

ORDER *of* PEGASUS

CLASS OF 2014



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
AND ENROLLMENT SERVICES

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Spring 2014



Dear Friend of the University:

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2014 Order of Pegasus awardees.

The Order of Pegasus is the highest honor the university gives to students. It recognizes outstanding graduating seniors and graduate students who have demonstrated exemplary university and community involvement, leadership, academic achievement, and service.

This year, 20 students were selected to receive the prestigious award.

The biographical sketches in this handbook provide information on the academic accomplishments, leadership experiences, and UCF and community involvement of the individual awardees.

We are extraordinarily proud of the outstanding achievements of these students, and we hope you join with us in offering our congratulations and best wishes.

Cordially yours,

John C. Hitt
President

GRADUATE STUDENTS

TRACY BECKER

PH.D. CANDIDATE, PHYSICS
COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

AVIANNE BUNNELL

CANDIDATE FOR DOCTOR OF MEDICINE, M.D. PROGRAM
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

COURTNEY BUZAN

MA STUDENT, EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE

STACEY HARDIN

PH.D. CANDIDATE, EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE

TRACY BECKER

Tracy is pursuing her Ph.D. in Physics on the Planetary Sciences track in the College of Sciences and received her B.S. in Astrophysics from Lehigh University. She is a graduate research assistant in the Physics Department, a NASA Florida Space Grant Consortium Fellow and a UCF Graduate Research Excellence Fellow. Her current research uses data from the Cassini spacecraft to study Saturn's rings. She is a recipient of the UCF Student Government Association's Extreme Leadership Scholarship and is the current president of the Physics Women Society which helped organize the 2013 Southeast Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics. Demonstrating her commitment to bringing science to the community, she acts as special tours director for the Robinson Observatory where she coordinates telescope nights for children, and volunteers with the Astronomy Society. She also helped implement the Professional Development Workshop on Gravity and Motion for middle and high school teachers in the Orlando area.



Tracy Becker
Freehold, New Jersey

Tracy's UCF Experience:

At UCF, I have been afforded the opportunity to engage in exciting research exploring the underlying physics of Saturn's rings. I have traveled to international conferences to present my research, exchange ideas with experts from around the globe, and establish a network for future collaborations. I regularly interact with UCF faculty, some of the world's foremost experts in their fields, and I am constantly learning from them and developing as a scientist. Campus facilities like the Robinson Observatory have allowed me to explore my passion for teaching and generate educational opportunities for the public. The overwhelming support the Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics received from university leaders was one of my most memorable UCF experiences. Despite its size, UCF showcases a close community spirit, which has enhanced my time as graduate student. UCF has enabled me to become a leading scientist and educator. Participation in cutting-edge research, exceptional faculty mentorship, and innovative leadership opportunities have created a solid foundation on which to build my career.

Future Plans:

After earning my doctorate, I intend to continue my career in academia as a professor, conducting research and actively contributing to our growing understanding of the solar system while teaching and remaining involved in public outreach.

AVIANNE BUNNELL



Avianne Bunnell
Mesa, Arizona

Future Plans:

My pathway to become a vascular surgeon will begin in the next few months. I eagerly look forward to treating the most complicated disease states and providing both palliative and curative care. I plan to remain actively involved in the academic growth of students and trainees throughout my career.

Avianne is a senior medical student at the College of Medicine and has spent the last four years exemplifying the role of a young pioneer. Starting her tenure as co-founder in the establishment of the local Student National Medical Association chapter propelled her to become a member of the national board of directors. During her past two years as chairperson for community service, she managed initiatives for over 150 chapters and represented UCF on a national level. She maintains a passion for mentorship, assisting in organizing pre-health outreach programs and conferences dedicated toward undergraduates and high school students. As a liaison for the Medical Students Providing Care Across Continents, she helped establish UCF's first medical mission to the Dominican Republic. She has kept a keen eye for research, partnering with local and national physicians to conduct clinical research focused on surgical intervention, intraoperative imaging, and critical care management. She has contributed to the UCF legacy by presenting her work at international conferences and publishing in national journals.

Avianne's UCF Experience:

At the UCF College of Medicine, I was welcomed and made to feel at home. I was made a promise, not a guarantee of easy success, but a pledge that if I worked hard and kept an open mind, I would contribute to the development and progression of a new type of physician equipped to lead in the 21st century. I have studied under faculty interested in setting new and improved precedence for training, not limited by traditions set in stone. UCF and the Orlando community collaborated to invest in me, via the financial support of the Florida Heart Institute, providing a scholarship and eliminating my tuition debt. I have been encouraged and provided with the resources to contribute back to the field of medicine. The College of Medicine has enhanced my leadership skills by presenting opportunities to participate in the development and management of university and national organizations. UCF has provided me the unparalleled opportunity to become a successful physician and future vascular surgeon.

COURTNEY BUZAN

Courtney is pursuing a degree in Educational Leadership as a member of the Higher Education & Policy Studies Program in the College of Education and Human Performance. For the past two years, she has served as graduate assistant for student organizations and as advisor for the Knights of the RoundTable, a student agency in the Office of Student Involvement. In addition, she served as a graduate assistant for the inaugural Knight Camp program for incoming and transfer students. She served as an intern for Sharon Ekern, associate vice president, Student Development and Enrollment Services. Before coming to UCF, she received her B.S. in Applied Meteorology from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach.



Courtney Buzan
Reading, Pennsylvania

Courtney's UCF Experience:

The moment I first set foot on the UCF campus, I was flooded with extraordinary experiences that would shape the next two years of my life and beyond. The majority of my opportunities at UCF have been a direct result of my work in the Office of Student Involvement. The staff, programs, and most importantly students have helped broaden my experiences as a professional and provided me with a wide array of irreplaceable leadership opportunities including the President's Leadership Council. As a student planning to go into higher education administration, this has been an experience that changed my future. I have had tremendous opportunities to interact with some of the most influential individuals in my field, from the phenomenal faculty of my program to the outstanding leadership that makes up UCF's administration. I feel extremely privileged to have learned from and been mentored by some of the greatest leaders in academia. Looking back on my experience, I am proud to say UCF has never failed to challenge me as a leader and has provided extraordinary opportunities which have shaped my college career and future as a student affairs professional.

Future Plans:

I plan to make an impact at various institutions of higher education throughout the country. My ultimate dream is to become a strong female leader and administrator at a major STEM institution.



Stacey Hardin
Charlotte, North Carolina

Future Plans:

I plan to continue researching and providing a voice for females with emotional and behavioral disabilities. I have received a position at Illinois State University, which will allow me to pursue my goal of preparing preservice and inservice teachers to adequately and effectively teach students with disabilities and students from diverse backgrounds.

STACEY HARDIN

Stacey Hardin is a Ph.D. candidate in the College of Education and Human Performance, exceptional student education track. She is a Project LEAD Scholar, a Holmes Scholar, and a recipient of the McKnight Doctoral Fellowship. She received her Master's in Special Education and her Bachelor's in Mass Communications from North Carolina Central University. Prior to entering the doctoral program at UCF, she served K-12 students in various settings, including teaching reading and mathematics in Spanish in Orizaba, Mexico. Her research interests and dissertation focus include the disproportionality of females labeled emotionally and behaviorally disabled, culturally responsive teaching pedagogy, and the effectiveness of STEM curriculum delivery to students of diverse backgrounds. As the director of University and School District Partnerships for TLE TeachLive™, a classroom simulation used to prepare inservice and preservice teachers at UCF, she assisted in expanding the client base from 10 national partners to 38 national and one international partner. She also serves on the executive board of UCF's Student Council for Exceptional Children and the national Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children and has facilitated STEM camps for middle school students from diverse backgrounds.

Stacey's UCF Experience:

Growing up in a gang-infested neighborhood in Charlotte, NC, I have always desired to help people advance from a place similar to my own. At the age of 18, I became pregnant and was discounted by many. I was a statistic. In 2010, a UCF professor provided me with the unique opportunity to study here. I was introduced to rigorous research activities, which continue to shape my future helping students with disabilities. I collaborated with other students across disciplines to help underserved Central Florida students and enhance technologies in teacher preparation. Exposure to national and local opportunities has advanced my thinking in policy, advocacy and service. With each professional experience, my personal growth has been visible, and I have learned how strong I am and how to balance school, work and family. As a single mother from an underserved neighborhood, I have been completely overwhelmed and humbled by the opportunities gained at UCF. They have influenced my educational journey exponentially and will continue to impact my life forever.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

LINH ANH CAT

BIOLOGY, INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES, UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

AMY CRAWFORD

POLITICAL SCIENCE, ENGLISH

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES, COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

SHEKINAH FASHAW

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

CYNTHIA FLORENTINO

POLITICAL SCIENCE

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

JESSICA GOTTSLEBEN

POLITICAL SCIENCE, RADIO-TELEVISION

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES, NICHOLSON SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION

THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

KAYE-ALESE GREEN

PSYCHOLOGY

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

CATHERINE GUTIERREZ

BIOTECHNOLOGY, MOLECULAR BIOLOGY AND MICROBIOLOGY

BURNETT SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

LAshaunda HAYES

POLITICAL SCIENCE

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

AMELIA KLUG

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

CHARLENE KORMONDY

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES
THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

AMELIA MACKAREY

MOLECULAR BIOLOGY AND MICROBIOLOGY, ENGLISH LITERATURE
BURNETT SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

JULIEN MEYER

HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT, EVENT MANAGEMENT
ROSEN COLLEGE OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

RANA RIAD

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE
THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

NICHOLAS SIMONS

ECONOMICS, SOCIOLOGY
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, COLLEGE OF SCIENCES
THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

VU TRAN

ANTHROPOLOGY
COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

ALEXIS WANSAC

POLITICAL SCIENCE, HISTORY
COLLEGE OF SCIENCES, COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

LINH ANH CAT

Linh Anh is earning a double degree in biology and interdisciplinary studies (environmental studies) and is a member of The Burnett Honors College. She helped develop the Experience for Education and the Environment (E-3) Program to assist high school students to think critically about sustainability. To share her passion for the environment with her peers, she served as an Alternative Break Program site leader for three years and a trip leader for the Recreation and Wellness Center's Outdoor Adventure Program for two years. She studied impacts of invasive species on Florida's ecosystems and the benefits of mycorrhizae in improving biofuel production through the National Science Foundation's Research for Undergraduates Program. She shared her enthusiasm for research through outreach with the Student Undergraduate Research Council. She traveled to St. Kitts and Nevis with the President's Scholars Program and helped build a shadehouse to promote community interest in research and sustainability.



Linh Anh Cat
Orlando, Florida

Linh Anh's UCF Experience:

Through research, volunteer trips, outdoor education and study abroad, my education at UCF has extended far beyond the classroom and has provided me the skills to become an engaged, passionate citizen ready to tackle environmental issues. I learned about science and policy in the classroom in Orlando, on a beach in the Caribbean, in the forested mountains of Tennessee, and in the quiet red rocky deserts of Utah. This would not have been possible without the support of my professors, mentors and UCF programs. While traveling, I found that my education at UCF prepared me to engage with citizens all over the world. At UCF, I feel like I am part of a close-knit community as it is hard for me to walk around without seeing familiar faces despite our large campus. UCF has helped me explore beyond the people and ecosystems I call home.

Future Plans:

I plan to pursue a Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology while promoting community involvement and interest in environmental issues, science and research.



Amy Crawford
Oviedo, Florida

Future Plans:

Following graduation, I hope to receive a Fulbright English Language Teaching Assistantship to Ecuador. I also plan to pursue graduate school and enter into a master's program in international education and public diplomacy. My ultimate goal is to work within public affairs, developing and supporting international cultural and educational initiatives.

AMY CRAWFORD

Amy is pursuing a double major in English and international relations with a minor in Spanish and certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. She is a LEAD Scholar, Provost Scholar, and an active member of The Burnett Honors College. Her academic and co-curricular accomplishments include serving as a President's Scholar in St. Kitts and Nevis, LEAD Scholar student assistant and peer advisor in the Office of Prestigious Awards, secretary for the Baptist Collegiate Ministries, peer mentor for the Provost Scholars Program, English conversation partner at the UCF Center for Multilingual Multicultural Studies, and participant in the UCF Summer Research Academy. Driven by her passion for Christ and her love for learning, she serves within her local church and volunteers with youth and education programs. This fall, she taught English in a rural elementary and middle school in Berlanga de Duero, Spain and conducted research on educational access among colegios rurales agrupados in Castilla y León. She is currently serving as a Department of State intern in Consular Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Lima, Peru and is researching returns on education in Peru's labor market.

Amy's UCF Experience:

From service learning to study abroad, UCF has provided me with opportunities to lead, serve, learn, explore and succeed. I learned to expand my horizons and view the world as both my classroom and my community. Within my first year at UCF, I received two opportunities which continue to impact my academic endeavors and career ambitions: the LEAD Scholars' Assistantship and the President's Scholars Program. These experiences sparked my dedication to international service learning and motivated me to pursue global-sized dreams. Inspired by The Burnett Honors College's and LEAD Scholars' emphasis on global citizenship, I strive to impact UCF's leadership, scholarship, and service communities in an international setting. This year, UCF has sent me across continents to actualize my vision of promoting international partnerships and education initiatives. I am humbled by the support, and grateful for the faculty and staff who continue to inspire, encourage and invest in me. Whether advocating education in Orange County or working in the U.S. Foreign Service in Peru, it is my sincere desire and honor to apply the tenets of the UCF Creed on my campus and in my world.

SHEKINAH FASHAW

Shekinah is a junior pursuing an interdisciplinary studies degree, focusing on biomedical sciences and public affairs in Undergraduate Studies, and is working towards a minor in health services administration. Her academic achievements include the President's Honor Roll and dean's list every semester. As a McNair Scholar and a member of The Burnett Honors College, she is currently conducting independent health services research and looking forward to presenting at future conferences. She is also working as a research assistant in the College of Nursing through the LEAD Scholars Assistantship program. She is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Psi professional business fraternity, as well as the President's Leadership Council. As a founding member of two student organizations, she values servant leadership and creating opportunities for others. She served in Student Government Association during her entire academic career; most currently, as the director of Student Affairs and as the Outreach chair on the Golden Rule Review Committee. Her passion for continuously investing in others is what drives her. She served as a student representative on the Capital Improvement Trust Fund Fee Committee as well as the Student Activities Committee leader for SDES PROGRESS initiative.



Shekinah Fashaw
Delray Beach, Florida

Shekinah's UCF Experience:

From the moment I became a Knight, I have been greeted with open doors and opportunities throughout my entire time. My experiences have allowed me to develop my true passions, to take on challenges, and to make a difference in the environment around me. One of my proudest and most memorable leadership experiences was founder of the Public Health Student Association. This organization not only exposes students to health care concerns, but it also helps students to prepare for graduate school admission. Becoming the first UCF Pre-McNair Scholar was an unforgettable honor and experience that allowed me to create a path for others like myself to achieve academic excellence. I am truly proud and grateful to wear black and gold, and I have done my absolute best to give back to the community that has given so much to me. Getting involved on day one gave me lifelong mentors and resources. My UCF experience has prepared me for my road ahead. I now know what it means to seize opportunities, overcome challenges and exercise creativity.

Future Plans:

After the attainment of my Ph.D. in the field of Public Health, it is my goal to serve as an advocate for minority and vulnerable populations through scholarly research and collaboration with government agencies.



Cynthia Florentino
Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic

Future Plans:

Following graduation, I plan to earn a graduate degree in international development and work to promote the human right to education in the developing world as a Foreign Service officer.

CYNTHIA FLORENTINO

Cynthia is pursuing a political science degree with a focus on international relations in the College of Sciences, as well as a minor in diplomacy. She is currently chair for the President's Leadership Council and director of Governmental Affairs for the Student Government Association. As a McNair Scholar, she is involved in research and is currently working on her first publication. She has presented around the nation and in countries like Canada and Taiwan. She served on the executive board of the Multicultural Student Center as literacy director and leadership committee coordinator. She self-funded her education through scholarships from organizations such as the Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Fund of Metro Orlando and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. Her honors include the Latinas Learning to Lead program, a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship at the University of California, Irvine and the President's Volunteer Service Award. As community affairs specialist for the Student Government Association during her sophomore year, she created a Day at City Hall, an initiative geared towards teaching students about their city government. Her community service includes Knight-Thon, American Heart Association's Heart Walk, and an Alternative Spring Break participant in Atlanta, raising awareness about HIV and AIDS.

Cynthia's UCF Experience:

When I first arrived at UCF, I had only lived in the United States for a little over a year. While still adjusting to my new life, UCF opened doors and allowed me to explore my abilities and potential. My ideas were always embraced, and I was able to create a Day at City Hall, a large scale event that showcased my leadership abilities. As a member of the McNair Scholars Program, I have been able to view the world of academia and research while having a support system that guides and encourages me. I once read an ad that stated: "Universities don't make reputations, people do." This is exactly what I have found here at UCF, a group of people who have selflessly given their time and resources to help me become the individual and leader that I am today. When I look back, I am glad that four years ago I made the decision to attend a university that believed in me, and my dignity as a student deserving a quality education.

JESSICA GOTTSLEBEN

Jessica is a senior double major in radio–television broadcast journalism and political science pre-law, with a certificate in Leadership Studies in The Burnett Honors College. She served as the student director of Knightcast for the last two years. She hosted multiple radio shows, and developed her broadcasting career through events with the cast of Harry Potter, Adam West, and more. She served on the University Fee Committee assessing fees paid by students. Previously, she served as an election commissioner for the Student Government Association, vice president of Honors Congress, and treasurer of Equal. She was a LEAD Scholar and involved in multiple honor societies and advisory boards. She is a Pet Rescue by Judy volunteer, site leader for Knights Give Back, member of the Senior Giving Campaign, Knight-Thon moraler, Honors peer ambassador, and Knight Camp counselor. She traveled to St. Kitts and Nevis as a President's Scholar in 2012. She returned in 2013 as a U.N. delegate for the UNESCO Environmental Policy Formulation and Planning Conference to present her research on climate change adaptation strategies and agribusiness curriculum. She was chosen as the “face of women” at UCF and the national Elect Her program representative for last year's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. She was awarded the Pride Undergraduate Student Leadership Award, the Walter Komanski Scholarship, X-Treme Leadership Scholarship, Allyn M. Stearman Scholar, and recognized by Who's Who.



Jessica Gottsleben
North Lauderdale, Florida

Future Plans:

I plan to attend graduate school or law school, while pursuing journalistic and media outlets. I just want to make a difference in the world, and create a sustainable and accepting future for all.

Jessica's UCF Experience:

UCF has made me the woman I am today, a strong Knight overflowing with pride and resources to change the world. UCF is my home, filled with opportunities to lead and inspire others, expand my mind as a scholar, and develop my character as an individual. Choosing to be Knighted, I recognized that UCF stood for the opportunity to strengthen my leadership and to “reach for the stars.” With funding and support from President John C. Hitt and campus groups, I have traveled the world, developed my broadcasting career, and served my community on a large scale. UCF gave me a chance to attend college and break barriers. During my first week of classes, the university presented me with countless ways to get involved and learn. The UCF Creed exemplifies how our institution develops individuals who graduate ready to make a difference.

KAYE-ALESE GREEN



Kaye-Alese Green
Jacksonville, Florida

Future Plans:

I plan to complete my Master's in Applied Learning and Instruction at UCF, and then continue to pursue my dream of becoming a physician. I hope to become a pediatric psychiatrist and help youth reach their potential.

Kaye-Alese is a College of Sciences graduate in which she completed a B.S. in Psychology, December 2013. She is a member of The Burnett Honors College. Currently, she is enrolled in the College of Education and Human Performance, pursuing her Master's in Applied Learning and Instruction. She completed her major requirements in three and a half years while remaining on the dean's list. She was involved in numerous activities including co-captain of the women's volleyball team, LEAD Scholar, social chair for the President's Leadership Council, student speaker at the freshman orientation programs, and member of the Student-Athlete Leadership Institute. She enjoyed giving back to the community as a member of the Burnett Community Scholar program, served in a leadership role in her local church, co-leading the children's ministry. She participated in Achieve a College Education Day with The Burnett Honors College, Knight-Thon, Relay for Life, and Knight's Without Borders program working at an orphanage in Panama.

Kaye-Alese's UCF Experience:

UCF and Orlando have become the launch pad for the rest of my life. During my time at UCF, I learned how to be resilient, developed my style of leadership, and defined characteristics of excellence as well as the importance of building relationships. A key aspect of my experience was the opportunity afforded to me to pursue my dreams. I arrived as an overwhelmed freshman and I completed my undergraduate degree as a confident woman. I was able accomplish every goal I set for myself. I gained an unparalleled education, recognized as an all-conference and all-academic volleyball player, conducted research, learned to lead, and met some of the most phenomenal people. Through my involvement in volleyball, LEAD Scholars, Honors, my church and PLC, I have gained so much valuable wisdom. These past four years have reshaped how I see the world. The university has equipped me to pursue my passion of helping underprivileged children reach their potential. UCF truly stands for opportunity and I will forever be a UCF Knight!

CATHERINE GUTIERREZ

Catherine is a fourth year student with a double major in molecular biology and microbiology and biotechnology in the College of Medicine. She participated in research at the NIH Center for Metabolic and Liver Diseases at the University of Pennsylvania, at the Sanford Burnham Medical Research Institute, and with medical students from the UCF College of Medicine in the FIRE Program. Currently, she co-heads a research project investigating the correlation between blood lead levels and neurological disorders among children from underserved communities. Her interest in research and teaching led to her involvement in the PILOT Program at UCF, and she was a part of the UCF Pre-Medical Surgical Internship Program. She is a recipient of the 2012 Hispanic Heritage Scholarship and was on the President's Honor Roll and dean's list. She was involved in various community efforts including Shepherd's Hope, HOPE Helps, Give Kids The World and the American Red Cross. She has helped in the organization of a community event for children in Central Florida living with HIV and AIDS.



Catherine Gutierrez
Queens, New York

Catherine's UCF Experience:

I came to UCF four years ago armed with excitement, determination and a rough idea of what I hoped to accomplish. I expected to acquire knowledge, an excellent education, and the skills necessary to apply myself to a career in medicine. UCF, however, offered so much more: it provided a wealth of guidance, incredible resources that have not only funded my undergraduate career but also my research, and an understanding of the impact that we, as students, can have on our community. I redefined not only my interests and aspirations but also my capabilities and talents. I have had incredible opportunities as a student, peer, tutor and co-worker within the institution, and it is with great appreciation and gratitude that I now apply for graduation. UCF has imparted on me the skills, experiences, and opportunities necessary to make me an agent of change in the world, and I know that it will continue to produce passionate and influential leaders in the many years to come.

Future Plans:

It is with great excitement that I will begin attending medical school in August, and I truly look forward to being able to participate in offering care to those in need. I plan on continuing my research on biliary atresia at the University of Pennsylvania, and hope to pursue an MD/MPH joint degree program in the future.



LaShaunda Hayes
Pembroke Pines, Florida

Future Plans:

I plan to pursue a law degree and one day to practice as an entertainment attorney. My long-term career goal is to become a political analyst and be a voice for those who are oppressed and in need.

LaSHAUNDA HAYES

LaShaunda is pursuing a political science degree focusing on pre-law in the College of Sciences with a minor in writing and rhetoric. She is currently the chief of staff for the Student Government Association and the recruitment chair for the President's Leadership Council. She is the founding president of First Knights, a registered student organization geared towards the academic and professional development of first-generation college students. Her involvement on campus ranges from LEAD Scholar to Civic intern for the Honors and Educational Reach Out program. In 2011, she won the Service Learning award for her work at the Hope Helps volunteer program, where she aided homeless and low-income families. Her academic achievements include the President's Honor Roll and dean's list each semester. She is a member of several honor societies including Phi Kappa Phi, for students who are in the top seven percent of their class and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. She had the privilege of serving on the 2012 Royal Homecoming Court. She credits her success at UCF to the support of her family and faith.

LaShaunda's UCF Experience:

I am so thankful for the opportunities and experiences offered at UCF. Each year has challenged me in such a way that I ultimately became a better version of myself. Four years ago, I knew the meaning of the word "leader," but I had no idea what it entailed to be a servant leader. My UCF experience has allowed me to develop strong and diverse leadership skills while fostering a productive environment for my weaknesses. I had the privilege to intern for some of our most powerful legislators, volunteer in the Orlando community, and study abroad in Europe. As someone who values relationships, I am grateful for the diverse groups of people I have been fortunate enough to have met. As a first-generation college student, earning a bachelors degree from such an outstanding university will be a proud moment for me. I know I could not have done it without the support of my immediate and my UCF family. In summary, I would say: aspire, inspire and achieve, but always be comfortable being you.

AMELIA KLUG

Amelia is a public administration major in the College of Health and Public Affairs with minors in education and non-profit management. She is a member of The Burnett Honors College and alumni of the LEAD Scholars program. She is the UCF campus campaign coordinator for Teach For America and served as the Education and Literacy director for Volunteer UCF for two years. Passionate about teaching college students about education inequality, she developed a life-size education awareness board game that has spread to other leading universities. She is a proud sister of Kappa Kappa Gamma and served in various roles on her Chapter Council. She was recently chosen to participate in the Alternative Break Program's trip to Quetzaltenango, Guatemala with hopes of gaining a global perspective on poverty and its effects on education. She serves as a Knight-Thon moraler and spends her summers interning for Give Kids The World Village to grant magical vacations for children and families suffering from life-threatening illnesses. A recipient of the President's Volunteer Service Award, she has completed over 800 service hours.



Amelia Klug
Gulf Breeze, Florida

Amelia's UCF Experience:

The first time I visited UCF as a high school senior, I had an overwhelming feeling in my heart that this was the university for me. Although I had such an immediate connection to this campus, I certainly never predicted the countless opportunities for growth that UCF would present to me throughout my college career. From implementing Volunteer UCF events to receiving the platform to inspire student leaders to apply for Teach For America, I am incredibly blessed with the opportunity to share the vision of education equality with others. The academic challenge I received from The Burnett Honors College and the service-learning opportunities I experienced through the Alternative Break Program, transformed me into an active-minded citizen with the foundation I need for future achievements. As a future elementary school administrator, I look forward to creating an environment for students that give them as many opportunities to "reach for the stars" as UCF has given to me. This campus molded me into the servant leader that I am, and no matter where life takes me, the University of Central Florida will always be a piece of my heart.

Future Plans:

I plan on beginning a teaching career as a 2015 Teach For America Corps member and later pursuing a future in school administration and education policy.

CHARLENE KORMONDY



Charlene Kormondy
Tallahassee, Florida

Future Plans:

In the future, I would like to work for a non-profit environmental organization, and ultimately have a career creating environmental policy.

Charlene is a senior in an interdisciplinary studies major (environmental studies) in Undergraduate Studies with a concentration in values, planning and policy. She is a member of The Burnett Honors College and the President's Leadership Council. She works at The Burnett Honors College, where she serves as a point of contact for prospective students and their families. She conducts research in the Political Ecology Lab and served for a year on the Unifying Theme team. Her volunteer work includes teaching children about college through the AVID program, engaging in gardening and clean-up projects in the Orlando area through the Green Honors Educational Reach Out program, participating in Alternative Spring Break at the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge, and interning with the Sierra Club. She worked on a sustainable agriculture project in the Caribbean Islands of St. Kitts and Nevis through the 2012 President's Scholars Study Abroad program. She returned a year later to speak about the project at the UNESCO Conference on Environmental Formulation and Planning to advocate for continuing investment in sustainable agriculture.

Charlene's UCF Experience:

Attending UCF was the best decision I could have ever made. The university provided opportunities that helped me develop both personally and academically. One of the greatest opportunities that I was given was to study abroad as a President's Scholar in St. Kitts and Nevis. As a result, I understand the power of international partnerships to create strong bonds between countries and strengthen vulnerable communities around the world. My participation in research and environmental projects in local communities developed my own sense of academic curiosity and encouraged me to make my mark on the world. The sound, interdisciplinary education I received from UCF and the opportunities to travel abroad provided me with the knowledge base and experiences that made me a strong advocate for the environment. The support and inspiration that I received from other students, faculty, and staff have pushed me to "reach for the stars." I will forever be proud to be a UCF Knight.

AMELIA MACKAREY

Amelia is a double major in molecular and microbiology in the College of Medicine and English literature in the College of Arts and Humanities. She is a member of The Burnett Honors College and an alumna of the LEAD Scholars program. She participates in the Honors in the Major program and will defend her thesis, "Representation and Imagination of the Holocaust in Young Adult Literature." She is on the President's Honor Roll and dean's list, a recipient of the Student Service Showcase Recognition of Excellence in Interdisciplinary Studies Scholarship Award, and a member of the National Society of Leadership and Service. She served as a National Merit Student ambassador in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, and a team leader and student secretary in The Burnett Honors College. Because of her volunteer work at Orlando Regional Medical Center and Shepherd's Hope Clinic, she now serves as the Health and Wellness Civic intern for the Honors Educational Reach Out program. She is an Achieve a College Education Day team captain, a BHC Greater Orlando Heart Walk captain, and a member of the LEAD Student Alumni Board. She served as an American Cancer Society advocate for the "Look Good, Feel Better" program while volunteering at Relay for Life. She is a lector for the Catholic Campus Ministry and a contributing writer for the Central Florida Future. Throughout her time at UCF, she volunteered with various service organizations including Pet Rescue by Judy, Knights Helping Knights Pantry, AVID, Junior Achievement, Knights Give Back and Green HEROs.

Amelia's UCF Experience:

I am from a small, tightly-woven, family-oriented community of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and my transition to the second largest university in the nation was a huge leap. I soon found myself at home because UCF truly does stand for opportunity to: make new friends from every walk of life, study subjects I love while challenging myself with difficult classes, earn leadership roles in my favorite activities, follow and support the leadership of others, serve and give back to this wonderful community that has given so much to me, and ultimately, be a member of the Knight family whose love, support, and compassion inspires me every day. I look forward to representing this university and the lessons that I've learned here in every aspect for the rest of my life.



Amelia Mackarey
Scranton, Pennsylvania

Future Plans:

This summer, I hope to pursue an internship at the National Holocaust Museum where I will attempt to further explore my Honors in the Major research. Next year, I hope to attend medical school so that, through health care, I can continue to share my passion for education and service.



Julien Meyer
Orangeburg, New York

Future Plans:

I plan to pursue an MBA in Finance at Rollins College in order to gain the skills and knowledge that I need to grow my business. In addition, I will continue to run my business out of the UCF Business Incubation and plan to enroll in Chinese language classes at UCF as well as pursue a certificate in entrepreneurship from UCF.

JULIEN MEYER

Julien is a hospitality management and event management dual major at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management as well as the CEO and founder of college TKTS LLC. He is on the dean's list every semester. He is a Pegasus Gold Scholarship recipient, LEAD Scholars graduate, and served on Student Government Association boards as well as Knightcast Radio. He was a member of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association and the National Association of Catering Executives. He was a mentor for the Rosen Peer Outreach Mentoring Program. His community service included Volunteer UCF, Fruit of the Vine Ministries and LEAD Scholars Service Project. In addition, he offered free business coaching to UCF students and served as a mentor for underprivileged boys in New York City. During his sophomore year, he started his company which has grown from three employees to over 15, and has also acquired College Stack coupon books here on campus. He was featured in UCF Today, Small Business Owner Magazine, and Small Business Today along with other publications. His company is a member of the UCF Business Incubation program. His success enabled him to fund a UCF scholarship.

Julien's UCF Experience:

When I first came to UCF, I knew no one. Within my first few weeks of attending class, and with the help of the LEAD Scholars program, I quickly fell in love with the UCF community. During my time, I learned many skills, made friends, networked with career professionals and attended courses with great professors. In fact, they helped to shape me into the person that I am today, and I accredit my success, so far in life, to the UCF community. I thank God everyday that I have been blessed to attend this university, and I will always be proud to be a UCF Knight.

RANA RIAD

Rana is an industrial engineering major in the College of Engineering and Computer Science and a member of The Burnett Honors College. She is on the President's Honor Roll and dean's list and is involved on campus and in her community. She is the current vice chair of the President's Leadership Council and a member of College Leadership Florida Class XV. She is a LEAD Scholar alumnus and has served on the Student Body President's Advisory Council in Student Government Association. She is currently a member of the Institute of Industrial Engineers and two honor societies, Alpha Pi Mu and Phi Kappa Phi. She is currently serves as a systems engineer intern at Lockheed Martin and enjoys volunteering for the American Heart Association, Walt Disney World Marathon for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, and Achieve a College Education Day.



Rana Riad
Orlando, Florida

Rana's UCF Experience:

Growing up in Orlando, UCF has been part of my life since I was a little girl and I anticipated the day where I could finally become a Knight. UCF has given me a world of opportunities that I will cherish forever. The university helped shape me academically, personally and professionally into the person I am today. My engineering courses taught me the importance of working cohesively to creatively solve a complex problem, and gave me the ability to apply what I learned to many facets of my life. This newly cultivated passion allowed me to succeed as a leader to children and peers alike. Through my extracurricular involvement, I was able to interact with children of all ages through ACE day as well as practice servant leadership through the President's Leadership Council. I learned how important it is to shine through confidence and always practice humility. I was blessed with wonderful mentors who challenged me and were always willing to guide me through times of hardship. UCF allowed me to turn my dreams into a reality, and gave me the tools to continue to do so wherever life may take me. I share my love of the university with everyone who crosses my path, and it is my hope, that I have inspired others to truly encompass what it means to be a Knight. With the help of God, I am forever grateful for my alma mater.

Future Plans:

I will begin a graduate degree in industrial engineering with an ultimate goal of becoming a professor. I hope to inspire other students to fulfill their dreams and "reach for the stars."



Nicholas Simons
Harrington Park, New Jersey

Future Plans:

After graduation, I will be living a dream pursuing my J.D. at the George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C., where I will continue doing social justice work.

NICHOLAS SIMONS

Nicholas is pursuing dual majors in economics and sociology with the College of Business Administration and the College of Sciences, with a minor in history. He was on the President's Honor Roll and dean's list throughout his time at UCF, and is a member of The Burnett Honors College. His academic research included: gender attitudes in Greek Life and transgender students in online communities. He is a proud founder of Delta Lambda Phi social fraternity, where he served as chapter president and currently serves on the international board of directors. He represented the College of Business Administration in the Student Senate, where he served as chair of the Legislative, Judicial, and Rules Committee. He was a research assistant at the Institute for Economic Competitiveness and currently works at Blackstone Prep as an assistant LSAT instructor and a tutor. He worked in LGBTQ Services as student director of the OUTreach Advocacy Board and led the creation of Pride Coalition, an agency of Student Government Association, which he continues to lead as student director.

Nicholas' UCF Experience:

In the past few years, both UCF and I have undergone incredible transformations together. When I arrived in fall 2010, the only entity serving lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, etc. students like myself was the student organization Equal, but a "sea" of change was just beginning. As UCF started growing and working toward diversity and inclusion for LGBTQ+ people, my own journey became parallel. The inspiration I felt set the course for my time at the university and my life after. As a freshman, I immediately became involved, motivated by a passion for social justice. I am proud to have a part in the transformations that occurred. The unfathomable opportunities and experiences here have challenged me with significant personal growth. I found my voice, became the leader I am today, and leave a legacy on campus. UCF stands for opportunity. The lesson I carry with me is that social justice means equality of opportunity. My experiences at UCF will allow me to continue this work by providing the foundation for my entire life. For that, I am forever grateful.

VU TRAN

Vu is an anthropology major in the College of Sciences with research interests in bioarchaeology and mortuary archaeology. Her academic achievements at UCF include earning the President's Honor Roll and dean's list every semester as well as membership in three honor societies, and winning several scholarships. As a Ronald E. McNair Scholar, she designed and conducted original research projects. She works as a teaching assistant for the Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy lab where she instructs students in animal dissections. In 2013, she received a National Science Foundation award to participate in an archaeological excavation in Cyprus. In addition to her dedication to research and scholarship, she serves on the President's Leadership Council and as the Volunteer UCF board director for Animal Awareness. She served as the fund raising coordinator for the undergraduate anthropology club, campus ambassador for Undergraduate Admissions, member of the Undergraduate Studies Student Advisory Committee, and former LEAD Scholars peer mentor. Upon graduating from LEAD, she founded and previously directed the LEAD Student Alumni Council. From her experiences at UCF, she strongly believes in giving back to others through civic engagement and inspiring others to make a difference. Her community service spans from volunteering at local animal shelters to raising awareness for different social issues.

Vu's UCF Experience:

From the moment I stepped foot on UCF, I was granted the opportunity of a lifetime. I still can't believe that I accomplished so many great academic and personal feats as a first-generation student, from conducting independent research with a professor, traveling abroad, to serving on the President's Leadership Council. My campus and community involvement transformed me into the servant leader that I am today. I am blessed to have made so many wonderful friends along the way. I thank the mentors who supported me through every endeavor and always encouraged me to "reach for the stars." As I close this chapter of my undergraduate studies, I hope that I have inspired other students to pursue their dreams and make a difference in someone else's life. I am proud to say that UCF was where I left my legacy as a Ronald E. McNair Scholar and as a servant leader.



Vu Tran
Orlando, Florida

Future Plans:

I will attend graduate school to obtain a master's degree and eventually a doctorate in anthropology. After which, I plan to pursue a career in academia where I will be able to teach students, conduct research, and travel to excavations during the summer field seasons.



Alexis Wansac
West Palm Beach, Florida

Future Plans:

After graduation, I plan to attend law school. I hope to pursue a career in civil rights litigation.

ALEXIS WANSAC

Alexis is a member of The Burnett Honors College, a LEAD Scholars alum, and is a dual degree-seeking student, majoring in political science in the College of Sciences and history in the College of Arts and Humanities. She is pursuing an economics minor. Throughout her time at the university, she has been extensively involved in the Honors Program, serving as a two-time peer ambassador for Honors Orientations and as a two-time Honors team leader, where she helped coordinate Orange County's AVID program. She participated in Honors in the Major, focusing her thesis on the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. She now serves as president and captain of the Trial Team, where she is the proud host of the 2014 National Tournament at the Orange County Courthouse. She has been involved with Student Government Association for the entirety of her UCF career, currently as the attorney general. She is the research chair for the Golden Rule Review Committee. She served twice as a team captain for UCF's Achieve a College Education Day, and spent the majority of her volunteer experiences working with children in local Orlando schools.

Alexis' UCF Experience:

As a first-generation college student, I have discovered that UCF stands for opportunity in ways that I never imagined. Coming to UCF in August 2010, I did not initially realize how easy it would be to find my "home" at such a large university. After being involved for only a short time, however, that notion changed. Here, I have made friendships and connections that will last for the rest of my life. I worked with professors who helped guide my academic interests, who helped shape my intellectual journey, and taught me to appreciate scholarly pursuits. I learned how to apply classroom skills and teachings to volunteer work in the community. At every point throughout my academic journey, I constantly have been challenged to try harder and to do better – not only for myself, but also for others. This drive to succeed is something that I will carry with me for the rest of my life and is something that has prepared me for the future.

Prior Recipients

CLASS OF 2013

Andrew Albaugh
Rachel Brill
Kaitlyn Chana
Raven Cokley
William Furiosi
Eddiedelso Garcia
Robert Gottfried
Valerie Greco
Ashley Jaramillo
Kayli Keough
Chelsey Lauzon
Heardley Murdoch
Mary-Kate Murphy
Joseph Myszkowski
Mitchell Popovetsky
Jacqueline Rodriguez
Sean Smith
Calvin Stewart
Cortez Whatley

CLASS OF 2012

Sarina Amin
Kelvin Ang
Jennifer Black
Adam Brock
Kelly Cox
Anna Eskamani
Ida Eskamani
Brandy Espinosa
Andrea-Li Medina Flores
Christopher Frye
Jamie Gregor
Anya Kroytor
Amanda Lager
Matthew McCann
Zainab Nasser
Lee Noto
Alana Persaud
Yisell Rodriguez
Amber Scheurer
Leslie Shillington
Marla Spector
Kevin Stevenson
Adam Straka
Colton Tapoler
Tatiana Viecco

CLASS OF 2011

Aaron Alva
Keristen Black
Melissa Blette
Jacqueline Boehme
Ashley Curry
Brennan Dobbins
Ashley Ewh
Adam Giery
Kumail Merchant
Michelle Messina
Anika Mirick
Jasmine Rosa
Stephen "Kyle" Schumacher
Kyle Simpson
Rachael Spangenberg
Gabrielle Swaby
Sylvia Torres-Thomas
Zachary Walker

CLASS OF 2010

Anthony Battaglia
Jennifer Bazemore
Natalia Marques da Silva
Amber Dukes
Brenna Egan
Shelly Frick
Timothy Harnden
Lisa Kipersztok
Stephanie Koffler
Andrea Long
Carla McKnight
Stephanie Neubert
Lauren Rehm
Patrick Stauffer
Sergio Tafur
Miguel Ubiles

CLASS OF 2009

Gregory Austin, Jr.
Gaston Blanchet
Tamara Chaplin
Katherine Ferstadt
Demetrius Frazier
Satyender Goel
Samantha Gil
Mustafa Gül
Ashley Jordan
Hye Jung Kim
Stephanie Morales
Michelle Murphy
Margaret Ann Shillingford
Ruth Strakosha
Thomas Blake VanBrunt, Jr.
Carissa Van Dalen

CLASS OF 2008

Ayoolabode "Ayo" Ajaja
Bryan Arnette
Lalita Booth
Kimberly Bryant-Davis
Tabatha Calabrese
Ashley Conyers
Tai Do
Samiullah Durrani
Scott Kirkman
Cassandra Korsvik
Maribeth Kuenzi
Brittany Moscato
Maria Pecoraro
Megan Policastro
Stephanie Kyla Tan

Prior Recipients continued

CLASS OF 2007

Rénee Bleczinski
Naomi Brownstein
Courtney Douglass
Christopher “Kit” Fuhrman
David Givens
Brandie Hollinger
Nicola Johnson
Cassandra Long
Meghan NeSmith
Ana Suarez
Evelyn Tonn
Rachel Wasserman
Zephyr Wilkins
Julie Zimmerman

CLASS OF 2006

Maria Noel Blanchet
Katherine Brown
Arianne Buchanan
Jennifer Curry
Morgan Cyphers
Sohang Gandhi
Jennifer Hartzler
Melissa Lanzone
Trenton Scott
Amy Schwartz
Kelly Simonz
Ravi Todi
Alison Valentine

CLASS OF 2005

Oluwaseun Aduloju
Vanessa Bowman
Venkata Sri Harsha Cherukumilli
Ericka Dunlap
Lindsey Eppleman
Vanja Grbic
Nicolette Hopson
Marianne Howe
Stacy McCord
Sandra Miles
Brian Monacelli
Lissa Stovall
Shreya Trivedi

CLASS OF 2004

Marshal Blessing
Andrei Boyarshinov
Anne Cecil
Laura Creegan
Haydee Cuevas
Helen Gelber
Barry Kudrowitz
Alexis Miseyko
Amanda Ramos
Charles Reuter
Lisa Wall
Gabriela Wolf

CLASS OF 2003

Jaecann Bollinger
Kimily Burgess
Bethany Ensor
Tyler Fisher
Yahaira Franceschini
Faraz Kureshi
Sunita Modani
Sarika Patel
Erika Phifer
Shakeba Thomas
Duc Tran
S. Anne-Marie Wolff

CLASS OF 2002

Gregory Auerbach
Scott Broadway
Alexcia Cox
Ti'eshia Daniels
Delia Goolsby
Carol Mancero
Peggy Moch
Wayne Nguyen
Sergey Polyakov
Sandra Schaal

CLASS OF 2001

Anna Berger
Jennifer Carroll
Carolyn Hopp
Seth Jonas
Sarah Kureshi
Christine Kurle
Sara Levinson
Eddie Ruiz
Jennifer White



THE UCF CREED

Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

INTEGRITY

I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.

SCHOLARSHIP

I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.

COMMUNITY

I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.

CREATIVITY

I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.

EXCELLENCE

I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA



Special Thanks

Student Development and Enrollment Services would like to thank members of the administration and faculty for nominating students, and the committee members listed below for undertaking the difficult task of selecting the outstanding UCF students receiving this distinguished honor.