CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

Doctoral Commencement Ceremony

DECEMBER 17, 2025

Doctoral Commencement Ceremony

Wednesday, December 17, 2025
3:00 p.m.
Littlejohn Coliseum
Clemson, South Carolina

Order of Ceremonies

Processional
Stage Party

National Anthem
(Please stand as you are able)

Opening of Ceremony
University Marshal

Welcome and Introductions
John Lopes
Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Graduate Address
Stephanie Tracey
Teaching and Learning

Remarks
John Lopes
Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School
and
Robert H. Jones
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Conferring of Degrees
President James P. Clements

Alma Mater
(See last page for lyrics;
please stand as you are able and remain standing for the recessional of the stage party)

Board of Trustees

Kim A. Wilkerson, Chair ..... Cayce, SC
John N. McCarter, Jr., Vice Chair ..... Columbia, SC
David E. Dukes ..... Columbia, SC
Nikki R. Haley ..... John's Island, SC
Ronald D. Lee ..... Aiken, SC
Louis B. Lynn ..... Columbia, SC
Patricia H. McAbee ..... Greenville, SC
E. Smyth McKissick, III ..... Greenville, SC
Robert L. Peeler ..... Lexington, SC
Cheri M. Phyfer ..... Bay Village, OH
Mark S. Richardson ..... Charleston, SC
William C. Smith, Jr. ..... Columbia, SC
Joseph D. Swann ..... Greenville, SC

Trustees Emeriti

John J. Britton ..... Sumter, SC
Leon J. Hendrix, Jr. ..... Kiawah Island, SC
Thomas B. McTeer, Jr. ..... Columbia, SC
David H. Wilkins ..... Greenville, SC
Allen Wood ..... Florence, SC

Deans

Sean Brittain ..... Associate Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Learning
John Lopes ..... Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School
Matt Holt ..... Dean, College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences
Ece Erdogmus ..... Dean, College of Architecture, Art and Construction
Nicholas Vazsonyi ..... Dean, College of Arts and Humanities
Leslie Hossfeld ..... Dean, College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences
Wendy York ..... Dean, Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business
Kristin M. Gehsmann ..... Dean, College of Education
Anand K. Gramopadhye ..... Dean, College of Engineering, Computing and Applied Sciences
Cynthia Y. Young ..... Dean, College of Science
Steven Marks ..... Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine
Christopher Cox ..... Dean, University Libraries

Graduate Student Government

Kazi Jewel Rana ..... President
Elletson Dubose ..... Interim Vice President

Executive Officers

James P. Clements ..... President
Robert H. Jones ..... Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Maxwell Allen ..... Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff
Doug Hallenbeck ..... Vice President for Student Affairs
Julio Hernandez ..... Assistant to the President for Community Outreach and Engagement
Matt Holt ..... Dean, College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences
Chip Hood ..... Special Advisor to the Board of Trustees and General Counsel
Tanju Karanfil ..... Senior Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Endeavors
Lisa Knox ..... Vice President for Institutional Excellence and Deputy Athletic Director/Chief of Staff
Angie Leidinger ..... Senior Vice President for External Affairs and Senior Adviser to the Board of Trustees
Sharon Martin ..... Vice President for Marketing and Communications
Graham Neff ..... Director of Athletics
Brian O'Rourke ..... Vice President of Advancement
Rick Petillo ..... Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations and Chief Financial Officer
April Purvis ..... Executive Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Brian Voss ..... Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Clemson Computing and Information Technology

The Graduate School

John Lopes ..... Associate Provost and Dean
Natasha N. Croom ..... Associate Dean
William Ferrell ..... Associate Dean
Jeffrey C. Hallo ..... Associate Dean
Jenny Presgraves ..... Assistant Dean

Associate Deans, School Directors, and Department Chairs

College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences

Carlyle Brewster
Acting Associate Dean of Research

Matthew Interis
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Thomas Dobbins
Associate Dean of Outreach and Engagement
and Director of Clemson Cooperative Extension

Charles V. Privette, III ..... Agricultural Sciences
Jim Strickland, interim ..... Animal and Veterinary Sciences
Ramesh Jeganathan ..... Food, Nutrition, and Packaging Sciences
Kyle Barrett, interim ..... Forestry and Environmental Conservation
Jim Faust, acting ..... Plant and Environmental Sciences

College of Architecture, Art and Construction

Ufuk Ersoy
Acting Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs

Vivek Sharma
Associate Dean of Student Excellence

Dan Harding, acting ..... Richard A. McMahan School of Architecture
Valerie A. Zimany ..... Department of Art
Tom Leathem ..... Nieri Family Department of Construction and Real Estate Development

College of Arts and Humanities

Michael LeMahieu
Associate Dean for Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

Amit Bein
Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs

William Stockton ..... English
Stephanie Barczewski ..... History and Geography
Lisa Melonçon ..... Interdisciplinary Studies
Joseph Mai ..... Languages
Linda Dzuris ..... Performing Arts
Ben White ..... Philosophy and Religion

College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences

Bryan Miller
Associate Dean for Research

Joel Williams
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies

Denise M. Anderson
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies,
Faculty Success and Well-Being

Lior Rennert
Associate Dean for Health Sciences

John Whitcomb ..... School of Nursing
Deana Sellnow ..... Communication
Robert Barcelona ..... Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management
Joseph Daniel Ura ..... Political Science
Patrick H. Raymark ..... Psychology
Wiley Jenkins ..... Public Health Sciences
Katherine E. Weisensee ..... Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice

Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business

Carl W. Hollingsworth
Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Jennifer Siemens
Associate Dean for Faculty Excellence

Scott Baier
Acting Associate Dean for Research

Robin Radtke ..... School of Accountancy
Robert Tamura, acting ..... Economics
Brandon Lockhart, acting ..... Finance
Charles "Chip" Tonkin ..... Graphic Communications
Craig Wallace ..... Management
Danny Weathers ..... Marketing
Gregory M. Pickett ..... MBA

College of Education

Celeste C. Bates
Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies

Michelle P. Cook
Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies
and Faculty Engagement

Kristen Cuthrell ..... Education and Human Development
Hans W. Klar ..... Educational and Organizational Leadership Development
David Fleming ..... Teaching and Learning

College of Engineering, Computing and Applied Sciences

Daniel L. Noneaker
Senior Associate Dean of Strategic Initiatives
and Faculty Affairs

Thompson Mefford
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies

Melissa C. Smith
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies

Delphine Dean ..... Bioengineering
David A. Bruce ..... Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
Jesus M. de la Garza ..... School of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences
Brian Dean ..... School of Computing
Hai Xiao ..... Electrical and Computer Engineering
Melissa C. Smith ..... Engineering and Science Education
R. Joe Watkins ..... General Engineering
Kevin M. Taaffe ..... Industrial Engineering
Kyle S. Brinkman ..... Materials Science and Engineering
Laine Mears ..... School of Mechanical and Automotive Engineering

College of Science

Stephen E. Creager
Associate Dean for Discovery, Graduate Education, Space Optimization and Faculty Affairs

Calvin L. Williams
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Excellence and Global Engagement

Karolina Mukhtar ..... Biological Sciences
William T. Pennington ..... Chemistry
David F. Clayton ..... Genetics and Biochemistry
Colin Gallagher ..... School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences
Chad Sosolik ..... Physics and Astronomy

College of Veterinary Science

Brian Butler
Associate Dean of Clinical Programs

Nicki Wise
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

Jonathan Fogle ..... Veterinary Medicine and Sciences

Graduate Address

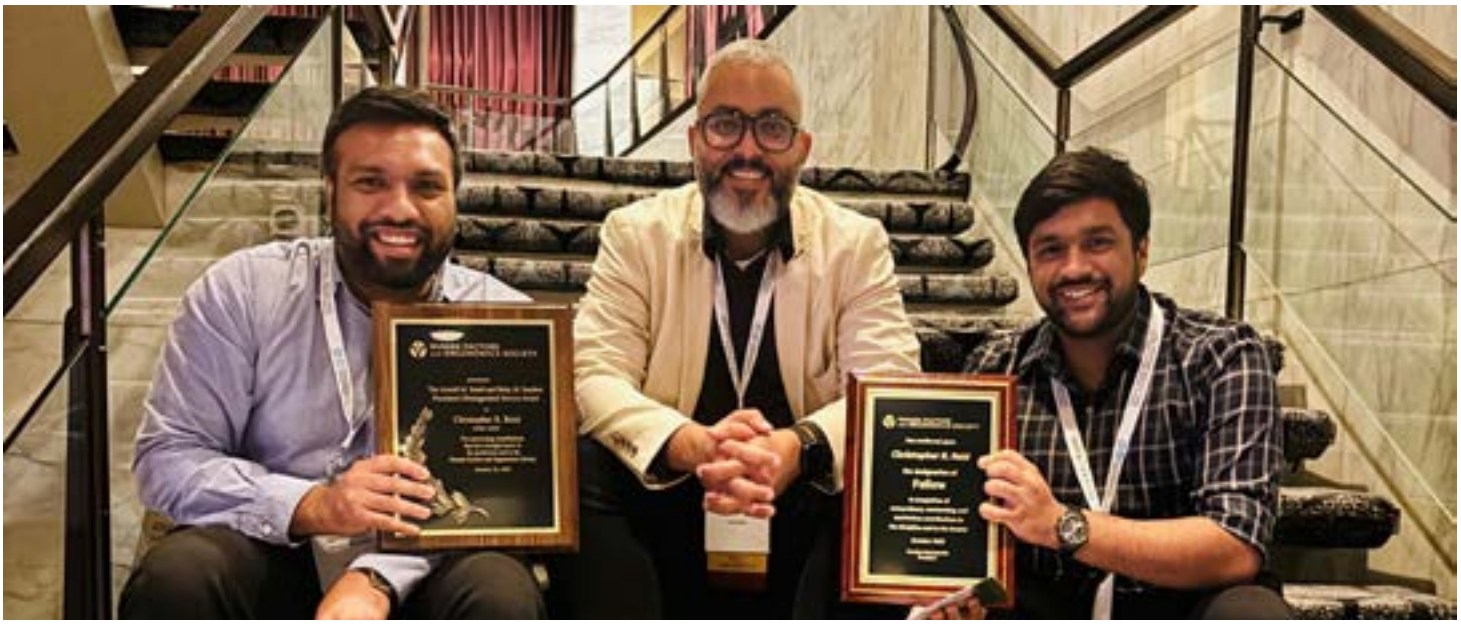
For each doctoral commencement ceremony, one graduating student is chosen by a panel of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to deliver the Graduate Address.

Today's speaker is Stephanie Tracey, who is graduating with a Ph.D. in teaching and learning from the College of Education.

The text of Stephanie's speech will be available ***here*** shortly after the conclusion of today's ceremony.

A Slideshow of Photos Submitted by Today's Graduates

Click or tap to play.



2025 Awards in Graduate Education

Outstanding Graduate Researcher Award

Ali Moghassemi
Electrical Engineering

Haley Swartz
Rhetorics, Communication and Information Design

Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award

Katie McGee
Literature, Language and Culture

Morteza Soltani
Industrial Engineering

Frankie O. Felder Graduate Student Award of Excellence

Devi Soman
Planning, Design, and the Built Environment

Commitment to Community and Engagement Award

Stefanie L. Whitmire, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Agricultural Sciences

Distinguished Doctoral Mentoring Award

Tony W. Cawthon, Ph.D.
Alumni Distinguished Professor, Educational and Organizational Leadership Development

Kelly Best Lazar, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Engineering and Science Education

Distinguished Graduate Student Support Staff Award

Heather Tomlinson
Graduate Student Advisor, Department of Automotive Engineering

Centennial Medallion

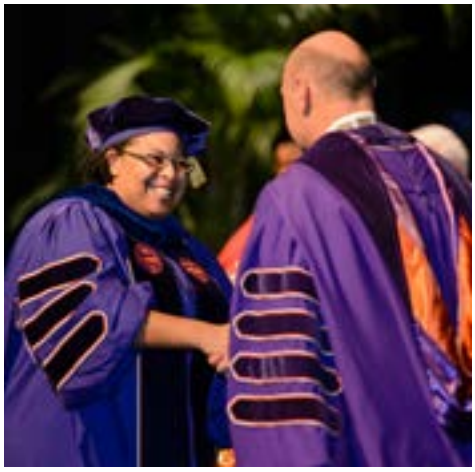
To honor the extraordinary dedication and achievement of today's graduates, each one will receive a medallion celebrating 100 years of graduate education at Clemson University. Each medallion features a logo specifically designed for the centennial celebration.

Doctoral Commencement

The doctoral hood is a symbolic honor of distinction bestowed upon scholars who have attained the highest level of formal education available in the world, representing a typical range of five to seven years of study beyond the bachelor's degree. Clemson's 46-inch-long doctoral hood is usually draped over the shoulders by the faculty member who, as chair of the advisory committee, has formally mentored and guided the student's research and education.

The University has named "Clemson purple" *Regalia* in a nod to the doctoral commencement gowns.

You will note that faculty members are wearing gowns, caps and hoods of many colors and designs. These academic costumes of medieval origin are, for faculty with degrees from U.S. institutions, specified by a uniform code maintained by the American Council on Education. Caps are black and are usually mortar boards or tams with tassels. Doctors of philosophy wear gold tassels usually of metallic thread; those with other degrees wear black or discipline colors. Those who have received their degrees from institutions outside the United States wear regalia specified by the awarding institutions.



Doctors' gowns are full, with bell-like sleeves. The front is bordered with velvet panels and the sleeves are marked by three velvet bars. While some gowns are black with black velvet, one variation is to replace black velvet with velvet in the discipline color. A second variation is a colored gown usually of the university's colors.

All hoods specify the level of degree, the type of discipline studied and the awarding institution. The width of the velvet trim conveys the degree. In addition, the degree is indicated by the color of the trim edging the hood to form the throat over the gown. The most frequently seen color is dark blue, which designates the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. Finally, the color of the hood's lining is specific to the awarding institution. The colors are displayed in combinations that are drawn from heraldry. Notice that the Clemson University hood is lined with purple through which is an orange chevron (a "V"). Although many combinations are duplicated by dozens of institutions, Clemson is presently the only institution with that registered combination of purple and orange.

The officers, trustees and honored guests wear academic, ecclesiastical or military regalia as set forth by their professions. The president of Clemson University wears a purple gown with four velvet bars piped in orange and the University seal embroidered on the panels. Each trustee wears a similar gown with three velvet bars piped in orange for doctorates and an embroidered palmetto tree on each sleeve for those who do not hold doctorates. Trustee hoods are either from Clemson or from the awarding school.

A Brief History of Graduate Education and the Graduate School at Clemson University

> [Clemson's faculty] would engage in original and important research, by which knowledge would be increased, whilst the immediate objects… would be the diffusion of facts on all scientific subjects. It would be vain to attempt to fix a limit to the benefits that would thus be conferred upon mankind and their effects upon society… — Thomas Green Clemson[1]

In conceptualizing a "high seminary of learning" for South Carolina, Thomas Green Clemson knowingly set the stage for graduate education to emerge as an engine of economic development in the state. Graduate education quickly became synonymous with the application of theory to improving the practices of education and agriculture. The analysis of fertilizer, a contracted activity of the chemistry department that began in the late 1930s, would help restore depleted South Carolina soils, increase agricultural production, and spur a rapid development in opportunities for students at Clemson College to study beyond the baccalaureate degree.

Graduate coursework initially responded to the needs of veterans and to the interests of teachers wanting to improve their classroom skills, but also — from its inception — attracted international students' attention. On June 3, 1924, Patrick Hobson of Sandy Springs, South Carolina, earned the first master's degree awarded at Clemson. He used his degree in vocational education to serve as a high school principal and later as superintendent of schools in York County, South Carolina and Mitchell County, North Carolina. The third graduate degree, a master's in textile industrial education awarded to Ko-Chia Li from Mukden, China, on June 1, 1926, initiated an enrollment trend that has catapulted China to its status as the number-one sending country for international graduate students for many years. Mr. Li returned to China and taught as a professor of textile engineering at Peking University, and served as head of the construction department in LiaoBei Province.

From 1938 until 1945, all aspects of graduate education (courses, programs, policies, procedures, admission, and graduation) developed under the auspices of the Committee on Graduate Instruction, chaired by F. H. H. Calhoun, Dean of the School of Chemistry and Geology. Twice during these years, the University's attempts to formalize graduate education were thwarted because of the challenges to the Committee to maintain the necessary standards of quality. Clemson faculty recognized early that to establish a graduate program that enabled Clemson alumni to enroll would require strengthening the undergraduate curriculum and courses to prevent knowledge gaps "between the two."[2]

On March 14, 1945, President Poole received the Committee's resolution requesting the appointment of a Dean of the Graduate School. It had been ascertained by that time that 19 courses could be offered immediately by the schools of agriculture, chemistry, engineering, textiles, and arts and sciences.

On July 27, 1946, the Board of Trustees approved the Committee's proposed graduate program of study and, that fall, formally admitted the first class of students into "the Graduate School." However, it would not be until June 15, 1951, that Herbert J. Webb, Chair of the

Department of Chemistry and Toxicology, was appointed as the first Dean of the Graduate School.

Masterfully stewarded by President Poole himself and modeled initially after several prestigious southern institutions, Clemson's graduate programs grew cautiously but the officers, trustees and honored guests wear academic, ecclesiastical or military regalia as set forth by their professions. The president of Clemson University wears a purple gown with four velvet bars piped in orange and the University seal embroidered on the panels. Each trustee wears a similar gown with three velvet bars piped in orange commemorating the first doctoral degree, in plant pathology, granted in 1955. Today, the Graduate School proudly enrolls more than 5,800 graduate students and is committed to continued growth at both the master's and doctoral levels.

1. Holmes, A. and G. R. Sherrill. *Thomas Green Clemson: His Life and Work*. 1937, p. 129.
2. Clemson University Library System archives. *Minutes of the Committee on Graduate Instruction*, 1945-1953, p. 7.

Candidates for the Doctoral Degree

John Lopes, Dean of the Graduate School

College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences

Doctor of Philosophy

Agriculture

Emily Lauren Burdine Hood..... Easley, South Carolina

B.S., M.S., Clemson University
A Mixed Methods Study of the Weather and Climate Science Curriculum Pilot in South Carolina K-12 Schools, 4-H, and Agricultural Education Programs
Advised by Dr. Dale Layfield

Lauren was a 2021 Clemson Young Alumni Roaring 10 recipient. She has received several awards and recognitions from both the National Association of 4-H Youth Development Professionals and the National Association of County Agricultural Agents. Lauren also has two peer-reviewed publications.

Plant and Environmental Sciences

Michael John Alden ..... Toms River, New Jersey

B.S., University of Florida; M.S., Clemson University
Cultivation Strategies to Improve Yield and Efficiency for Controlled-Environment Cannabis Production

Advised by Dr. James E Faust

Shikha Dubey ..... Varanasi, India

B.S., Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India; M.S., Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, India
Optimizing Site-Specific Cotton Nitrogen Recommendations Based on Soil Properties

Advised by Dr. Bhupinder Singh Farmaha

Venkata Rao Ganaparthi .....Vengayapalem, India

B.S., Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University; M.S., North Dakota State University
Breeding for Disease Resistance in Melon and Watermelon
Advised by Dr. Sandra Branham and Dr. Patrick Wechter

Venkat developed the first cultivated watermelon with resistance to Fusarium Wilt Race 2 and has seven peer-reviewed publications with two more under review. He plans to work with industry partners to develop consumer-focused products.

Khushwinder Kaur ..... Punjab, India

B.S., M.S., Punjab Agricultural University
Decoding Disease Resistance and Genetic Diversity: Mapping Bacterial Leaf Blight Resistance in Brassica rapa, and Exploring Genetic Variation in Brassica oleracea Leafy Greens and Pathogenic Pseudomonads
Advised by Dr. Sandra Branham

Khushwinder received a Graduate Student Grant from the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program and plans to pursue a career in academia.

Foster Yambout Kangben.....Bawku, Ghana

B.S., University for Development Studies; M.Phil, University of Ghana
Advancing Upland Cotton (Gossypium hirsutum) Trait Genetics for Enhanced Yield, Biotic Resilience and Seed Quality
Advised by Dr. Christopher Saski

Foster began his Ph.D. in 2020 as a Fulbright Scholar from Ghana. He is also a recipient of the 2024 NAPB Borlaug Scholar Award and has earned multiple university, departmental, and conference recognitions. He has published two peer-reviewed papers, with three additional manuscripts currently under review. Foster aspires to continue advancing scientific innovation by bridging the gap between research and public engagement through a role in either industry, academia, NGOs, or the private sector.

Sifat Sultana .....Dhaka, Bangladesh

B.S., M.S., University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh; M.S., New Mexico State University
Impact of Cover Crop Functional Types in Monocultures and Mixtures on Mycorrhizal Fungi and Soil Microbial Functional Activity

Advised by Dr. Vidya Suseela

Wildlife and Fisheries Biology

Joshua David Holbrook.....Pawcatuck, Connecticut

B.S., Palm Beach Atlantic University; M.S., Florida Atlantic University
Drivers of Faunal Communities in Isolated Wetlands: Local and Landscape Determinants of Assemblages
Advised by Dr. Kyle Barrett

Joshua is now teaching full-time as a professor and is working on publishing his dissertation chapters.

College of Architecture, Art and Construction

Doctor of Philosophy

Planning, Design and the Built Environment

Mina Shokrollahi Ardekani.....Yazd, Iran

B.Arch, Urmia University; M.S., Istanbul Technical University

Exploring the Experience of Anxiety and Coping Among Autistic Children in Healthcare Outpatient Waiting Environment

Advised by Dr. Anjali Joseph

College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences

Doctor of Nursing Practice

Nursing Practice

Kimberly Kamp Hill .....Anderson, South Carolina

B.S.N., Clemson University

Assessing the Impacts of the American Nurses Foundation Well-Being Initiative on Nurse Burnout in an Academic Health Center Using the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory

Advised by Dr. Margaret Wetsel and Dr. Teri Terramano

Kimberly serves as Associate Director of Nursing Simulation at Clemson University, leading simulation-based education across two sites of instruction for over 800 nursing students. She has advanced simulation pedagogy by supporting over $5 million in federal grant funding and leading initiatives that strengthen faculty development and program excellence. Previously, she developed the first Accredited Chest Pain Center in Upstate South Carolina. She is a Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator, Vice President of the South Carolina Nursing Simulation Education Alliance, and a recipient of the SC Palmetto Gold Nursing Award.

Alice Rodriguez .....Piedmont, South Carolina

B.S.N., University of South Carolina Upstate; M.S.N., University of South Alabama

Survey of Breastfeeding Infants While Receiving Painful Procedures During Well Child Visits

Advised by Dr. Stephanie Clark Trammel and Dr. Rebekah Ryan Martin

Alice is working on getting her DNP project published. She is currently a bilingual pediatric nurse practitioner serving an underserved area of the Upstate and also working as a clinical supervisor in PRN at Clemson University. She plans to actively serve in the community as well and use her skills and knowledge to continue helping those in need.

Doctor of Philosophy

Applied Health Research and Evaluation

Kinsey Ann Sierra Meggett .....Columbia, South Carolina

B.S., M.S., Clemson University; M.S., University of South Carolina School of Medicine

Place is Health: The Role of Residential Segregation in Cancer Diagnosis and Survival

Advised by Dr. Lu Zhang

Kinsey was awarded the 2025 Dr. Karen Kemper Award from the Public Health Sciences department for her outstanding leadership and academic performance. She has accepted a postdoctoral position at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina.

Healthcare Genetics and Genomics

Sujata Srikanth ..... Belton, South Carolina

M.S., M.Phil, University of Hyderabad, India; M.S., Tennessee Technological University

Metabolic Signatures of Long COVID-19

Advised by Dr. Luigi Boccuto and Dr. Delphine Dean

Ethan Carlisle Wilson.....Piedmont, South Carolina

B.S., Anderson University; M.A.T., Clemson University

Optimizations in Small Molecule Cancer Drug Research

Advised by Dr. Luigi Boccuto

Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Rebecca Nicole Pool ..... Gainesville, Georgia

B.S., University of North Georgia; M.A., Clemson University

Navigating Safety: A Mixed-Methods Examination of Supportive Workplace Practices in Maritime Contexts

Advised by Dr. Patrick Rosopa

Rebecca is the 2025 Outstanding Ph.D. Student in Psychology. With 10 peer-reviewed publications and more than 20 conference presentations, she was also the recipient of the 2022 Frankie O. Felder Graduate Student Award of Excellence. Following graduation, Rebecca will continue her work as a Research and Data Science Fellow with McKinsey & Company.

Alexandria Noelle Wentworth .....Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

B.A., Alma College; M.S., Clemson University

Meta-Analytic Investigations of the ABCs of Teamwork and Multiteam Systems

Advised by Dr. Marissa Shuffler

Ally plans to take a postdoctoral research fellowship with the U.S Army Research Institute.

International Family and Community Studies

Noha Ekram Hassan..... Port Said, Egypt

Discipline Bylaw in Egypt: A Critical Policy Analysis of the Framing of Child Rights in Education

Advised by Dr. Natalia Sianko

Noha was selected for the U.S. State Department-funded International Leaders in Education Program at Clemson University in 2012. She was awarded a scholarship in 2014 to study child rights and classroom management at Lund University in Sweden. That experience later led her back to Clemson to pursue her Ph.D in International Family and Community Studies. Originally from Egypt, Noha spent 19 years in school leadership where she led bilingual education reform and child-rights–based practices. She also earned an MBA in 2015 and completed professional diplomas in Arabic–English translation and simultaneous interpretation Noha plans to continue her work at the intersection of child rights, policy, and educational leadership.

Valëza Ukaj Elshani..... Prishtina, Kosovo

F.L., University of Prishtina, Kosovo; M.L., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

Legal Analysis of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence as an International Law Violation (the case of Former Yugoslavia)

Advised by Dr. Mark Small and Dr. Susan P. Limber

Valëza serves as a teaching assistant and Secretary of the Department of International Law at the Faculty of Law, University of Prishtina. She obtained her Master's of Law degree from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, graduating with Magna Cum Laude distinction. Her academic and professional work centers on international law, human rights, and transitional justice, with a particular focus on gender justice and conflict-related violence. She has authored several peer-reviewed publications addressing international law, human rights, legal accountability, post-conflict reparations. In addition, she has actively contributed to numerous academic and policy-oriented programs related to human rights, gender equality, and transitional justice mechanisms in post-conflict societies. Valëza has also participated in numerous national and international conferences over the past decade, contributing to scholarly and policy discussions on international law.

Yira Ivana Vargas Caminero..... Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

B.S., M.A., Universidad Iberoamericana; M.A., Universidad de Salamanca

Teacher Self-Efficacy as a Moderator of the Relationship Between Perceived Stressors and Overall Stress During the COVID-19 Pandemic: a Study of Dominican Public School Teachers in the USAID LEER Project

Advised by Dr. Mark Small

Yira is passionate about inclusion, mental health, animal-assisted interventions, and educational transformation. As Director of the School of Psychology and Chair of the UNESCO Chair on Inclusion of People with Disabilities at Universidad Iberoamericana in the Dominican Republic, she has led numerous initiatives promoting equity and social innovation in higher education. Her doctoral research examined teacher self-efficacy and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. She plans to continue building bridges for inclusive education across Latin America and the Caribbean.

Artilda Lala ..... **Elbasan, Albania**

B.S., ATEI Athens, Greece; M.S., University of ELbasan, Albania
Risk and Protective Factors of Iron Deficiency Anemia among Children Aged 0-10 Years in Elbasan: Directions for Health Policy in Albania

Advised by Dr. Mark Small and Dr. Susan P. Limber

Sashen Rexhepaj ..... **Vlora, Albania**

B.S., Universiteti i Tiranës; M.S., Universiteti i Vlorës Ismail Qemali
An Experimental Evaluation of a Gamified Learning Approach to Address Bullying Knowledge, Perceptions, and Self-Efficacy Among Elementary Students: Playing Yozgoo in Albania

Advised by Dr. Mark Small

Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management

Austin M Souto ..... **Seneca, South Carolina**

B.A., M.A., Wheaton College
The Life Significance of Summer Outdoor Program Employment During Emerging Adulthood
Advised by Dr. Barry Garst

Austin pursued his doctoral degree as a part-time student over several years while working full time in the outdoor field, first as Assistant Director of the Clemson Outdoor Recreation and Education program, then as an assistant professor of outdoor leadership and education at Toccoa Falls College. He now currently serves as an assistant professor of outdoor leadership and experiential education at Brevard College in North Carolina.

Patricia Ann Whitener ..... **Clemson, South Carolina**

B.S., M.S., Clemson University
Adoption of the 4-H Thriving Model of Positive Youth Development: A Case-Centered Examination of 4-H Agents
Advised by Dr. Barry Garst and Dr. Harrison Pinckney

As the State 4-H Natural Resources Program Leader with the cooperative extensions at Clemson University, Patricia embodies a deep commitment to fostering curiosity and nurturing the next generation of environmental stewards. With an extensive background spanning environmental and natural resources, wildlife, fisheries, and biology, she brings both expertise and passion to her role. Patricia's career includes impactful service with the National Park Service, the National Forest Service, and the South Carolina State Parks system. In her leadership, Patricia collaborates with educators, volunteers, schools, county parks and recreation departments, community groups, and state organizations to design and implement innovative programming that empowers youth. Through her work, Patricia hopes to inspire others to embrace the wonders of South Carolina's rich ecological heritage.

Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business

Doctor of Philosophy

Economics

Dean Anthony Williams..... Saratoga Springs, New York

B.A., Providence College
The Bandwagon Model
Advised by Dr. Andrew Hanssen

Dean has worked for the Clemson baseball team as an analytics graduate assistant and is pursuing a career in Major League Baseball.

College of Education

Doctor of Education

Education Systems Improvement Science

Tygére Alisha West Charles.....Columbia, South Carolina

B.A., M.A.T., University of South Carolina; Ed.S, Cambridge College
Virtual Coaching: Ushering in A New Era in School Improvement
Advised by Dr. Roy Jones and Dr. Reginald Wilkerson

Tygére works at the South Carolina Department of Education. She has served as a Regional Transformation Coach and continues to support schools through the state. She is a proud mother and grandmother who cherishes her family and honors her mother's legacy.

Conswlya J'vell Decoteau.....Greenville, South Carolina

B.S., Winthrop University; M.A., Capella University; M.A.+30, Clemson University
Closing the Achievement Gap: School Counselors' Role in Enhancing College and Career Access for First-Generation Students

Advised by Dr. Noelle Paufler

Philip L Price ..... Westminster, South Carolina

B.L.S., M.A.T., Anderson University; Ed.S., Arkansas State University
Enhancing Teacher Planning Practices to Improve Teacher Self-Efficacy Through Professional Learning Communities

Advised by Dr. Noelle Paufler

Rachael Smilowitz.....Charleston, South Carolina

B.S., West Chester University; M.Ed., Walden University; M.Ed., The Citadel
Math for the Real World: Implementing a Standards-Based Math Curriculum With a Focus on Formative Assessment

Advised by Dr. Brandi Hinnant-Crawford

Rachael serves as a Senior Manager for Academics at TNTP. She intends to continue advancing her passion for mathematics education through ongoing consulting work in curriculum and instruction. Rachael dedicates this degree to her family in appreciation of their unwavering love and support.

Doctor of Philosophy

Educational Leadership

Wallace Deandre Cobbs.....Mauldin, South Carolina

B.A., Clemson University; M.Ed., Southern Wesleyan University

Do You Feel the Power: The Role of Affinity Spaces in Black Male Principals' Personal and Professional Journeys

Advised by Dr. Roy Jones

Wallace continues to serve as Principal of Welcome Elementary School in Greenville, South Carolina. He plans to remain in public school leadership, mentoring future administrators and advancing equity-focused initiatives that empower educators and students across Greenville County Schools.

Debra Pruitt Wallace .....Fair Play, South Carolina

B.A., M.Ed., Clemson University; M.Ed., Converse College

The Influence of Using Bibliotherapy and or Cinematherapy Interventions on the Social-Emotional Competencies of Middle School Students Identified as Gifted

Advised by Dr. Hans Klar

Debra was selected as a South Carolina Financial Literacy Master Teacher with South Carolina Economics. She will present across the state using financial literacy in content and career classes.

Erica Scheffler Walters ..... Clemson, South Carolina

B.A., LaGrange College; M.Ed., Clemson University

Experiences of Young Adults With an Intellectual Disability and Their Families as They Transition From High School to a Post-Secondary Education Program

Advised by Dr. Hans Klar

Erica is in her 11th year at Clemson University, serving as Director of ClemsonLIFE, a world-renowned postsecondary education (PSE) program for young adults with intellectual disabilities (ID). She is a co-author of *How to Create an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Program* (2025). Through her dissertation research, she seeks to increase awareness of PSE opportunities for individuals with ID, enhance existing programs, and support the development of high-quality PSE programs worldwide.

Learning Sciences

Tolulope Famaye .....Central, South Carolina

B.S., Ebonyi State University; M.Ed., University of Ibadan

Exploring Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen-AI) and Developing AI Competencies through Joint Media Engagement in Family Settings

Advised by Dr. Danielle Herro and Dr. Golnaz Arastoopour Irgens

Tolulope was a recipient of the Clemson 2024-2025 Doctoral Dissertation Completion Grant and the College of Education Digital Media Learning Lab Travel Award, Spring 2025.

Teaching and Learning

Jessica Ann Cuneo ..... Charlotte, North Carolina

B.A., High Point University; M.A., University of North Carolina, Wilmington

Using Photovoice to Amplify Teachers' Voice: Participatory Action Research to Impact Teacher Retention

Advised by Dr. Jacquelynn Malloy

Jessica focused her research on teacher retention and presented at the 2025 American Educational Research Association with her peers, as well as at Clemson's Teaching and Learning Student Graduate Conference, and The International Society of Teaching and Learning. She plans to work in K-12 school leadership and in educational research in higher education.

Racquel Simone Plummer ..... McDonough, Georgia

B.S., Stony Brook University; M.S., The City College, CUNY

Redefining the Script: Autonomy, Agency and Advocacy Among Black Women Educators

Advised by Dr. Sandra Linder

Racquel serves as a Talent Development District Support Teacher and Talented and Gifted Program Lead in metro Atlanta. She leads efforts to expand equitable identification and access for black and brown gifted learners. Racquel recently presented "Digitizing Visible Thinking Routines in the Elementary Classroom" at the National Association for Gifted Children Conference in Seattle, sharing innovative ways to engage young learners through technology-enhanced critical thinking.

Stephanie Tracey.....Kingston, Jamaica

B.S. University of Panama; M.A., Quality Leadership University

African American Language Ain't No Barrier: Teacher Perceptions, Power, and Possibilities in Rural Science Classrooms

Advised by Dr. Brooke A. Whitworth and Dr. Julianne Wenner

Stephanie is a Sandra K. Abell Scholar and an Asa G. Hilliard III & Barbara A. Sizemore Fellow whose research examines culturally responsive discourse and African American Language in K–8 science classrooms. A 3-Minute Thesis finalist with over ten years of teaching experience before her career as a Marine Engineer and Surveyor, she brings a unique interdisciplinary lens to science education. Stephanie will begin her postdoctoral fellowship at Stanford University advancing equity-focused STEM teaching.

College of Engineering, Computing and

Applied Sciences

Doctor of Philosophy

Automotive Engineering

Ali Arsalan ..... Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan

B.S., M.S., University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore
Resilient Control Framework for EV Motor Drive System Subject to Cyber-Physical Security
Advised by Dr. Behnaz Papari

Ali was awarded the Outstanding Research Award – Special Mention by Clemson University's Graduate Student Government in 2025 for his exceptional contributions in power electronics and cyber-physical system security. His research has led to several peer-reviewed publications and advancements in diagnostics of electric drive systems and real-time electro-thermal control. He has joined Schneider Electric as a Senior Electrical Design Engineer in Columbia, South Carolina.

Ankur Bhatt .....Greenville, South Carolina

M.S., Clemson University
Opposed-Piston Two Stroke Engine as a High Power Density Solution in Heavy Duty Applications: An Experimental Evaluation With Diesel and Ethanol
Advised by Dr. Benjamin Lawler and Dr. Brian Gainey

Ankur has joined Rolls-Royce Solutions America as a Senior Verification and Validation Engineer, continuing his work in engine development and testing.

Zhimin Chen..... Wuyishan, China

M.S., Ohio State University
Multi-modal Data-efficient Learning for 3D Machine Vision

Advised by Dr. Bing Li

Som Dixit .....Kanpur, India

B.S., DIT University, India; M.S., Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, India
Additive Manufacturing of High-Performance Materials: Mechanical Anisotropy, Interfacial Properties, and Metallurgical Defects
Advised by Dr. Shunyu Liu

Som was awarded the $25,000 Hitachi Electron Microscopy Fellowship for excellence in materials research utilizing advanced electron microscopy and has published six peer-reviewed journal papers, with several others under review. His work has also been recognized with multiple honors, including the Editorial Choice Award for a review paper and a 2nd-place finish in the MRS OPTICA poster competition. Som has accepted a materials scientist position with Leidos at the National Energy Technology Laboratory in Albany, Oregon.

Habtamu Debebe Hailemichael .....Addis Abeba, Ethiopia

B.S., Addis Ababa University; M.S., Politecnico di Milano
Continual Hybrid Model Learning and Management of Lithium-ion Batteries
Advised by Dr. Beshah Ayalew

Habtamu has focused throughout his Ph.D studies on integrating machine learning and artificial intelligence to advance the modeling and control of vehicle energy systems.

He has authored 11 research publications in this field, contributing to strengthening the future of intelligent transportation and sustainable energy management. His work has been featured at five major conferences, highlighting the excellence and impact of his contributions.

Ajinkya Sanjay Joglekar ..... Greenville, South Carolina

B.S., Symbiosis International University; M.S., Clemson University
Data-Driven Discovery of Finite-Dimensional Koopman Operator for Modeling and Control of Uncrewed Ground Vehicles

Advised by Dr. Venkat Krovi and Dr. Umesh Vaidya

Dhruv Mehta..... Mumbai, India

B.E., University of Mumbai; M.S., Michigan Technological University
Hybrid Learning for Rough Terrain Navigation of Actively Articulated Wheeled Vehicles

Advised by Dr. Venkat Krovi

Shailendran Poyyamozhi..... Chennai, India

Ontological Approach for Verification and Validation in Self-Driving Systems

Advised by Dr. Rahul Rai

Ameya Salvi ..... Mumbai, India

B.E., MumB.A.i University; M.S., Clemson University
Learning Enhanced System Identification and Control for Skid-Steered Robots

Advised by Dr. Venkat Krovi and Dr. Phanindra Tallapragada

Chunheng Zhao .....Jiamusi, China

B.S., Harbin Institute of Technology; M.S., Clemson University
Resilient System Design against False Data Injection Attacks on Connected and Automated Vehicles
Advised by Dr. Pierluigi Pisu and Dr. Jerome McClendon

Chunheng has eleven peer-reviewed publications and plans to work in the autonomous driving industry.

Bioengineering

Jessica Ramsey Boulos..... Greenville, South Carolina

Development of Multifunctional Peptides for Delivery of Combination Treatments for Glioblastoma
Advised by Dr. Angela Alexander-Bryant

Jessica received the Eugene M. Langan III Service Award in 2023 and 2025 and has authored publications in biomaterials, cancer therapeutics, and disease diagnostics. She also served as a search and evaluation fellow with the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and as a technology transfer associate with the Clemson University Research Foundation, supporting technology evaluation and commercialization.

Peter William Kurtz..... Haddonfield, New Jersey

B.S., Drexel University
Degradation of Cobalt Chrome Molybdenum Hip and Knee Implants In Vivo and in Vitro

Advised by Dr. Jeremy L. Gilbert

Peter has four first-author peer-reviewed publications with another under review. He received the STAR award for his work on low-power electron beam modification of metallic biomaterials from the Society of Biomaterials. He has started his position as a product development engineer in Gainesville, Florida.

Robert Connor Moore ..... Greenville, South Carolina

B.S., M.S., Clemson University

Reverse (Bio)Engineering: A Machine Learning Approach to Optimize Baseball Pitcher Health and Performance

Advised by Dr. Reed Gurchiek

In 2025, Connor was awarded the R. Larry Dooley Entrepreneurship Award by the Department of Bionengineering for his sports science and analytics research with Clemson Baseball, which now regularly provides more than 15 graduate and undergraduate students with internship opportunities in sports analytics. Post-graduation, he will continue this line of research as Head of Athlete Data Science at Maven Baseball Lab in Atlanta, Georgia.

Chemical Engineering

Karen Guillen Cuevas ..... San Luis Potosi, Mexico

B.S., Autonomous University of San Luis Potosi; M.S., Technological Institute of Mexico, Campus Celaya

Purifying Circular RNA Therapeutics by Ultrafiltration

Advised by Dr. Scott Husson and Dr. Marc Birtwistle

Karen developed a novel ultrafiltration-based method to purify circular RNA, achieving high purity and yield, thereby advancing the manufacturing of RNA therapeutics. She led interdisciplinary research bridging chemical engineering and biomolecular science, contributed to peer-reviewed publications, and presented award-winning work, including first place at the Clemson Research Symposium.

Zehua Jin ..... Yiwu, China

B.S., Inner Mongolia University

Design and Performance Investigation of Single-Atom Alloy Catalysts for Carbon Dioxide Reduction

Advised by Dr. Ming Yang

Civil Engineering

Thinh Tan Nguyen ..... Dak Lak, Vietnam

B.E., Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology; M.E., Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology

Accident Data Analytics and AI-based Auditory Enhancement for Highway Construction Safety

Advised by Dr. Tuyen Le

Thinh applies artificial intelligence to improve auditory safety in construction zones and plans to advance AI-driven innovations in the construction industry.

Jiayun Shen ..... Shanghai, China

B.S., Rowan University; M.S., Clemson University

A Human-Centric Approach to Hurricane Recovery: A Three-part Analysis of Evacuation Decisions, Recovery Priorities, and Recovery Optimization
Advised by Dr. Pamela Murray-Tuite

Computer Engineering

Ali Owfi ..... Tehran, Iran

B.S., Sharif University of Technology; M.S., Clemson University
Adaptive Deep Learning in Physical Layer Applications
Advised by Dr. Fatemeh Afghah

Computer Science

Maha Habib Almaimani..... Madinah, Saudi Arabia

B.S., TaiB.A.h University; M.S., University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
An Analysis of Face Synthesis Methods and Their Influence on Human Perception

Advised by Dr. Eric Patterson

Reagan Samuel Burke ..... Aiken, South Carolina

B.S., M.F.A., Clemson University
A Modified KD Tree for Rendering Maritime Mirages and Turbulence in Scattering Atmospheres
Advised by Dr. Jerry Tessendorf

Reagan has earned three degrees at Clemson University. Each pursuit has been inspired by his desire to produce more visually compelling art.

Xiwen Chen..... Chengdu, China

Diversity-Aware Machine Learning under Resource Constraints: From Theory to Applications

Advised by Dr. Abolfazl Razi

Electrical Engineering

Eyad Ahmad Aldarsi ..... Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

End-to-End Direct Current for Standalone Power Network

Advised by Dr. Rajendra Singh

Prashanth Chivkula..... Mumbai, India

B.E., Mumbai University
Motion Primitives in an Underactuated Fish-Like Robot

Advised by Dr. Richard E. Groff and Dr. Phanindra Tallapragada

Xinyu Jiao..... Haicheng, China

Microwave Transmission Line based Sensing and Activation Platform in Modern Engineered Energy System

Advised by Dr. Hai Xiao

Fatemeh Lotfi ..... Tehran, Iran

B.S., Iran University of Science and Technology; M.S., University of Tehran
AI-Optimized Resource Management in Next-Gen Wireless Networks
Advised by Dr. Fatemeh Afghah

S M Imrat Rahman .....Chattogram, Bangladesh

B.S., Islamic University of Technology; M.S., Technical University of Munich
Thermal Management of Power Electronic Converters in Electric Motor Drives Using Active Thermal Control and Active Cooling
Advised by Dr. Christopher S. Edrington and Dr. Gokhan Ozkan

Imrat's research focuses on electro-thermal management and real-time control of power electronic converters for electric motor drives. He has published multiple IEEE papers and received Clemson's Doctoral Dissertation Completion Grant. Imrat plans to pursue a career in power electronics research and development.

Evan Robertson ..... Albuquerque, New Mexico

B.S., M.S., New Mexico State University
A Study on Utilizing Coherently Coupled Orbital Angular Momentum Beams for Maritime Sensing and Communication
Advised by Dr. Eric G. Johnson

Evan has eleven first-author publications and is an author on twelve additional publications to which he contributed significantly.

Engineering and Science Education

Randi Joy Sims ..... Easley, South Carolina

B.S., M.S., Clemson University
Legitimacy, Learning, and LAUNCH: Exploring Relationships, Community, and Connection in an Undergraduate Research Experience
Advised by Dr. Karen High

Randi's research explores community, equity, and belonging in undergraduate science research experiences, focusing on mentoring and data-informed program improvement. She has led national STEM education evaluations and co-authored several publications. Randi will continue her work as a consultant with Quality Evaluation Designs and plans to pursue a career in educational evaluation and enhancing student experiences in higher education.

Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences

Muzan Williams Ijeoma .....Port Harcourt, Nigeria

B.E., UCSI University, Malaysia; M.S., Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana
Advancing Life Cycle Assessment of Mass Timber: Environmental Performance, Circular Design, and End-of-Life Strategies
Advised by Dr. Michael Carbajales-Dale

Muzan was awarded the American Center for Life Cycle Assessment 2025 leadership award for his contributions to advancing LCA methodologies and sustainable systems and has over nine peer-reviewed publications and three under review. He plans to work as a life cycle assessment engineer and consultant providing sustainable solutions to different industries.

Jiusi Wang ..... Shanghai, China

B.S., Clemson University
Surface Reaction and Transportation of Radium-226 in Marine Systems
Advised by Dr. Brian Anthony Powell

Human Centered Computing

Deyrel Diaz ..... Cape Coral, Florida

B.S., Florida Gulf Coast University; M.S., Clemson University
Digital Reflections: Evaluating Body Dissatisfaction in XR Through Eye- and Body-Tracked Virtual Humans
Advised by Dr. Matias Volonte

During his time at Clemson, Deyrel received the Intel GEM Consortium Fellowship, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, and other industry travel grants. Because of these grants, Deyrel had the opportunity to coach wrestling at Daniel High School, mentor first-generation high school students from across the country, undergraduates local to the Clemson community, and graduate students within the College of Engineering, Computing and Applied Sciences. Deyrel completed two internships while finishing his Ph.D and successfully published more than ten peer-reviewed manuscripts. Since his defense, Deyrel has been working as a senior research scientist and developer at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory.

Elizabeth Alexandra Schlesener ..... Hilton Head, South Carolina

B.A., Converse College; M.F.A., Clemson University
Examining the Roles of Embodiment and Theory of Mind in Shaping User Perceptions of LLM-Driven Conversational Agents
Advised by Dr. Sabarish V. Babu

Elizabeth currently has six peer-reviewed publications and six additional manuscripts under review. She plans to pursue a career in industry as a human–computer interaction researcher.

Kelsea Schulenberg ..... Central, South Carolina

B.S., M.A., Clemson University
AI In Consideration of Her: Accounting for Gendered Workplace Dynamics in the Design and Evaluation of Human-Centered AI Integration in Everyday Workplaces
Advised by Dr. Guo Freeman

Kelsea is a distinguished Dean's and University Fellow in Engineering, Computing, and Applied Sciences. Her peer-reviewed publications include a total of eight journal articles (three first-authors) and eight conference papers (two first-authors) in high-ranking computing venues. Of these publications, six won Best Paper Honorable Mention Awards at their respective venues, three of which she is the first author. For the last several years, she has also poured herself into supporting and connecting with other women in science and tech in the Upstate through her involvement with organizations such as Women, Life, and Science, and Carolina Women+ in Tech. After graduation, Kelsea is looking forward to fully dedicating herself to empowering women in tech through said causes and future entrepreneurial endeavors.

Industrial Engineering

Nikhil Aditya Eti.....Visakhapatnam, India

B.T., Indian Institute of Technology-Madras; M.S., Carnegie Mellon University
Methodologies to Solve Cross-dock Optimization Problems for Real-life Applications
Advised by Dr. William G. Ferrell

With one recent peer-reviewed publication and another under review, Nikhil plans to further his career in academia.

Alec John Gonzales.....Kingsville, Texas

B.S., Texas A&M University Kingsville
Decision-Making Training of Minimally Invasive Surgical Skills
Advised by Dr. Jackie Cha

Alec was awarded the Department of Industrial Engineering's Outstanding Researcher Award (2025), Student Development Award (2024), and Janine Bowen Graduate Fellow Award (2023). He was also a Clemson University Interdisciplinary Researcher (2022), a Graduate Diversity Doctoral Fellow (2022), and placed second runner-up in the 3-Minute Thesis competition (2023). He currently has ten peer-reviewed publications with two under review, presented ten oral and twenty-three poster presentations at local and international conferences, and mentored eighteen undergraduate students.

Martha Lucia Sabogal De La Pava..... Cali, Colombia

B.S., M.S., Universidad del Valle
Stochastic Programming Approaches for Pharmaceutical Supply Chains Facing Geopolitical Strain
Advised by Dr. Emily L. Tucker

Martha received the 2025 Student Development Award for outstanding scholarship and commitment to research, as well as the 2022 Janine Anthony Bowen Graduate Award for outstanding academic performance from the Industrial Engineering department. She was a finalist for the 2025 Best Student Paper Award from the INFORMS Section on Location Analysis where she presented results from her dissertation.

Sarvesh Rajesh Sushma Sawant..... Mumbai, India

B.E., University of Mumbai; M.S., Clemson University
Interfaces to Enhance Performance in Human-AI Teams Conducting Safety-Critical Military Operations: A Route Reconnaissance Use Case

Advised by Dr. Kapil Chalil Madathil

Materials Science and Engineering

Hafiz Busari.....Katy, Texas

B.S., University of Texas at Dallas; M.S., Lehigh University
Vat Polymerization 3D printing with biodegradable polymers as a tunable platform for controlled release

Advised by Dr. O. Thompson Mefford

Bernadine Johanna Daichendt..... Lexington, South Carolina

B.S., Clemson University
Polypropylene/Polyethylene Blends with Asymmetric Viscosity: Fabrication, Characterization, and Recycling Potential

Advised by Dr. Philip Brown and Dr. Igor Luzinov

Bernadine has a publication in progress and has started an engineering position at Poly-Med.

Nathan Linton ..... Lander, Wyoming

B.S., University of Wyoming
Integrating DFT and Machine Learning to Predict Structural Properties in High Entropy Alloys
Advised by Dr. Dilpuneet S. Aidhy

Nathan received the Jennings Fellowship in 2024 and has five peer-reviewed publications with another under review. He has started a postdoctoral position at the Savannah River National Lab.

Bochuan Sun ..... Hefei, China

B.S., Anhui Jianzhu University
Computational Modeling of Refractory Metals and Alloys
Advised by Dr. Enrique Martinez Saez

Bochuan Sun has seven peer-reviewed publications, with another three currently under review. His core doctoral research has been published as the first author in Acta Materialia.

Andrii Ruslanovych Tiiara..... Seneca, South Carolina

B.S., M.S., Lviv Polytechnic National University
Synthesis and Characterization of Chemically Recyclable Polypropylene-Based Covalent Adaptable Networks
Advised by Dr. Igor Luzinov

Mechanical Engineering

Pegah Ghanbari ..... Clemson, South Carolina

B.S., Shahid Chamran University; M.S., Shahid Beheshti University
Robust Data-driven Control of Nonlinear Systems Under Modeling Uncertainty
Advised by Dr. Javad Mohammadpour Velni

Edward Dowds Louis.....Hanahan, South Carolina

B.S., M.S., Clemson University
Approaches for Simulation-Based Systems Design Under Uncertainty and Information Scarcity within the Limits of Human Rationality and Multi-Attribute Decision-Making
Advised by Dr. Gregory Mocko

Ed won the Mechanical Engineering Endowed Teaching Fellowship in Spring 2024 and served on the Mechanical Engineering Graduate Student Council. He has accepted a postdoctoral researcher position at CU-ICAR.

John H Morris.....Springville, Utah

B.S., Brigham Young University; M.S., Clemson University
Universal Systems Simulation via Constraint Hypergraphs with Applications to Digital Twins
Advised by Dr. John Wagner and Dr. Gregory Mocko

Hossein Esfahani ..... Esfahan, Iran

Machine Learning-Enabled Safety-Critical Model Predictive Control for Uncertain Dynamical Systems

Advised by Dr. Javad Mohammadpour Velni

Sanskruti Ramesh Raut..... Mumbai, India

B.E., University of Mumbai

Particle Migration in Non-Newtonian Fluid Flows Through Curved Microchannels

Advised by Dr. Xiangchun Xuan

Muhammad Usman .....Central, South Carolina

B.S., University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore; M.S., Michigan Technological University

Hydrodynamics of Perforated Heave Plates

Advised by Dr. Hassan Masoud

College of Science

Doctor of Philosophy

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Sabrina Sutton Pizarro .....Honea Path, South Carolina

B.S., North Greenville University

Exploring Glycosomes as Therapeutic Targets for Trypanosoma brucei

Advised by Dr. James Morris

Biological Sciences

Jazmine Alexis Eccles-Miller..... High Point, North Carolina

Metabolic Dysfunction Caused by Dietary Oxylipins and the Environmental Toxicant PFOS

Advised by Dr. William S. Baldwin

Jazmine was named Outstanding Graduate in Learning for Biological Sciences in 2021, has six peer-reviewed publications with a seventh under review and an eighth soon to be submitted, and has won a number of presentation awards and research grants. She will be starting a postdoctoral research fellowship in January.

Keiffer Logan Williams..... Huntington, Indiana

B.S., Butler University; M.S., University of Minnesota

Ecomorphological Diversification of Tooth Complexity in the Oral Jaws of Marine Teleostean Fishes

Advised by Dr. Samantha Price

Keiffer is graduating with five peer-reviewed publications with two more dissertation chapters in preparation for publication. Keiffer accepted a visiting faculty position at Berea College where he just finished his first semester of teaching.

Chemistry

Madhushi Bandara.....Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

B.S., University of Peradeniya
Exploring Halogen Bonding in Cocrystals and Deep Eutectic Solvents
Advised by Dr. Bill Pennington and Dr.Colin McMillen

Danushi Nawoda Lakrandi Kapuge Dona ..... Clemson, South Carolina

B.S., University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka
Development of Sulfur-based Composites from Agricultural and Industrial Waste for Sustainable Materials
Advised by Dr. Rhett C. Smith

Nawoda received the Mandel Fellowship and the Interdisciplinary Fellowship in 2024 for academic excellence and research productivity. She has authored twelve peer-reviewed publications and is currently a faculty member in the Department of Chemistry and Physics at Western Carolina University.

Brandon Gregory Wackerle..... Gladwin, Michigan

B.S., Grand Valley State University
Developing Ligand Systems for Selective Uranyl Binding and Methods to Investigate the Radiolytic Stability of Monoamides
Advised by Dr. Julia Brumaghim

Brandon was awarded the Dr. Earl C. Ray '38 Endowment, Dr. Frederick S. Mandel '78 Fellowship, the Department of Energy's Graduate Student Research Fellowship, and the Doctoral Dissertation Completion Grant. Currently, Brandon has three peer-reviewed publications with three additional manuscripts in preparation. He spent two summers collaborating on interdisciplinary research projects at Idaho National Laboratory. Brandon plans to become a staff scientist at one of the national laboratories.

Environmental Toxicology

Alyssa Marie Whisel ..... Bluffton, South Carolina

B.A., Clemson University
The Influence of tert-Butylhydroquinone (TBHQ) on ACOD1/IRG1-Driven Inflammatory Pathways
Advised by Dr. Charles D. Rice

Mathematical Sciences

Geoffrey Bernard Boyer.....Rumford, Rhode Island

B.S., Wake Forest University; M.S., Clemson University
On Variations of Isolation in Graphs
Advised by Dr. Wayne Goddard

During his time at Clemson, Geoffrey has co-authored five papers published in various international journals with five more under review.

Jiyun Huang..... Clemson, South Carolina

B.S., Harbin University of Commerce; M.S., M.B.A., University of North Florida

Contributions to the Statistical Modeling and Estimation of Rainfall Intensity–Duration–Frequency Curves

Advised by Dr. Brook Russell and Dr. Whitney Huang

Boyoung Hur ..... Seoul, South Korea

Flexible Spatial Priors in Bayesian Neuroimaging: GMRF, NNGP, and Deep GMRF.

Advised by Dr. D. Andrew Brown

Katherine Kreuser ..... Clarksville, Tennessee

B.S., Austin Peay State University; M.S., Clemson University
Uncertainty Quantification in Extreme Value Modeling, Online Optimization, and Bias Correction
Advised by Dr. Whitney Huang

Katherine has presented several posters and talks, including being invited to speak at Joint Statistical Meetings in 2024. She plans to work at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

Kyle Jacob Yates ..... Roseburg, Oregon

B.S., San Diego State University; M.S., Clemson University
Leveled Homomorphic Encryption Schemes: Noise and Precision Control
Advised by Dr. Shuhong Gao

Kyle will begin his professional career this upcoming January as an applied research mathematician.

Physics

Sagar Adhikari ..... Kathmandu, Nepal

B.S., M.S., M.S., Tribhuvan University, Nepal
Cosmic Duets: A Search for Binary Supermassive Black Holes in Merging Galaxies

Advised by Dr. Marco Ajello

Madeline Louise Clyburn ..... Augusta, Georgia

B.S., Berry College
Numerical Calculations of the Electromagnetic and Gravitational Wave Signatures of Unequal Mass Black Hole Binary Inspirals
Advised by Dr. Jonathan Zrake

Madeline was awarded the Future Investigators in NASA Earth and Space Science and Technology grant in 2023 to fund her Ph.D. studies. She has two peer-reviewed publications with another in preparation.

Basanta Ghimire ..... Chitwan, Nepal

Waste Heat Harvesting and pH-sensing Devices

Advised by Dr. Apprao M. Rao and Dr. Jeffrey N. Anker

Rajen Kumar Goutam ..... Jhapa, Nepal

B.S., M.S., Tribhuvan University, Nepal; M.S., University of Texas at El Paso
Cancer-Associated Pathogenic Missense Mutations in the ARID Domain of ARID1A Reveal Biophysical Insights Into Structural Destabilization and DNA Binding

Advised by Dr. Hugo Sanabria

Gangtong Huang ..... Shenzhen, China

B.S., Sun Yat-sen University
Amyloid Fibril Polymorphism and Morphology-Dependant Fibrillization
Advised by Dr. Feng Ding

Gangtong was a recipient of the Andrew F. Sobczyk Fellowship. He has published ten peer-reviewed scientific articles with another under review, and has served as a reviewer for more than five scientific journals.

Chendi Xie .....Changchun, China

B.S., Jilin University
First Principles Calculation of Electron-Phonon Coupling in Nonequilibrium Quantum Materials
Advised by Dr. Yao Wang

After the COVID-19 pandemic, Chendi began working with Dr. Wang in his fourth year. He has four peer-reviewed publications, including being published in Computational Materials and Physical Review Letters.

Clemson Alma Mater

Farmer and McGarity/arr. Freeman

Where the Blue Ridge yawns its greatness,
Where the Tigers play;
Here the sons of dear Old Clemson
Reign supreme alway.

Chorus
Dear Old Clemson, we will triumph
And with all our might,
That the Tiger's roar may echo
O'er the mountain height.

We will dream of greater conquests,
For our past is grand,
And her sons have fought and conquered
Every foreign land.

Where the mountains smile in grandeur
O'er the hill and dale,
Here the Tiger lair is nestling
Swept by storm and gale.

We are brothers strong in manhood,
For we work and strive;
And our alma mater reigneth
Ever in our lives.