

THE CHELLGREN CENTER FOR UNDERGRADUATE EXCELLENCE

Alumni Newsletter | Volume II | 2020



Chellgren
Center

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR



For over a decade, I have had the privilege of serving as the Chellgren Endowed Chair for Undergraduate Excellence. In this role I have had the honor of helping direct the Chellgren Center, which involves working with some of UK's most talented and ambitious undergraduates. These students have the potential and desire to make the world a better place. Equally important, I have collaborated with many of my faculty colleagues, who have shared with our students their deep commitment to teaching excellence and their expertise as exceptional scholars. Many of these faculty have mentored Chellgren Student Fellows working on research and creativity projects, while others, especially the Chellgren Endowed Professors, have pursued projects that have significantly enriched the University's educational mission. Students and faculty supported by the Chellgren Center represent a diverse array of disciplines from each of the colleges at UK. Finally, I have had the good fortune of collaborating with many among UK's administrative leadership, program directors, and professional staff. The level of creativity and dedication expressed by these campus leaders is exceptional.

Through it all, I have been constantly reminded that the Chellgren Center touches lives, especially UK undergraduates, in profoundly positive ways. That fact looms large as I am writing. At this moment, we are all struggling to endure the tragedy of the Coronavirus pandemic. Life at UK today is far from normal, as is true for lives across the globe. As the University community copes with an experience that few of us could have imagined, our hearts reach out to all who have and are suffering. We long for the day when we can once again concentrate our energies on supporting and celebrating the achievements of our students and relish the virtues of a state-of-the-art research university campus. All members of our community look forward to the day when our classrooms, laboratories, residence halls, and living learning spaces resonate once again with the vibrant energy of substantial young men and women creating their futures.

I am confident that we will triumph and return to meeting our educational mission in the ways that our campus has been designed to function. My optimism emanates, in part, from recognizing the foundation upon which the Chellgren Center itself was built: the creative, optimistic vision of Mr. Paul Chellgren. His generous commitment to creating programs that catalyze undergraduate excellence by motivating UK students, faculty and staff to aim high and think big is the kind of inspiring idea that evokes optimism. Mr. Chellgren challenged UK to create undergraduate experiences that would have a broad and deep impact on the lives of talented students. The resounding success of students who have been supported through the Chellgren Center is evidence that UK is meeting Mr. Chellgren's challenge. Their achievements over the past 12 years of the Center's existence sustain our confidence that even greater success lies ahead. We will endure the current moment, and we will prosper once again.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: DR. NAZEEHA MICCICHE



Dr. Nazeeha (Jawahir) Micciche, M.D., is a Chellgren Fellows Program Alumna. She graduated in 2011 with majors in Biology and Chemistry and minors in Spanish and Philosophy before going on to the University of Kentucky College of Medicine. After graduating in 2016, she started her residency at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in a program focusing on Pediatrics, Adult Psychiatry, and Child Psychiatry.

Through the Chellgren Fellowship, she was able to become a participant in the Gaines Fellowship for the Humanities. She also completed a Fulbright grant in Malaysia in 2012 where she served as an English Teaching Assistant.

Dr. Micciche has presented clinical research on adverse childhood experiences in pediatric patients. She also was awarded a resident CATCH community advocacy grant by the American Academy of Pediatrics. In the future, Dr. Micciche is interested in working in child psychiatry and pediatrics with clinical interests in global medicine, trauma informed care, and resilience.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: DR. JOSIAH HANNA

Josiah studied computer science and mathematics at the University of Kentucky. Starting at UK, Josiah knew he wanted to explore a career in computer science research. During his freshman year, he began working with Professor Judy Goldsmith on artificial intelligence (AI) research. The idea that computers could be programmed to solve problems “intelligently” was (and remains) fascinating to him.

Josiah received the Goldwater Scholarship during his junior year. Receiving the Goldwater Scholarship was an important recognition of his promise as a young researcher and was very encouraging as he started his research career.

Following his time at the University of Kentucky, he completed his PhD in computer science at the University of Texas at Austin working with Professor Peter Stone. There, he continued to pursue AI research. He began work in an area of AI called reinforcement learning that aims to allow computers to learn from feedback on how well they perform a given task. Ultimately, his long-term goal is that computers and robots will be able to learn and adapt to accomplish goals much in the same way that people and animals can.

After completing his PhD, he is spending a year and a half as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. Beginning in August 2021, he will be an assistant professor in the computer science department of the University of Wisconsin in Madison.



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: POST GRADUATE PLANS



"I have accepted a full-time job with Marathon Petroleum as a Technical Service engineer in Catlettsburg, KY. I think this will be a great launch-pad for my career, and I thoroughly enjoyed working there this past semester." -Thomas Ostertag

"I have a job at Reynolds and Reynolds in Dayton, OH as a tax analyst in their Income Tax Department that will start in May." -Elyse Blakeman



"I plan to go to graduate school but not directly after college. After graduation, I will be working for Goldman Sachs doing data analytics in NYC starting in August. I plan to take my GRE in April in hopes of going to graduate school after my contract at Goldman Sachs expires." -Jada Green

CONGRATULATIONS 2019 NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE AWARD RECIPIENTS!

Jessica Appel - NSF-REU

Mitchell Dennis - Henry Clay NASA Internship

Angela Jones - Astronaut Scholarship, Goldwater Scholarship

Caylee Marshall - Amgen Scholars Program

Bridget Nicholas - Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship

Caylyn Railey - NSF-REU

Kyra Seevers - Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst Scholarships

Ava Vargason - National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship

Follow us for research
and award opportunities,
student spotlights and more!



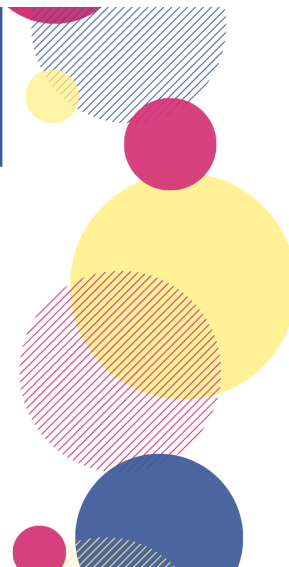
@ChellgrenCenter
@competitiveawards



@ChellgrenCenter
@UK_awards



@competitiveawards



ALUMNI SURVEY

We would love to hear from our former Chellows.

What have you been up to? Where in the world are you? How did the program set you up for success in your career? Let us know through this short survey!

https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6tn58222Mo6xPeJ