

NEWSLETTER



Photo Caption: UMA Scholars pose in front of their charter bus before heading to the University of Houston College of Medicine for the day.

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EDITOR'S WELCOME

I hope everyone is settling into the new semester! As your Historian for the 2024–2025 school year, I'm thrilled to bring you the first newsletter of the year. We hope you enjoy diving into all the exciting things happening in the UMA!

Anisa Cole, Historian

Mission Statement

The Texas Undergraduate Medical Academy's (UMA) mission is consistent with the overall mission of Prairie View A&M University and the Texas A&M University System. The UMA is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, service, and professional development.

UMA SCHOLARS' SUMMER EXPERIENCES



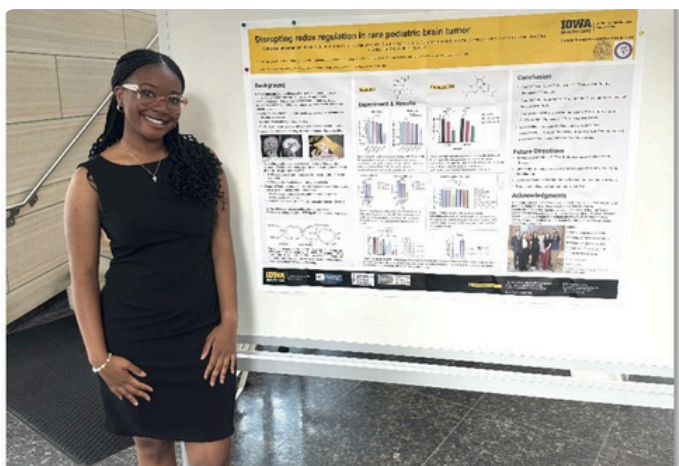
Kenton Moore - UMA Junior and 2024-2025
Mr. UMA, Crochet Club President
2024 Johns Hopkins USTAR

“This summer, I interned at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, Maryland, as part of the Hopkins Undergraduate Summer Training and Research (USTAR) program. USTAR is a 10-week, 2-summer program targeted toward students interested in aging research. As a part of the program, I was matched with a research advisor, Dr. Carrie Nieman, M.D, M.Ph. Dr. Nieman is an ENT surgeon who works at the Johns Hopkins Hospital; she also conducts public health research, studying the sociological barriers that prevent access to hearing healthcare.”

“This summer, I had the extraordinary opportunity to be accepted into the Harvard/MIT Equitable Access to Research Training (HEART) MD-PhD Summer Program, a specialized track within the Summer Honors Undergraduate Research Program (SHURP) at Harvard Medical School. During the program, I interned in the lab of Dr. Benjamin Gewurz, MD, PhD, at Brigham and Women's Hospital's Infectious Disease Division, where I conducted research on the pathophysiology of Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV).”



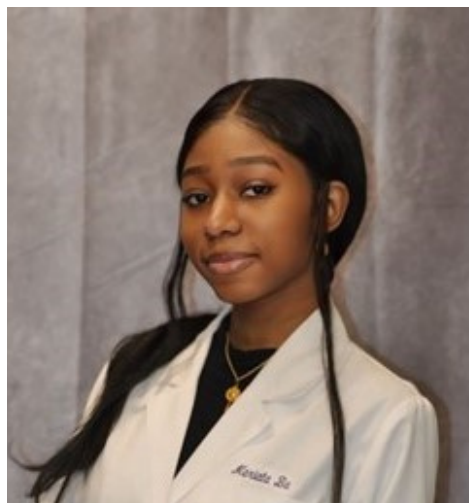
Anisa Cole - UMA Junior and 2024-2025 Historian
2024 Harvard HEART



Eryka Appiah-Amaning UMA Senior
2024 Iowa CROI

“This summer, I had the privilege of participating in a transformative 10-week research internship at the Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Iowa. Working in the Howard Lab, my research focused on addressing Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), a rare and aggressive pediatric brain tumor with one of the lowest survival rates among childhood cancer sufferers. Under the mentorship of Dr. Michelle Howard, my project aimed to identify a therapeutic agent that could enhance radiation therapy for DIPG patients by disrupting redox regulation within the tumor.”

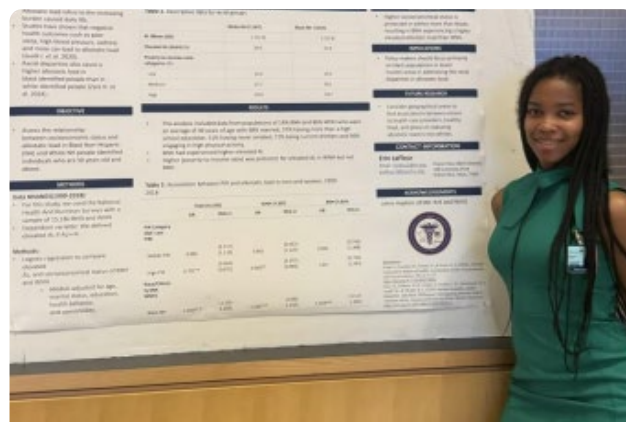
UMA SCHOLARS' SUMMER EXPERIENCES



**Mariata Ba - UMA Senior and 2024-2025
Crochet Club Vice President
2024 MSKCC Research Scholar**

“During my internship at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, I had the opportunity to develop new skills and learn many essential research techniques. I was also able to form new connections, learn from my mentors, and interact with other students in the program with whom I share similar motives and objectives. I was able to conduct various research experiments to determine the effects that different doses/concentrations of drugs/inhibitors (Avutometinib and Trametinib) would have on relevant pathways such as PI3K and RAS, essential proteins, as well as the overall growth of specific lung and melanoma cancer cell lines.”

“This summer, I conducted a 10-week research project at Johns Hopkins University alongside Dr. Zare and Dr. Thorpe. My research focused on allostatic load, examining how chronic stress impacts low-income individuals aged 50 and older. The study provided critical insights into the long-term health effects of stress in economically disadvantaged populations.”



**Erin LaFleur - UMA Junior
2024 Johns Hopkins USTAR**



**Caleb Owens - UMA Sophomore
CMBS Wisconsin and FIS Houston**

“Over the summer, I had the opportunity to participate in the Cellular and Molecular Biology of Stress (CMBS) program in Wisconsin and the Frontiers in Science (FIS) program in Houston, Texas. My research in Dr. May's lab delved into understanding how Vitamin D3 influences the immune response to Mycobacterium tuberculosis. Using Matlab, we developed regression equations representing bacterial load as a function of time, IL-12, IL-10, TNF-α, NO, H2O2, and LDH during high and low Mycobacterium tuberculosis. At the culmination of my time in Wisconsin, I had the opportunity to deliver a final presentation at the Pyle Center on the results of my research. Additionally, I concluded the FIS program with a presentation at Rice University's Bioscience Research Collaborative facility.”

UMA SCHOLARS' SUMMER EXPERIENCES



Alesha Maxwell - UMA Sophomore
PVAMU-EBI Shell Internship - UC Berkeley

“My internship at the University of California-Berkeley approached science and technology from an agricultural standpoint, increasing my awareness of environmental problems and advancements. My summer research involved using high throughput screening to find a natural inhibitor of methanogenesis in plant systems. We used natural enrichments in the lab to test this theory and set up pots of rice seeds in the greenhouse. The research is still ongoing, but the results from both experiments are making excellent progress! Working at UC-Berkeley for eight weeks was enough to advance my laboratory skills and my ability to communicate fluently and professionally. I also had the opportunity to explore San Francisco and other nearby cities with friends I made along the way! I am very thankful for all the friendships I made and the skills I acquired. Participating in this internship was indeed the best decision I have made.”

“This summer, I had the opportunity to research at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, specifically in the division of allergy and immunology. I focused on penicillin allergy categorization within the pediatric population and built a REDCap database to conduct this study. I had an amazing summer in which I learned so much about research, and I am excited to continue researching in the future.”



Keeland Harville - UMA Junior and 2023-2024 Mr. UMA
Cincinnati Children's Hospital



Alexay Bullard - UMA Sophomore
Summer Health Professions Education Program (SHPEP)

“This summer, I was at SHPEP, where they educated us on health professions through lectures and seminars. I had the opportunity to do several simulations, such as intraosseous infusion, intubation, blood drawing, intravenous infusion, suturing, and case studies. We also were able to work with patient care mannequins. Additionally, I was able to shadow a pediatric surgeon and a geriatric family medicine doctor. I would recommend SHPEP for any student eligible who wants an immersive experience into the world of a health professional.”

UMA SCHOLARS' SUMMER EXPERIENCES

“During the summer, I was awarded an opportunity to engage in an international research experience at Sorbonne Université in Paris, France, where I learned the theoretical and practical application of Fourier-Transform Ion Cyclotron Resonance (FT-ICR) mass spectrometry. FT-ICR is a mass analyzer that provides ultra-high resolution to detect and characterize molecules. The purpose of using an instrument of this caliber is to determine the relative abundance of ions at varying masses through enhanced signal amplification. Over 12 weeks, I contributed to developing a suitable method for utilizing FT-ICR to assess the effects of environmental stresses on the molecular composition of dissolved organic matter in aquatic environments. The experience underscored the importance of cross-cultural collaboration in adapting to new environments. As I navigated the language barrier, I became accustomed to my surroundings through outward engagement with native French speakers. Working alongside a brilliant, multilingual team inspired me to learn a new language, highlighting patience as an integral element in mastering new skills and nurturing mutual understanding.

I am eager to continue this journey by participating in the Spring 2025 American Chemical Society conference in San Diego, California. There, I will present our findings on the effects of antibiotics and climate change on the molecular composition of dissolved organic matter in water, as analyzed through FT-ICR mass spectrometry.”



Debra Davis - UMA Senior
Sorbonne Université, Paris, France



Simone Lenoir - UMA Senior
2024 JAMP UT Long Medicine Intern

“During my summer internship at Long School of Medicine, I had the privilege to learn and train as a medical student, learn various different patient exams, and directly care for patients across multiple specialties and surgical units alongside a resident physician. This was a beautiful experience for me that truly rekindled my passion for why I started this all in the first place, reaffirming my true calling to become a Physician.”

“Shadowing a physician-scientist at a clinic serving underserved communities deepened my commitment to addressing health disparities through compassionate, evidence-based care. Working with fellow Nigerian leaders in medicine and presenting my research to hospital faculty underscored my growth and passion for meaningful contributions to health care.”



Britney Chukwu - UMA Senior
U of Chicago Pritzker SOM

UMA SCHOLARS' SUMMER EXPERIENCES



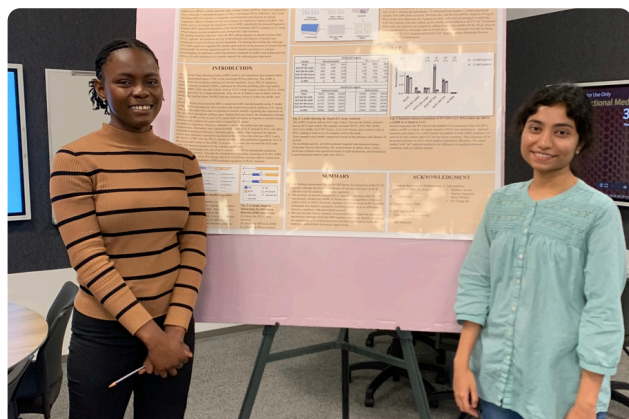
**Erin Renfro - UMA Senior and 2024-2025 President
2024 UNC School of Medicine - MED Scholar**



**Mikylah Blackshire - UMA Senior
2024 Mayo Clinic ENT Researcher**



**Geri Jenkins - UMA Senior
Marigold Leaning Academy Behavioral Tech.**



**Racheal Ighomena - UMA Junior
GREAT Program**



**Rubyleane Linton - UMA Senior
2024 Purdue Veterinary Research Scholar**



**Kayla Vital - UMA Junior
2024 Iowa CROI**



**Paige Wilson - UMA Senior and 2024-2025 Treasurer
2024 Texas A&M University Research Scholar**

PREM 2024 CONFERENCE



At the 2024 UMA PREM Conference, new UMA Scholars had the opportunity to explore the many resources available through the UMA and engage in valuable networking. The event featured a series of insightful presentations from distinguished UMA alumni and faculty, offering inspiration and guidance for the scholars' academic and professional journeys.

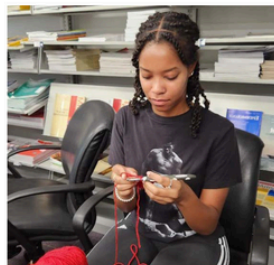
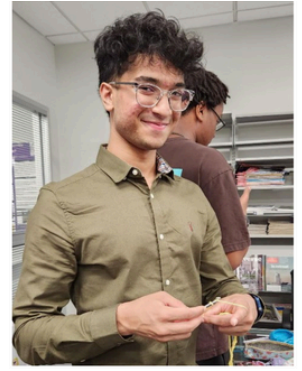
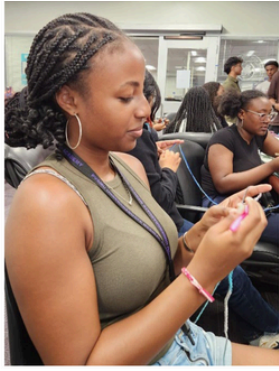
Involvement Fair

On September 10, 2024, PVAMU hosted its annual Involvement Fair to increase engagement with UMA clubs and activities.

UMA scholars represented the UMA, as well as Women in STEM, Women in Pre-Med, the Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students (MAPS) and the National Society of Black Women in Medicine.



CROCHET & SUTURING CLUB



The Crochet & Suturing Club held its first meeting of the semester on Friday, September 13th. 2024-2025 Crochet Club President Kenton Moore and Vice President Mariata Ba led UMA Scholars in practicing their technique by crocheting baby hats, which will be donated later in the semester. With Mrs. Huynh's guidance, Kenton and Mariata will continue to lead club activities every Friday in the UMA at 2 PM. All UMA Scholars are invited to participate!

UMA Alum Visit



UMA alum Dr. Matthew Stevens, DDS of the UMA Iron class (class of 2013), stopped by the UMA in October for a visit. Dr. Stevens earned his DDS degree in 2021 from Howard University College of Dentistry. Currently, Dr. Stevens practices for Village Smiles Dentistry and Orthodontics in Allen, Texas.

Medical School Visits



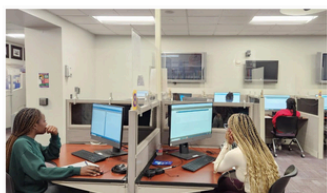
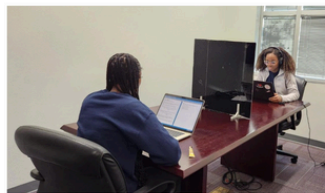
UMA Scholars had the opportunity to visit the University of Texas Medical and Dental Schools on September 5th, 2024. On October 10th, UMA scholars took a second trip to the University of Houston College of Medicine and College of Optometry. UMA Scholars were able to tour the facilities and learn from faculty speakers.

Community Emergency Response Training



Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) kicked off for the Fall 2024 semester! UMA Scholars have learned techniques for splinting and bandaging, and visited the Prairie View Fire Station to complete their Fire Suppression Training. Jacqueline McGill and Shantal Taylor, UMA Seniors, completed additional training to be CERT instructors.

PRACTICE MCAT/DAT/OAT

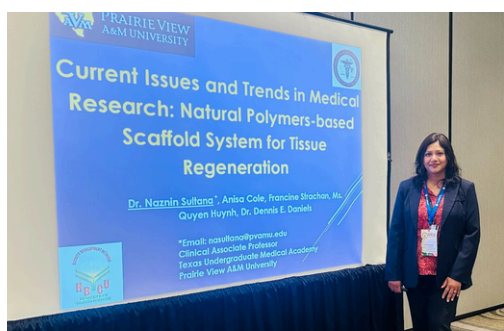


On Saturday, October 5, 2024, the UMA hosted its first practice MCAT/DAT/OAT event of the Fall semester. The turnout for the event was phenomenal, with 24 UMA Scholars attending to take the practice exam. Additionally, a number of UMA Scholars earned community service hours for the semester by assisting as proctors for the exam. The second practice MCAT/DAT/OAT exam session will be held on November 16: UMA scholars may sign-up to participate with Mrs. Huynh.

Research Activities

Dr. Naznin Sultana had the opportunity to present her research during the Annual HBCU-Faculty Development Network conference in Houston, Texas, during October 17-19, 2024. Top photo: Dr. Sultana poses for a picture during her presentation.

UMA Scholars had the opportunity during the Fall semester to work with Dr. Sultana in UMA's BL2 lab. Dr. Sultana notes that this is one of the largest groups of UMA scholars to have the opportunity to learn and conduct cell culture research in her lab. Middle photo left-to-right: Kira Holman, Nyla Holiman, Jazmine Bolden, Jhaydah Pinder, Saif Mohammed, Anisa Cole, Taylor Kilgore, Shelby Davis, and Dr. Sultana.



Session 48 - Current Issues and Trends Medical Research: Natural Polymers-based Scaffold System for Tissue...

Salon B Student Success/Tchng & Lrng

Current Issues and Trends in Medical Research: Natural Polymers-based Scaffold System for Tissue Regeneration

Presenters:

- Naznin Sultana, Prairie View A&M University
- A. Cole, Prairie View A&M University
- F. Strachan, Prairie View A&M University
- Q Huynh, Prairie View A&M University
- D. Daniels, Prairie View A&M University



Mid-Term Grab & Go



The UMA E-Board arranged a snack grab-n-go event during midterms week, October 15-18. UMA Scholars were invited to stop by and help themselves to refreshments between their midterms.

St. Jude Walk



Three UMA Scholars participated in the St. Jude Walk/Run on Saturday, September 28, 2024: Keeland Harville, Erin LaFleur, and Kenton Moore. The St. Jude Walk/Run is an annual event sponsored by St. Jude's Children's Hospital that raises money and awareness in support of children with cancer.

"This year's St. Jude Walk was a wonderful experience. Unlike other years, instead of participating in the run, we volunteered for the event instead. It was great to volunteer and see everyone having a good time coming out to support children with cancer."

Kenton Moore

Birthdays

Summer Birthdays

Shantal Taylor 13-Jun
Deja Livingston 14-Jun
Alyssa Bradford 18-Jun
Jane Ambe 25-Jun
Shelby Davis 29-Jun
Kailan Hatten 29-Jun
Jhaydah Pinder 20-Jul
Rubyleane Linton 23-Jul
Kacey Menyoli 31-Jul
Katie Johnson 31-Jul

Areyana Stigler 1-Aug
Zoey Davis 4-Aug
Lizbet Roque 7-Aug
Mariata Ba 10-Aug
Britney Chukwu 14-Aug
Kira Holman 17-Aug
Erin Renfro 28-Aug
Haile Allen 29-Aug
Alexis Richardson 31-Aug

September & October Birthdays

Kiersten Atkinson 3-Sep
Alesha Maxwell 10-Sep
Kennedy Moses 17-Sep
Saif Mohammed 23-Sep
Sana Ali 24-Sep
Jordan Derry 27-Sep
Keeland Harville 27-Sep

Debra Davis 1-Oct
Mikaylah Blackshire 12-Oct
Geri Jenkins 12-Oct
Taylor Kilgore 17-Oct
Cyrail Young 22-Oct
Simone Lenoir 28-Oct
Kailynn Weaver 30-Oct

Upcoming Events

