The PhD Program in Biochemistry will welcome 17 students in Fall 2021: Angelina Grobe, Daniel Oktattah, David Amoh-Beateng, Eleonora Achrak, Jeni Sebastiani, Joseph Closson, Julia Dubman, Liliana Margent, Lily Kharlamb, Mahil Alwis Kothalawala, Md. Raihan Uddin, Mehreen Mahbub, Oscar Soler, Philip Asamani, Pooja Rao, Tania Rajpersaud, Tarsisius Tiyani. The students will join us from universities from across the globe: Fordham University, University of Ghana, Hunter College, Stony Brook University, Siena College, Albany University, SUNY New Paltz, University of Colombo (Sri Lanka), Mississippi State University, Queens College, University of Alicante (Spain), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana), Kasturba Medical College (India), College of Staten Island, and University of the Free State (South Africa). They will all bring great diversity to our program with great promise for the future.

In addition, the program admitted 13 students in Fall 2020: Augustine Onyema (University of Nigeria, Nsukka), Benjamin Lesea-Pringle (Columbia University), Charisse Capadona (York College), Dana Kanso (City College), Edge Vydaline Agbor Otu (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium), Favour Achimba (Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Nigeria), Gilbert Reyes (Lehman College), Grace Terry (Mercer University Macon), James Parziale (Weill Cornell Medical College), Jennifer Cersosimo (York College), Marian Romaine (John Jay College), Murat Yaman (Long Island University) and Tatiana Derli (York College). In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, these students were very enthusiastically performing research rotations in labs throughout the city, while taking their core courses and seminars fully on-line. Most of them have completed their four rotations and are now actively seeking a permanent thesis lab to join.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 & 2021 GRADUATES!

2021 Graduates


Christine Chrissian (Stark lab, City College) defended her dissertation "The C. neoformans Cell Wall: A Scaffold for Virulence" on August 20, 2020.

Eskil Andersen (Koder lab, City College) defended his dissertation "Using the Marcus Inverted Region and Artificial Cofactors to Create a Charge Separated State in de novo Designed Proteins" on December 18, 2020.

Gabriela Arias De La Rosa (Desamero lab, York College) defended her dissertation "Mechanism of Action of Dihydropteridine Reductase" on August 17, 2020.

Inna Bakman (Gibney lab, Brooklyn College) defended her dissertation "Pointing the Zinc Finger on Protein Folding: Energetic Investigation into the Role of the Metal-Ion in the Metal-Induced Protein Folding of Zinc Finger Motifs" on September 3, 2020.


Solomon Haizel (Goss lab, Hunter College) defended his dissertation "Direct Recruitment of elf4G1 AND/DAP5 to the 5' UTR of a Subset of Human mRNA Drives Their Cap-Independent Translation" on December 16, 2020.

Shami Chakrabarti (Hubbard lab, City College) defended her dissertation "Development and maintenance of thymic epithelial cell microenvironment" on January 18, 2021.
2020 Graduates

Anjela Manandhar (Loverde lab, College of Staten Island) defended her dissertation "Molecular Dynamics Simulations of Supramolecular Assemblies in Biology and Bio-nanotechnology" on June 19, 2019.


Daniela Kroiss (Ulijn lab, Hunter College) defended her dissertation "Minimalistic Peptide-Based Supramolecular Systems Relevant to the Chemical Origin of Life" on July 17, 2019.

Gamage Aruggoda (Kleiman lab, Hunter College) defended her dissertation "HuR Ubiquitination by BRCA1/BARD1 and its Role in Controlling Gene Expression during DNA Damage Response" on November 13, 2019.

Hasan Zumrut (Mallikaratchy lab, Lehman College) defended his dissertation "Development of Ligand Guided Selection (LIGS) to Identify Specific DNA Aptamers Against Cell Surface Proteins" on April 3, 2020.

Imane Djemil (Ghose lab, City College) defended her dissertation "Structural and Dynamic Features of a Transiently Assembled Bacterial Tyrosine Kinase and Phosphatase Complex" on February 11, 2020.

Jose Cobo (Ryan lab, City College) defended his dissertation "Transcription Initiation and Termination of Chemically Synthesized Small RNA Expression Vectors" on January 16, 2020.

Michael Kelly (Holford lab, Hunter College) defended his dissertation "Developing a Dissociative Nanocontainer for Peptide Drug Delivery" on February 13, 2019.

Rajat Kumar Pal (Gallicchio lab, Brooklyn College) defended his dissertation "Advanced Computational Methodologies To Study Binding Free Energies of Biomolecular Complexes" on November 17, 2019.

Ryan Schroder (Poget lab, College of Staten Island) defended his dissertation "Structural Studies of Peptide Toxins and their Binding Properties toward the Voltage Sensing Domain of Nav1.7" on March 31, 2020.

Silas Hartley (Jeruzalmi lab, City College) defended his dissertation "DNA Damage Recognition and UvrB Loading by UVrA within the Nucleotide Excision Repair Pathway" on February 21, 2020.


Sam Wong (Xu lab, Hunter College) defended his dissertation "Renal Specific RNAi Delivery by Fibrillar Nanoparticle Excipients" on July 12, 2019.

Stephen Jannetti (Zeglis lab, Hunter College) defended his dissertation "PARP1-Targeted Radiotherapies" on December 16, 2019.
AWARDS

Doctoral Student Research Grant

2021 Recipients: Lieyang Chen (Kurtzman lab) Lehman College; Joekeem Arizala (Poget lab) College of Staten Island, Marvin Bilot (Desamero lab) York College, Roksana Azad (Gardner lab) ASRC, and Andres Cabezas (des Georges lab) ASRC.

2020 Recipients: David Dansu (Casaccia lab), Hunter Korsmo (Jiang lab), Seth Bennett (Torrente lab), Jasmin Philip (Ikui lab), Jingbo Kan (Biais lab), Dominique Gutierrez (des Georges lab), Devon Semoy (Jeruzalmi lab), Irving Rosario (Stark lab), Xingjian Xu (Gardner lab), George Amor (Bargonetti lab), Pierpaolo Cordone (Harding lab), Alison Domzalski (Kawamura lab), Tanya Napolitano (Holford lab) and Charles Wallace (Figueiredo-Pereira lab).

Other Awards

Alfredo Vidal Ceballos (Elbaum-Garfinkle lab, Advanced Science Research Center) was awarded an Art and Science Connect Research Fellowship which provides a $5000 stipend in recognition of his research that intersect the arts and sciences. Alfredo also created a compelling microscopic images that increase understanding of what a disease like Alzheimer’s actually does to the brain: https://bit.ly/3bpr9rY.

Alison Domzalski (Kawamura lab, Hunter College) is the recipient of three scholarships: The Irwin Polishook Doctoral Scholarship which provides a $5000 award based on her merit and dedication to community service, The Flavor Extract Manufacturers Association (FEMA) College Scholarship provided a $3000 award based on her merit and research in chemistry that could be applied to the flavor industry and The Rose K. Rose Award for Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching from the Hunter College Chemistry Department.

Fatlum Hajredini (Ghose Lab, City College) was the winner of the 2020 Horst Schulz Award for his paper that was published in Science Advances (https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/6/51/eabd3718.full). In addition, Fatlum was selected to attend the 70th Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Lindau Germany. The meeting will take place as an online event this year from June 27 – July 2. It was postponed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jasmin Philip (Ikui lab, Brooklyn College) is the recipient of the 2020 Estelle and James Scholarship at Brooklyn College.

Javier Lopez (Contel lab, Brooklyn College) was awarded the Carl Storm Underrepresented Minority Fellowship to attend a Gordon Research Conference. Unfortunately, this conference was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Jingbo Kan (Biais lab, Brooklyn College) received $25000 from The Graduate Center Mina Rees Dissertation Fellowship for the 2020-21 academic year.

Pierpaolo Cordone (Harding lab, Hunter College) received $5000 from The Graduate Center Dissertation Year Award for the 2020-21 academic year.

Roksana Azad (Gardner lab, City College/ASRC) was awarded a NIH (National Institutes of Health) NRSA (National Research Service Award) Predoctoral Fellowship of over $97000 to study a protein that is linked to diabetes and cancer.

Solomon Haizel (Goss lab, Hunter College) was the recipient of two awards: The Donald and Mary Ellen Passantino Awards and a U54 TUFCCC/HC Pre-Pilot Grant.

Tamar Skaist (Keedy lab, City College/ASRC) was awarded $25000 from The Graduate Center Dissertation Year Fellowship for the 2021-2022 academic year and a D.E. Shaw Research Graduate & Postdoc Women’s Fellowship.

Tanya Napolitano (Holford lab, Hunter College) received the Amie James Science Travel Award to travel scientific meetings to present her work.

Zaynab Jaber (Gardner lab, City College/ASRC) was awarded an Early Research Initiative Catalyst Grant this year.
FIRST AUTHOR PUBLICATIONS

Antonio Cerullo (Braunschweig lab)
ACS Publications: https://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdf/10.1021/acsbiomaterials.0c00715

Anupam Karki (Harding lab)
Bioorganic & Medicinal Chemistry: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bmcl.2020.115578

Brian Olson (Kurtzman lab)

Camilla Yattah (Casaccia lab)
Neurochemical Research: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11064-019-01941-y

Charles Schaub (Raper lab)
Journal of Biological Chemistry: https://doi.org/10.1074/jbc.RA120.014201

Christine Chrissian (Stark lab)
Journal of Biological Chemistry: https://doi.org/10.1074/jbc.RA119.011942

Daniela Kroiss (Ulijn lab)
ChemSystemsChem: https://doi.org/10.1002/syst.202000025

David Dansu (Casaccia lab)

Fatlum Hajredini (Ghose lab)
Science Advances: https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/6/51/eabd3718

Hansaim Lim (Xie lab)
IEEE/ACM Transactions on Computational Biology and Bioinformatics: https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=8970514

Hunter Korsmo (Jiang lab)
Nutrients: https://doi.org/10.3390/nu11081823

Leyang Chen (Kurtzman lab)
Journal of Chemical Theory and Computation: https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jctc.0c01185

May Poh Lai (Stark lab)
Protein Science: https://doi.org/10.1002/pro.3875

Oliver Turque (Greer lab)
Organic and Molecular Chemistry: https://doi.org/10.1039/D0OB01993C

Phu Tang (Loverde lab)
Journal of Chemical Theory and Computation: https://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdf/10.1021/acs.jctc.0b00541 &
Nanoscale Advances: https://doi.org/10.1039/D0NA00977A

Pierpalo Cordone (Harding lab)
The Journal of Heterocyclic Chemistry: https://doi.org/10.1002/jhet.4086

Sheenan Khuttan & Solmaz Azimi (Gallicchio lab)
The Journal of Chemical Physics: https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0056944

Solomon Haizel (Goss lab)
The Journal of Biological Chemistry: https://jbc.org/retrieve/pii/S0021925817484667

Xingjian Xu (Gardner lab)
Magnetic Resonance: https://doi.org/10.5194/mr-2-65-2021