographed along with Merkle, five crew members, and two musicians for an acoustic version of The Beatles' "Across the Universe" while video recordings of childhood memories played on the theater's backdrop. Beyond producing the show, Mae put their custom-designed major of costume design to work, designing all the costumes for each dancer and performance. All proceeds from the performance went to the Alzheimer's Association.



Students Tackling Advanced Research (STAR) Scholars Program

In 2024, 122 first-year students participated in the Students Tackling Advanced Research (STAR) Scholars Program, Drexel's flagship early undergraduate research program. STAR provides highly motivated students with the opportunity to engage in faculty-mentored research, scholarship, or creative work during the summer after their first year at Drexel. Students find their own research mentors, complete 350 hours of research, and participate in educational programming. At the end of the summer, they present their work at the annual STAR Scholars Summer Showcase.

STAR alumni cite the program as having a significant impact on their academic and professional journeys, with many of them continuing to do research as Drexel undergraduates and later pursuing graduate school and research-related careers.

"STAR was the single most impactful program I had as an undergraduate. It springboarded my interest in research, and I am still using the skills I gained from STAR as a threat researcher in my current role."

- *STAR Alumnus*



iSTAR: Taking Research Global:

The iSTAR Scholars program relaunched after a four-year hiatus with two students, Josiah Saddick, mechanical engineering '28, and Zakir Jiwani, computer engineering '28, working with Swathi Sudhakar, PhD at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras in Chennai, India. Dr. Sri Balasubramanian, biomedical engineering, science and health systems Vice Provost Rogelio Miñana, and Drexel Global helped us relaunch this program and supported Josiah and Zakir while they were abroad.

Velay Research Fellows: Supporting Women in STEM:

11 Frances Velay Fellows met weekly to discuss issues relevant to women in STEM. This program is supported by the Panaphil Foundation and co-managed by UREP, Dr. Jen Stanford, biology and the Center for the Advancement of STEM Teaching and Learning Excellence (CASTLE).

STAR AWARDEES

Recognizing Undergraduate Research Excellence



Riya Dhiman
biomedical engineering '28

In August, 36 STAR Scholars participated in the STAR Quick Pitch Competition, sharing short presentations about their research. Riya Dhiman, won with her pitch about neuroergonomic human-robot interaction.



Caitlin Betson
psychology '28

Two students won the first Teagle Civic Impact Award, funded by Pennoni's Teagle Foundation grant, for research benefitting the public good: Caitlin Betson, for work on re-entry programming for justice-involved individuals, and Chan Chung, for research on alcohol addiction and neurochemical changes in the brain. Caitlin later received a UREP travel grant to present her project at the 2025 Annual Conference of the American Psychology-Law Society.



Chan Chung
biological sciences '27



Jill Moses, MFA
Associate Teaching
Professor of English
and Philosophy

Jill Moses and Edward Kim were named the STAR Outstanding Mentors of the Year!



Edward Kim, PhD
Associate Professor of
Computer Science

SuperNova Undergraduate Research Fellows

Launching a Research Trajectory:
 Spring 2025 marks the 11th year of the SuperNova Undergraduate Research Fellows Program. Over the past 11 years, 95 students have completed SuperNova and been recognized for their sustained commitment to undergraduate research.
 Students in the program submit reflections on their undergraduate research experiences to receive badges worth points, leading to the designation of Research Fellow or the higher designation of SuperNova upon graduation. In 2024-25, all 12 program graduates received the SuperNova designation!

"Consistency pays off! Sticking with labs throughout my time at Drexel showed me how research projects evolve from idea formation to project execution and ultimately to data analysis and follow-up. It was gratifying to see how small, daily tasks involved in research projects add up into bigger findings with important applications."
 - *Nawal Syed*
 BS biological sciences '25

"My undergraduate research journey has taught me the value of following your passion and curiosity because it can lead you to wonderful places and insights, even if you didn't expect it!"
 - *Nisha Patel*
 BS biological sciences '25

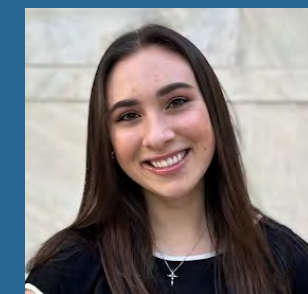
2025 Graduates



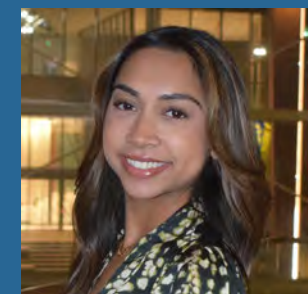
Alyssa Kemp
 BS/MS environmental engineering '25, Honors



Hunter Cheng
 BS psychology '25, Honors



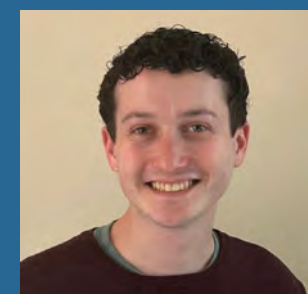
Lindsay Hager
 BS/MS biomedical engineering '25, Honors



Nawal Syed
 BS biological sciences '25, Honors



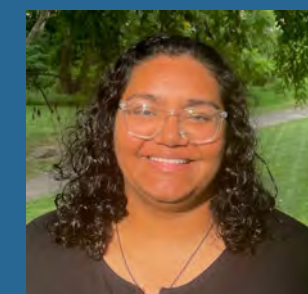
Serenity Baruzzini
 BS engineering '25



Griffin Stein
 BS biomedical engineering '25, Honors



Kaylee Wilson
 BA sociology & global public health '25, Honors



Monisha Gupta
 BS chemistry '25



Nisha Patel
 BS biological sciences '25, Honors



Yan Burets
 BS physics '25

Not Pictured:
Meredith Davies
 BS custom-designed major in translational biomedical research '25, Honors
Suhani Dheer
 BS psychology '25, Honors



FELLOWSHIPS

Undergraduate Research & Enrichment Programs supports Drexel students and alumni applying to competitive external fellowships by publicizing opportunities and providing application resources and intensive individual advising and support. Over the past year, fellowship advisors spent over 550 hours advising 128 students and alumni applying for fellowships.

NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program

Graduate Research Fellows:

Sky Harper
BS chemistry '24, Honors

participated in the Mayo Clinic post-baccalaureate research and enrichment program and will be pursuing graduate studies in Fall 2025. While at Drexel, he was a STAR Scholar, Aspire Scholar, and Supernova Undergraduate Research Fellow, and was selected as a 2022 Goldwater Scholar, 2022 Udall Scholar, and 2023.

Lotus Shareef-Trudeau

is a PhD student in clinical psychology and applied cognitive and brain sciences, working with Aaron Kucyi, PhD and Kirk Heilbrun, PhD. Truman Scholar.

Udall Scholarship:

Dejenae Smith
biological sciences '27

was selected as one of 55 Udall Scholars in recognition of her commitment to a career related to the environment. She is currently doing research with Megan Phifer-Rixey, PhD and plans to pursue a career as a climate scientist. Dejenae was a 2023 STAR Scholar and is in the Honors Program.

Hunter Cheng
BS psychology '25, Honors

plans to enter a PhD program in social psychology to study intergroup relations and identity formation. Hunter has been involved in multiple research projects at Drexel and is a 2022 STAR Scholar, SuperNova Undergraduate Research Fellow, and an Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant recipient.

Tiara Bounyarith

is a full-time Research Coordinator in the Dynamic Brain and Mind Lab led by Aaron Kucyi, PhD in Drexel's Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences and will begin her PhD in clinical psychology and applied cognitive brain sciences at Drexel in the Fall of 2025.

Goldwater Scholarship:

Madeline Navea
psychology '26

was named a 2025 Goldwater Scholar. This award recognizes top undergraduates in STEM who are planning to pursue research careers and have the potential to be leaders in their fields. Madeline has been highly involved in research at Drexel and is part of the SuperNova Undergraduate Research Fellows Program and an Undergraduate Research Mini-Grant recipient.

Honorable Mentions:

Yoongyeong Baek

is a PhD student in the chemistry program at Drexel University, where she conducts research in Myungwoon Lee, PhD's lab.

Owen Goodchild
BS geoscience '23

is pursuing a PhD in comparative biology at the American Museum of Natural History's Richard Gilder Graduate School. While at Drexel, he did research in the the vertebrate and invertebrate paleontology departments at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University.

Journeyman Fellowship:

Alec Aversa

Alec Aversa is a PhD candidate in electrical engineering who received a 2024 DEVCOM Army Research Laboratory (ARL) Research Associateship Program (RAP) Journeyman Fellowship. Alec will continue his research at Drexel with Ioannis Savidis, PhD in the Integrated Circuits and Electronics (ICE) Design and Analysis Laboratory while also working with an ARL-RAP advisor.

Sneha Boda
BS psychology '23

currently serves as a project coordinator at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the CIRCLE Lab, led by Margaret Sheridan, PhD, and aims to pursue a PhD in clinical psychology, clinical psychology and applied cognitive brain sciences at Drexel in the Fall of 2025.

DOE SCGSR:

Ariella Atencio

Ariella Atencio is a PhD candidate in physics who received a 2024 US Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science Graduate Student Research (SCGSR) award to do research at SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory. Ariella is working with Michelle Dolinski, PhD, studying experimental particle physics.

Global Fellowships:

Gilman Scholarships:

Five students received Fall 2024 Gilman Scholarships to study abroad, and 17 students (a new Drexel record!) received Spring 2025 Gilman Scholarships. Drexel's Gilman Scholars will travel to South Korea, Singapore, Japan, Ireland, Spain, Italy, and Costa Rica.

Christine Nguyen, management information systems & business analytics '28, was named a Gilman Scholar to Singapore and also received a Freeman-ASIA scholarship.

Lynelle Martin, BS/MS biomedical engineering '26, was Drexel's first Gilman STEM Supplemental Award recipient, which helped fund her biomedical research co-op in Singapore (pictured below).



DAAD Research Internships in Science & Engineering:

Five Drexel students were selected as recipients for the 2025 DAAD Research Internships in Science & Engineering (RISE) and will spend the summer conducting research at universities across Germany. UREP worked with the Steinbright Career Development Center to provide co-op funding for Drexel's DAAD RISE applicants, which allowed these students to spend the Spring Term working in research co-op positions on campus before heading to Germany.

Kiana Ahmari, mechanical engineering '27

Kelly Baran, biological sciences '26

Saffron Buscemi, custom-designed major '27

Sydney Rowley, custom-designed major '27

In all provided Fellowships and awards above, Listed honorees do not include those who declined publicity.

Fulbright US Student Program grants:

Seven Drexel students and recent alumni received prestigious Fulbright US Student Program grants for 2025-26, out of a record 17 semi-finalists.

Asad Baig, BS chemistry '25, Honors, received a Fulbright Study/Research Grant to Greece to pursue a master's degree in Translational Engineering and Medicine at the National Technical University of Athens.

Anjalee Bhuyan, MD '26, received a Fulbright-Fogarty Fellowship in Public Health to Nepal to study health impacts of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) exposure among brick kiln workers.

Lillian Fenzil, BS custom-designed major in academic counseling & advising '25, Honors, was awarded an English Teaching Assistantship to Hungary and will be teaching as well as advising students on studying in the US.

Alexandra Goodin, BS psychology '25, Honors, was awarded an English Teaching Assistantship to Spain and will be teaching in the Canary Islands.

Alyssa Kemp, BS/MS environmental engineering '25, Honors, received a Fulbright Study/Research Grant to the Philippines to strengthen community involvement in coastal conservation and disaster planning.

Mathew Mitchell, MD '27, received a Fulbright Study/Research Grant to Hungary to research human microbiome remodeling for the treatment of non-infectious disease.

Samuel Sung, PhD candidate in biomedical engineering, was awarded a Study/Research Grant to Germany to develop smarter biomaterials for macrophage-based cell therapy.

Going Beyond Campus

Pennoni provides travel grants for undergraduate Drexel students to present their research at national and international conferences. This year, we approved over \$20,600 in grants to 35 students.



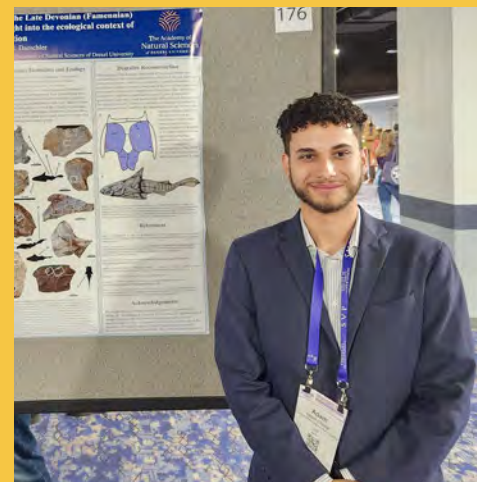
Poppy Martínez, custom-designed major '26, presented her postcolonial critique of luxury resort wear at the International Textile & Apparel Association (ITAA) 2024 Conference in Long Beach, CA.



Nisha Patel, BS biological sciences '25, Honors, presented her archival research on Dr. Anandibai Joshi, the first Indian female doctor of western medicine, at the 2024 National Research Conference at Penn (NRCP).



Damian Mozier, BS/MS biomedical engineering '27, gave an oral presentation on tau activity in progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP) at Neuro 2024: The PSP and CBD International Research Symposium in Toronto, Canada.



Adam Eliezer, environmental studies & sustainability '25, shared his research on vertebrate fossils at the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology 84th Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, MN.

Pennoni Staff Highlights:



Leah Gates, MA, Associate Director was selected for a Fulbright U.S.-Taiwan International Education Administrators Award. She traveled to Taiwan in March to attend a two-week group seminar with other American higher ed administrators and representatives from Taiwanese universities, private sector agencies and organizations, and government agencies.



In November, Lauren Davis, MA, Assistant Director of Academic Operations for Academic Programs, and Melinda Lewis, PhD, Director of Strategy and Communications, presented at the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Their presentation, "Blending Borders: Building Collaborative Partnerships in an Urban Community," presented the planning, coordinating, and implementation of the Pennoni Community Fellows Program.

BUILDING CIVIC FOUNDATIONS:

In 2021 and 2022, Pennoni was awarded two grants totaling \$300,000 from the Teagle Foundation to implement a civic foundations program for first-year Honors Program students. Our Program in Civic Foundations began with 15 students in 2021, growing to 35 students in 2022, 112 students in 2023, and 85 students in 2024. The three-course sequence focused on the texts and ideas that have grounded and shaped American liberal democracy, as well as voices that have sought to appeal to, expand upon, and critique those ideas.

We also collaborated with the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement and the First-Year Writing Program in the College of Arts and Sciences to provide Honors Program students broader access to the curriculum through University-required courses. Over these four years, civic foundations reached 430 students.

Our Teagle Learning Community promoted professional development for fifteen faculty and staff who participated. Each year, a group of fellows met regularly to discuss readings and how they could inform pedagogy and course design.

Moving forward, we aim to keep civic education as a cornerstone of Honors Program learning. We will seek ways to expand upon the success made possible by the Teagle grant, broadening its impact to encompass more students.



GIVING TO PENNONI:

The Pennoni Honors College is supported, in part, by advisory board members and donors like Chuck Pennoni, Greg and Caroline Bentley, John H. Martinson, and Abbie Dean. To be part of this giving circle, donate and/or follow us using the QR codes to the right!

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MEET OUR TEAM

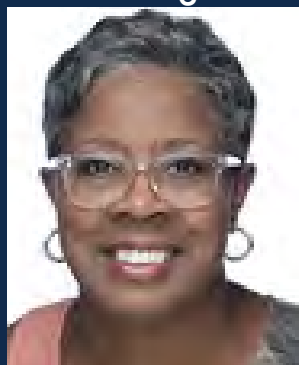




Neville Vakharia, PhD
Dean of the Pennoni Honors College



Melinda Lewis, PhD
Director of Strategy and Communications



Karen Sams
Executive Assistant to the Dean



Rachel James
Assistant Director for Strategic Communications



Ann Alexander, MS
Director of Administration and Finance



Kevin Egan, PhD
Director of Outreach



Katie Sullivan Barak, PhD
Director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Inquiry



Julia Wisniewski, EdD
Director of Honors Programs



Lauren Davis, MA
Assistant Director of Academic Operations for Academic Programs



Charlotte Shreve
Academic Advisor in the Center for Interdisciplinary Inquiry



Kenyon Privott
Academic Advisor for the Honors Program



Greg Probst, MFA
was the 2024-25 Teagle Faculty Fellow



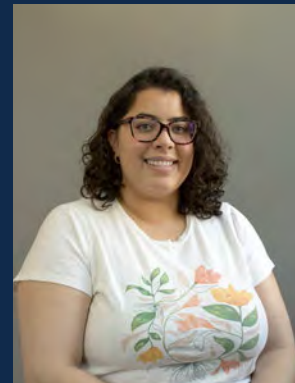
Jaya Mohan, MA
Director of Undergraduate Research & Enrichment Programs



Ian Zimmermann, PhD
Associate Director of Fellowships



Leah Gates, MA
Associate Director



Cara Fantini, MEd
Assistant Director



Emily Kashka-Ginsburg, MA
Associate Director



Roxane Lovell, MA
Program Manager

MEET OUR STUDENT TEAM:

Throughout the year, we hire students as support staff, co-ops, mentors, and ambassadors. These students are all instrumental in helping us not only maintain the college but ensure we remain a welcoming, student-centered community.

Student Support Staff:

Prasin Shrestha
BS/MS game design & production & digital media '26

Esther Lee
BS graphic design '25

Esther Lee
biomedical engineering '29

Niyam Acharya
economics & data science '26

Bhavya Isotia
computer science '28

Lucy Gamble
music industry '27

Samantha Ita
BS chemistry '25

Johanna Jarvis
graphic design '27

Oluwakemi Openibo
behavioral economics, business, & organizations '27

Annie Jiang
marketing & management information systems '26

Oorwarae Alexander
management information systems '29

Medhavi Pandit
economics '26

Reshain Hall
biomedical engineering '29

Honors Mentors:

Emily Woodland
BS/MS biomedical engineering '27

Paulie Loscalzo
sport business & legal studies '26

Kayla Hidalgo
psychology '27

Angelina Wang
biological sciences '26

Amina Ibrahim
marketing '27

Cat Le Febvre
product design '27

UREP Ambassadors: Spring/Summer 2024:

Sukriti Dhungel
economics & data science '27

Emma Johnson
history '26

Khizar Kashif
economics '26

Madeline Plummer
public health '26

Julia Wiafe-Jackson
global studies '26

Emily Woodland
BS/MS biomedical engineering '27

Fall/Winter 24-25:

Arya Gopikrishnan
BS/MS computer engineering & robotics & autonomy '26

Josiah Saddick
mechanical engineering '28

Maven Mercado
environmental science '26

Narwal Syed
BS biological sciences '25, Honors

Nisha Patel
BS biological sciences '25, Honors

Ruby Ihediwa
computer engineering '27

Spring/Summer 2025:

Jessica Abu
environmental engineering '26

Sarah Bonsall
graphic design '27

Khizar Kashif
economics '26

Madeline Navea
psychology '26

Rina Notani
biological sciences '28

Dwij Rana
biological sciences '27

Matthew Uppani
biological sciences '27

Pennoni Co-Ops:

Esther Lee
BS graphic design '25

Piper Kelly
BS film & television '25

Natalie Rebelo
graphic design '26

Brianna Cordova
animation & visual effects '27

Connor Erezuma
graphic design '26, Honors

Our Student Designer

Over the past five months, I've had the opportunity to serve as the lead designer for Pennoni Honors College. During this time, I've worked on a wide range of creative projects, from social media campaigns to event collateral—and most notably, this impact report.

Designing this report has been a uniquely rewarding experience. It presented an exciting challenge: striking a balance between visual creativity and structured clarity. Some spreads allowed for more conceptual freedom, while others required a strict, information-first approach. Navigating that spectrum pushed me to grow both technically and creatively.

This project has been a true labor of love, representing over three months of iteration, collaboration, and refinement. I'm incredibly proud of the final result and deeply grateful to have had the trust and support to lead its design.

I hope reading this report is as engaging and insightful for you as the process of creating it was for me.

— *Connor Erezuma*
graphic design '26, Honors

