

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

**AWARDS CELEBRATION  
2026**



## Welcome

Chris Pearl, Chair,  
Biomedical Sciences Department

## Awards

### Excellence in a Discipline: Undergraduate - Biomedical Sciences

*Makenna May*

### Excellence in a Discipline: Graduate - Master of Health Science in Biomedical Sciences

*Camila Duarte*

### Academic Excellence in a Degree Program - Graduate School Award

*Lucy Groothuis*

### Duke Tanaka Jr. Anatomy Scholarship

*Haarika Hebbur*

### Ilene I. Schooley Biomedical Sciences Scholarship

*Gabby Diaz Deleon and Jamie Valkenburg*

## Biomedical Sciences Graduates of Distinction

Tejaswini Balla	Esther Lee
Kaia Barnhardt	Jessica Lukins
Chad Britton	Faith Lutz
Olivia Brodie	Rose Pulte
Malachi Foster	Autumn Simms
Koby Fraaza	Kaley VanSuch
Noah Greiner	Stephen Warner
Arash Kordbacheh	Elizabeth Yamine
Thu Le	

## Closing Remarks

Eric Ramsson,  
Chair, BMS Awards and Scholarships Committee

## Acknowledgements

Chris Pearl, Donovan Anderson, Sheri Greene and Katie Haynes  
Faculty for their nominations, support of students, and participation

BMS Awards and Scholarships Committee:  
Allison Ham, David Linn, Eric Ramsson

## Excellence in a Discipline

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### ***Excellence in a Discipline: Undergraduate - Biomedical Sciences 2026 Awardee:***

***Makenna May***

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Awards/Scholarships: Dean's List, William Schroeder Undergraduate Endowed Fellowship in Chemistry, Student Summer Scholar, GVSU Presidential Scholarship, Thompson Working Families Scholarship, Excellence in a Discipline Award (Undergraduate)

Research: I performed research on the emerging fungal pathogen *Candida auris* by examining the roles of several genes involved in biofilm formation in the closely related *Candida albicans*, under the mentorship of Dr. Cleary and Dr. Thomas.

Clinical Experience: I have worked as a CNA at two different nursing homes throughout my time at GVSU. In one of them I worked on a ventilator unit that had an active *C. auris* outbreak, which started my interest in the organism and led to my later research experience.

Service: I have volunteered at Blodgett hospital on their acute care of the elderly (ACE) unit as a patient support volunteer. In the last two years, I've volunteered weekly at Meals on Wheels West Michigan, where I prepare meals which will be delivered to elderly residents in the area.

Future Plans: After a gap year I plan to pursue a Ph.D. in microbiology.

## Excellence in a Discipline

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### ***Excellence in a Discipline: Graduate - Master of Health Science in Biomedical Sciences***

***2026 Awardee:***

***Camila Duarte***



Major: Master of Health Science in Biomedical Science

Awards/Scholarships: Outstanding Abstract Award, Excellence in a Discipline Award (Graduate)

Research: I have conducted research investigating the effects of a ketogenic diet on reproductive health in male and female obese mice, analyzing metabolic and reproductive outcomes. In males, I evaluated sperm production, storage and maturation, while in females, I evaluated uterine morphology. I also evaluated the effects of alkaline water consumption on gut microbiota and inflammatory markers in obese rat model.

Service: I have volunteered at the 2025 Anatomy and Physiology Science Olympiad Tournament and served as a Human Physiology tutor for one year during my undergraduate studies in Colombia, gaining experience in mentoring and supporting student learning.

Future Plans: I would like to do research at the intersection of nutrition, endocrinology, and women's health, with a particular emphasis on fertility. I am motivated to investigate how nutritional and hormonal interventions can improve reproductive outcomes and can also support long-term health and quality of life for women. I hope to contribute to the development of practical, evidence-based strategies that address real-world challenges, bridging the gap between scientific research and meaningful improvements in female health over the lifespan.

## Academic Excellence Award

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### ***Academic Excellence in a Degree Program - Graduate School 2026 Awardee: Lucy Groothuis***



**Major:** Master of Health Science in Biomedical Science

**Awards/Scholarships:** Graduate Academic Conference Fund Travel Grant, Academic Excellence in a Degree Program

**Research:** I worked in the lab of Dr. Kristin Renkema to evaluate if immortalized cell lines can serve as a cost-effective alternative to primary cells in an undergraduate immunology laboratory course. We led students through a proposed immunology laboratory manual using a mouse model to obtain primary cells for the exercises. I did parallel experiments in RAW 264.7 and CTLL-2 cell lines to model macrophage and CD8+ T cell activation respectively. I presented my work at the Autumn Immunology Conference (AIC2025) and Student Scholars Day.

**Clinical Experience:** At Zeeland Hospital, I have worked as an Ambulatory Clinical Tech in the Infusion Clinic and as an Emergency Nursing Tech in the Emergency Room. I have also shadowed various physicians in OB/GYN, Anesthesia, Ophthalmology, General Surgery, and Orthopedic Surgery.

**Service:** During graduate school, I have volunteered for the Ed & Nancy Hanenburg Children's Advocacy Center in Holland assisting with child supervision, front desk coverage, and fundraising events. I also volunteered at Corewell Health's Zeeland Hospital on the medical-surgical unit in a patient-companion role while supporting unit operations. I have also helped out at GVSU's Science Olympiad and GRCC's Community STEM Day.

**Future Plans:** I am applying to medical school this year and starting a new full-time position at Corewell Health as a Surgical Support and Anesthesia Tech.

## Scholarships

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### ***Duke Tanaka Jr. Anatomy Scholarship 2026 Awardee: Harrika Hebbur***



**Majors:** B.S. in Biomedical Sciences, M.S in Cell and Molecular Biology

**Minor:** Chemistry

**Awards/Scholarships:** GVSU Dean's List (all semesters), GVSU International Scholarship, Student Scholar's Day, Reach Higher Showcase, BMS Graduate of Distinction, Frederik Meijer Honors College, Student Research Spotlight in AWRI: A Year in Review, Literature Review published on Scholar Works, Duke Tanaka Jr. Anatomy Scholarship, and Georgette "Tete" Zainea Memorial Scholarship.

**Research:** I worked with Dr. S. Hamsher to study diatom growth rates in different light and nutrient broth conditions. This lab works to understand the nitrogen-fixing cyanobacteria endosymbiont in diatoms. We presented the data at Student Scholar's day. With Dr. E. Synder and Dr. P. Wampler, I collected and analyzed water chemistry and macroinvertebrates from Lower Grand River, presenting this research at the Reach High Showcase. Also with Dr. S. Hamsher and Dr. E. Snyder, I studied the symbiotic relationship between diatoms and mussel populations. I wrote a review synthesizing scientific publications, published on ScholarWorks. I work with Dr. K. Renkema measuring gene expression in mouse tumors using Bulk RNA Sequencing to understand anti-tumor immune responses. I am a Graduate Assistant at the Molecular Monitoring lab.

**Clinical Experience:** I work at Uof M Health-West as a certified phlebotomist. I am also a Certified EKG technician through NHA.

**Service:** I volunteered at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Center, Spinal Cord Clinic. I was a Teaching Assistant for Honors Live. Learn. Lead. I volunteer at Versiti blood drives, at Science Olympiad Events and other community events.

**Future Plans:** I will continue in the Cell and Molecular Biology thesis master's program at GVSU, complete a graduate certificate in Bioinformatics and Genomics, and conduct my Master's research under the guidance of Dr. Kristin Renkema. I intend to pursue an MD specializing in oncology.

***Ilene I. Schooley Biomedical Sciences  
Scholarship 2026 Awardee:***

***Gabby Diaz Deleon***

Gabby Diaz Deleon was unable to attend the awards ceremony. However, the Biomedical Sciences Department wishes to acknowledge Gabby as an awardee of the 2026 Ilene I. Schooley Biomedical Sciences Scholarship.

***Ilene I. Schooley Biomedical Sciences  
Scholarship 2026 Awardee:***

***Jamie Valkenburg***

Jamie Valkenburg was unable to attend the awards ceremony. However, the Biomedical Sciences Department wishes to acknowledge Jamie as an awardee of the 2026 Ilene I. Schooley Biomedical Sciences Scholarship.

### ***Tejaswini Balla***

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Awards/Scholarships: BMS Graduate of Distinction, Dean's List (x4)



Research: For the past three semesters, I have worked under the supervision of Dr. Sylvester to investigate the vasoactive effects of beet powder. I have been part of multiple projects, but my most recent one involved studying beet powder's ability to lower systolic blood pressure on a rat model. I presented research at the 2026 GVSU Student Scholars Day.

Clinical Experience: I have shadowed multiple physicians and physician assistants which gave me valuable insight into the responsibilities of different healthcare professionals. I've also gone through a CNA/PCT training program at Oakland Community College and through that I received my NHA PCT/A certification.

Service: I have volunteered as a medical assistant at Exalta Health, where I supported providers by doing patient intake and taking their vitals. Through Mu Epsilon Delta, which I have been a part of for 5 semesters, I gained a wide variety of volunteering experience. I have also volunteered as a patient companion at multiple hospitals.

Future Plans: I hope to start medical school in the Fall of 2027. Until then, I will spend my time working as a nurse technician at Henry Ford, and will continue volunteering in my free time.

### ***Kaia Barnhardt***



Majors: Biomedical Sciences and Behavioral Neuroscience

Awards/Scholarships: Mary Free Bed Student Volunteer of the Year Award, BMS Graduate of Distinction

Service: I volunteer at Mary Free Bed and am a member of Kappa Kappa Psi.

Future Plans: I plan to attend the Second-Degree BSN program starting in May.

### Chad Britton

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Minor: Chemistry

Awards/Scholarships: GVSU Faculty Scholarship, Dean's List (all semesters), General Chemistry Award, BMS Graduate of Distinction



Research: I have been a part of Dr. Cleary's research lab working with the fungus *Candida albicans*. I have been looking at changes of morphology and adhesion of strains of the fungus using different growth media. I have observed these cells in liquid cultures and more recently, have been analyzing the different strains' bio-film formation. I have presented two posters at Student Scholars Day.

Clinical Experience: For a year I was a medical scribe working at Corewell Health emergency departments, including Butterworth ED, Helen DeVos ED, and Zeeland ED, where I was able to work with a variety of providers. Currently, I am a direct care worker at a retirement community, Green Acres of Standale. I often work in the memory care section, assisting residents with neurodegenerative disorders.

Service: I was a teacher's assistant for the cadaver lab for a semester and have volunteered at the Science Olympiad Regional event.

Future Plans: I plan to take a gap year before attending medical school. I have currently applied through GVSU's Early Assurance Program to both Michigan State and Central Michigan. After medical school, I wish to return to the Upper Peninsula to practice medicine.

### Olivia Brodie

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Minor: Spanish

Awards/Scholarships: Michigan Space Grant Consortium Undergraduate Research Grant, Portage Education Foundation: Laura C. Dunlop Scholarship, Dean's List (all semesters), BMS Graduate of Distinction, Outstanding Award Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, GVSU Award for Excellence



Research: I worked with Dr. Renkema on piloting an undergraduate immunology lab course. I learned techniques including collecting mouse tissue, stimulating immune cells, and analyzing data. I was one of two students to care for the mice through daily checks and weekly cage changes. I also was awarded a grant from the Michigan Space Grant Consortium (MSGC), presented a poster and gave an oral presentation at CMU's MSGC Fall Conference, and co-presented an undergraduate poster at the Autumn Immunology Conference.

Clinical Experience: I have been a patient safety assistant, monitoring patients who were at risk of injuring themselves or others at Kalamazoo's Bronson Hospital. I have worked as a physical therapist technician at Hulst Jepsen where I established meaningful connections with patients, learned how to motivate and encourage them in ways suited to their personalities, and assisted PTs by running patients through their exercises. Additionally, I've shadowed Pediatric, Dermatology, Family Medicine, Radiology, and OBGYN providers.

Service: I've volunteered at Compassionate Heart Ministries, supporting and developing bonds with individuals with mild to moderate disabilities. I also went on a children's ministry Mission Trip in Guatemala, and during this past year, I have co-led a weekly bible study through Campus Ministry GVSU.

Future Plans: I plan to work as a medical assistant during my gap year while applying to medical school. I am interested in specializing in Pediatrics or Dermatology.

### ***Malachi Foster***

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Awards/Scholarships: BMS Graduate of Distinction, GV Laker Scholarship, Dean's List Recipient

Research: Under the guidance of Dr. Christians, I investigated the role of ATG101 in autophagy, with particular focus on its involvement in stabilizing the ATG13/ULK1 complex. To assess its role in regeneration, RNAi was utilized to selectively knock down ATG101 expression in planarian, and regenerative capacity was quantified by measuring post-amputation growth rates. This work contributes to a deeper understanding of autophagy-related mechanisms in eukaryotic regeneration and provides a foundation for future investigations into the molecular regulation of tissue repair.

Clinical Experience: I am a Behavioral Health Technician at Focus Clinic where I administer cognitive assessments to contribute to the diagnosis and treatment of neurodevelopmental disorders and learning disabilities. I have also been a Medical Assistant at Grand Rapids' WellCare Urgent Care.

Service: I served as a facilitator at an African American Male Achievement Conference where I gave a presentation which focused on developing personal growth, academic success, and professional readiness. I volunteer with Men of Color Read, an initiative to promote literacy and representation by engaging MLK Jr. Academy elementary students through reading and mentorship. I also mentor in GVSU's Pre-Med Program, assisting freshmen in navigating academic and personal challenges while guiding them toward becoming competitive medical school applicants.

Future Plans: Following graduation, I plan to take the MCAT and apply to medical school. I aspire to pursue a career in psychiatry, where I can address disparities in mental health care and improve access to culturally competent treatment for underserved communities.



### ***Koby Fraaza***

Majors: Biomedical Sciences, Microbiology

Minor: Biology

Awards/Scholarships: 2025 Excellence of a Discipline Award in Microbiology, BMS Graduate of Distinction, 3x GLIAC Commissioner's Award, Academic and Athletic All-American

Research: I worked in Prof. Kurjiaka's lab, where we evaluated how reduced media glucose and fetal bovine serum (FBS) impact endothelial cell survival and proliferation. Our results have helped establish a baseline for future investigation on AT-1 receptor stimulation and its role in endothelial cell proliferation and apoptosis.

Clinical Experience: At Olivia's Gift, I had the rewarding experience of being a direct care worker who supported the daily needs of adults while fostering dignity, independence and joy.

Service: I volunteer at the Family Life Center of West Michigan, Helping Hands, and at collegiate and high school track meets.

Future Plans: I hope to attend medical school and pursue a career as a physician.



### Noah Greiner

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Minor: Chemistry

Awards/Scholarships: Grand Valley Award of Excellence Scholarship, Dean's List, BMS Graduate of Distinction

Research: I conducted research under the guidance of Dr. Bergman investigating the comparative behavioral impacts of neuroactive pharmaceuticals on crayfish locomotion. This work involved analyzing behavioral responses to pharmacological agents. I presented a poster on our ongoing research at the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB) conference in Portland, OR.

Clinical Experience: I have gained clinical experience in the following roles: post-surgical unit Patient Care Technician, Physical Therapy Technician, Patient Attendant, and Direct Support Professional at a long term neurorehabilitation center. Working in a variety of clinical settings has provided me with broad exposure to different areas of medicine and diverse patient populations, while strengthening my skills in patient care, communication, and adaptability.

Service: I volunteered at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, where I supported pediatric patients and their families. I have also assisted with food packing and distribution efforts through Gleaners Community Food Bank.

Future Plans: I plan to apply to Physician Assistant programs this summer and take a gap year before beginning PA school. I hope to ultimately specialize in pediatrics or surgery, building on my clinical and volunteer experiences!



### Arash Kordbacheh

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Awards/Scholarships: Dean's List (All Semesters), Daisy Award Nominee at Blodgett Hospital, Frederik Meijer Honors College Scholar, 4.0 Cumulative GPA, BMS Graduate of Distinction

Research: I conducted neurodegenerative research under Dr. Benskey at MSU's Grand Rapids Research Center, investigating immune regulatory mechanisms in Parkinson's disease. My work involved brain tissue sectioning, immunohistochemistry, RNA isolation, and molecular analysis. I presented my findings at GVSU's Student Scholars Day and Van Andel Institute's WMRUGS Conference. I am co-author on a manuscript derived from this research, which is in preparation for publication.

Clinical Experience: I was a nurse technician on a medical-surgical unit at Corewell Health Blodgett Hospital. I provided direct patient care including hemodynamic monitoring, urinary catheterization, electrocardiogram acquisition, and I assisted patients with activities of daily living. I have also assisted physicians in community-based street clinics in rural Costa Rica

Service: I founded and served as President of Tutors To Go, a university-recognized organization dedicated to providing academic tutoring and mentorship to underserved high school students. Additionally, I served as a mentor in regional health career pipeline programs, supporting underrepresented students pursuing healthcare professions. My volunteer work as a youth wrestling coach further reflects my dedication to mentorship.

Future Plans: I will attend Wayne State University School of Medicine while participating in the United States Navy Health Professions Scholarship Program. I intend to serve as a Navy physician, contributing to the health and operational readiness of service members. I will continue to manage Clever Prep as a partial owner, expanding access to high-quality MCAT and undergraduate tutoring. Long term, I aim to practice family medicine in a rural or underserved community.



### ***Thu Le***



Major: Biomedical Sciences

Minor: Chemistry

Awards/Scholarships: General Chemistry Award, Dean's List, Badge in Homebrewing, GVSU Presidential Scholarship, BMS Graduate of Distinction

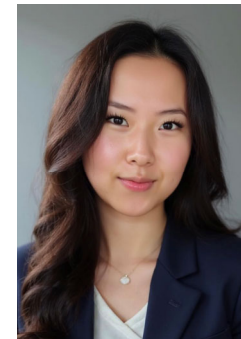
Research: I have conducted research under the mentorship of Dr. Sylvester investigating the physiological effects of commercial beetroot powders on vascular smooth muscle function. Using porcine coronary and segmental arteries as models, organ bath studies were performed to measure changes in vascular tension in response to various extracts. More recently, ammonium sulfate precipitation procedures were executed to isolate potential vasoactive proteins and quantification of those yields.

Clinical Experience: I have been a Nurse Technician at Corewell Health Helen Devos Children's Hospital and have extensively shadowed doctors in the Corewell Health System.

Service: I was an English tutor for a group of eight students residing in Vietnam, providing language lessons and academic support. I have also volunteered at Kid's Food Basket.

Future Plans: I will start at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine in the Fall of 2026 with the future intention of working in underserved communities.

### ***Esther Lee***



Major: Biomedical Sciences

Awards/Scholarships: BMS Graduate of Distinction, Dean's List, Frederik Meijer Honors College, GV Laker Scholarship, The Malinoski Family Pre-Dental Scholarship

Clinical Experience: I am a dental assistant at Exalta Health, a nonprofit clinic providing affordable care to underserved and uninsured populations. I assist with chairside procedures and support patient care. I have also shadowed a variety of dental practices including general dentistry and orthodontics.

Service: At GVSU, I serve as a CRLA-certified tutor, providing one-on-one support in various biology, chemistry, and math courses. I also worked as a SLA facilitator, where I led class sessions designed to reinforce course material and help students through challenging concepts. I volunteer as a tutor and classroom aide at Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Academy, supporting elementary students in reading and writing through both individual and group instruction. Additionally, I volunteer at Spectrum Health Renucci Hospitality House, where I help prepare and serve meals for patients and their families to create a supportive and welcoming environment.

Future Plans: I will be attending the University of Detroit Mercy School of Dentistry to earn my DDS degree. I look forward to pursuing a career as a dentist in the public health sector.

### **Jessica Lukins**



Major: Biomedical Science

Minor: Chemistry

Awards/Scholarships: GVSU Transfer Award of Excellence Scholarship, Dean's List, BMS Graduate of Distinction, and DAT Princeton Review Scholarship

Research: I conducted organic chemistry research under faculty mentor Professor N. Olle, where I synthesized two new chalcone compounds for potential use in pharmaceuticals and dental biomaterials and evaluated their antimicrobial properties in the microbiology lab under Dr. Baxter's guidance. I worked on the GEP's Pathways Project under Dr. M. Burg where I annotated Drosophila insulin-regulation genes by utilizing several bioinformatics tools. I presented both projects at Student Scholars Day.

Clinical Experience: I have worked as an orthodontic and general dental assistant and as a phlebotomist technician at BioLife Plasma Center. I have shadowed dentists and dental specialists.

Service: I volunteered at Exalta Health, a nonprofit community medical and dental clinic and also served at Degage Ministries, a shelter for housing insecure women. I have also volunteered at Kids Food Basket preparing meals for underprivileged children throughout West Michigan.

Future Plans: I will attend dental school at the University of Utah School of Dentistry to pursue my dream of becoming a dentist for underserved communities.

### **Faith Lutz**



Major: Biomedical Science

Minor: Chemistry

Awards/Scholarships: BMS Graduate of Distinction, Dean's List (all semesters), GV Presidential Scholarship, GV National Merit Finalist Scholarship, Frederik Meijer Honors College

Research: I worked in Dr. Sylvester's lab where our research was mainly focus on the vasoactivity of beet root powder. More recently, I worked on a rat model where we are hoping to determine whether beet root has vasodilating properties that may be beneficial for cardiovascular health. Additionally, I worked dissecting porcine renal segmental arteries for a study of optimal organ transplant conditions.

Clinical Experience: I have worked as a care aide and medication passer at Green Acres of Allendale, a local assisted living facility. I was also a care aide at Trillium Hospice House in Marquette, MI for a summer and have shadowed in family medicine, general surgery, radiation oncology, and emergency medicine.

Service: I volunteer with the kids cancer support groups at Gilda's Club. I have also volunteered at Children's Healing Center in Grand Rapids to help facilitate fun, clean programs for immunocompromised children.

Future Plans: I plan to apply to medical school in hopes of matriculating in 2027. I am interested in Radiation Oncology and Women's Health. In my semester off, I plan to work at a hospital in Grand Rapids as well as continue my clinical and volunteer experiences.

## ***Rose Pulte***

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Minor: Studio Art

Awards/Scholarships: BMS Graduate of Distinction

Research: Throughout my time at GVSU, I have primarily participated in Professor Nicholas Olle's laboratory researching chalcones and their derivatives. In clinical settings, chalcones have shown great promise as anti-inflammatory, antifungal, antimicrobial, and anticancer agents, making them a subject of research for many chemists and microbiologists as a lead alternative to antibiotics. In this lab, I have successfully synthesized the organic compound 4,4-dihydroxychalcone via a Claisen-Schmidt Aldol reaction using the catalyst NaOH or KOH. Following the recrystallization of the crude product, I performed a series of antimicrobial susceptibility tests of the chalcone on various microbes in Dr. Ian Cleary's lab.

Future Plans: Beginning in June 2026, I will attend the University of Illinois Chicago's Biomedical Visualization Master's Program, where I will pursue a career in medical illustration. While attending this program, I am interested in creating classical illustrations and 3D models of various anatomical abnormalities and pathologies, as well as working with doctors and other professionals to illustrate their research.

## ***Autumn Simms***



Major: Biomedical Sciences

Minor: Chemistry

Awards/Scholarships: Dean's list for 8 semesters, BMS Graduate of Distinction

Research: In Dr. Sylvester's lab, I examined how pH influences arterial responses to cardiovascular drugs. Using the segmental artery from porcine kidneys, I tested three pH conditions (7.2, 7.4, 7.6) in a HEPES-buffer solution. I then evaluated arterial responses to potassium chloride, sodium nitroprusside, and phenylephrine. By conducting this research, I hoped to improve understanding of drug performance under pathological acid-base conditions and inform clinical decision-making and cardiovascular drug development.

Service: I have participated in initiatives led by Mu Epsilon Delta that support organizations such as Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, Gift of Life, and the homeless population in Grand Rapids.

Future Plans: I plan on gaining clinical experience before attending medical school, where I hope to specialize in cardiology and nephrology.

### ***Kaley VanSuch***

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Minor: Chemistry

Awards/Scholarships: GVSU Presidential Merit Scholarship, BMS Graduate of Distinction, Dean's List, Student Summer Scholarship Award, Academic Conference Fund, Frederik Meijer Honors College

Research: Under Dr. Renkema, I helped develop an open access immunology lab manual for undergraduate research related coursework. I presented this research at Student Scholars Day, Student Summer Scholars Showcase, and at an Autumn Immunology Conference. This ongoing project expects to publish a lab manual in fall 2026. My role in this research was in animal husbandry, peer mentorship to undergraduate students during a trial lab experience, and extensive use of ELISA, flow cytometry, and other immunological research techniques. I also worked on a project investigating water quality in the Lower Grand River under Dr. Wampler and presented this at a Reach Higher Showcase.

Clinical Experience: I have worked as a medical scribe in the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital emergency department under Helix Scribe Solutions, as a Corsocare Hospice volunteer, and as a Home InStead caregiver. I currently am a resident aid at Waterford Place and will pursue a position there as a medical technician after graduation.

Service: As a leader in Campus Ministry, I lead a bible study. I have also done service projects such as hurricane relief in Knockpatrick, Jamaica for the Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf as well as home restoration for World Renew in Windsor, North Carolina.

Future Plans: I will apply to medical school to pursue a career as an Allergy and Immunology Physician.



### ***Stephen Warner***

Major: Biomedical Sciences

Awards: BMS Graduate of Distinction

Research: I did research involving neuroprotection and neurogeneration in pig retina cells through selective stimulation.

Future Plans: I am hoping to become a doctor, with a preemptive interest in family medicine or emergency medicine.



### ***Elizabeth Yamine***

**Majors:** Biomedical Science, Biochemistry

**Awards/Scholarships:** Midwest Enzyme Chemistry Conference 2025 Best Poster Award, BMS Graduate of Distinction, Thompson Working Families Achiever Scholarship, Professor Charles Knop Chemistry Scholarship, GV Award for Excellence, Frederick Meijer Honors College, Dean's List

**Research:** I worked in Dr. Brad Wallar's lab conducting research on  $\beta$ -lactamase variants involved in antibiotic resistance. I worked closely with IMP-1, a class B  $\beta$ -lactamase, and ADC-172 and ADC-217, both class C  $\beta$ -lactamases. I had the opportunity to practice protein purification and crystallization techniques, including site-directed mutagenesis, cation exchange chromatography, and hanging drop vapor diffusion. I used enzyme kinetics to assess the effects of various inhibitors on enzymatic activity.

**Clinical Experience:** I have worked as a nurse technician at Butterworth Hospital on the oncology floor. Currently, I work as a pharmacy technician at the Butterworth Hospital Meijer Pharmacy, and I also volunteer in the emergency department.

**Service:** I was on the executive board for GVSU Alternative Breaks in which I participated in and planned humanitarian and environmental service events around campus and assisted in planning week-long volunteer trips across the US. I participated in volunteer trips to Hungry Mother State Park, Marion, VA. I have also volunteered through Fleece and Thank You making blankets for hospitalized children.

**Future Plans:** I plan to take some time away from school and later apply to physician assistant programs to pursue a career as a physician assistant.



**Congratulations from the  
Biomedical Sciences Department  
on your accomplishments and  
best of luck in your  
future endeavors!**



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**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT**