



2026

Du Bois
Scholars Program
End of Summer Book



CONTENTS

- 3 About the Du Bois Scholars Program
- 5 A Message from Harvard University's Vice Provost for Special Projects
- 6 Abstracts and Reflections
- 65 Program Highlights
- 75 A Word of Gratitude
- 78 Autographs
- 85 Photo Captions

About the Du Bois Scholars Program

The Du Bois Scholars Program launched in 2024 as part of the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery (H&LS) Initiative's implementation work, which is guided by the 2022 [Report of the Presidential Committee on Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery](#). The Report clearly documents Harvard's direct, financial, and intellectual ties to slavery and presents a set of recommendations to help the University understand and cast light on its legacies of slavery. The H&LS Initiative was created to implement the recommendations outlined in the Report. Drawing from those recommendations, the H&LS Initiative established three strategic priority areas in 2025: deepening partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), memorializing those enslaved by Harvard affiliates while educating the Harvard community about slavery and its impact, and supporting descendant communities. The Du Bois Scholars Program advances the H&LS Initiative's priority of deepening partnerships with HBCUs.

Named after W.E.B. Du Bois — a sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, and Harvard PhD graduate — the program embodies his commitment to honoring and uplifting academic excellence through research-based collaboration between Harvard and HBCUs.

The program is a summer research internship at the Harvard Summer Undergraduate Research Village (HSURV). [Evelynn Hammonds](#), a member of the H&LS Advisory Council and the Barbara Gutmann Rosenkrantz Professor of the History of Science and Professor of African and African American Studies, developed HSURV in 2009 with the goal of providing mentoring and research opportunities at Harvard.

Rising juniors and seniors from [select R1, R2, and research-intensive HBCUs](#) are qualified to apply to the program. Previous program fellows who meet eligibility criteria may also apply as returning fellows. Interested students should [sign up](#) for the H&LS Initiatives newsletter to stay informed about the application cycle at legacyofslavery.harvard.edu.

Students who are accepted into the program become fellows in the HSURV residential community, work closely with a faculty mentor, participate in programming with other HSURV fellows, and create lasting relationships and memories. At the end of the program, fellows present their final research to their peers, faculty mentors, and family members.

The Du Bois Scholars Program is funded by the H&LS Initiative, the Harkness Trust, the Office for the Arts at Harvard, Harvard College, the Center for Astrophysics, and Harvard Business School's Program for Research in Markets and Organizations. For more information, email HLoS_duboisscholars@harvard.edu.



Harvard & the Legacy
of Slavery Initiative



The reflections and abstracts in this book were written by participants in the Du Bois Scholars Program. They reflect the views, experiences, and research of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views, policies, or requirements of the Du Bois Scholars Program, Harvard University, or any affiliated entities or sponsors.



A Message from Harvard University's Vice Provost for Special Projects

As the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery Initiative celebrates another successful summer of the Du Bois Scholars Program, I am filled with pride and gratitude.

This year, our program has both grown and deepened. We received nearly twice as many applications – more than 900 – compared to 2025, due in large part to the Campus Ambassadorship, which was developed and is led by Du Bois Scholar Program alumni to elevate awareness about the program. We also welcomed fellows from Fisk University and Tuskegee University for the first time. Together, these are important milestones that expand our community of Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

I am also delighted to share that donor support has increased, including contributions from the Harkness Trust and the Office for the Arts at Harvard. Our longstanding partners, including Harvard College, the Center for Astrophysics (CfA), and Harvard Business School's Program for Research in Markets & Organizations (PRIMO), continue to walk alongside us. The enthusiasm from new donors, PRIMO, CfA, and other partners is a direct reflection of the fellows' success.

To cohort three of the Du Bois Scholars Program: You have built a vibrant community that means a great deal to Harvard. Your presence – whether in labs and research group meetings, in conversations with faculty and peers, or in the moments of laughter, celebration, and creativity you shared – has enriched Harvard. The program is growing stronger each year because of your engagement. You show up fully, ask hard questions, hone your research skills, contribute to projects that advance knowledge, and support one another, modeling what it looks like to lead with integrity and purpose. As you move forward, continue to stay true to yourself – be bold in your curiosity, purposeful in your research, and maintain the connections you made this summer.

To our dedicated faculty mentors: thank you for your time, wisdom, and continued collaboration with fellows long after the summer ends.

To our donors and partners across Harvard and beyond: your investment in these remarkable students is transforming lives and, in turn, Harvard. Your commitment is both noticed and deeply appreciated.

With immense gratitude,

Sara Bleich, PhD
Vice Provost for Special Projects | Harvard University
Professor of Public Health Policy | Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
Member of the Faculty | Harvard Kennedy School



Abstracts and Reflections

Learn about the Du Bois fellows' projects and their summer takeaways.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Prior to the program, my understanding of machine learning was mostly from a prediction standpoint. Through my work on classifying SPHEREx infrared sources, I found out that successful research depends just as much on understanding the data, asking meaningful scientific questions, and carefully evaluating results as it does on building models.”

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

ABDUL-MAJEED HAMIDU

This summer really changed my perception of what researchers do. Prior to the program, my understanding of machine learning was mostly from a prediction standpoint. Through my work on classifying SPHEREx infrared sources, I found out that successful research depends just as much on understanding the data, asking meaningful scientific questions, and carefully evaluating results as it does on building models. I also got better at using Python to prepare and analyze astronomical datasets and understand model performance

of machine algorithms. Apart from getting technically proficient, this project gave a great platform for me to hone my presentation and communication skills through interactions with mentors, giving my work presentations, and writing a research abstract. These activities have increased my interest in applying ML to scientific research discoveries and prompted my research to merge computer engineering with actual-world problems in astronomy and other areas of science.



Classifying SPHEREx Sources Using Machine Learning

Fellow: Abdul-Majeed Hamidu

Mentor: Joseph Hora, Center for Astrophysics

Abstract

We apply machine learning techniques to classify infrared (IR) spectral sources for NASA's SPHEREx mission, with a particular focus on identifying Young Stellar Objects (YSOs) and distinguishing them from other astrophysical sources. Accurate classification of YSOs is critical for studying the early stages of stellar evolution; however, traditional approaches based on infrared color-color and color-magnitude diagrams often suffer from overlapping source populations and provide limited confidence in the resulting classifications. In this paper, we leverage the low-resolution near-infrared spectral data of SPHEREx to carry out the automated spectral classification based on the supervised learning techniques.

A set of labeled templates with 5,412 objects was applied to train and test various machine learning models by dividing them into thirteen different astrophysical categories, e.g., Class I, II, and III YSOs, carbon-rich and oxygen-rich Asymptotic Giant Branch (AGB) stars, Active Galactic Nuclei (AGN), and main-sequence (MS) stars with effective temperatures between 3500 K and 6500 K. The template comprises 316 Class I YSOs, 500 Class II YSOs, 385 Class III

YSOs, 524 carbon-rich AGB stars, 258 MS 3500 K stars, as well as about 500 samples for each other stellar class. Several supervised learning algorithms were evaluated using cross-validation to identify the model with the strongest classification performance.

We found that among the models tested, the highest overall cross-validation accuracy (73.3%) was achieved using a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) classifier. The classifier performance was high for several source types, e.g. Class II YSOs (97%), carbon-rich AGB stars (95%), MS 3500 K stars (88%), MS 6500 K stars (87%), and AGN (84%). Lower accuracies were obtained for intermediate-temperature main-sequence stars due to their spectral similarities which cause confusion between the adjacent temperature classes. The best-performing CNN model was subsequently applied to 21,524 previously unlabeled SPHEREx sources to predict their astrophysical classifications, providing an efficient and scalable framework for identifying unknown objects from their infrared spectra.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“My skillsets and interests have evolved so much over the summer... I have learned so much about how to engage with primary and secondary documents, properly read and annotate academic articles, and engage with academic materials differently.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

ABIBA MONCRIFFE

Working with Evelyn Hammonds this summer has helped me grow in more ways than I could have ever imagined. My skillsets and interests have evolved so much over the summer. Initially, I was anxious to work in the history of science department because it is so different from research I have done before. However, I have learned so much about the creation of race, the history of its evolution, and the role science has played in the creation and sustenance of it. Additionally, I

have learned so much about how to engage with primary and secondary documents, properly read and annotate academic articles, and engage with academic materials differently. This summer has really challenged me but also reminded me of the joy in learning new things and immersing yourself in a new field. I am so excited to use everything I have learned from Evelyn Hammonds in my future research!



Measurement on the Color Line: A Historical Analysis of Scientific Instruments Created to Measure Skin Tone

Fellow: Abiba Moncriste

Mentor: Evelyn Hammonds, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and Hannah Marcus, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

This research project examines three objects from Evelyn Hammonds' upcoming exhibit on the history of the scientific idea of race in the Harvard University Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments.

Through a historical analysis, the project examines the backgrounds of three different tools used to measure skin color: the Bradley Color top used by physical anthropologists in the early 20th century (1928), the von Luschan Scale, designed in 1905 by Austro-Hungarian anthropologist, Felix von Luschan; and Monk Skin Tone Scale, created in 1922 by Ellis Monk, a Harvard Professor of Sociology.

The project provides examples and historical backgrounds of three different tools used to quantify skin color and reveals the limitations of each method. In doing this, the project works to establish a lineage of tools scientists have used to understand skin color differences. It also explores how different disciplines and scientists asked questions

about skin color, pursued their answers, and interpreted their findings. Most importantly, it examines how these different tools produce answers to the same questions and continue to affect our ideas of skin color difference today.

The analysis draws on primary and secondary sources to examine each instrument's function, their flaws, and implications. The project shows various examples of differences in skin color measurements in scientific contexts from the early 20th century to the 21st century. This research illustrates the relationship between scientific inquiry, discovery, and experimentation, alongside biological and sociological conceptions of race.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“I have been learning a lot more about neuroscience and working with brain tissue, which has reinforced that this is the field of work that I want to go into.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

ARYANNA TOOMER

My research skills have evolved because I have learned new techniques that I had not been previously exposed to. I have been learning a lot more about neuroscience and working with brain tissue, which has reinforced that this is the field of work that I want to go into. I have also learned a lot about neurodegenerative diseases.



Differences in the Distribution of Tau and -Synuclein Pathologies in Serotonergic Brainstem Regions and its Clinical Significance within Neurodegeneration

Fellow: Aryanna Toomer

Mentor: Veronique VanderHorst, Harvard Medical School

Abstract

Alzheimer's disease (AD) and Parkinson's disease (PD) are neurodegenerative disorders characterized by cognitive and motor impairment. Some of their key neuropathologies, phosphorylated tau (p-tau) in AD and phosphorylated alpha-synuclein (p-asyn) in PD, first accumulate in the brainstem before spreading to other brain regions. Among brainstem sites, serotonergic nuclei are particularly vulnerable and play essential roles in cognitive and motor function. However, the regional distribution of p-tau and p-asyn across the serotonergic system remains poorly understood. This study characterized the burden of p-tau and p-asyn within serotonergic brainstem regions.

We analyzed 37 postmortem brainstem tissues from the Memory and Aging Project (ages 78–101 years; 28 female, 9 male; 11 with AD and 3 with PD) using immunohistochemistry for serotonergic neurons, p-tau, and p-asyn. Analyses focused on the dorsal raphe nucleus (DRN), median raphe nucleus (MR), raphe magnus/obscurus/pallidus complex (RPM), and lateral paragigantocellular nucleus (LPGI). In 1mm² regions of

(interest (ROIs), we quantified p-tau tangles, p-asyn Lewy bodies and filled neurons manually, and pathology particle density using image analysis software.

All 37 cases exhibited p-tau pathology. Tangles were detected in the DRN (37/37), MR (33/37), LPGI (24/37), and RPM (22/37), with the DRN showing the highest tangle burden and p-tau particle density. In contrast, only eight cases were positive for p-asyn pathology, with pathology identified in the RPM (7/8), DRN (7/8), LPGI (6/8), and MR (6/8). The rostral RPM showed the greatest Lewy body burden, filled neurons, and p-asyn particle density.

These findings demonstrate distinct patterns of AD and PD pathology burden in serotonergic brainstem nuclei. P-tau predominated in rostral ROIs, particularly the DRN, and p-asyn in caudal ROIs, especially in the RPM. As the DRN innervates forebrain cognitive regions and the RPM innervates spinal sensorimotor structures, future studies will correlate these regional pathological gradients with cognitive and motor impairment.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“This summer provided me with the resources, time, and mentorship to fully immerse myself in a research environment and to challenge myself to grow as an academic.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

AVERY BENNEKIN

This summer provided me with the resources, time, and mentorship to fully immerse myself in a research environment and to challenge myself to grow as an academic. I spent my days in city and state archives, scouring for details on colonial Cambridge’s enslaved, a population that was considered subhuman. I’ve grown in my ability to critically analyze technical documents, efficiently catalog primary

materials, and navigate large digital collections and databases. I have been so humbled by this opportunity to piece together the stories and lives of my ancestors. In a city where they lived and worked, entrapped in a system of servitude and death, I have joyously engaged in this project that brings them back to the forefront of Cambridge’s collective memory.



A Resting Place: Mapping the Daily Lives of Enslaved Individuals in Colonial Cambridge

Fellow: Avery Bennekin

Mentor: Jason Ur, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

In the northwestern corner of Cambridge's Old Burial Ground, separated from the community they inhabited, two headstones mark the graves of enslaved people: Cicely, 13, and Jane, 22. Though signified in death, little is known about how they lived, worked, and moved through space. This project centers the experience of the enslaved, separate from their enslavers, by uncovering where and how they lived in colonial Cambridge during the 17th and 18th centuries. Using archival research, paleography, and critical fabulation, this project examines extensive primary sources like municipal and judicial records, estate documents, deeds, receipts, and personal writings to compile mentions of enslaved people across various institutions in a single database. By organizing the primary sources in a central archival catalog, our project creates a more comprehensive look at enslaved life in colonial Cambridge beyond prominent narratives.

Additionally, by detailing the lives of two enslaved Cantabrigians, our project highlights the complex relationships between the enslaved and their enslavers, often falsely remembered as benevolent and dismissive of slavery's inherent violence. Our project centralizes primary sources detailing both geographical and personal information about what it meant to be enslaved in colonial Cambridge. In contrast to earlier scholarship, this project emphasizes the humanity of the enslaved, often flattened to one-dimensional characterizations in documentary records. Though Cicely and Jane are the only enslaved people memorialized in the Old Burial Ground, our project stands as a living monument to the public memory of Cambridge's enslaved.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“My research skillset has evolved over the course of this summer. I learned the importance of persistence.”

NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

AVERY S. PATTERSON

My research skillset has evolved over the course of this summer. I learned the importance of persistence. The topic I researched has seldom been explored, and the research gap was large. At the beginning, I felt discouraged because I didn't have a template I could follow or many other sources I could reference. Instead, I relied on my mentor and the professionals around me. I also was intentional about contacting sources, and I learned that a cold email could get me very far! As a result of my persistence this summer, I created a research project I was proud of.



Lewis Community: How a Free Black Family Influenced 19th Century Massachusetts

Fellow: Avery S. Patterson

Mentor: Jerome Offord, Jr., Harvard Library

Abstract

After the publication of the Report of the Presidential Committee on Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery, there has been an enhanced understanding of the role enslaved Black and Indigenous persons played in supporting Harvard University and Massachusetts. However, seldom has been explored about the influence of free Black residents in 1800s Massachusetts and their connection to Harvard University. To address this knowledge gap, this study explored free Black residents, specifically members of the Lewis family of Cambridge, and their influence on 19th century Massachusetts.

These significant results indicate free Black persons played an integral role in shaping the Black Massachusetts community of the 19th century, contributing to the economy and advocating for civil rights. This study could be referenced by the Harvard & Legacy of Slavery Initiative in their creation of memorials and local tours that commemorate notable Black figures. Future research could explore the prospective relationship between the antebellum colonization movement in Massachusetts and 1920s Back-to-Africa Movement.

The methodology used in this case study was archival research. Archival research was conducted by referencing the Massachusetts Archives, census records, newspapers, special collections from the Cambridge Historical Society, and Harvard Special Collections. As predicted, the study identified that the Lewis Family had a significant political impact through their involvement in the Liberian Emigrant Association and the signing of civil rights petitions. Also as hypothesized, the Lewis family made notable contributions to the financial system of Massachusetts by serving as business owners and Harvard University employees.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Beyond the lab, I significantly improved my ability to read and interpret scientific papers, critically analyze research findings, and communicate scientific ideas through writing.”

NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

BARAK AMARI MEACHEM

This summer, my research interests expanded into virology, a field I had never worked in before. Learning how viruses function, interact with host cells, and cause infection introduced me to an entirely new scientific discipline and gave me a broader perspective on biomedical research. I also learned several new laboratory techniques and experimental approaches that were different from those I had previously used. Beyond the lab, I significantly improved my ability to read and interpret scientific papers, critically analyze research findings, and communicate scientific ideas through

writing. Overall, this experience strengthened both my technical skills and my confidence as a researcher while inspiring me to continue exploring infectious disease research.

The most surprising thing I discovered this summer was the mechanism behind how antiviral strategies can work. Before this experience, I mainly thought antivirals targeted viruses directly. Through my research, I learned that some antiviral approaches instead.



Uncovering the Roles of Host Cell Proteins Incorporated into Coronavirus Virions

Fellow: Barak Amari Meachem

Mentor: Kizzmekia S. Corbett-Helaire, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Abstract

Host-cell proteins incorporated into enveloped viruses during viral assembly have been shown to influence viral attachment, entry, and infectivity of viruses such as HIV. However, the role of host-derived surface proteins in coronavirus infectivity remains poorly understood despite the significant global health burden posed by coronaviruses. Our laboratory identified the host proteins CD49e (integrin $\alpha 5$) and CD29 (integrin $\beta 1$) on the surface of human coronavirus (HCoV)-OC43. Because these proteins function in cell adhesion and receptor-mediated interactions, we hypothesized that their incorporation into HCoV-OC43 virions contribute to viral attachment, entry, and infectivity.

To test this hypothesis, flow virometry to antigenically validate individual HCoV-OC43 virions and confirmed the presence of CD49e and CD29 on viral envelopes was first used. We then infected susceptible HEK-derived target cells with HCoV-OC43 and quantified infectivity using a luminescence-based assay. To determine the functional contribution of these host proteins, we performed antibody-mediated depletion

to remove CD49e- and CD29-positive virions and antibody-mediated neutralization to block their function before infection. Infectivity following each treatment was compared with HIgG isotype controls and an anti-spike (H501-008) positive control to determine the contribution of CD49e and CD29 to OC43 infectivity.

Overall, identifying the roles of CD49e, CD29, and other host-derived proteins in coronavirus infectivity may provide insight into novel host-virus interactions and support development of antiviral strategies targeting stable host-associated components of the viral envelope rather than rapidly mutating viral proteins.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Through this experience, I gained a deeper appreciation for interdisciplinary research and the role of data in addressing environmental health challenges.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

CAITLYN THOMPSON

Coming into DBSP, I had broad interests in public health and environmental justice. Working with Tamarra James Todd this summer allowed me to explore the many directions these fields can take while refining my interests in understanding how water quality and access influence public health outcomes. Through this experience, I gained a deeper appreciation for interdisciplinary research and the role of data in addressing environmental health challenges. I also

strengthened my practical research skills by becoming proficient in tools such as ArcGIS and RStudio, which enhanced my ability to analyze and visualize complex datasets. Overall, this summer helped me clarify the type of research I want to pursue while equipping me with valuable technical skills that I will continue to build on throughout my academic and professional career.



Historical and Contemporary Measures of Social Vulnerability in Relation to Metals Concentrations in Public Park Water Samples and Lead Service Line Infrastructure

Fellow: Caitlyn Thompson

Mentor: Tamarra James-Todd, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Abstract

Water is a known source of toxic metals exposure. Exposures vary by communities due to both historical and contemporary measures of social vulnerability. Past policies such as historical redlining and contemporary measures, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) are linked to a disproportionate burden of harmful environmental exposures.

This study expands on limited research evaluating associations between historical redlining and SVI with metals concentrations in public drinking water samples collected from Boston parks. As a secondary analysis, we assessed the total number of lead service lines by historical redlining and SVI within Boston. A total of 36 parks with functional drinking water stands were sampled in nine racially/ethnically and socioeconomically diverse Boston neighborhoods. Using ArcGIS, we linked the parks census tract data to HOLC grade maps and SVI ranks. Water samples collected from all parks were analyzed by the Metals Core Lab at Dartmouth College using ICP-MS. Of the

metals assessed, 10 toxic metals were above limit of detection (i.e. As, Ba, Be, Cd, Cr, Cu, Mn, Pb, Se, Tl) and included in the present analysis where we calculated mean metals concentrations by HOLC grade and SVI ranks and used ANOVA to assess differences in mean concentrations across groups. Spatial analyses were conducted to determine associations between redlining, SVI, and metal concentrations.

We found specific patterns of contamination rather than systemic elevation across all analyzed metals. Specifically, historically redlined neighborhoods had significantly higher concentrations of Barium ($p = 0.0017$), while neighborhoods with higher SVI levels exhibited significantly higher concentrations of Cadmium ($p = 0.0431$). No statistically significant differences across groups were observed for the remaining eight metals. These data provide key information about public drinking water from parks as a disparate source of metals exposure in marginalized communities that could benefit from targeted infrastructure interventions.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

*“This summer... I learned
that meaningful research
begins with listening.”*

SPELMAN COLLEGE

CAMBEL CADIEN

This summer transformed how I think about research and its role in advancing health equity. Working alongside Dr. Daniel Palazuelos and community partners such as the JRI Health Law Institute, I developed skills in survey design, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community engagement. More importantly, I learned that meaningful research begins with listening. Whether refining surveys to better capture client experiences or collaborating with community organizations, I came to appreciate that the most effective interventions are built with

communities rather than for them. This experience deepened my understanding of community-centered medical education and showed me that small, intentional improvements in evaluation and program design can lead to more equitable care. As an aspiring physician, I now see research not only as a means of generating knowledge, but as a tool for strengthening partnerships, improving systems, and ensuring every community's voice informs the care they receive.



Community-based Scholarship and Service

Fellow: Cambel Cadien

Mentor: Daniel Palazuelos, Harvard Medical School

Abstract

Community-centered healthcare depends on meaningful partnerships and effective evaluation to improve health outcomes and advance health equity. However, community-based programs often face challenges in measuring their impact and sustaining meaningful engagement with the populations they serve. This project examined strategies to strengthen community-based health initiatives through quality improvement, program evaluation, and community engagement.

The project involved two complementary initiatives. First, existing pre- and post-service surveys used by the JRI Health Law Institute to evaluate legal services for clients living with HIV were reviewed to identify opportunities to improve question clarity, strengthen the relevance of survey content, and address barriers to survey completion. Recommendations were developed to improve survey design and increase post-service response rates, enabling a more comprehensive assessment of client experiences, program outcomes, and service effectiveness. Second,

community engagement efforts were supported through the planning and facilitation of Mission Main Tenant Task Force's annual Family Fun Day, a community event serving residents of the Mission Main public housing development. The event fostered connections between residents and partnering organizations while promoting access to health-related resources and community services.

Preliminary findings suggest that strengthening evaluation methods while cultivating authentic community partnerships enhances the effectiveness of interdisciplinary programs addressing the social determinants of health. Ongoing work will focus on implementing and evaluating the proposed survey revisions while exploring how community-centered evaluation practices can improve equitable, person-centered care and inform future community health initiatives.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“The most surprising discovery was how exhilarating research would be.”

TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

CHIOMA OKORO

The most surprising discovery was how exhilarating research would be. I expected to gather sources; I didn't expect to feel so energized by reading dissertations and seeing the depth and rigor behind major scholarly work. That exposure naturally sharpened my own project. Without changing direction, my research became more focused and more clearly defined, revealing what my work actually wants to be.

I was also surprised by how well I balanced everything: archival research, writing, preparing for my lecture-recital, and managing Harvard Summer Chorus, all while building community and attending campus engagements. This summer showed me that I can sustain intensive intellectual work while juggling multiple responsibilities, a confidence-building realization that will shape my academic path moving forward.



The First American Music: William Levi Dawson, Institutional Resistance, and the Legacy of the Negro Folk Song

Fellow: Chioma Okoro

Mentor: Andrew Clark, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

This research argues that Negro Folk Songs constitute among the first genuinely American musical traditions, emerging from enslavement and collective memory rather than from any single composer. W.E.B. Du Bois described them as "the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas," a claim this project takes seriously as a starting point rather than a rhetorical flourish.

The project traces how these songs moved from suppression and minstrel caricature toward institutional legitimacy through the arranging work of Harry T. Burleigh, R. Nathaniel Dett, and William Levi Dawson, whose twenty-six years directing the Tuskegee University "Golden Voices" Concert Choir produced some of the most widely performed works in the American collegiate choral canon. Drawing on archival research and comparative analysis, the project examines Tuskegee's choral tradition alongside Harvard's, where influential

music department figures John Knowles Paine and Archibald T. Davison disputed the authenticity of Negro Folk Songs as American music for nearly a century combined. This comparison illuminates how institutional gatekeeping shaped which musical traditions were canonized and which were marginalized, with consequences that extended through Jim Crow and persist today.

Preliminary findings point to a significant gap between the ubiquity of Dawson's arrangements in collegiate choirs today and singers' awareness of their origins and significance. Building on this research, the project proposes a freshman seminar course syllabus on the history of collegiate choral singing, intended to close that gap by giving student performers the historical and cultural context behind the music they sing.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Learning about health decision science from my mentor transformed the way I think about research.”

SPELMAN COLLEGE **CHLOE FITE**

I came in with an interest in researching health disparities with illnesses like diabetes and hypertension. Coming in and learning about health decision science from my mentor transformed the way I think about research. Through my work on patient and stakeholder engagement in US health technology assessments, I learned how research can directly influence healthcare decision-making. Beyond strengthening my quantitative and analytical skills, I developed

a deeper appreciation for meaningful questions and interpreting data in context. Working alongside Professor Ankur Pandya has challenged me to view research as an iterative process rather than finding a “right” answer. This experience has confirmed that I want to pursue a career where I can use research as evidence to shape policies that improve health equity, particularly for historically underserved communities.



Examining Patient and Citizen Engagement in U.S. Health Technology Assessments

Fellow: Chloe Fite

Mentor: Ankur Pandya, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Abstract

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) organizations play an essential role in evaluating the clinical effectiveness, value, and affordability of new medical treatments. As healthcare decision-making increasingly highlights incorporating patient perspectives along with clinical and economic evidence, it is important to understand how patients and other stakeholders— including manufacturers, patient advocacy organizations, researchers, payers, and citizens—participate in the HTA process. However, limited research has examined what factors influence the level of patient and stakeholder engagement in U.S. HTAs.

This study examines the factors associated with patient and stakeholder engagement in reports published by the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review (ICER). We developed an analytic dataset of publicly available ICER assessments published between 2017 and 2026 that included the following variables: disease prevalence, patient engagement measures, stakeholder participation, patient representation within reports, and overall report lengths. We used this dataset to report descriptive statistics, correlation analyses, and regression analyses to examine whether disease prevalence, rare disease status, and disease categories were associated with levels of patient and stakeholder engagement.

Every HTA included in our analysis (n=46) included patient input in a dedicated section of the report, eight of which (27%) included a patient quote on their experience with the disease or treatment being considered. Most (29, 97%) included a comment from the manufacturer of the technology, and 20 (67%) included input from a patient advocacy group. None of the reports included input for citizens (i.e., representation of taxpayers or those paying for the technologies via health insurance premiums). Preliminary analyses of ICER assessments suggest that disease prevalence does not predict the degree of patient engagement, but could predict other elements of HTAs such as the total length of the report. Consistent with these findings, correlation analyses showed no meaningful relationship between disease prevalence and patient engagement ($r = -0.12$), while disease prevalence was moderately associated with total report length ($r = 0.57$). Regression analyses also found no statistically significant association between patient engagement and either rare disease status ($p = 0.43$) or disease category ($p = 0.67$). Future analyses will expand on the dataset to further examine whether rare diseases and disease burden are associated with increased patient and stakeholder engagement. Findings from this study inform efforts to promote more equitable and representative stakeholder participation in health technology assessments and healthcare decision-making.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Rather than viewing research as simply collecting data, I now see it as a tool for advancing meaningful change.”

NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

DERRICK J. BRADLEY II

This summer, my research interests have evolved in ways that encourage critical thought, innovation, and methodological rigor. Through my work, I have realized that my interests naturally connect to civic responsibility and community engagement, particularly in understanding how research can inform equitable policies and improve the lived experiences of vulnerable populations. Rather than viewing research as simply collecting data, I now see it as a tool for advancing meaningful change. My skillset has also grown significantly. I have become more strategic in synthesizing large amounts of

information, identifying meaningful patterns, and communicating complex findings with clarity and purpose. Additionally, I have developed a deeper appreciation for rigorous research methods and the importance of asking thoughtful questions that move a project forward. These experiences have strengthened my ability to approach research with both analytical precision and a commitment to generating solutions that benefit communities.



Cooling solutions for High-Risk Urban adults Experiencing Heat Waves

Fellow: Derrick J. Bradley II

Mentor: Gary Adamkiewicz, Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health

Abstract

As extreme heat events become more frequent and severe, older adults face heightened risks due to age, chronic health conditions, and environmental exposures. The Beat the Heat study investigates indoor heat exposure and the cooling strategies older adults use during extreme heat events, including air conditioning use and access to cooling resources. Building on this work, this study examines how outdoor neighborhood environments influence indoor heat experiences and heat adaptation behaviors through an environmental justice and green infrastructure lens. Specifically, it investigates whether disparities in tree canopy, shaded public spaces, park access, and neighborhood investment contribute to differences in heat exposure and cooling strategies among older adults.

Using surveys and interviews alongside geographic analyses of green infrastructure, the study will explore perceptions of neighborhood green space, barriers to cooling, air conditioning use, and the relationship between outdoor environmental conditions and indoor heat management. Findings will provide insight into how green infrastructure shapes cooling strategies and heat exposure, the health implications of inequitable neighborhood environments for older adults, and policy interventions that support equitable landscape planning, public health, and climate resilience in heat-vulnerable communities.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Surrounded by an interdisciplinary and globally diverse cohort of peers, I learned not only through research itself but also through the meaningful relationships and conversations that shaped it.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

GARRISON BOYD ANDREWS

As a research-oriented scholar committed to service and community, this summer has been academically and professionally transformative. I was surprised by how much I strengthened my institutional and qualitative analysis skills while also growing holistically as a student researcher. Through the Du Bois Scholars Program and the Program for Research in Markets and Organizations, I was encouraged to pursue my intellectual curiosity fully, whether by engaging with faculty whose work inspired me or by embracing new perspectives and opportunities. Most importantly, my faculty

mentor, these two programs, and the Harvard Summer Undergraduate Research Village created an environment where scholarship was deeply collaborative. Surrounded by an interdisciplinary and globally diverse cohort of peers, I learned not only through research itself but also through the meaningful relationships and conversations that shaped it. This experience reinforced my commitment to using scholarship in the service of others and approaching academic inquiry as rigorous and community-centered.



How Has Race Been Theorized in Organizational Research Since 1964? A Review of Workplace Scholarship

Fellow: Garrison Boyd Andrews

Mentor: Lumumba Seegars, Harvard Business School's Program for Research in Markets & Organizations

Abstract

Question: How has race been theorized within organizational research since 1964? Post-Civil Rights era workplaces have become increasingly diverse. In response to this demographic shift, scholars have devoted significant attention to understanding the role of race in organizational and workplace contexts. Consequently, a rich body of research has developed, illuminating the dynamics, experiences, processes, and outcomes associated with race in organizations and the workplace.

Twenty-eight business-related research articles examining race in workplace settings were reviewed for this project. Using a coding framework, how race was conceptualized and studied across these articles was analyzed and identified, capturing each study's organizational context, industry setting, research design, and theoretical treatment of race. Through this analysis, the primary outcomes of the studies evaluated whether each article could be categorized as presenting evidence of sanctioning and, if so, whether such sanctioning occurred through authorization (organizational processes that grant individuals/groups access,

legitimacy, or opportunity), discipline (processes that constrain, exclude, or regulate), or a combination of both.

A preliminary analysis showed that much of the literature, demonstrated across a range of organizational contexts, formal and informal organizational practices, are associated with how employees understand, express, and navigate their racial identities and relationships with majority and minority groups. Findings within the literature demonstrate that race is not simply a static demographic characteristic but has been conceptualized and redefined in a multitude of ways which have influenced the varied relational dynamics and outcomes across different organizational levels.

Future research will expand the scope of analysis by incorporating a larger sample of studies and additional analytical parameters, enabling a more comprehensive examination of patterns and trends across organizational contexts and management research.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Developing more inclusive research methods that better capture the complexity of suicide risk ultimately contribute to more equitable prevention strategies.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY **IMANI MARC**

The most surprising discovery was how strongly educational experiences and other adverse childhood experiences can influence suicidal ideation beyond individual psychological symptoms alone. Exploring the literature and analyzing data showed me that suicide risk is shaped by interconnected systems rather than a single factor. I was especially struck by the gaps in research

involving marginalized adolescents, whose experiences are often underrepresented in existing measures and studies. This reinforced the importance of developing more inclusive research methods that better capture the complexity of suicide risk and ultimately contribute to more equitable prevention strategies.



Perceived Unfair School Discipline and Dual Harm Among U.S. Adolescents: Evidence From the 2023 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Fellow: Imani Marc

Mentor: Matthew Nock, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

Youth who experience both suicidal behaviors and physical fighting, referred to here as dual harm, are at an increased risk for long-term morbidity and mortality. Schools can significantly affect the mental health of adolescents. Researchers are just starting to explore how schools influence adolescent mental health.

One under-studied aspect is whether perceived unfair school disciplinary practices contribute to dual harm. To test this association, we used data from the 2023 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), which contains a representative sample of all high school students in the United States. Using survey-weighted multinomial regression models, we examined if there were significant associations between perceived unfair school discipline and being part of one of four categories: no harm, having engaged in suicidal behavior only, having engaged in fighting only, and having experienced both.

After controlling for demographic factors and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), we found that the perceived unfairness of school discipline was positively correlated with each category, and specifically, that adolescents who

perceived that they received unfair school discipline had significantly higher odds of experiencing dual harm when compared to youth without any form of harm (adjusted OR = 3.62, 95% CI: 2.81–4.67, $p < .0001$). In addition to the significantly positive correlation between perceived unfair school discipline and dual harm, we also observed statistically significant correlations between perceived unfair school discipline and engaging in either fighting only (adjusted OR = 2.31, 95% CI: 1.92–2.79) or suicidal behavior only (adjusted OR = 1.53, 95% CI: 1.25–1.88).

Thus, our findings suggest that perceived unfair school discipline may represent a point where a vulnerable subgroup of adolescents experience overlap in their internalizing and externalizing risk factors due to structural vulnerabilities present within their educational environments, even before these same adolescents experience ACEs. As such, school-based encounters with discipline procedures may provide opportunities for behavioral health screenings and identifying suicidal risk prior to the onset of identifiable symptoms.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“One of the greatest privileges of research is discovering what you want your future work to look like.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY INDIA CROWE

One of the greatest privileges of research is discovering what you want your future work to look like. This summer, I was honored to contribute to a project that aligns closely with my interests in the public memory of Afro American experiences and the preservation of Black culture and history. It also reaffirmed my desire to produce research with meaningful social impact. At the same time, the project, along with the program's presentations, site visits, and

conversations, showed me that the methods I am most drawn to are those centered on people and communities. I also strengthened my ArcGIS Pro skills beyond the fundamentals I came in with. Every week, I learned something new, leaving with both stronger technical abilities and a clearer understanding of the kind of anthropologist I hope to become.



A Resting Place: Mapping the Daily Lives of Enslaved Individuals in Colonial Cambridge

Fellow: India Crowe

Mentor: Jason Ur, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

In the northwestern corner of Cambridge's Old Burial Ground, separated from the community they inhabited, two headstones mark the graves of enslaved people: Cicely, 13, and Jane, 22. Though signified in death, little is known about how they lived, worked, and moved through space. This project centers the experience of the enslaved, separate from their enslavers, by uncovering where and how they lived in colonial Cambridge during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Using geospatial visualization, 3D modeling, and spatial analysis, this project reconstructs the living environments of enslaved individuals and provides insight on how they moved through space. Additionally, by detailing the lives of two enslaved Cantabrigians, our project highlights the complex relationships between the enslaved and their enslavers, often falsely remembered as benevolent and dismissive of slavery's inherent violence. The project centralizes primary sources detailing

both geographical and personal information about what it meant to be enslaved in colonial Cambridge. Through vectorization of historical maps and reconstructions alike and cataloging geographical locations from textual evidence, the project's database examines the lives of the enslaved through time and space. In contrast to earlier scholarship, this project emphasizes the humanity of the enslaved, often flattened to dimensional characterizations in documentary records.

Though Cicely and Jane are the only enslaved people memorialized in the Old Burial Ground, the project stands as a living monument to the public memory of Cambridge's enslaved.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“This summer at Harvard Medical School and Boston Children’s Hospital, I saw how much people’s health is shaped by the support or lack of support they have.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY **KAMILAH LIGE**

This summer at Harvard Medical School and Boston Children’s Hospital, I saw how much people’s health is shaped by the support or lack of support they have. Learning from community organizations and shadowing my mentor’s psychiatry practice, I realized how isolating it can feel when that support isn’t there, and how urgently we need to bridge those gaps for every child and family.



Youth Behavioral Health Equity & Justice Involvement Mapping Pathways to Care in Boston

Fellow: Kamilah Lige

Mentor: Kevin Simon, Harvard Medical School

Abstract

Standard models of youth diversion trace a one-way path: a young person in crisis is identified, referred, and connected to care. The clinical reality in Boston is recursive. Many justice-involved youth are already known to clinicians, schools, probation officers, and community programs, and many are engaged in services at the moment they enter/re-enter the legal system. These young people, and the family members who care for them, navigate an ecosystem they did not design. The harder problem is not the first referral but sustained engagement.

To map the pathways justice-involved youth and their families travel among crisis, behavioral health care, and legal re-entry in Boston, and to develop a framework that matches distinct youth profiles to the community behavioral health interventions built to hold them. We are conducting a landscape scan of Boston's youth behavioral health infrastructure and a synthesis of the published literature on engagement and legal-system return, informed by the Sequential Intercept Model.

Pathways loop rather than progress linearly. Care and legal involvement often run concurrently, and families bear the burden of navigating disconnected systems. Current service categories miss key distinctions: some youth face complex psychiatric needs alongside involvement with multiple agencies, while others face primarily social challenges, yet both are labeled "high-risk." An emerging engagement fit framework aims to guide referrals by considering system involvement, clinical picture, and family context together. Sustaining engagement requires matching a young person's actual profile, including family, to the intervention designed for them, not to their label.

The findings point toward a structural answer: a community-based clinical model that partners with state agencies to provide psychiatric care for this population, in place of the current patchwork. The completed pathways map, the engagement fit framework, and cross-system recommendations will be presented in August 2026.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“From learning how to create stimuli to running Zoom studies with children to learning how to code and interpret data, I have already learned so much.”

SPELMAN COLLEGE

KATHYA LAVADO-ARRINGTON

As a rising junior who is currently trying to figure out my post-college plans, being in a research lab for the summer has opened my eyes to career paths that I have not yet considered. As I am working in the Laboratory of Developmental Studies within the Harvard Department of Psychology, I have seen an entirely different side of working with children than what I am used to as a teacher. From learning how to create stimuli to running Zoom studies with children

to learning how to code and interpret data, I have already learned so much thanks to my faculty mentor, Ashley Thomas, and lab manager, Maya Hernandez. Although there are still a few weeks left in the program, it is without a doubt that I am now interested in pursuing a PhD in psychology, and also continuing to explore the realm of research in general.



How Children Use Parent-Teacher Value Alignment to Establish Who They Can Trust

Fellow: Kathya Lavado-Arrington

Mentor: Ashley Thomas, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

Previous research suggests that children evaluate whom to believe. Long before they can articulate why, they are tracking who has been right before, who knows what is correct, and to whom other people listen. However, we do not know if children notice whether a potential teacher shares the values they have learned at home. While a child's foundational understanding of the world and moral rules is heavily shaped by their parents at home, entering school requires them to extend that trust to unfamiliar adults in a different setting.

This study explores how parent-teacher value alignment impacts a child's willingness to trust new information and to complete difficult tasks. We hypothesize that children will be more likely to trust and learn from potential teachers whose values align with their parents' values, but less likely to do so from potential teachers whose values align with those of an unfamiliar adult. This hypothesis is informed by research suggesting that children trust their parents' moral testimony and draw inferences about social relationships.

We present 6- to 7-year-old children, over Zoom, with novel action words (e.g., turbing), two animal avatars, and either their parent in the parent condition or a stranger in the yoked control condition. One character agrees with their parents that 'turbine is ok' and another character disagrees with their parent. Then both characters give an impossible task, and we measure how long children spend on the tasks. Finally, we ask children questions about interpersonal and epistemic trust toward the two characters.

The premise is that when children encounter potential teachers they believe are socially connected to their parents, they may be more receptive to learning from them. By examining how children develop trust in new potential teachers, this study highlights the importance of consistency between home and school life.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“I have come to understand the importance of a strong foundation in mathematics and coding for research in the field of economics.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY **KAWIKA KEYS**

I have come to understand the importance of a strong foundation in mathematics and coding for research in the field of economics. There is quite a big learning curve, but once I overcome it I believe I will be set to delve into graduate-level research. This has become quite clear to me during my time at HBS and I look forward to blowing it out of the water!



The Market for CFOs: Evidence from Private Equity

Fellow: Kawika Keys

Mentor: Paul Gompers, Harvard Business School's Program for Research in Markets & Organizations

Abstract

Most research conducted on the labor market for Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) has revolved around publicly traded companies with very little research addressing the market for CFOs in Private Equity, specifically in companies acquired through Public-to-Private (P2P) deals. This project explores both the nature of and the dynamics of the hiring of CFOs within both the public and private CFO labor markets, focusing on external versus internal appointments and their implications for firm-specific human capital.

In line with the work of Gompers, et al. regarding the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) labor market, we utilize Pitchbook company and deal-level data to accurately assess the labor market for CFOs in companies acquired by private equity. Specifically, the study analyzes the rate of internal hiring of the acquired company's CFO as opposed to external hiring of a new CFO after acquisition, industry-related experience of the new CFOs relative to their new company/industry placement,

buyout and equity incentives used to attract new CFOs, and size of firm relative to turnover rates for CFOs. Additionally, the study seeks to gain a greater understanding of the background of PE-backed CFOs prior background, how they were recruited to the companies, and what their action plan for the firm is. The study then compares these findings to counterparts in publicly traded companies, allowing us to gain deeper insights into the labor market for CFOs in both publicly traded and privately held companies.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“While I entered the program interested in maternal health, I developed a deeper appreciation for implementation science and qualitative research.”

SPELMAN COLLEGE

KENNEDY WATSON

This summer, my research interests and skillset evolved in ways I did not expect. While I entered the program interested in maternal health, I developed a deeper appreciation for implementation science and qualitative research. Through conducting literature reviews, coding interview transcripts, and analyzing themes related to doula integration during cesarean births, I learned how patient experiences and clinician perspectives can be translated into practical strategies for improving care. I also strengthened my ability to critically evaluate

evidence, synthesize qualitative data, and communicate research findings through scientific writing and presentations. Most importantly, this experience reinforced my passion for advancing patient-centered maternal health care and showed me how research can drive meaningful changes in clinical practice. I leave this summer with stronger research skills, greater confidence, and an even clearer vision of the physician-scientist I hope to become.



Implementation Barriers and Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change Strategies for Supporting Doula Presence in the Operating Room

Fellow: Kennedy Watson

Mentor: Elysia Larson, Harvard Medical School

Abstract

Introduction/Objective:

Cesarean birth is a common component of childbirth, but unexpected surgical delivery may require changes to a patient's planned support. Doulas are trained professionals who provide continuous emotional, informational, and physical support during childbirth, but their role in the operating room (OR) during cesarean birth is often unclear. Identifying barriers to doula inclusion and implementation strategies to support collaboration may improve efforts to promote patient-centered care during cesarean birth.

Methods:

A secondary qualitative analysis was conducted of previously collected in-depth, semi-structured interviews focused on doula care and cesarean birth. These interviews included 49 participants: 27 clinicians, 11 doulas, and 11 patients who either experienced cesarean birth or were involved in cesarean delivery care. Interview transcripts were analyzed using a framework analysis approach to identify barriers to doula presence in the OR and participant-informed strategies to address those barriers. Findings were then used to create an educational tool for clinicians.

Results/Discussion:

Qualitative analysis identified seven clinician-perceived barriers to doula presence in the OR: limited space, clinician misunderstanding of the doula's role, low trust between clinicians and doulas, lack of standardized OR policies, liability concerns, poor teamwork, and the need for interdisciplinary education. Participant-informed strategies to address these barriers included standardized policies, interdisciplinary education, and improved communication, and were mapped to implementation science approaches to identify potential methods for supporting doula integration during cesarean birth.

Implementation of these strategies, including use of the educational tool, may help clinicians better understand doulas' roles and improve team collaboration in the OR, thus supporting doula integration during cesarean birth.

Future Directions:

Future implementation should focus on developing and testing standardized OR protocols and interdisciplinary education to support doula presence during cesarean birth. Future research should evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of these strategies among clinicians, doulas, and patients in cesarean birth settings.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“I am grateful that I get to positively contribute to exoplanet research and the scientific community.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY **LAMYLA HILL**

Before starting my research, I had very little knowledge about Exoplanets. The most surprising thing I've discovered in my research this summer is the quest to find habitable planets and how I can contribute to this mission. My research has reminded me of why I fell in love with astrophysics. There is something so intriguing about looking up at the sky and knowing that so many astrophysical bodies lie beyond our imagination. I am grateful that I get to positively contribute to exoplanet research and the scientific community in a meaningful way.



Resolving Long Period Planet Ambiguities in TESS Data

Fellow: LaMyla Hill

Mentor: Jason Eastman, Center for Astrophysics

Abstract

Understanding the periods of exoplanets, which are any planets that exist outside of our solar system, is vital to understanding basic properties of the entire planetary system. NASA launched TESS (the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite) in 2018 to discover transiting planets. Transiting planets pass in front of the star and block a percentage of the star's light as seen from Earth. TESS has 106 distinct sectors that are independently observed for 27 days, roughly every two years. For long period planets (>20 days), the data gaps often result in ambiguous orbital periods because we don't know how many transits were missed while not observing.

We analyzed two planets, which TESS reported as long-period: TOI-5626 with a period of 716.22 days, and TOI-1861, with a period of 742.51 days. Using the EXOFASTv2 modeling software, we fit the transits, their orbits, and the host star with a variety of possible periods to determine a viable period and the system's parameters. Along with the data from TESS, we used follow-up observations from the Exoplanet Follow-

Up Observing Program (ExoFOP) to assess if the combination of data could resolve ambiguous periods. By including detections and non-detections alike, we determined that TOI-5626 has a period of 23.10 days, a semi-major axis of 0.1550 AU, and an eccentricity of 0.353. Additionally, TOI-1861 has a period of 185.63 days, a semi-major axis of 0.643 AU, and an eccentricity of 0.29. From the period, we got a temperature of 354 K, meaning TOI-1861 is in the habitable zone. The habitable zone is the distance away from a host star at which a planet can sustain liquid water. Despite there being 6,316 confirmed exoplanets, only a handful have periods comparable to TOI-1861, and it is among the easiest to study, making it a valuable testbed for understanding habitable planets more broadly.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“My understanding of law expanded from something practiced primarily in courtrooms to something studied, questioned, and shaped through scholarship.”

SPELMAN COLLEGE

MADELINE WRIGHT

This summer, my understanding of law expanded from something practiced primarily in courtrooms to something studied, questioned, and shaped through scholarship. Under Professor Minow’s guidance, I explored transitional justice, human rights violations, and the many ways societies pursue accountability beyond criminal prosecution: truth commissions, reparations, public education, archives, and

institutional reform. What changed most was not only what I researched, but how I learned to think. Professor Minow’s breadth of knowledge across law, history, ethics, and public policy pushed me to read sources as part of larger conversations and to ask what is at stake in every argument. I became more confident synthesizing legal scholarship, evaluating case studies, and understanding law as an academic field.



Transitional Justice, International Criminal Court Complementarity, and Responses to Human Rights Violations

Fellow: Madeline Wright

Mentor: Martha Minow, Harvard Law School

Abstract

How should international law respond when societies confront crimes against humanity, genocide, and gross violations of human rights? This project examines how domestic transitional justice practices interact with criminal trials at national and international levels.

Transitional justice includes measures such as truth commissions, reparations, and restorative sanctions that societies use to address legacies of mass violence. The project focuses especially on the International Criminal Court (ICC), a permanent court that prosecutes individuals for the gravest international crimes, and complementarity, the principle that the ICC generally acts only when national authorities are unwilling or unable genuinely to investigate or prosecute the same cases. Building from scholarship on alternative justice mechanisms and ICC complementarity, the research reviewed legal scholarship, empirical public opinion studies, and case studies, with particular attention to Colombia and Cambodia.

The research assessed how these approaches pursue accountability, include survivors, and preserve evidence and collective memory. The findings suggest that responses to human rights violations should not be judged only by how closely they resemble adversarial prosecution. Together, the cases illustrate how restorative sanctions can combine criminal accountability with acknowledgment and repair, while trials alone may not fulfill broader goals of truth, education, memory, and reconciliation. Across the sources, a central question is who has authority to define justice: international institutions, domestic governments, experts, survivors, or affected publics.

Guided by complementarity and the concept of jurisdictional redundancy, which emphasizes overlapping legal authority, the next phase will develop criteria for when domestic transitional justice practices should supplement, reshape, or receive recognition from the ICC and the United Nations without replacing genuine accountability.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Working with the Food Law and Policy Clinic has helped me understand how federal rulemaking directly affects what people see, buy, and consume every day.”

NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

MADELYN MCFALL

This summer, my research interests have evolved by showing me how food law connects public health, consumer protection, administrative law, and real-world advocacy. Before this experience, I was interested in law and policy broadly, but working with the Food Law and Policy Clinic has helped me understand how federal rulemaking directly affects what people see, buy, and consume every day. Through my front-of-package labeling project, I have learned how to

navigate the Federal Register, review public comments, identify stakeholder arguments, and organize large amounts of information into clear themes. My skillset has also grown in research, writing, and professional communication. I have become more comfortable synthesizing complex material, preparing for client-centered work, and thinking about how legal research can support practical policy change.



FDA Front-of-Package Nutrition Labeling: Balancing Public Health, Regulation, and Commercial Speech

Fellow: Madelyn McFall

Mentor: Emily Broad-Leib, Harvard Law School

Abstract

Front-of-package nutrition labeling raises important questions about how federal agencies communicate nutrition information while balancing public health objectives, statutory authority, constitutional limitations, and practical implementation concerns. As the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) considers a proposed rule requiring front-of-package nutrition labeling, this project examines how public comments submitted during the federal rulemaking process illuminate broader debates surrounding consumer protection, regulatory authority, scientific evidence, industry burden, and the First Amendment's protection of commercial speech.

This project employs legal and policy research methods, including reviewing Federal Register materials, examining the federal rulemaking process, and conducting a thematic analysis of preliminary findings from public comments submitted in response to the proposed rule. The research identifies recurring stakeholder perspectives and evaluates how those perspectives relate to the FDA's statutory authority under existing food labeling laws, the evidentiary support for the

proposed rule, implementation and compliance challenges, and the constitutional framework governing compelled commercial disclosures.

Preliminary findings suggest that while many stakeholders support improving consumers' access to clear and accessible nutrition information, significant disagreement remains regarding whether the proposed front-of-package labeling system is the most effective, evidence-based, and legally defensible approach. Public comments raise questions concerning the FDA's authority, the adequacy of the scientific record, potential economic and operational burdens on manufacturers, the scope of required disclosures, and whether the proposed labeling requirements satisfy constitutional protections afforded to commercial speech. This research contributes to a broader understanding of the legal and policy considerations that will shape the development and implementation of the FDA's final rule.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Working in a translational research environment has shown me how fundamental microbiology can directly contribute to the development of new therapies for infectious diseases.”

SPELMAN COLLEGE

MAKYRA WILSON

This summer at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health has significantly shaped both my research interests and skill set. Through my work investigating the role of the AmiB2 gene in *Mycobacterium smegmatis*, I have developed a deeper interest in the molecular mechanisms underlying bacterial persistence, cell wall maintenance, and antibiotic tolerance in tuberculosis. Working in a translational research environment has shown me how fundamental microbiology can directly contribute to the development of new therapies for infectious diseases.

Technically, I have gained hands-on experience with bacterial culture techniques, plasmid preparation, PCR, gel electrophoresis, and Gibson assembly, while also strengthening my ability to troubleshoot experiments and interpret data. Most importantly, I have grown into a more independent and confident researcher, learning to think critically, ask meaningful scientific questions, and embrace challenges as an essential part of the research process.



Genetic Engineering and Functional Characterization of AmiB2 and GlpK in Mycobacterial Growth and Carbon Metabolism

Fellow: MaKyra Wilson

Mentor: Sarah Fortune, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Abstract

Tuberculosis (TB), caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (Mtb), remains one of the leading infectious causes of death worldwide. During infection, Mtb disseminates multiple anatomical sites, including the lungs, lymph nodes, and other extrapulmonary tissues. Each tissue presents a distinct microenvironment characterized by differences in nutrient availability, and immune pressure. These heterogeneous environments shape bacterial physiology and metabolism, ultimately influencing bacterial growth and response to antibiotic treatment.

Previous studies have demonstrated that clinical Mtb isolates exhibit strain-specific preferences for different host organs and carbon sources, suggesting that genetic variation contributes to tissue tropism and metabolic adaptation during infection. However, the bacterial determinants that govern these phenotypes remain largely unknown.

Two candidate genes implicated in these processes are glpK, encoding glycerol kinase, and amiB2, encoding a putative amidase. Mutations in glpK alter glycerol utilization and have been associated with changes in bacterial

physiology, growth, and antibiotic tolerance, indicating that carbon metabolism can profoundly influence bacterial adaptation. In contrast, the function of amiB2 is poorly understood. Based on sequence prediction, AmiB2 may participate in amide metabolism and cell envelope homeostasis, processes that could influence nutrient utilization and bacterial fitness in distinct host environments. We therefore hypothesize that both glpK and amiB2 contribute to Mtb tissue tropism by regulating metabolic adaptation to different host niches.

In this study, the roles of amiB2 and glpK using *Mycobacterium smegmatis* as a model organism are investigated. This study combines genetic manipulation, molecular biology, and phenotypic analyses to determine how these genes influence bacterial growth under different carbon sources and environmental conditions. This work aims to define the mechanisms by which metabolic genes regulate bacterial adaptation to diverse host microenvironments and to identify genetic determinants of tissue tropism in mycobacteria.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“In the future, I would like to work as a Forensic Psychologist, but I have a lot of interests in the interdisciplinary ways one can approach that work through research.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

MARIAM OYEJIDE

From the start of my readings to get acclimated to the research my lab was conducting, I was shocked to learn about the relationship early pubertal timing has with social factors like family adversity and its relationship with psychopathology during and after adolescence. In the future, I would like to work as a Forensic Psychologist, but I have a lot of interests in the interdisciplinary

ways one can approach that work through research. The ANDL lab has allowed me to explore my interests in neuropsychology and behavior where I have discovered that the same factors that can contribute to EPT are also behaviors that adolescents may exhibit, continuing the process. I learned about GA(M)Ms, a non-linear statistical method.



Pubertal Timing, Loneliness, and Externalizing Behaviors: Examining Social Disconnection in Adolescence

Fellow: Mariam Oyejide

Mentor: Leah Somerville, Harvard Faculty of Arts & Sciences

Abstract

Adolescence is a development period marked by rapid social and biological change, as well as increased risk for psychopathology. Early pubertal timing, which is defined as physical maturation outpaced by same-age peers, has been identified as a risk factor for psychopathology, particularly internalizing symptoms (e.g., depression and anxiety), and externalizing behaviors (e.g., aggression and rule-breaking). Although pubertal timing is often studied in relation to emotional distress, it may also alter adolescents' social experiences by reshaping friendship contexts and increasing exposure to more deviant peer socialization.

A previous cross-sectional analysis using the Human Connectome Project in Development (HCP-D; $n = 652$, 325F, ages 9-17) reported that loneliness mediated the relationship between early pubertal timing and internalizing symptoms; however, it is unknown if the mediating effect of loneliness generalizes to other forms of psychopathology. Using the same HCP-D sample, stratified by sex, a mediation model linking externalizing behaviors with early pubertal timing and loneliness will be run, while also exploring its relationship with other social factors (e.g., friendship, emotional

support). Pubertal timing will be operationalized as a composite of self-reported pubertal status (i.e., Tanner Stages), controlling for age to represent relative timing compared to same-age peers. Externalizing symptoms are assessed using two validated questionnaires: the Child Behavior Checklist (parent-report for ages 6-18) and the Youth Self-Report (ages 11-18). Percentage scores will be used to standardize across surveys. Loneliness is measured using the NIH Toolbox Loneliness Survey.

Preliminary findings show that males report significantly higher overall externalizing behaviors while females show higher internalizing symptoms. Within externalizing behavior subscales, males scored significantly higher on rule-breaking but not for aggression. Overall, these findings may help clarify if early-maturing youth are vulnerable to not only emotional symptoms, but also behavioral difficulties shaped by friendships, peers, and relational contexts.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“My research interests expanded from beyond analyzing policy issues to understanding how I can inform policy decisions and implementation.”

SPELMAN COLLEGE

MICAH FLEMING

My research interests expanded from beyond analyzing policy issues to understanding how I can inform policy decisions and implementation. I explored the feasibility of designing a randomized controlled trial on evidence adoption and conducting background research and analysis of trends in public servant terminology. These projects allowed me to strengthen my research skills by conducting literature reviews, developing research questions, and translating ideas into study designs.



Perceptions of Public Servants: Analyzing Trends in Terminology Use

Fellow: Micah Fleming

Mentor: Elizabeth Linos, Harvard Kennedy School

Abstract

The language used to describe how Americans view government workers has continuously evolved due to political and social discourse. The goal of our project is to understand when and how different terms such as “bureaucrats”, “public servants”, and “civil servants”, have been used over time to describe government employees, including by whom, in what contexts, and with what differences in tone/sentiment/framing. Our study examines trends in the frequency, sentiment, and framing of these terms across political institutions, mass media, and social media.

We are collecting text data across three domains of discourse: political institutions, mass media, and social media. We will then apply a text analysis framework using ChatGPT to filter relevant passages and classify them according to sentiment, perceived warmth, competence, integrity, innovativeness, and thematic framing. We will incorporate human validation throughout the process including human classification of sentiments and framings on subsets of the corpus.

Our project is currently in the data acquisition and corpus construction phase, with priority datasets being collected and processed for relevance filtering. Potential data sources include academic databases of user posts from X (formerly Twitter) and Reddit, as well as transcripts of congressional floor speeches and presidential speeches. This initial stage will determine the scope of our corpus and determine what trends in terminology use we will be able to capture from the data. One way we are examining shifts is to compare positive and negative sentiments associated with different terms and assess whether political changes predict changes in the frequency of those terms over time. Our future work will include classifying the filtered corpus using ChatGPT and then begin with human validation of filtering and scoring steps.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“I have pushed myself to be in conversation with my work and truly engage with the questions it raises, strengthening my ability to approach research with curiosity, independence, and critical thinking.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY NIA FREEMAN

As a returning Du Bois fellow, I have witnessed my research skills grow alongside my confidence as a researcher. At the beginning of the summer, I was focused on simply understanding my project and its underlying concepts. As I continue to develop a stronger foundation, I find myself questioning topics beyond the immediate scope of my project. And as I developed a stronger foundation, I found myself questioning topics beyond the immediate s

cope of my project. My research skillset has matured and evolved to where I am able to not only understand the fundamental ideas behind my project but also explore the broader implications of those concepts. This summer, I have pushed myself to be in conversation with my work and truly engage with the questions it raises, strengthening my ability to approach research with curiosity, independence, and critical thinking.



Thin Accretion Disk Luminosity of Rotating Black Holes in Perfect Fluid Dark Matter

Fellow: Nia Freeman

Mentor: Raid Suleiman, Center for Astrophysics

Abstract

Motivated by the observational evidence that dark energy and dark matter comprise more than 60% of our universe's matter, we considered a Kerr black hole surrounded by perfect dark matter (PFDM) to study the accretion processes of its thin disk. Using the Novikov-Thorn model for accretion disks, we analyzed how the PFDM parameter influences the properties of the circular geodesics.

First, we derived the spacetime metric using the Einstein-Hilbert action and its spacetime properties. Then, we found the radius of the innermost stable circular orbit (ISCO), the specific angular momentum and velocity, the energy flux, and luminosity of the thin disk. The results indicated that for a given PFDM parameter, the ISCO radius decreases. In contrast, the spin parameter increases, and at a fixed spin parameter, the ISCO radius decreases to a critical value.

Our findings show that, in the presence of PFDM, thin accretion disks are hotter and more luminous than those around Kerr black holes without dark matter.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“This summer, I have learned how to design advocacy education, expanding my understanding of what it takes to prepare future advocates for client-centered policy work.”

SPELMAN COLLEGE NOLA JAMES

My skillset has evolved tremendously during my time as a Du Bois fellow. I have gained experience translating complex scholarship into digestible language, which will help in my legal career. Earlier in my pre-professional career, my work centered around supporting advocacy efforts. This summer, I have learned how to design advocacy education itself, expanding my understanding of what it takes to prepare future advocates for client-

centered policy work. Exploring my mentor's curriculum and supplemental reading has given me the opportunity to absorb advocacy skills in a uniquely immersive way. By redesigning a course for an undergraduate audience, I was able to internalize the strategies and practical skills that effective advocates use and utilize them in my career.



Creating Justice Together: An Undergraduate Adaptation of Harvard Kennedy School's Client-Centered Policy Course

Fellow: Nola James

Mentor: Cornell William Brooks, Harvard Kennedy School

Abstract

Although experiential policy education equips learners with the competencies necessary to address complex justice-related problems, opportunities to participate in client-centered policy advocacy—through which students develop campaign strategies for real-world clients—remains largely limited to graduate education. To expand this model of learning, this project designs a curriculum that complements the Harvard Kennedy School's William Monroe Trotter Collaborative for Social Justice Clinic (WMTC) course, "Creating Justice in Real Time: Visions, Strategies, and Campaigns" (CJRT), taught by Professor Cornell William Brooks, JD., M.Div.

Designed as a week-long J-Term course for undergraduate students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), the curriculum equips undergraduates with advocacy skills necessary to contribute to campaign plans addressing contemporary voting rights challenges.

Rather than simply condensing the graduate-level material, the curriculum is designed to be academically appropriate and culturally responsive to HBCU undergraduates. The project

examines the existing graduate-level syllabus and pedagogical literature on experiential learning to curate the curriculum, which consists of constitutional materials, court decisions, case studies, law review articles, voting rights scholarship, and interactive learning activities. Reading and experiential learning components, including simulations, policy design activities, guest speakers, and multimedia resources, to introduce students to the principles of effective advocacy while preparing them to collaborate with graduate students on voting rights campaigns. Interviews with CJRT teaching assistants and former students informed the curriculum by identifying classroom experiences most effective in fostering engagement and applied learning.

The proposed J-Term establishes a reciprocal partnership between the William Monroe Trotter Collaborative for Social Justice and selected HBCU students. Undergraduate participants will contribute community-informed perspectives shaped by their proximity to the HBCU communities served by the clinic's clients. In turn, the J-Term will provide practical advocacy skills, preparing HBCU undergraduates to become the next generation of policy advocates.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“I have really learned a lot so far, not only from my personal project and my mentor, but also from all the other members of my lab who are involved in many amazing parts of the malaria research field.”

FISK UNIVERSITY

OLUWAFUNKE FAVOUR OLADOKUN

I always knew I was interested in translational medicine, whether as a physician or as a researcher or even both, but my research project this summer has shown me an amazing new perspective in this field. It is a team effort with so many moving parts that lead to the finished work of a product for the health industry. I have really learned a lot so far, not only from my personal project and my mentor, but also from all the other

members of my lab who are involved in many amazing parts of the malaria research field. These are people who are contributing to the fight against this infectious disease and find joy in putting their best foot forward every single day, inspiring me at every turn. I have gained new skills and techniques that I will continue to apply every time they are needed.



Antimalarial treated bednets block *Plasmodium falciparum* infection in mosquitoes

Fellow: Oluwafunke Favour Oladokun

Mentor: Flaminia Catteruccia, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Abstract

Malaria is a severe, life-threatening infectious disease caused by *Plasmodium* parasites transmitted through the bite of infected female *Anopheles* mosquitoes. The widespread insecticide resistance of *Anopheles* vectors has compromised the effectiveness of long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets, necessitating the development of novel vector control strategies.

Recent studies from our lab have demonstrated that the transmission of *Plasmodium falciparum* parasites can be efficiently blocked when exposing female *Anopheles gambiae* mosquitoes to antimalarials incorporated in bed-net like polyethylene films in six-minute tarsal contact assays. These films contained Endochine-like quinolone (ELQ) inhibitors of the *P. falciparum* cytochrome bc1 complex and utilized two lead compounds - ELQ-453 and ELQ-613. Here, we demonstrate that a prototype polyester net formulation coated with either ELQ-453 alone or a combination of ELQ-453 and -613 completely blocks the establishment of *P. falciparum* oocysts when exposed to

mosquitoes shortly before infection. Building upon this, our current work focuses on scaling this strategy by testing a broader library of antimalarial compounds to identify additional candidates suitable for this use. To this end, we tested new iterations of ELQs incorporated in LDPE films, with two compounds showing complete blocking activity against the establishment of a *P. falciparum* infection. We also test novel transmission-blocking compounds selected in an in vitro screen against *P. falciparum* ookinetes for their in vivo blocking activity in Standard Membrane Feeding Assays (SMFAs).

These results show promise for continued development of antimalarial-treated bed nets and highlight new compounds with the potential to enhance malaria transmission-blocking interventions.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“I’ve always known I wanted to do research, but being here [at Harvard] has opened my eyes to how diverse the field of psychology truly is.”

HOWARD UNIVERSITY TAYLOR ALLEN

Prior to this summer, I hadn’t had much exposure to cognitive psychology, but I have truly fallen in love with it over the course of my time here. I’ve always known I wanted to do research, but being here [at Harvard] has opened my eyes to how diverse the field of psychology truly is. Not only that, but I’ve learned many organizational tools and research tips that have helped enhance the skills I already came with.



Who Gets Their Way? Children's Use of Relative Group Size and Ingroup Leadership to Infer Social Power

Fellow: Taylor Allen

Mentor: Ashley Thomas, Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Abstract

White U.S. Americans have long expressed concern about the growing size of minority groups. Prior work suggests that information about demographic change, especially projections that White Americans will no longer be the numerical majority, can increase racial bias and support for conservative policies. Where do concerns about shifting group size and power originate?

Developmental research suggests that humans reason about social groups early in life. Infants attend preferentially to same-race faces and are more likely to accept objects from people who speak the same language as their caregivers, suggesting early ingroup biases. Children also favor ingroup members over outgroup members, allocating more resources to ingroup members and expecting ingroup members to show loyalty to their own groups, even when groups are novel or fictional. Children also reason about numerical group size and dominance. Infants and children expect members of larger groups to prevail, and older children use relative

group size to infer power: they see smaller groups as leaders, whereas larger groups are able to obtain resources. These findings suggest that children may integrate ingroup membership and relative group size when reasoning about which groups are likely to “get their way.” The current work will examine whether children have intuitions about how relative ingroup-outgroup size shapes social power.

First, we test whether children expect ingroup members to favor ingroup leaders. Second, we test whether children expect group members to get their way more often when they have an ingroup leader (2a) and when they are in the majority (2b). Finally, we examine whether children combine these cues, expecting groups to be most powerful when they are both relatively larger and represented by an ingroup leader. Together, these studies aim to advance knowledge on how children reason about group identity, hierarchy, and power, and may illuminate developmental origins of adult concerns about demographic change and the consolidation of power.



ABSTRACTS AND REFLECTIONS

“Astrophysics research gives me an ‘I am bigger because I know how small I am’ feeling that nothing replicates.”

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

XAVIER MAPLE

Over the period of this summer, my research interests have evolved beyond my usual realm of academic excellence. Being new to the field of astrophysics was honestly scary initially, but this summer taught me that this field is the field for me. As my daily interest in astrophysics grew over the summer I began to view the changing world around me

differently. Astrophysics research gives me an "I am bigger because I know how small I am" feeling that nothing replicates. Having the opportunity to study the physics of our universe has not only changed my perspective on my place in the universe, but also taught me skillsets that will stick with me forever, and for that I am grateful.



Understanding the cause of Broad Emission Lines of $\text{Ly}\alpha$ in the Broad Line Region using Monte Carlo Simulations

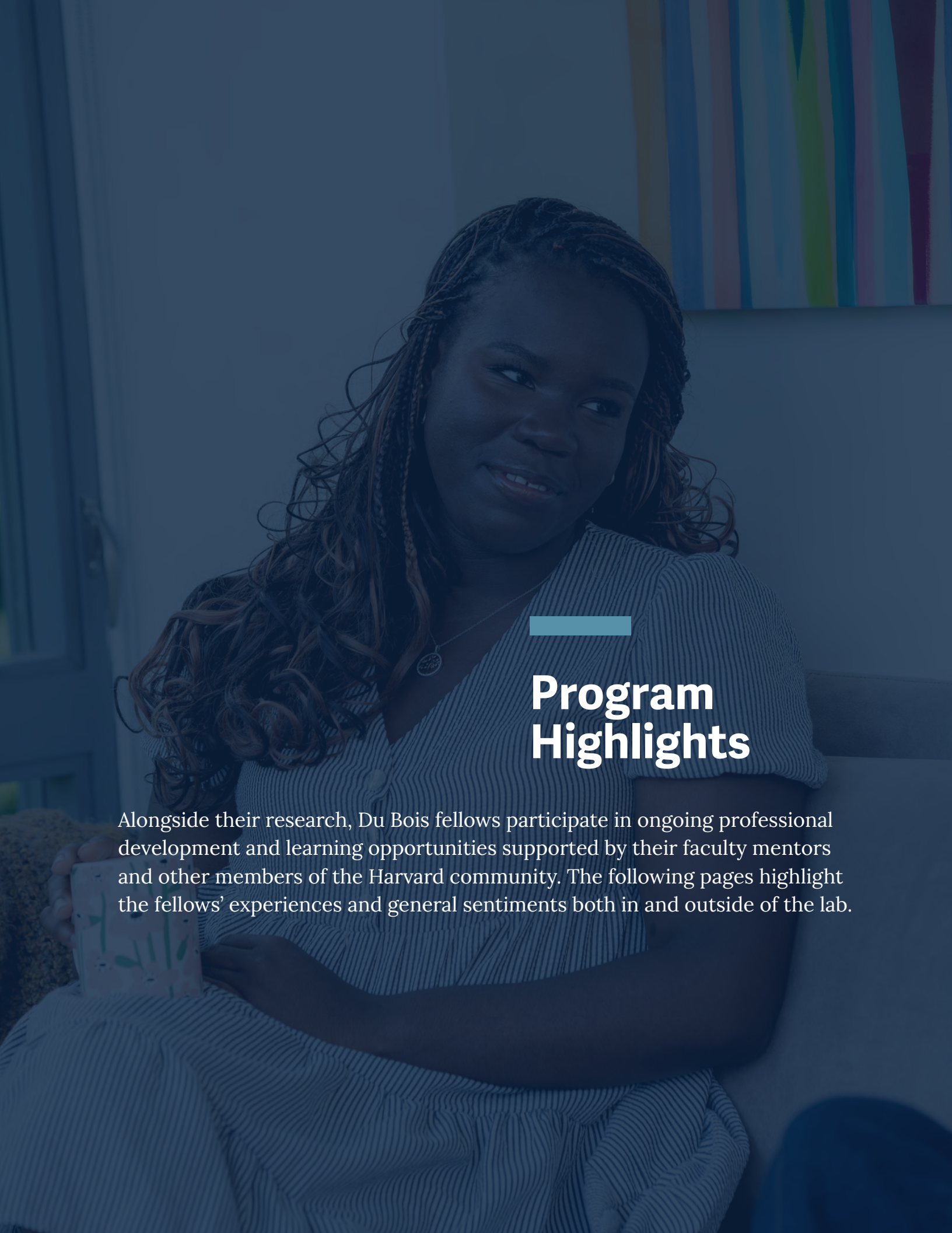
Fellow: Xavier Maple

Mentor: Fabio Pacucci, Center for Astrophysics

Abstract

The broad line region (BLR) is an enormous area bordering the accretion disk of a black hole full of rapidly moving ionized gas clouds. These gas clouds are known to broaden emission lines, but they present two major issues. It is not well known what gas clouds parameters cause the broadening of the emission lines. Additionally, in order for these ionized gas clouds to remain intact, there must be a medium that provides enough outside pressure for their existence to be observed.

This presents the idea of a Hot Intercloud Medium (HIM), which is a hot cloud of freely moving electrons theorized to have two main purposes, to provide pressure support to clouds in the BLR and to scatter highly energized photons from the accretion disk. Using Monte Carlo Simulations, the emission lines of $\text{Ly}\alpha$ photons after passing through the hot intercloud medium in the broad line region, are analyzed. Through analyzing the temperature, gas density, and ionization states, findings show that higher temperatures correlate to broader emission lines.

A woman with long, curly hair, wearing a striped shirt, is sitting and holding a small object. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a colorful abstract painting on the wall.

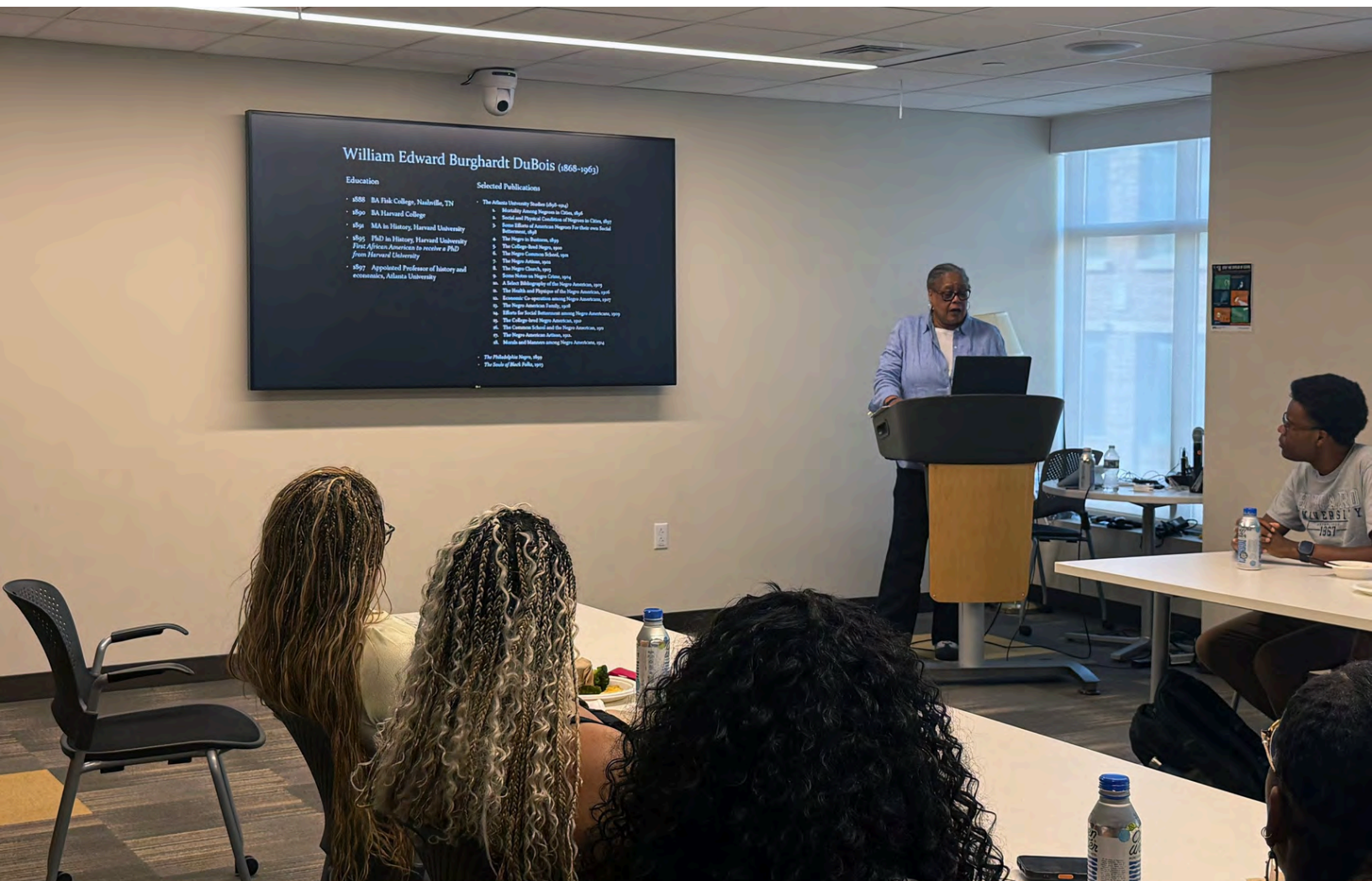
Program Highlights

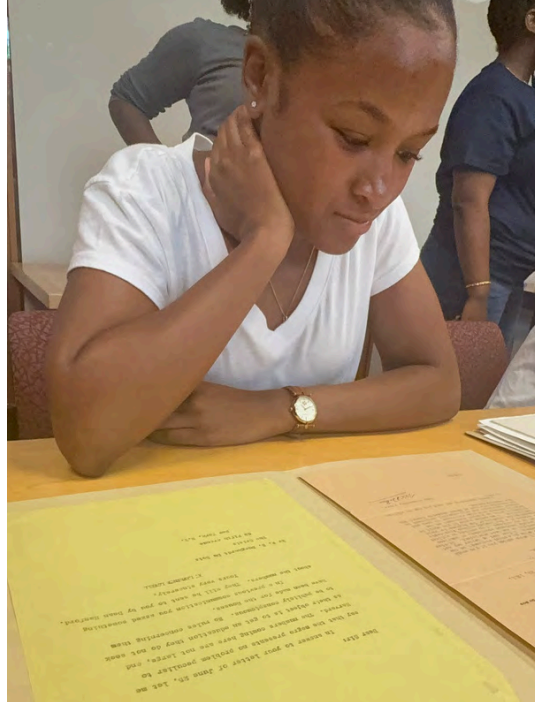
Alongside their research, Du Bois fellows participate in ongoing professional development and learning opportunities supported by their faculty mentors and other members of the Harvard community. The following pages highlight the fellows' experiences and general sentiments both in and outside of the lab.

Cohort Meeting with Evelynn Hammonds

Harvard University, Cambridge MA // June 9, 2026

Members of the Du Bois Scholars Program were joined by Evelynn Hammonds at one of their weekly cohort meetings. Hammonds explored W.E.B. Du Bois's enduring connection to Harvard, highlighting how his experiences as a student and scholar shaped his intellectual contributions and commitment to advancing equity and social justice. The conversation encouraged fellows to reflect on the role of research, history, and higher education in addressing contemporary challenges while considering their own potential to create meaningful and lasting impact through scholarship and leadership.





Nathan Marsh Pusey Library

Harvard University, Cambridge MA // June 11, 2026

Du Bois fellows had the unique opportunity to join University Archivist Virginia Hunt and tour the Harvard University Archives in the Pusey Library, looking at artifacts from W.E.B. Du Bois' years on campus. Viewing handwritten assignments, academic records, photographs, and other archival materials offered fellows an intimate glimpse into his scholarship and intellectualism. The experience deepened the fellows' understanding of Du Bois' legacy and encouraged meaningful reflection on the transformative power of scholarship, leadership, and the pursuit of justice.

COMMUNITY ACTION & CHANGE

“We all have a responsibility to leave our communities better than we inherited them. We can all serve our communities from any role we occupy.”

*- Alexis Harewood, Du Bois Scholars Program
Summer Coordinator (2026)*



good work

understand broader history

stories

principles

listen first

room full

changed

potential

**conquer what
they think**

lasting change

larger purpose

know

understand

connect

advocacy



Marcyliena H. Morgan Hip Hop Archive & Research Institute at the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research

Harvard University, Cambridge MA // June 16, 2026

Du Bois fellows visited the Marcyliena H. Morgan Hip Hop Archive & Research Institute at the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research for an engaging tour led by Executive Director Abby Wolf. During their visit, fellows explored the Center's mission to advance research on the histories, cultures, and experiences of people of African descent while learning how the Hip Hop Archive & Research Institute preserves and studies hip hop as a vital cultural, artistic, and intellectual movement.



GROWTH & SELF-DISCOVERY

“If we want to create a more equitable future, we must understand our past. In understanding our past, we are able to speak truth...”

- Sara Bleich, Colloquy podcast on Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery (February 2025)



**embraced
the pivot**

let's work

next steps



clearer view

every day

deep breath

privilege

new career direction

best self

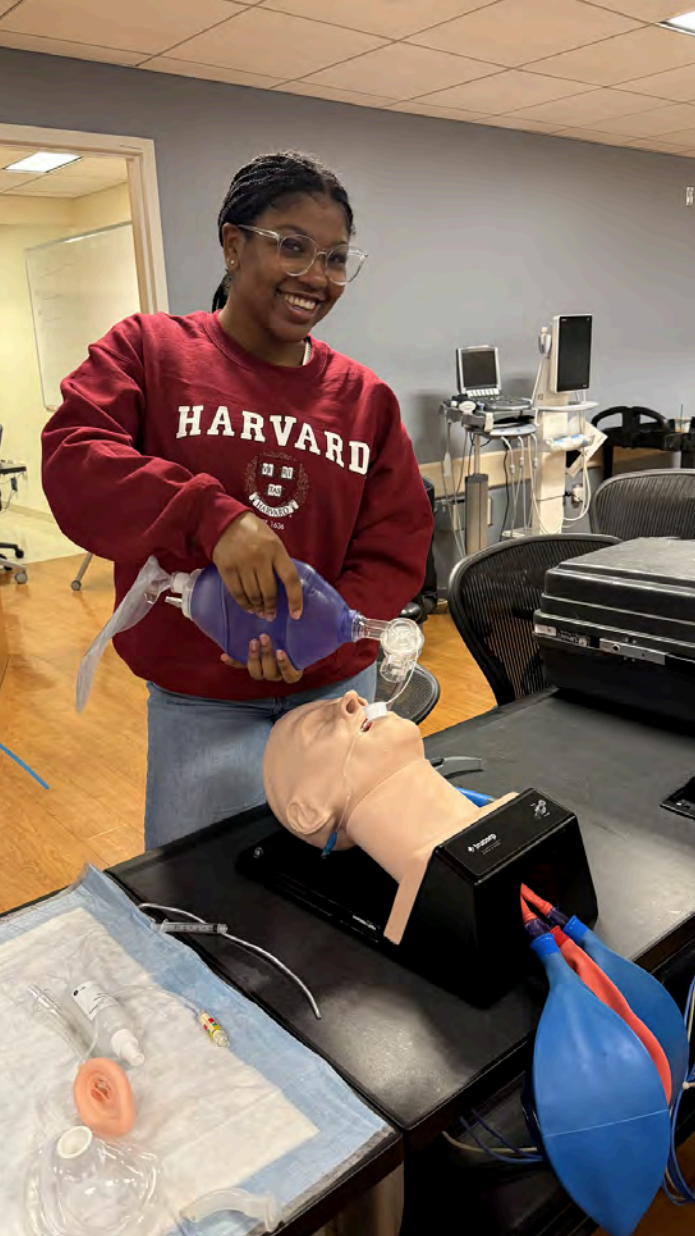
smiled

**Overcome fear
and doubt**

finding yourself

**uncovering
the person**





Airway Simulation

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) Simulation Lab, Boston, MA // July 7, 2026

Some of the Du Bois fellows spent time at BIDMC's Airway Simulation Lab, where they joined fourth-year Harvard Medical School students and visiting medical students for an immersive hands-on learning experience. Under the guidance of clinical instructors, fellows explored the fundamentals of airway management and simulated endotracheal intubation on mannequins. Working alongside medical students offered a glimpse into the collaborative nature of clinical training while providing meaningful exposure to emergency medicine and critical care.

RESEARCH & LEARNING

“We...do our very best to ensure that the environment here at the College is a safe one in which to ask questions, even uncomfortable questions, and in which to experiment and in which to accommodate moments of both success and failure ...”
- Evelyn M. Hammonds, welcome to the Harvard College Class of 2015 (August 2016)

write

grew as an individual

scientists think

research

stay curious

clarity

scholar

through curiosity

challenge myself

grew as

researcher

learn something new

double the time

keep asking better questions

learning

write more



Procedures Simulation

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) Simulation Lab, Boston, MA // July 14, 2026

Du Bois fellows participated in an immersive clinical skills simulation at BIDMC, where they gained hands-on experience practicing essential medical procedures in a state-of-the-art simulation laboratory. Working alongside medical educators and medical students, the fellows learned and performed techniques including suturing, lumbar punctures, and central line placement using mannequins. The experience provided an authentic glimpse into clinical medicine while practicing technical skills. By engaging directly with procedures commonly performed by physicians in the emergency department, the fellows deepened their understanding of patient care and explored the precision, teamwork, and decision-making required in the medical profession.



MENTORSHIP & BELONGING

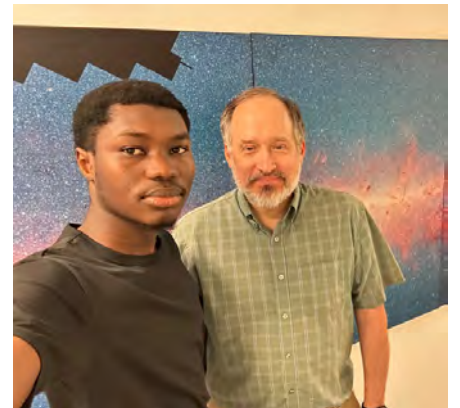
“Education must not simply teach work—it must teach life.”
– W.E.B. Du Bois “The Talented Tenth” (1903)



never shrink yourself

**Bison in
the room**

community
engagement



mentorship

belonging

community
you belong here

second family

**making room
for new voices**

your presence
is powerful

chosen for a reason

**impostor
syndrome is real**

dreams

show up as your
best self



ask for what
you need



A Word of Gratitude

We are grateful for all of the support received to make this program possible.



A Word of Gratitude

With gratitude, we thank everyone who made the 2026 Du Bois Scholars Program possible. To our dedicated faculty mentors – your guidance, encouragement, and purposeful, rigorous research have profoundly shaped our fellows as they continue their academic journey. We are equally grateful to the Harkness Trust, the Office for the Arts at Harvard, Harvard College, the Center for Astrophysics (CfA), Harvard Business School's Program for Research in Markets and Organizations (PRIMO), and many others in and beyond the Harvard community, who generously opened doors to vital research, professional, and community-building opportunities. Your collective commitment fostered an environment where our fellows could thrive, learn deeply, and forge lasting connections. This summer's success is a direct result of your unwavering support. Thank you for uplifting and empowering the Du Bois fellows this summer.

– The Office of the Vice Provost for Special Projects

2026 Faculty Mentors

Andrew Clark
Ankur Pandya
Ashley Thomas
Cornell William Brooks
Daniel Palazuelos
Elizabeth Linos
Elysia Larson
Emily Broad-Leib
Evelynn Hammonds
Fabio Pacucci
Flaminia Catteruccia

Gary Adamkiewicz
Hannah Marcus
Jason Eastman
Jason Ur
Jerome Offord, Jr.
Joseph Hora
Kevin Simon
Kizzmekia Corbett-Helaire
Leah Somerville
Lumumba Seegars
Martha Minow

Matthew Nock
Paul Gompers
Raid Suleiman
Sarah Fortune
Tamarra James-Todd
Veronique VanderHorst

Program Directors / Collaborators

Center for Astrophysics
Elizabeth Doyle
Iuliana Banks
Kim-Vy Tran
Lars Hernquist
Madelin Nova

**Harvard Summer
Undergraduate Research Village**
Ariel Lepito
Jonna Iacono
Tom Hamel

**Harvard Business School's
Program for Research in
Markets and Organizations**
Darlene Le



A Word of Gratitude

Orientation

- Bri Manning
- Carrie Wade
- Chris Hopson
- David Brewster
- Deepali Ravel
- Jerome Offord, Jr.
- Lamount Evanson
- Morgan Martin

Application Reviewers

- Alden Landry
- Alecia McGregor
- Andrew Clark
- Clarisse Wells
- Daniel Neafsy
- Elysia Larson
- Emanuel Contomanolis
- Emily Broad-Leib
- Evelyn Hammonds
- Gary Adamkiewicz
- Jason Ur
- Jerome Offord, Jr.
- John Quackenbush
- Jonna Iacono
- Liz Phelps
- Matthew Nock
- Nora Kory
- Ryan McNamara
- Sarah Fortune
- Tamarra James-Todd

Programming Collaborators

- Abby Wolf
- Alden Landry
- Alexis Harewood
- Chip Greenidge
- Clarisse Wells
- Daniele Ölveczky
- Darren Higgins
- Evelyn Hammonds
- Imani Luckey
- Jonora Calixte
- Kara Buckley
- Mina Cikara
- Nicole Dubosh
- Pam Gaddi
- Tiana Burnett
- Virginia Hunt
- Xavier Du Maine

Organizational Collaborators

- Alain Locke Gallery of African and African American Art at the Hutchins Center
- Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
- Boston Red Sox
- Harvard University Archives
- Harvard University Office of Institutional Research & Analytics
- Summer Honors Undergraduate Research Program
- Summer Research Opportunities at Harvard

Du Bois Scholars Program Ambassadors

- Aaliyah Rapping
- Ifediora Nwakuche
- Jacqueline Joseph-Lainez
- Jada Hubbard
- Jonora Calixte
- Kai Dickerson
- Nichele Washington

A woman with curly hair, wearing a red dress, is looking down at a computer screen. She is in a library or office setting with bookshelves in the background. The image has a dark blue overlay.

Autographs

Share a favorite memory or a kind word.



Photo Captions

Cover photo: A photo collage with Caitlyn Thomas, Tamarra James-Todd, Leah Somerville, Mariam Oyejide, Joanna Hernandez, Garrison Andrews, Jason Ur, Avery Bennekin, and Barak Meachem.

Page 3: Members of the 2026 Du Bois Scholars Program Cohort observe a fellow student write on a chalkboard on Harvard University's campus at the Marcyliena H. Morgan Hip Hop Archive & Research Institute at the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research, in Cambridge, MA. June 2026. Photo by Harvard University.

Page 6: Avery Bennekin and India Crowe meet with their faculty mentor, Jason Ur, at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA. June 2026. Photo by Harvard University.

Page 68: A photo collage with Garrison Andrews, Alexis Harewood, Madeline Wright, Mariam Oyejide, Joanna Hernandez, Ashley Thomas, and Kathya Lavado-Arrington.

Page 70: A photo collage with Aditi Saxena, Oluwafunke Favour Oladokun, Flamina Catteruccia, Garrison Andrews, Lumumba Seegars, Kamilah Lige, and Kevin Simon.

Page 72: A photo collage with LaMya Hill, Jason Eastman, Avery S. Patterson, Jerome Offord, Jr., Oluwafunke Favour Oladokun, and Flamina Catteruccia.

Page 74: A photo collage with Nia Freeman, Raid Suleiman, Abdjul-Majeed Hamidu, Joseph Hora, Evelynnn Hammonds, and Abiba Monciffe.

Page 75: MaKyra Wilson and Sarah Fortune pose for a photo in a lab at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, in Boston, MA. June 2026. Photo by Harvard University.

Page 78: India Crowe flips through a book at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA. June 2026. Photo by Harvard University.

**Office of the Vice Provost
for Special Projects**

Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery Initiative
Du Bois Scholars Program
legacyofslavery@harvard.edu
HLoS_duboisscholars@harvard.edu



Harvard & the Legacy
of Slavery Initiative

2026 Du Bois Scholars Program End of Summer Book



Harvard & the Legacy
of Slavery Initiative