



STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS 2021-2022



CHELSEA MCGEE

German studies

Chelsea McGee is pursuing a degree in the Teachers Education Program and majoring in German studies. She was nominated for the inaugural SIU System Distinguished Student Service Award. Chelsea combines an excellent academic record with a commitment to enhancing education for children in our community. What integrates her academic work and service commitments is a passion for education: to help children feel loved and respected as they learn so that learning becomes a lifelong quest and a joy.

Chelsea is training to be a teacher, but she is already making a difference in the local school system and enriching our community. She is in the first cohort of the Saluki Scholars in Action, an initiative between Chancellor's Scholars, the University Honors Program, and the local school district. Through the program, Chelsea has tutored, worked as a teacher's aide, and helped in the classroom and outside with children grades K through First grade, helping them with reading, writing, and math.

The long-term consequences of the pandemic on early childhood education are yet to be known. However, students like Chelsea stepped up to meet the challenge even as it is taking shape. We are proud of you, Chelsea!

(08.16.2021)



PREM RANA

Computer Science and Digital Media

Prem Rana is a senior graduating this upcoming May with a dual degree in both Computer Science, specializing in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics, and Radio, Television, and Digital Media specialized in Radio and Audio Production. After graduating, he plans to either join a graduate school with a focus on researching Machine Learning for Signal Processing or work as a Data Scientist/Machine Learning Engineer.

This year, he will be doing research in collaboration with The Green Roof Team, aiming to create an autonomous irrigation system. This project recently got awarded the REACH Grant, and Prem is excited to showcase his findings in April during the Annual Student Research and Creative Activities Forum. He is also continuing research into developing a platform to track the spread of various different COVID-19 strains. He is also preparing to apply for the Marshall Scholarship, which helps students get graduate degrees in the United Kingdom.

We are very hopeful that the experience and opportunities Prem has accumulated at SIU will make him a strong candidate for this scholarship.

(08.23.2021)



DAVID HERNANDEZ

Zoology

Theater

David Hernandez is a junior majoring in Zoology with a minor in Theater. This past summer, he was one of the select few Honors students from across the country to take part in the Delta Scholars Summer Institute, a collaboration between the Shackouls Honors College, Mississippi State University, and Harvard University. Students worked on identifying an issue of inequality or injustice and develop a proposal that would promote dialogue and change in their communities or the state of Mississippi. The Delta Scholars will reconnect in Harvard in the Fall to share updates and engage with others working on Mississippi issues.

David writes:

The Delta Scholars Program was an experience that I can truly say was integral in how I developed my professional and problem-solving skills. Through the lens of public health, I learned how to diagnose the issues in my community and how to implement solutions at the individual, community, and global levels. I met some amazing people from all over the Southern US region and from a wide range of disciplines and got the experience of the beauty of the Northwest Mississippi Delta Region. The coordinators of the event were incredibly devoted to helping develop our projects and connect us with experts and sponsors to move them forward, all of whom were excited to see and contribute to what we came up with. I am excited to be seeing the rest of the Delta Scholars and mentors again as we present the progress of our projects at Harvard later this year. For those interested in community problem-solving, this is a valuable experience that you would not want to miss.

(08.30.2021)



MERCEDES MOLL

Mathematics

Mercedes Moll is a junior with an emphasis in Mathematics in the Teacher Education Program in the College of Education and Human Services. Mercedes is beginning her second year at SIU Carbondale and was motivated to join Honors after receiving a score of over 1300 on the SAT. She considers herself very fortunate to be receiving scholarships for her study (including the Provost tuition award through the Honors Program). Her family, friends, dog, and future goals are her constant motivators. Her goal is to graduate with Honors with her GPA as close to a 4.0 as possible. Mercedes has volunteered for the Big Event at SIUC, the Women's Center, and local community gardens.

Mercedes has wanted to be a mathematics teacher since fourth grade. However, in her first semester at SIUC she began to doubt herself. The uncertainty continued to increase amid the virtual learning environment and the overall stress of the pandemic (especially as she was working in a nursing home). She credits the wonderful teaching of Dr. Tumpa Bhattacharyya, (whom she considers one of the best teachers she has ever had) for helping her pull through her challenges and succeed where she had previously been unsure she could. Dr. Bhattacharyya made sure she had every resource possible, spent many extra hours with her, and is one of the main reasons she has stuck with her decision to become a high school math teacher. Mercedes wants to lessen the number of kids in school who "hate math" and, who knows, she might just inspire others like her to also become math teachers!

When not in class, doing homework, or studying, Mercedes enjoys painting, writing poems, watching Marvel movies, and most of all, being with her dog.

(09.06.2021)



NICOLE TILLBERG

Cinema and Photography

Television studies and Theater

Nicole Tillberg is an Honors student currently finishing up her senior year as a dual specialization major in Cinema and Photography with minors in Television studies and Theater. She is currently president of the school's photography RSO, Photogenesis, but also participates in numerous other media RSO's. Nicole has spent a lot of her time volunteering as a Saluki Start Up Leader and as an ambassador to her college to help welcome in the new students. She has also volunteered as a camera operator for live sports broadcasts on ESPN+, which has served as an amazing learning opportunity to get to know more about the intricacies of live television. Nicole has worked as a photographer for the Daily Egyptian and had an internship as an editor and content creator for an advertising company in her hometown. She is currently working as a Media Specialist in Educational Outreach for WSIU Public Broadcasting. In the future, Nicole hopes to continue to learn, explore, and make educational and adventurous content either with PBS or Discovery Network.

(09.13.2021)



LAUREN KEPLEY

Accounting and Spanish

Lauren Kepley is a Senior from Monticello, Illinois. She will graduate with a dual degree in Accounting and Spanish in December of 2021. As a member of UHP, Lauren took the Yoga for Harmonious Living honors course. She really enjoyed the course, the instructor, and she even met her future roommate there. She also has completed three different honors contracts and has enjoyed serving the community around her by participating in VITA and volunteering at a high school near her hometown. Lauren has enjoyed being a member of the University Honors Program and all of the additional opportunities and experiences it has provided her.

While at SIU, Lauren has been a member of the Saluki Service Dawg organization, the Women's Business Association, and the Student Leadership Honors Society. She is currently a member of Beta Alpha Psi and volunteers for VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance). For two years, Lauren has worked as an Academic Peer Advocate for University Housing. She is currently the Accounting Student Worker in the Dean's Office for the College of Business and Analytics.

During the summer of 2019, Lauren studied abroad at the University of Alcalá in Madrid, Spain. She took four additional Spanish courses and had the opportunity to travel to various cities and countries in Europe. Some of her most favorite places were Paris, Rome, and Porto (Portugal).

Lauren had an audit internship with Kemper CPA Group, LLP in Champaign, Illinois in the summer of 2021. She enjoyed getting to network with many professionals and putting the knowledge she had learned in the classroom to practice. Lauren will have another audit internship with KPMG after graduation and plans to return to SIU to resume her education enrolling in the Masters of Accountancy Program and taking the CPA exam. In total, Lauren is extremely excited about all of the opportunities she will have thanks to the education and experiences she has gained while attending Southern Illinois University.

(09.20.2021)



FAITH MOONEY

Psychology

Faith Mooney is a senior studying psychology with a special interest in child psychology. One of her biggest sources of motivation is her family who continue to support her in all she does.

She currently is working at the Centralia Community Youth Center as the Activities Director. This position allows her to help children in her hometown via the afterschool program that she oversees.

She is currently taking Exploration of Children's Literature through the honors program, and she loves it! She recommends everyone taking it if given the opportunity!

After graduation, she hopes to attend graduate school to earn her Ph.D. in clinical psychology with a specialization in children. When she's not at work or studying she enjoys hiking, crocheting, watching reality TV with her friends, or riding roller coasters with her family. She hopes that everyone's semester is going great!

(09.27.2021)



MORGAN NULL

Communication Disorders and Sciences program.

Morgan Null is a 4th year Senior in the Communication Disorders and Sciences program. She has worked as a Volleyball Coach at Marion High School for the past three years.

She is passionate about helping those who struggle with speech, language, and hearing disorders in relation to her field of study. After earning her Bachelor's Degree in May of 2022, she plans to continue into SIUC's Communication Disorders and Sciences Graduate program in hopes of becoming a Speech Language Pathologist.

Outside of the classroom, Morgan is a member of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) where she is surrounded by other students and professionals in her program, and also does multiple aspects of community service throughout her City. She volunteers at her Church's food bank where she helps distribute free food for those in need, and she also volunteers at an animal shelter in her spare time.

Morgan's long-term goals include pursuing her career as a Speech-Language Pathologist to help those in need and to also stay active within her Church's volunteer outreach. She loves being a Volleyball Coach, hiking in the mountains, and reading her Bible any opportunity she gets. Morgan hopes to keep coaching Volleyball and travel the world as much as possible.

(10.04.2021)



ISAAC BROWN

Information Technology and Economics

Isaac Brown is a senior from the STL area with a double major in Information Technology and Economics. He is interested in cyber security and serves as the Treasurer of the SecurityDawgs RSO. He is aiding this team in preparing for the annual Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition. He is also working for University Housing as a Community Assistant at the Wall and Grand apartments.

Isaac is currently improving his website and mobile application development skills and preparing to take the Certified Ethical Hacker and CompTIA Security+ certification exams in the Spring.

In his free time, he enjoys traveling with friends, playing basketball and floor hockey, and video games especially 2k and Modern Warfare. He also loves the outdoors. He enjoys taking walks around the campus lake and enjoys hiking some of the trails around the Carbondale area.

(10.11.2021)



KAILYN STONE

Spanish and Political Science

Legal Studies

Kailyn Stone is a senior graduating with a double major in Spanish and Political Science with a pre-law concentration and a legal studies minor. Kailyn is also a member of the SIU soccer team. She is the president of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, and she is a Senior Saluki Ambassador. Kailyn also founded the mock trial student organization, she is an ambassador for the Department of Political Science, and she is in the Pre-Law Scholar's Program. As an active member of her community, Kailyn has planned a food drive for the Saluki Food Pantry, a pen pal program for student-athletes and members of Century Assisted Living, a voter registration drive for student-athletes, organized a mental health awareness week for student-athletes, and helped organize a walk benefiting the Boys and Girls Club of Carbondale.

Kailyn aspires to become a trial attorney after receiving her Juris Doctorate Degree from an ABA-accredited law school. She completed an internship at Ziemer, Stayman, Weitzel, & Shoulders, LLP during the summers of 2019 and 2020. She is currently working on her senior thesis under Dr. Comparato. Her thesis studies and analyses the impact of the role of social media in the development and regulation of free speech throughout the 21st century. Specifically, her thesis examines the outcome of the landmark Supreme Court Case *Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L.* (2021) regarding free speech development in schools. In her free time, she enjoys traveling and scuba diving.

(10.18.2021)



SYDNEY JEAN DIX

Biological Sciences

Chemistry and Psychology

Sydney Jean Dix is a 4th-year undergraduate student majoring in biological sciences with a specialization in biomedical sciences and minoring in chemistry and psychology. Sydney enjoyed living in the Honors LLC her first two years here at SIUC! Last fall with the UHP, she took Bioethics: The Human Experience in a Rapidly Changing World with Dr. Marsha Ryan from SIUC's School of Medicine and Tom Britton from SIUC's School of Law. This was one of her favorite classes to take at SIUC! This fall, she is completing an honors contract in her Health Psychology class.

At the start of the pandemic, she volunteered to produce and package Viral Transport Medium (VTM) for the COVID-19 emergency response in Illinois under Dr. Scott Hamilton-Brehm's supervision. VTM is used to preserve patient COVID-19 samples for testing. Last academic year, she volunteered over 100 hours in SIUC's Student Health Center as a COVID-19 screener.

Sydney is currently an undergraduate research assistant in Dr. Hamilton-Brehm's microbiology lab. She is a part of the Dog Tooth Bend Project team, which is working to identify and assess the impact of wetland denitrifying microbial communities upon the removal of surplus nitrogen from the Mississippi River. She is the president of the Microbiology Student Organization. She is also a member of the Pre-Health Professional Association. Sydney is a home health care aide with Addus HomeCare caring for the elderly in Jackson County, IL. After graduating from SIUC, Sydney wants to go to medical school and become a psychiatrist.

(10.25.2021)



ZACH ZAPPA

Biomedical Sciences

Zach Zappa is a senior studying Biomedical Sciences. He earned his EMT license over the summer and plans to work on an ambulance during his gap year as he prepares for medical school. For the previous 3 semesters, he worked in Dr. Fisher's microbiology lab as an undergraduate researcher. Dr. Fisher's lab focuses on research on *Chlamydia trachomatis* as well as *Escherichia coli*, which is what Zach's work mainly revolved around.

Outside of the field of biology, Zach is also very involved with music on campus. He played in the SIUC Wind Ensemble for the 2018-19 season. He has also been involved with both the Marching Salukis and Saluki Pep Band since he was a freshman. He is now a trumpet section leader. Going to SIU sporting events is one of his favorite activities in Carbondale! He also serves as the Warden and Treasurer of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, a national music fraternity that participates in music-based philanthropy, like singing or playing at nursing homes and hospitals.

(11.01.2021)



JULIA CICERO

Musical Theater

English Literature

Julia Cicero is a senior studying Musical Theater, with a minor in English Literature. She is the vice president of SIU's student-run theater company, Fierce!, and is also the music director of the SIU Student Newman Center. Currently, Julia is working on a creative research project as part of a REACH grant. The project is focused on a dance piece that combines tap dance and classical music. In October, the piece premiered in New York City with the professional dance company, #TapLife, who will come to SIU in the spring to perform the piece again.

Looking ahead, Julia plans to become a professional actor, likely in her hometown, Chicago. She plans to continue her passion for writing music and creative fiction, and she hopes to adopt a cat and a bunny.

(11.08.2021)



ELYSIA LEWIS

Crop, Soil, and Environmental Management, and Spanish

Ellie is a senior majoring in Crop, Soil, and Environmental Management, and Spanish. She plans to graduate in May 2022 and pursue a Master's degree in sustainable agriculture. Ultimately, she would like to work on issues surrounding food security, both domestically and abroad.

On-campus, Ellie is a member of the Women's Soccer Team; works as an undergraduate researcher in the plant pathology laboratory, under the direction of Dr. Bond and Dr. Fakhoury; participates in the Honors Program; and serves as a transfer transition leader.

This year, Ellie has been working with another undergraduate student, Lily Becker, on their REACH project where they are studying the characterization of endophytes with potential bio-control activity against soil-borne pathogens and beneficial effects on plant health. She has also been writing her Honors thesis this semester researching the potential role of bio-fortification in sustainability and its impact on nutrition, culture, and ethics.

(11.29.2021)



ANUJ PAWAR

Zoology

Anuj Pawar is a Senior Zoology student specializing in Animal Biology. He plans to forward his education after graduation by pursuing a Master's degree in relation to Zoology. Animal relationships with their environment are what interest him. For the past year and a half, he has been working in Dr. Narr's Freshwater Ecology Lab as a laboratory assistant, and more recently as a REACH recipient. As a lab assistant, he has helped out his professor and graduate students in their projects and has made periodic trips to the SIU Research Ponds at Touch of Nature. His REACH project is focusing on how a microsporidian parasite is affected by its host's food quality.

Aside from his Zoological focus, he is also invested in music within the university. Since his freshman year, he has been involved with the Marching Salukis and the Saluki Pep Band and is ending this semester as the third-year Trombone Section Leader. He is also involved with a national music fraternity known as Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. His position as Vice President and Secretary allows him to be dedicated to the development of music.

(12.06.2021)



HALEY SPIEWAK

Communication Studies

Journalism, Political Science

Haley Spiewak is a senior majoring in Communication Studies, specializing in Public Relations, and minoring in Journalism and Political Science. Haley is involved in many different RSO's such as Undergraduate Student Government (Chief of Staff), PRSSA (President), The Big Event (Executive Director), Delta Zeta, and Rho Lambda.

Haley has interned with The Walt Disney Company through the Disney College Program, and this past summer, she participated in SPLC's Summer Media Law and Policy Institute. She hopes to attend law school in the fall of 2022, focusing on either media law or education law. Haley says that she is thankful for the opportunities that SIU has provided and looks forward to an exciting and challenging senior year.

(01.10.2022)



HOPE BUDNY-CLYMER

Electrical Engineering

Math

Hope Budny-Clymer is a senior majoring in Electrical Engineering with a Biomedical specialization and a minor in Math. Hope is involved in many RSO's, such as Engineers Without Borders as president, Society of Women Engineers as vice president, and the Student Alumni Council. She is also a member of Soroptimist International and has been very active with volunteer work in her hometown community with groups such as the local youth center and a human trafficking rescue shelter.

Hope is very interested in international endeavors and has traveled outside of the United States on numerous occasions, doing volunteer work and bringing much-needed supplies. In 2019 she won the Soroptimist Woman of Distinction in International Goodwill and Understanding for her efforts.

Hope has participated in SIU's Extern Program through Ameren of Illinois. She is a third-generation legacy student. Her parents both graduated from SIU as well as her grandfather. Hope is looking to continue her education at SIU through the Accelerated Master's Degree program.

(01.18.2022)



KATHERINE HOSICK

Anthropology

Forensic Science, American Sign Language

Katherine Hosick (She/They) is a Senior studying Anthropology with minors in Forensic Science and American Sign Language. She plans to pursue a career in Forensic Anthropology, but she is open to all opportunities including Human Osteology or Biological Anthropology. Her dream job is to work at the National History Museum at the Smithsonian. Katherine is the VP of Operations for the University Honor's Honors Assembly. Also, she is a member of the RSO Saluki Service Dawgs where she works with the organization SIT as a student volunteer training service dogs so that they may assist their partner when they are ready! This RSO is one of the greatest opportunities she has been able to be a part of at SIU. Katherine has been, currently is, motivated by her drive to help others. That is why she is pursuing her degree and loves her work with Saluki Service Dawgs. Last year, she won the Outstanding Junior in Anthropology award and prior to that the Outstanding Sophomore in Anthropology award. She hopes to continue on the trend this year.

Currently, Katherine is working on an Honors Thesis under the direction of Dr. Gretchen Dabbs about a Differential Diagnosis on an osteological sample from ancient Egypt. Also, she is currently taking UHON 111: Honors Colloquium with Elizabeth Donoghue

A personal fact about Katherine is that she enjoys reading, writing, and cosplaying! She recently reached 1,567 followers on her TikTok account which she is extremely proud of. She recently started streaming on Twitch. She is an Aquarius. A fun fact about her is that she has twenty pets one of which is her cat Ranger who lives with her this year!

(01.31.2022)



FIONA ELY

Nursing

Healthcare Management

Fiona Ely is a junior studying nursing with a minor in healthcare management; she is in her second year of the nursing program. She hopes to continue her education in nursing and become a Nurse Practitioner, working in medically underserved areas.

Fiona is a member of the SIUC Student Nurses Association and has been in SIU's chapter of Timmy Global Health (TGH) for three years. She has served as the Director of Service for TGH for two years, leading service projects for the chapter at the Big Event and the Carbondale Warming Center. Fiona has recently accepted a position with SIH and is excited to further her clinical experience.

When not in class or at work, she enjoys hiking, working out, and spending time with her friends. She also loves sporting events and goes to as many Saluki games as she can. Go Dawgs!

(02.07.2022)



LIZZ SAERY

Microbiology

Chemistry, American Sign Language (ASL)

Lizz Saery is a senior majoring in Microbiology, with minors in Chemistry and American Sign Language (ASL). She is currently applying to several graduate programs with the goal of earning an M.S. in medical microbiology. She hopes to spend her career researching pathogens and the body's response to infection, with a focus on developing new therapies and vaccines. Microbiology intrigues her because of the complexity of which cells interact with each other. She currently works for Dr. Fisher, doing research on *Chlamydia trachomatis* that may lead to new antibiotic targets. She has also worked under Dr. Konjufca, where she did research on oral tolerance in mice, funded through a team REACH grant.

Lizz has been a part of several organizations on campus, including the Student Leadership Honor Society and Kiwanis Circle K of SIUC. She enjoys volunteering with projects that help local children or clean up hiking trails/parks. She likes reading, sewing, embroidery, and playing games with friends. She also has a small army of indoor plants she maintains.

(02.21.2022)



ANGELINA KAPP

Aviation Flight and Aviation Technologies

Environmental Studies

Hello everyone! Please meet Angelina Kapp. She is a senior in the Aviation Flight and Aviation Technologies programs and in the Environmental Studies minor. Angelina is a Chancellor's scholarship recipient and proud of her time here at SIU. She is one of the current captains for our Flying Salukis flight team and has lead various aviation RSOs over the past few years. Angelina has completed two summer internships, one as an avionics technician and another as a flight operation intern. Her goal is to use her education and skills to fly for the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) a part of their hurricane hunting team. This month she was selected as a primary candidate and is waiting on the medical committee approval! She is an Airframe and Powerplant certified mechanic and is working as a flight instructor at SIU. Angelina loves to hike, camp, paint, and play the ukulele in her free time. Explore all SIU and southern Illinois has to offer! It is an amazing place with amazing people that will change you for the better.

(03.14.2022)



MORGAN REITER

Political Science

Philosophy, Sociology

Morgan Reiter is a senior this year, majoring in Political Science with a concentration in Pre-Law, and minors in Philosophy and Sociology. In addition to being an Honors student, Morgan can be found participating in the Mock Trial RSO here on campus, as well as working at the Student Center as an Audio/Visual Technician! She also really enjoys volunteering at the Boys and Girls Club of Southern Illinois with the Saluki Scholars in Action group and getting to see the difference she is making in the young lives of those living in Southern Illinois.

Morgan has been very passionate from a young age about working in law and government, and when she graduates from SIU this December, hopes to have an acceptance to law school and a scholarship all set up for the Spring! She is interested in going into civil liberties law and ultimately wants to end up working in Washington D.C., helping to create and protect civil rights laws. In her free time, Morgan enjoys hanging out with friends and family, watching movies and television, and traveling abroad!

(03.21.2022)



JORDAN ALTUG

Microbiology

Chemistry

Jordan Altug is a senior majoring in microbiology with a minor in chemistry. She has also taken some animal science classes on top of that since she is planning to attend Veterinary School after graduation. Jordan is a member of the University Honors Program, Pre-Veterinary Science Club, Pre-Health Professionals Association, and Microbiology Student Organization. On top of school and extracurricular activities, she works at the Southern Illinois University Graduate School as a receptionist, along with volunteering at Pet Wellness Center, Saint Francis CARE shelter, and Gumdrops. This upcoming summer, Jordan is moving to Lake Buena Vista to partake in the Disney College Program. This has been a dream of hers for a very long time. Jordan hopes to eventually be able to work for the Walt Disney World Company again as a veterinarian at the Disney's Animal Kingdom.

(03.28.2022)



LIBBY VALEK

Communication Disorders and Sciences

Neuroscience and Psychology

Libby Valek is a senior studying Communication Disorders and Sciences while minoring in Neuroscience and Psychology. In addition to being a part of the Honors program, Libby is currently the President of NSSLHA and the Vice President of Rho Lambda Honors Society. Libby previously was the Vice President of Philanthropy for Delta Zeta. This fall, Libby completed her Honors Thesis with Professor Meadows on distinguishing APD and ADHD in the classroom setting. Libby worked as an Undergraduate Research Assistant for the Social Cognitive Development Lab at SIU during 2021 and currently works for the SIU Clinical Center as a Materials Librarian. Libby will attend SIU for her master's degree and hopes to become a Speech Language Pathologist in a middle school setting. Libby looks forward to making a difference in her clients' lives by helping improve their speech, language, and communication skills.

(04.04.2022)



BROOKE SINN

Biological Sciences

Brooke Sinn is a senior studying Biological Sciences with a concentration in Biomedical Sciences. A few things that continually motivate her are the thought of helping her community, as well as other communities, and showing that just because you come from a small town, it doesn't mean you cannot make a difference in this world. She has always loved anything medical related but realized that her calling was in microbiology. Right now, she is unsure where she will go after graduation, but she has had multiple interviews for microbiology related positions at different companies. She is in the sorority Delta Phi Epsilon and has made many lifelong friends and memories. Her favorite event is the Murder Mystery Dinner that Delta Phi Epsilon puts on every fall semester to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Fun Fact: This photo was actually taken at the Murder Mystery Dinner and Brooke would love for everyone to come to the next dinner this fall and help raise awareness for cystic fibrosis!

(04.11.2022)



KAMARIA HARMON

Journalism

Hospitality, Tourism, and Event Management

Kamaria Harmon is a junior majoring in Journalism with a specialization in News-Editorial, and a minor in Hospitality, Tourism, and Event Management. She has been on the Dean's list for three consecutive years. Kamaria's motivation to be a writer started in the classroom when she wrote stories about her life that received recognition. She finds the escapades and independent lifestyle of journalists to be a big part of her attraction to the profession. Ms. Harmon received the Marmaduke Scholarship, named after Illinois' First Lady of Journalism, and the Luebke Laad Family Scholarship from the school of Journalism. She was featured in the Day of Giving video this year and recognized for her academic honors by the College of Arts and Media.

Kamaria is President of the National Association for Black Journalists SIUC chapter. She has been a member of the Fatal Fusion dance team for three years. She is also a member of the Africana Theatre Lab. Kamaria has been a site-lead at The Big Event for two years and has participated in the Women's' Civic Institute. She is active in TriO student support services and the First Saluki Center. She is an ambassador for the College of Arts and Media. Kamaria currently works on campus with University Communications and Marketing as a public information writer and she is a news reporter at the student-led newspaper, the Daily Egyptian. Off campus, Kamaria volunteers at The Climate Economy, a local non-profit where she is a communications writer and co-organizer for their events. She is also active with The Dentmon Center in Carbondale. Kamaria is hoping to be an intern with the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute next spring.

(04.18.2022)



BRENT HARRIS

Electrical & Computer Engineering Mathematics

Brent Harris is a graduating senior in Electrical and Computer Engineering, with a minor in Mathematics. For the past four years, he's been a proud member of the SIU Robotics Team, this year serving as the vice president. The club recently attended the UIUC Robobrawl competition, where the team ended their first round with a battery fire. He is also a member of the University Honors Program and Tau Beta Pi.

Last summer, he completed an internship with Continental Tire in Plant Engineering, and currently works as a supervisor for the SalukiTech Service Center.

He is excited to graduate in the spring and begin his engineering career with United Launch Alliance. He will be working as a Communication Systems Engineer on the Vulcan Centaur rocket in Colorado. Brent has been excited about the space industry from a young age and is glad to finally get a chance to make this dream a reality.

In his free time, Brent enjoys watching terrible movies, traveling, and enjoying the Carbondale live music scene.

(04.25.2022)



RILEY SANDERS

communication disorders and sciences

Spanish and psychology

Riley Sanders is a senior from Williamsville, IL. She is majoring in communication disorders and sciences, and will also receive her minors in Spanish and psychology. Riley is graduating with her bachelor's degree in May and will continue her education here at SIU to earn her master's degree in communication disorders and sciences. She eventually hopes to become a speech-language pathologist, which will allow her to work with a range of clients, from newborns to geriatrics. She is unsure what clientele she will eventually work with, but her options range from swallowing disorders, feeding struggles in newborns, and speech therapy for all ages. Riley was drawn to speech-language therapy because of its range of services and its relation to the medical and educational fields.

Riley Sanders is very active on campus, spending her time in the Tutoring Center working as a Team Leader, giving campus tours, and training new members as a Saluki Ambassador. She is also currently serving as the president of the Student Alumni Council and acting as the secretary for the National Speech Language Hearing Association. She will continue working in the Tutoring Center in graduate school as their graduate assistant. She also spends her free time volunteering for a monthly adopt-a-spot, Brehm Preparatory School, Saluki Cares Day, SIU open houses, and many other events. She has been featured in various Alumni Association posts like the Day of Giving video and Ask A Saluki. She has also been on the SIU Dean's List since her first semester in the Fall of 2019.

Just recently, Riley won the Outstanding Leadership and Service Award, received an Honorable Mention for the SIU Student Distinguishable Service Award, and won the Roscoe Pulliam Memorial Scholarship. She is very grateful to have been selected for multiple scholarships, such as the University Excellence Scholarship and various textbook scholarships, since her freshman year, allowing her to pursue her dreams without worry. Riley is motivated and grateful for everyone who supports her in her studies and extracurriculars. She is excited to graduate and begin her next step toward her dream.

(05.09.2022)