Awards, Nominations and Recognitions

The School of Medicine is very pleased to recognize the recipients of more than 200 departmental, school, university, and national awards. Our graduate students have once again proven themselves to be outstanding!

1. 2024 Joshua E. Neimark Travel Award (AAAS Neimark-Holt Travel Award)
2. AAAS Towards Science without Walls E-poster Competition
3. Bio-Serv Travel Award
4. Cayman Chemicals Travel Award
5. Commonwealth of Virginia Cancer Research Conference
6. Dr. Herbert John Evans, Jr. Award
7. Dr. Smriti Bardhan Award of Excellence in Genetics Research
8. Dr. Smriti Bardhan Award of Excellence in Genetics Research Nomination
9. F30/F31 Doctoral Fellowship Workshop Panelist
10. Human and Molecular Genetics Department Travel Award
11. Human and Molecular Genetics Student Representative
12. ISCC-PEG Scholar 2022–2024
13. James L. Poland Award
14. Jan F. Chlebowski Memorial Travel Award
15. Lang Kucera Award
16. Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center Travel Scholarship
17. Metastasis Research Society Early Career Research Virtual Meeting Oral Presenter
18. Myotonic Dystrophy Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship
19. NIH Dissertation Research Award
20. NIH Diversity Supplement Award
21. NIH F30 Predoctoral Fellowship
22. NIH F31 Predoctoral Fellowship
23. NIH I.M.S.D-Ph.D. T32 Award
24. Physiology and Biophysics Department: Certificate of Recognition
25. Research Society of Alcohol Meeting: 2024 Naudia Chaudhri Rising Scholar Award
26. Research Society of Alcohol: 2023 Enoch Gordis Award Finalist
27. Robert W. Ramsey Award
28. School of Medicine BSDP Student Recruiter
29. School of Medicine Charles C. Clayton Award
30. School of Medicine Charles C. Clayton Award Nomination
31. School of Medicine Equity Scholarship
32. School of Medicine Orientation Discussion Panel Nomination
33. School of Medicine Orientation Discussion Panel Presenter
34. School of Medicine Panel Moderator: Boost Your Skills Workshop
35. School of Medicine Phi Kappa Phi Scholarship
36. School of Medicine Phi Kappa Phi Scholarship Nomination
37. School of Medicine Travel Award
38. School of Medicine TRIO Student Panel Nomination
39. Susan G Komen ASPIRE Grant Award
40. Travel Award for the 16th Annual Behavior, Biology, and Chemistry—Translational Research in Substance Use Disorders
41. VAAGC Student Research Award
42. VCU Distinguished Dissertation Award—Life Sciences Category
43. VCU Distinguished Dissertation Award Program Nomination—Life Sciences Category
44. VCU Graduate School Travel Grant
45. VCU Graduate Student Representative for the Teaching Excellence Awards Selection Committee
46. VCU Graduate Student Representative for the Teaching Excellence Awards Selection Committee, Alternate
47. VCU Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award—Life Sciences Category
48. VCU Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award—Non-traditional Thesis/Capstone Project Award Category
49. VCU Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society Membership Nomination
50. VCU Phi Kappa Phi Susan E. Kennedy Award School of Medicine Nomination
51. VCU Susan E. Kennedy Award
52. Walter Lawrence Research Retreat Participant
01 2024 Joshua E. Neimark Travel Award (AAAS Neimark-Holt Travel Award)
Ailen Garcia-Santillan
Ph.D., Human Genetics

02 AAAS Towards Science without Walls E-poster Competition On-going Finalist
Ailen Garcia-Santillan
Ph.D., Human Genetics

03 Bio-Serv Travel Award
Lauren Moncayo
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

04 Cayman Chemicals Travel Award
Lauren Moncayo
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

05 Commonwealth of Virginia Cancer Research Conference, Oral Presenter
Ailen Garcia-Santillan
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Commonwealth of Virginia Cancer Research Conference, Best Talk in Session
Julia Altman
Ph.D., Human Genetics

06 Dr. Herbert John Evans, Jr. Award
Emily Zboril
Ph.D., Biochemistry

07 Dr. Smriti Bardhan Award of Excellence in Genetics Research
Mallory Stephenson
Ph.D., Integrative Life Sciences

08 Dr. Smriti Bardhan Award of Excellence in Genetics Research Nomination
Holly Byers
Ph.D., Human Genetics/Genetic Counseling

Joseph Picone
Ph.D., Neuroscience

09 F30/F31 Doctoral Fellowship Workshop Panelist
Chatman Clark
M.D.-Ph.D., Biochemistry

Emma Gnatowski
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Sam Gottlieb
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Alaina Jaster
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Anne Skelton
M.D.-Ph.D., Physiology and Biophysics

Natalie Truby
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Augustus White
M.D.-Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research

10 Human and Molecular Genetics Department Travel Award
Nichole Alley
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Julia Altman
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Helen Anderson
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Journey Bly
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Elaine Conrad
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Maya Derhake
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Margaret Fergusson
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Elizabeth Gage
M.S., Genetic Counseling
10 Human and Molecular Genetics
Department Travel Award (continued)

Ailen Garcia-Santillan
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Alison Gaynor
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Julia Hartman
M.D.-Ph.D., Human Genetics

Rachel Hendricks
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Natalie Luffman
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Alexandra Marrero Quinones
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Shelby May
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Gufran Mohed
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Walker Rogers
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Madhurbain Singh
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Ashley Smith
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Carson Walker
Ph.D., Human Genetics

11 Human and Molecular Genetics Student Representative

Julia Altman
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Elaine Conrad
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Gillian Fanning
M.S., Human Genetics

Alison Gaynor
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Rachel Hendricks
M.S., Genetic Counseling

12 ISCC-PEG Scholar 2022–2024

Molly Felix
M.S., Genetic Counseling

13 James L. Poland Award

Virginia Villani
M.S., Physiology and Biophysics

14 Jan F. Chlebowski Memorial Travel Award

Lauren Moncayo
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

15 Lang Kucera Award

To be Announced
M.S., Genetic Counseling

16 Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center Travel Scholarship

Julia Altman
Ph.D., Human Genetics

17 Metastasis Research Society Early Career Research Virtual Meeting Oral Presenter

Aileen Garcia-Santillan
Ph.D., Human Genetics

18 Myotonic Dystrophy Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship

Alexandra Marrero Quinones
Ph.D., Human Genetics

19 NIH Dissertation Research Award

Hannah Robinson
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
20 NIH Diversity Supplement Award
Holly Byers
Ph.D., Human Genetics/Genetic Counseling

21 NIH F30 Predoctoral Fellowship
Jefferson Abaricia
M.D.-Ph.D., Biomedical Engineering
Chatman Clark
M.D.-Ph.D., Biochemistry
Hannah Shadowen
M.D.-Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research
Anne Skelton
M.D.-Ph.D., Physiology and Biophysics
August White
M.D.-Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research
Kyle Woisard
M.D.-Ph.D., Clinical and Translational Science

22 NIH F31 Predoctoral Fellowship
Maria Bent
Ph.D., Neuroscience
Emma Gnatowski
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
Samantha Gottlieb
Ph.D., Neuroscience
Kaitlyn Jackson
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology
Alaina Jaster
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
Kimberly Karin
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
Madison Marcus
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
Bryan McKiver
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
Joseph Picone
Ph.D., Neuroscience
Walker Rogers
Ph.D., Human Genetics

23 NIH I.M.S.D.-Ph.D. T32 Award
Jose Alvarez-Manilla Sanchez
Ph.D., Biochemistry
Amber Baldwin
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
Gavin Chambers
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology
Melissa Lewis
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
Alexandra Marrero Quinones
Ph.D., Human Genetics
Gabriella Silva
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

24 Physiology and Biophysics Department Certificate of Recognition
Ian Colello
M.S., Physiology and Biophysics

25 Research Society of Alcohol Meeting: 2024 Naudia Chaudhri Rising Scholar Award
Lauren Moncayo
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

26 Research Society of Alcohol: 2023 Enoch Gordis Award Finalist
Lauren Moncayo
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

27 Robert W. Ramsey Award
Anne Skelton
M.D.-Ph.D., Physiology and Biophysics
28 School of Medicine BSDP Student Recruiter

Julia Altman  
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Jason Burchett  
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Belle Buzzi  
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Holly Byers  
Ph.D., Human Genetics/Genetic Counseling

Gavin Chambers  
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Eva Davis  
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Saeed Farajzadeh Valilou  
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Kathryn Flinn  
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Ailen Garcia-Santillan  
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Elizabeth Geisler  
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Emma Gnatowski  
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Sam Gottlieb  
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Nira Hosseini  
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Diane Ingabire  
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Dana Kneisley  
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Mary Clark Lind  
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Alexandra Marrero Quinones  
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Samantha Mercer  
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Aidan Moylan  
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Vera Purcell  
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Sumit Saha  
Ph.D., Biochemistry

Gabriella Silva  
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Michelle Taylor  
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Natalie Truby  
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Carson Walker  
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Emily Zboril  
Ph.D., Biochemistry

29 School of Medicine Charles C. Clayton Award

Mateb Alghamwa  
Ph.D., Medical Physics

Helen Anderson  
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Kaitlyn Jackson  
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Jessica Maltman  
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Hannah Robinson  
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Madhurbain Singh  
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Emily Zboril  
Ph.D., Biochemistry

30 School of Medicine Charles C. Clayton Award Nomination

Virginia Villani  
M.S., Physiology and Biophysics

31 School of Medicine Equity Scholarship

Quinlyn Highsmith  
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Gufran Mohed  
M.S., Genetic Counseling
32 School of Medicine Orientation Discussion Panel Nomination
Saeed Farajzadeh Valilou
Ph.D., Human Genetics
Olivia Lowman
M.S., Anatomy and Neurobiology
Mark Pavlichenko
M.S., Anatomy and Neurobiology
Alissa Saverino
M.S., Human Genetics

33 School of Medicine Orientation Discussion Panel Presenter
Helen Anderson
M.S., Genetic Counseling
Sam Gottlieb
Ph.D., Neuroscience
Nicholas Koelsch
M.S., Microbiology and Immunology
Destiny Pryor
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology
Ashley Smith
M.S., Genetic Counseling

34 School of Medicine Panel Moderator: Boost Your Skills Workshop
Natalie Truby
Ph.D., Neuroscience

35 School of Medicine Phi Kappa Phi Scholarship
Natalie Truby
Ph.D., Neuroscience
Ashley Smith
M.S., Genetic Counseling

36 School of Medicine Phi Kappa Phi Scholarship Nomination
Mateb Alghamwa
Ph.D., Medical Physics

37 School of Medicine Travel Award
Sarah Alban
M.S., Genetic Counseling
Helen Anderson
M.S., Genetic Counseling
Gavin Chambers
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology
Sarah Collins
Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research
Nicholas Cramer
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology
Melanie Cruz
M.P.H., Master of Public Health
Edem Defor
Ph.D., Biostatistics
Farnese Murielle Edimo Motto
Ph.D., Social and Behavioral Science
Madelena Eifert
M.P.H., Master of Public Health
Molly Felix
M.S., Genetic Counseling
Destiny Flanagan
M.P.H., Master of Public Health
Kathryn Flinn
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology
Alison Gaynor
Ph.D., Human Genetics
Dargahi Abbasabad Ghader
Ph.D., Social and Behavioral Science
School of Medicine Travel Award (continued)

Emma Gnatowski
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Julia Hartman
M.D.-Ph.D., Human Genetics

Sara Herz
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Peter Hoang
M.S., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Khoa Huynh
Ph.D., Biostatistics

Diane Ingabire
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Kiatlyn Jackson
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Dawn Jessup
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

R. Kijoon Kim
M.D.-Ph.D., Neuroscience

Jacqueline Knight Wilt
Ph.D., Social and Behavioral Science

Heather Liffert
M.P.H., Master of Public Health

Mary Clark Lind
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Mahmoud Manouchehri Amoli
Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research

Madison Marcus
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Lauren Moncayo
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Tess Murphy
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Asmaa Namoos
Ph.D., Social and Behavioral Science

Paulette Omeaku
Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research

Oyintoun-Emi Ozobokeme
Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research

Briona Phillips
Ph.D., Social and Behavioral Science

Joseph Picone
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Sonia Riaz
Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research

Kendall Rodier
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Walker Rogers
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Rachel Schaff
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Laura Schuetz
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Anabeel Sen
Ph.D., Epidemiology

Sadia Shah
Ph.D., Social and Behavioral Science

Guleer Shahab
Ph.D., Healthcare Policy and Research

Dongho Shin
Ph.D., Biostatistics

Thomas Siff
M.D.-Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Gabriella Silva
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Scott Silvey
Ph.D., Biostatistics

Madhurbain Singh
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Anne Skelton
M.D.-Ph.D., Physiology and Biophysics

Ashley Smith
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Fariha Tariq
Ph.D., Social and Behavioral Science

Namrata Tiwari
Ph.D., Neuroscience

Natalie Truby
Ph.D., Neuroscience
Grayson Way
Ph.D., Clinical and Translational Science

Jordana Weiss
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Jonathan Wells
Ph.D., Epidemiology

Courtlyn Witte
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Emily Zboril
Ph.D., Biochemistry

38 School of Medicine TRIO Student Panel Nomination

Holly Byers
Ph.D., Human Genetics

Alexandra Gonsiewski
Ph.D., Biochemistry

Rachel Hendricks
M.S., Genetic Counseling

Annie Hinson
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Justin Kidd
Ph.D., Physiology and Biophysics

Zachary Kiernan
Ph.D., Physiology and Biophysics

Dana Kneisley
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Sachin Kumar Kempelingaiah
M.S., Biochemistry

Usha Mahawar
Ph.D., Biochemistry

Bryan McKiver
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

Victoria Rubalsky
M.S., Physiology and Biophysics

Sumit Saha
Ph.D., Biochemistry

Anne Skelton
M.D.-Ph.D., Physiology and Biophysics

Virginia Villani
M.S., Physiology and Biophysics

39 Susan G Komen ASPIRE Grant Award
To be Announced
Ph.D., Human Genetics

40 Travel Award for the 16th Annual Behavior, Biology, and Chemistry—Translational Research in Substance Use Disorders
Amber Baldwin
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology
Samuel Marsh
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

41 VAAGC Student Research Award
Helen Anderson
M.S., Genetic Counseling

42 VCU Distinguished Dissertation Award—Life Sciences Category
Wendemi Sawadogo
Ph.D., Epidemiology

43 VCU Distinguished Dissertation Award Program Nominee—Life Sciences Category
Anuj Tharakan
M.D.-Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

44 VCU Graduate School Travel Grant
Julia Altman
Ph.D., Human Genetics
Lauren Moncayo
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

45 VCU Graduate Student Representative for the Teaching Excellence Awards Selection Committee
Emily Zboril
Ph.D., Biochemistry

46 VCU Graduate Student Representative for the Teaching Excellence Awards Selection Committee Alternate
Natalie Truby
Ph.D., Neuroscience
VCU Outstanding Master's Thesis Award—Life Sciences Category
Ahmed Elshazly
M.S., Pharmacology and Toxicology

VCU Outstanding Master's Thesis Award—Non-traditional Thesis/Capstone Project Award Category
Keegan McMenamin
M.P.H., Master of Public Health

VCU Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society Membership Nomination
Helen Anderson
M.S., Genetic Counseling
Belle Buzzi
Ph.D., Neuroscience
Gavin Chambers
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology
Mallory Cunningham
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology
Suman Gautam
Ph.D., Medical Physics
Mary Clark Lind
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

VCU Phi Kappa Phi Susan E. Kennedy Award School of Medicine Nomination
Lauren Moncayo
Ph.D., Pharmacology and Toxicology

VCU Susan E. Kennedy Award
Annie Hinson
Ph.D., Microbiology and Immunology

Walter Lawrence Research Retreat Participant
Ailen Garcia-Santillan
Ph.D., Human Genetics
School of Medicine Advanced Degree Graduates

The School of Medicine congratulates all students that earned doctoral degrees, master’s degrees and graduate certificates in 2023-2024. It has been our honor to be involved in their training and we are extremely proud of their accomplishments!

**Addiction Studies**
- Martin Agwogie, M.S.
- Darren Ball, M.S.
- Janelle Dalip, Certificate-Advanced
- Fernanda De Conto, Certificate-Intermediate
- Deborah Evasick, Certificate-Advanced
- Louise Freeman, M.S.
- Teresa Grund, M.S.
- Jackson Lane, M.S.
- Yue Chong Lee, M.S.
- Bonny McKinna, Certificate-Advanced
- Emily Olszewski, M.S.

**Anatomy and Neurobiology**
- Sarah Baig, M.S.
- Julie Kraft, M.S.
- Peter Lamothe, M.S.
- Olivia Lowman, M.S.

**Biochemistry**
- Gene Chatman Clark, M.D.-Ph.D.
- Souad Hatmi, M.S.
- Sachin Kumar Kempelingaiah, M.S.
- Usha Mahawar, Ph.D.
Clinical Genetics
Delaney Berthault, Certificate
Sydney Dudley, Certificate
Jensen Goulette, Certificate
Morgan Talbert, Certificate
Alanna Varca Gentile, Certificate
Bailey Willoughby, Certificate

Genetic Counseling
Sarah Alban, M.S.
Helen Anderson, M.S.
Molly Felix, M.S.
Quinlyn Highsmith, M.S.
Tess Murphy, M.S.
Kendall Rodier, M.S.
Rachel Schaff, M.S.
Laura Schuetz, M.S.
Ashley Smith, M.S.
Jordana Weiss, M.S.
Courtlyn Witte, M.S.

Human Genetics
Hannah Gatley, M.S.
Maryam Jamil, Ph.D.
Marina Provenzano, M.S.
Alissa Saverino, M.S.
Mimansha Shah, M.S.
Noah Berley, M.S.

Medical Physics
Rishabh Kapoor, Ph.D.
Larousse Khosravi Khorashad, Certificate
Kijun Park, Certificate
Srinidhi Rajagopalan, M.S.
Nicholas Wilson, M.S.

Microbiology and Immunology
Jasmine Benbei, M.S.
Creighton Friend, Ph.D.
Nathaniel O'Bier, Ph.D.
Kailyn Turcios-Gonzalez, M.S.

Neuroscience
Martina Hernandez, Ph.D.
Namrata Tiwari, Ph.D.

Pharmacology and Toxicology
Edward Choi, M.S.
Katherine Contreras, M.S.
Caroline Flagler, M.S.
Rosamond Goodson, Ph.D.
Alaina Jaster, Ph.D.
Dawn Jessup, Ph.D.
Kimberly Karin, Ph.D.
Bryan McKiver, Ph.D.
Hannah Robinson, Ph.D.
Justin Silverman, M.S.
Madison Simpson, Ph.D.
Physiology and Biophysics
George Miller, M.S.
Taylor Roy, Ph.D.

M.D.–Ph.D. Partner Colleges and Schools
Kara Dods, M.D.-Ph.D. (Department of Chemical Biology)
Christian Fontan, M.D.-Ph.D. (School of Dentistry)

Pre-Medical Graduate Health Sciences
Sami Ali, Certificate
Jay Asawla, Certificate
Christy Bouhaidar, Certificate
Ella Callahan, Certificate
Amber Clayton, Certificate
Rachel Dillon, Certificate
Nick Gonzales, Certificate
Sara Greene, Certificate
Peter Hoang, Certificate
Gabriela Leon, Certificate
Alana Lewis, Certificate
Rebecca Mathew, Certificate
Pranav Murthy, Certificate
Dezirae Partin, Certificate
Khushbu Patel, Certificate
Anh-Minh Phung, Certificate
Brooks Pollard, Certificate
Kelsey Quinn, Certificate
Safiyah Quraishi, Certificate
Margaret Ren, Certificate
Mikaela Richardson, Certificate
Hanna Terrill, Certificate
Cole Tilton, Certificate
Andrew Tran, Certificate
Alexa Vergara, Certificate