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DEAN’S WELCOME

Spring is here and I look forward to shaking the hands of hundreds of new Graduate College alumni this month! The award ceremonies and graduations will be a welcome respite after a long, cold winter and contentious state budget preparations.

The budget forecast from Springfield is disheartening and the effects will be felt in the number of major fellowships we can offer; however, I am confident that our proactive planning will allow us to weather the storm, and we will continue to provide top-notch programming and services.

Internal Fellowships
After a trial period of increased stipend levels ($25,000) for our “big” awards – the Abraham Lincoln Fellowship (ALF), the University Fellowship (UF), and the Dean’s Scholar Award (Dean’s) – we are scaling back the award amounts yet increasing the overall support for our well-deserving graduate students. The new funding mechanism calls for $22,000 stipends in years one and four of our major recruitment fellowships (ALF and UF). The student’s home department or program will provide funding for years two and three. In addition, the Graduate College will augment departmental funding with up to $6,000 annually to reach $22,000. Tuition and partial fee waivers will be provided for all four years.

Additionally, this year we are excited to implement the new, four-year STAR Awards. Up to one student from each of the four disciplinary divisions – Arts and Humanities; Behavioral and Social Sciences; Engineering, Math, and Physical Sciences; and Life Sciences – will receive four years of stipend ($22,000) and tuition and partial fee waivers. While tracking the impact of the STAR, we are contemplating making the ALF only a retention award.

We hope that the new Provost and Chancellor will continue to fund the popular research awards bearing their names while we continue to draw from our gift accounts for specific types of interdisciplinary research. See below for the names of the winners of our internal awards and fellowships.

Graduate Student Appreciation
Thanks to the untiring work of Theresa Christenson-Caballero, our dynamic Assistant Director of Graduate Student Outreach and Career Development, the Graduate College held its inaugural Graduate Student Appreciation Week, March 9-13, with 18 workshops, panel discussions, information sessions, which were attended by 516 graduate students! This is indeed “phenomenal,” to quote one attendee.

Enjoy your summer!
Karen J. Colley
Dean and Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics

Diversity Initiatives
Lunaire Ford, Assistant Dean for Diversity and Recruitment, and I were proud to host this year’s Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance Diversity Dialogue and Research Forum on April 15th. The plenary session showcased the scholarship of four outstanding graduate students: Tristesse Burton, Abel Castillo, Megan C. Diaz, and Deanna Ledezma.

And, in this edition, we are happy to provide the backstory on a new travel award, and to highlight the research of a current graduate student who has won several internal and external awards.

PHOTOS ON FRONT COVER (clockwise from top left): Dean Colley giving Dr. Tom Driver, Associate Professor in Chemistry, the Graduate Mentoring Award; Tristesse Burton, a graduate student in Pharmacognosy, presenting her research at the Diversity Dialogue and Research Forum; SROP Director Allen Bryson with SROP alumni Sharice Hill (left) and Tyler Crump (right) at the Diversity Dialogue and Research Forum.
NOTES FROM THE FIELD

SOCIAL PRODUCTIONS OF SPACE
LEONOR VANIK, PHD CANDIDATE, URBAN PLANNING

Of Czech-Mexican origins, Pilsen resident Leonor Vanik has the heart of a social worker and a philosopher’s wit. She began her UIC undergraduate years in pre-med before tackling course, influenced, in part, by her sister Maria. Born with Down Syndrome, Maria has been a “spark, a driving force” for her sister and friends, according to Vanik, with her refusal to cower to the stares and admonitions offered by many people. Most of Leonor’s adult life has been spent helping others and advocating for better perspectives on the daily lives of outliers to societal norms.

After completing her bachelor’s degree, for the next decade Vanik worked in several capacities: at Chicago’s Esperanza School, where she managed a caseload of 86 special needs students; program coordinator for a community health care non-profit, where she developed support initiatives for residents with alcohol, tobacco, and other drug issues; YouthNet Director for Pilsen Coalition for Families/Pilsen YMCA, where she developed and managed daily operations for an after-school program; and prevention specialist for the Pilsen Little Village Mental Health Center. The individuals with whom she worked showed Vanik that housing and community development were necessary to improve the quality of life for marginalized families. She then turned her attention to urban housing issues in Chicago, Indianapolis, and other cities.

Vanik completed the Great Cities Institute’s Urban Development certificate, which, in turn, provided a springboard to a master’s degree in urban planning (CUPPA ’06). Now she is on the cusp of finishing her PhD in urban planning. Her graduate studies have offered many opportunities in grant writing and developing methodologies and theories. In 2008, she was awarded an Early Doctoral Dissertation Research Grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for her research entitled “Through My Eyes: Transitioning into the Community, a Qualitative Study of People with Disabilities.” With her sister’s personal experiences in the foreground and heavily influenced by the French philosopher/sociologist Henri Lefebvre, Vanik sought to examine how “de-institutionalized people with physical and mobility limitations navigate and interpret space” in their communities.

What was supposed to be a one-year grant became an “accidental longitudinal study.” Due to conditions beyond her control, Vanik was compelled to continually rethink and expand her original methodological design for her dissertation that covered seven counties in her study. In her Lefebvrian interdisciplinary fashion, Vanik borrows from phenomenology, ethnography, critical grounded theory, and GIS spatial analysis to create a new, multi-method approach she calls “grounded critical visualization.”

Vanik is appreciative of the Graduate College, her professors, and the friends and colleagues who assisted when she took care of her mom who suffered a stroke. She wished to offer a special thank you to the “GC support system,” which knows that graduate students “can’t do it alone.”

After finishing her doctorate, Vanik wishes to continue combining urban planning research with ideas from disability studies in order to reach a larger audience. She hopes to create a post-doctoral position in urban planning at UIC in order to give back to UIC students and faculty. Dr. David Perry, Professor and Senior Fellow at the Great Cities Institute, explains: “Leonor Vanik is one fine graduate student and one fine person. What sets her apart from her peers is the way she has integrated her life into her graduate research, making for an undeniably rich and well-defined research program.”
On April 15, 2015, UIC and the Graduate College hosted nearly two hundred people at “After the Rainbow: The Future of Alliance Building across Communities and the Implications for Higher Education,” which was the title of this year’s Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance (IALHEA) Diversity Dialogue and Research Forum. This collaborative effort between The Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE) and the Illinois Latino Committee on Higher Education (ILACHE).

Since 2010, this event showcases the scholarly work of underrepresented students from Illinois to facilitate mentor relationships between faculty and students of color, to foster faculty-student research collaborations, and to increase the persistence and success of underrepresented students in academia. Former and current Graduate College diversity administrators – José Perales, Interim Assistant Vice President for Institutional Diversity and Equity at DePaul University; Aixa Alfonso, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences; and Lunaire Ford, Assistant Dean for Diversity and Recruitment – play crucial roles in pulling off IALHEA. (Special thanks go to the two co-chairs: Leonard Ramirez, Program Coordinator in Educational Policy Studies, and Michael Toney, Former Executive Director of the Urban Health Program, both at UIC.)

This year’s program included two keynote speakers – Jakobi Williams, Associate Professor at Indiana University, and Lilla Fernández, Associate Professor of History at Ohio State University. A research plenary featured four current graduate students (and winners of Graduate College funding): Tristesse Burton, Pharmacognosy; Abel Castillo, Mathematics; Megan C. Diaz, Economics; and Deanna Ledezma, Art History. Additionally, over fifty impressive undergraduate students from schools across the Chicagoland area displayed posters to present their research.
GRADUATE COLLEGE EVENTS

GRADUATE STUDENT APPRECIATION WEEK

WE ♥ GRADUATE STUDENTS AT UIC!

The Spring 2015 semester has been very lively and inspiring. The Graduate College was excited to host its first annual Graduate Student Appreciation Week March 9-15, 2015. The week consisted of a variety of programs and workshops, exclusively for graduate students, which focused on Career and Professional Development, Academic Development, Wellness, and Social Programming. Five hundred and sixteen students from a variety of disciplines across East and West Campus attended 18 events and workshops.

Students had the opportunity to learn about personal branding and professional networking, about college teaching, and how to improve graduate student writing. There were plenty of stress relieving activities with meditation workshops, a tackling graduate student stress session, and free massages (which, as one might expect, were extremely popular). In partnering with the Gender and Sexuality Center, we were able to host a wonderfully engaging dinner and dialogue around the topics of queer activism, mindfulness, and empowerment. Students also appreciated the useful advice offered by current fellowship winners at the “How to Submit a Successful Fellowship Application” session, where they received tips on how to apply for fellowships and win awards. On the final day of activities, over 100 students showed up all decked out in their professional best and took advantage of free professional headshots and the LinkedIn Labs workshop.

One of the highlighted sessions for the week included the “#Alt-Academy-Alternative Career Paths for Graduate Students Panel and Discussion,” held in collaboration with the Office of Career Services. Six invited panelists in a variety of fields talked about their path into careers outside of the academy. Panelists offered meaningful and practical advice and engaged in a dialogue with students questions. In feedback about the event, one student wrote: “I loved the session ... I got a chance to resolve a lot of my queries related to my career goals.” Another noted: “It was reassuring to see former academics’ strategies for securing non-academic jobs, particularly those in the humanities and social sciences.” And finally, the “alt-ac panel was so good ... I think that the more there are presentations like this, the more people will open up to the possibility that PhDs go on to get a non-academic job, which is infinitely better than being unemployed and feeling overqualified and useless!” We were delighted to have such a positive response from students and panelists.

The appreciation week ended on a fun note with a family movie night and pizza party! Graduate students and their families enjoyed a movie screening of Dr. Seuss’s “The Lorax” with a lot of pizza, snacks, and book giveaways. Families were able to meet one another and socialize and kids of all ages enjoyed the finale.

Graduate Student Appreciation Week was truly a great success. Students described their experiences with words such as, “Fantastic,” “Phenomenal,” “Diverse,” “Fabulous,” and “Impactful.” The Graduate College looks forward to making this an annual event.
NEW FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

BARNHURST-DOHERTY AWARD
TRAVEL FUNDS TO SUPPORT GRADUATE STUDENTS PRESENTING LGBTQ RESEARCH

Presenting at a national or international conference is an excellent experience for a young scholar. It can also be very expensive between plane tickets, registration, hotel, and meals. Caring faculty members cringe at the thought of top students having to pass up such a formative opportunity, but funds are often limited to support conference expenses. The UIC Kevin G. Barnhurst and Richard Doherty Graduate Student Award Fund was created in January of 2013 to provide supplemental funds for UIC graduate students to cover the expenses of travel to professional conferences, seminars, and workshops at which they are presenting original research, preferably on LGBTQ issues. The “Barnhurst-Doherty Award” will officially become active upon fulfillment of the donors’ $25,000 pledge.

Who are Barnhurst and Doherty? Kevin Barnhurst is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Communication at UIC, where he taught from 1998 until his retirement in 2012. The Graduate College knew him because he served first as Department Head and then as Director of Graduate Studies for most of the last decade, as well as a member of the Graduate Executive and Dean Search committees. Prior to his employment in Chicago, he taught at several schools including Keene State (NH), Syracuse, and UIUC. He holds a chair (Communication in the Digital Era) at the University of Leeds, along with other appointments at EU universities. Beyond teaching, mentoring MAs and PhDs, and service, he is a prolific author and editor with seven award-winning books, including Media Queered: visibility and its discontents (2007) and The Form of the news: a history (2001, with John Nerone), as well as over a hundred research articles, essays, book chapters, reviews, and commentaries in leading academic journals.

Richard Doherty hails from New England, but is now a visiting lecturer in the School of Media and Communication at the University of Leeds, specializing in environmental communication. UIC alumni may remember him as an instructor and “tech guy” in the Department of Communication. Over the years, though, he has worn many hats: artist, baker, chef, gardener, guitar player, husband, naturalist, and pitcher. His teaching has taken him to DeVry University, Boston University’s Sargent Center for Outdoor Education, and NPR’s Living on Earth’s Ecological Literacy Project for high school students in Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Boston. His research in environmental communication examines nature-human interfaces such as park and trail signage, TV weather, and global positioning (GPS) devices. He is the founder of the Environmental Communication division of the International Communication Association. And, in December 2014, Rich successfully defended his dissertation at UIUC.

The couple met more than twenty years ago at a party at Barnhurst’s house. Doherty endeared himself by playing video games with the host’s three sons. (Joel, Andrew, and Matthew are now grown men living in England, Thailand, and Salem, Mass., respectively.) Barnhurst and Doherty speak fondly of their time in Chicago. Besides lasting friendships, culture, and diversity, they found UIC very LGBTQ-friendly, despite the “shocking difficulties revealed by students in the Rainbow Room” of the Gender and Sexuality Center.

As openly gay men who have faced down prejudice, it was not a leap to funding a travel award for graduate students who work on LGBTQ issues. The idea grew out of a conversation with one of Barnhurst’s graduate students, who, like many of his comrades in Communication – “great students accepted at good conferences” – could not afford to present, despite the small travel awards provided by the Graduate College and the Graduate Student Council. Barnhurst told himself, “We need to do something.” Although far from wealthy, Barnhurst and Doherty decided, they “could afford to set aside money each year” to endow a fund through the University of Illinois Foundation. In a phone interview, Barnhurst remarked that he sought the Graduate College as the administrative “home” because he was impressed by the (then new) Dean, Karen Colley. Bravo – and braval More information about the award will be available closer to its target date. Meanwhile, Barnhurst and Doherty are looking forward to a return to New England.
The Graduate College offers a number of fellowships and awards to students, who, depending on the funding mechanism, either apply directly to the Graduate College or are nominated by their academic program. Large awards carry a stipend (currently $22,000) with a tuition and partial fee waiver, and are used for both recruitment and retention. Smaller awards promote research and/or highlight achievements in mentoring or scholarship. Complete information on the Graduate College’s funding mechanisms can be found here.

**STAR Award**

This year, the Graduate College is excited to implement the new, four-year STAR Awards for the crème de la crème of our recruitment round of awards. Up to one student from each of the four disciplinary divisions—Arts and Humanities; Behavioral and Social Sciences; Engineering, Math, and Physical Sciences; and Life Sciences—will receive four years of stipend ($22,000) along with tuition and partial fee waivers.

Winners for AY 2015-16:
- **Javier Almarza**, Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science
- **Areins Pelayo**, Philosophy
- **Lin Mu**, Epidemiology and Biostatistics

**Abraham Lincoln Fellowship**

The goal of the Abraham Lincoln Fellowship program is to increase the excellence and diversity of the graduate student body by attracting applicants who have overcome obstacles to achieve academic success, like President Lincoln himself, who by his words and actions forged the framework for America’s pursuit of freedom, equality, and justice. There are two competitions: (a) a two-year recruitment award and (b) a one-year award, either for recruitment or retention. All applicants must be nominated by their departments. Selection criteria for all Abraham Lincoln Fellowships include academic achievement, promise, and alignment with the goals of the fellowship.

Winners for AY 2015-16:
- **Melissa Abad**, Sociology
- **Jacqueline Bonds**, Neuroscience
- **Lindsay Bynum**, Psychology
- **Albert Colon**, Electrical & Computer Engineering
- **Andrea Cooke**, Disabilities Studies
- **Jada Domingue**, Physiology & Biophysics
- **Justin Escamilla**, Criminology, Law, & Justice
- **Rocio Garcia**, Latin American & Latino Studies
- **Rachel Harsley**, Computer Science
- **Devin Malone**, Museum Studies
- **Carlos Rosas**, Psychology
- **Neri Sandoval**, English

**Dean’s Scholar Award**

The Dean’s Scholar Award is a one-year, non-renewable award presented by the Dean of the Graduate College in recognition of a student’s scholarly achievement. The award is intended to provide the most distinguished, advanced-level doctoral and MFA students with a period of time dedicated solely to the completion of their degree. The Dean’s Scholars are nominated by their program.

Winners for AY 2015-16:
- **Thomas Alter**, History
- **Roberto Aspholm**, Social Work
- **Abel Castillo**, Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science
- **Zhiyuan Chen**, Computer Science
- **William D’Alessandro**, Philosophy
- **Christopher Findeisen**, English
- **Alyssa Greenberg**, Art History
- **Hao-ju Hsu**, Biopharmaceutical Sciences
- **Bernard Issa**, Hispanic Studies
- **Wan-Ju Lee**, Pharmacy Outcomes Systems
- **David Lowenstein**, Biological Sciences
- **Viktor Mateevitsi**, Computer Science
- **Claudia Peter-Hagene**, Psychology
- **Leonid Serebryannyy**, Physiology and Biophysics
- **Neslihan Sen**, Anthropology
- **Soumyadip Sett**, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering
- **Douglas Smit**, Anthropology
- **Aimee Wodda**, Criminology, Law, and Justice

Winners of the Excellence in Undergraduate Mentoring Award for Graduate Students (left to right): Alexander Jendrusina, Leigh Hellman, Jade Domingue, Kate Brill-Schuetz, and Sean Lee.
University/W. C. Deiss Fellowship
University Fellowships aim to recruit outstanding students newly admitted to graduate programs at UIC. Both Master’s and PhD students who receive the University Fellowships will be awarded $22,000 in the first year. PhD recipients are eligible for an additional year of support when they begin their dissertation research (after completing their preliminary examination). In the second year (for a master's recipient) and the second and third years (for a doctoral recipient), the student’s academic program must provide a 50% FTE nine-month appointment or equivalent. Students with a 50% teaching or research assistantships will have their stipends topped off to $22,000 or by a maximum of $6,000. University Fellowship recipients also receive a tuition and partial fee waiver and part of the cost of Campus Care coverage, if applicable. Research in the area of clinical or basic medical sciences receive funding from the W.C. and May Preble Deiss Fund.

Winners for AY 2015-16:
Hajer Alfaham, Political Science; Joseph Broz, Physics; Reilly-Owen Clemens, Sociology; Oliver Dewey, Chemical Engineering; David Gitten, Biological Sciences; Jessica Huff, Criminology, Law and Justice; Maggie Miller, Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science.

Chancellor’s Research Fellowship
The Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship Program supports increased multidisciplinary scholarship opportunities and exposure to varied research and creative fields for graduate and professional students, who show exceptional promise for future multidisciplinary research and creative activity. Funding of up to $4,000 per year for up to 2 years will allow graduate or professional candidates to supplement their existing stipends. Students from any field of study participating in multidisciplinary research are eligible. The L.J. and M. Allen Cancer Research Fellowship Fund and the Dorothea Fleming Student Research Fund permit the Graduate College to select additional winners who are working in the areas of cancer.

Winners of the Fall 2014 Competition: Gregory Bartoszek, Psychology; Ivan Brugere, Computer Science; Luoth Chou, Earth and Environmental Sciences; Cristina Correa, Latin American and Latino Studies; Tunde Cserpes, Sociology; Rebecca Deeb, Anthropology; Michael Fettiplace, Neuroscience; Drexler James, Psychology; Alexander Jendrusina, Psychology; Kelly Jones, Nursing; Caleb Kestle, Anthropology; Cuiping Long, Economics; Tyler Miller, History; Deepthi Murali, Art History; Goda Muralidhar, Biopharmaceutical Sciences; Frank Pagone, EOHS- Public Health; David Reid, Anthropology; Emily Ruehs, Sociology; Antonia Savarese, Neuroscience; Sarah Shepherd-Manandhar, Anthropology; Amanda Stewart, Sociology; Luke Wojdyla, Biomedical Sciences.

DFI Fellowship
The Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Program (DFI) was established by the Illinois General Assembly and signed as Public Act 093-0862 on August 4, 2004, which combined two pre-existing initiatives into one fellowship program. The purpose of the state-controlled DFI Fellowship Program is to increase the number of underrepresented faculty and staff in Illinois institutions of higher education and higher education governing boards. The Graduate College administers the award to UIC winners, who are announced in the summer. The stipend level varies each year.

Fellows for AY 2014-2015:
Melissa Abad, Sociology; Elizabeth Alejo, Political Science; Angelica Alonso, Public Health; Bakari Baker, Public Health; Paola Blanca Baldo, Criminology; Kisha Milam Brooks, Policy Studies; Prudence Browne, Education; Tristesse Burton, Pharmacognosy; Georgina Enciso, Criminology; Almethia Franklin, Criminology; Anjali Fulambarker, Social Work; Alysha Hart, Nursing; Heather Hathaway, Policy Studies; Stephanie Hicks, Policy Studies; Ivan Hong, Criminology; Nabeelah Kauser, Chemistry; Deanna Ledezma, Art History; Deana Lewis, Policy Studies; Michael Lewis, Computer Science; Jose Cristian Martinez, Biological Sciences; Yanantali Mejia, Curriculum and Instruction; Darneisha Miller, Criminology; Janet Omitoyin, Curriculum and Instruction; Andre Paredes, Bioengineering; Trinniee Pearson, Nursing; Laura Ramirez, Policy Studies; Taneka Taylor, Bioengineering; Joanna Thompson, Criminology; Amanda Vasquez, Criminology; Delaina Washington, Curriculum and Instruction; Pierre Washington, Sociology; Simeko Washington, Curriculum and Instruction.

Students at the Graduate Mentoring and Research Awards reception on April 17, 2015.
Provost/Deiss Research Award
The Graduate College holds bi-annual (fall and spring) competitions for graduate student research support. The Provost’s Award for Graduate Research and the W.C. and May Preble Deiss Fund for Biomedical Research provide $1,000 - $3,000. The Provost’s Award is open to all graduate students and the Deiss Fund is for graduate students engaged in clinical or medical sciences.

Spring 2015 Winners:
Deanna Arsala, Biological Sciences; Joseph Arthurs, Psychology; Sohella Azadi, Art; Gregory Bartoszek, Psychology; Ajar Chekirova, Political Science; Mylisha Cherry, Philosophy; Deborah Haar, Philosophy; Jialin Li, Sociology; Kirk Manson, Psychology; Michael Mkrtschjan, Bioengineering; Ehsan Noohi Bezanjani, Electrical and Computer Engineering; David Randolph, Computer Science; Lauren Sudbrink, Art; Vidyani Suryadevara, Bioengineering; Justin Sysol, Pharmacology; Pinar Uner Yilmaz, Art History; Dawson White, Biological Sciences; Sarah Zinn, Biological Sciences

Winners of the Fall 2014 Competition:
Rebecca Bivens, Art History; Thomas Driver, Associate Professor, Chemistry; Nicholas Huggett, Professor, Philosophy; Barbara Risman, Professor, Sociology; Gregory Thatcher, Professor, Medicinal Chemistry & Pharmacognosy

Undergraduate Mentoring Award
Now in its third year and co-sponsored by the Honors College and Graduate College, the Excellence in Undergraduate Mentoring Award highlights the most outstanding, creative, and hard-working graduate students who mentor undergraduates.

2015 Winners:
Kate Brill Schuetz, Psychology; Jada Domingue, Physiology and Biophysics; Leigh Hellman, English; Alexander Jendrusina, Psychology; Sean Lee, Public Health

2015 Honorable Mentions:
Jelena Dinic, Chemical Engineering; Soohyun Kim, Photography; Christina Mekonen, Germanic Studies; Kathryn McCarthy, Psychology; Emily Ruehs, Sociology; Roberto Rincon, Political Science; Dianne Selden, Political Science; Tanina Toypeko, Biological Sciences

Interdisciplinary Collaboration In The Arts And Humanities Award
Created in 2014, the ICAH facilitates interdisciplinary collaboration in the arts and humanities between graduate students and junior faculty members. Each collaboration, consisting of one graduate student and one faculty collaborator, receives an award of $5,000 for travel, research, etc.

Winners of the 2015 competition:
Soohyun Kim (MFA student in Photography) and Scott McFarland (Lecturer in English) for their book entitled “Fight for Fifteen: Portraits,” which combines social justice, photography, and oral history.

Jeffrey Nichols (PhD candidate in History) and Matthew Wizinsky (Assistant Professor of Graphic Design) for a project entitled “iPhone Rapid Digitization, Applications, and Workflows,” which blends design, digital technologies, and public history to document and perfect a workflow for digitizing unbound archival documents at the rate (and cost!) of turning a page.

Saja Parvizian (PhD student in Philosophy) and John Whipple (Assistant Professor of Philosophy) for their article “Leibniz on Philosophy and Theology: Two Models for World Selection.”

Outstanding Thesis Award
This annual award honors the most outstanding research master’s theses and doctoral dissertations in the College’s four divisions, while also acknowledging the research advisor.

Winners of the 2015 competition:
Jenna Nigro, History: Colonial Logics: Agricultural, Commercial, and Moral Experiments in the Making of French Senegal, 1763-1870; Advisor, Kirk Hoppe

Javier Ruiz-Tagle Venero, Urban Planning and Public Policy: Bringing Inequality Closer: A Comparative Urban Sociology of Socially Diverse Neighborhoods; Advisor, Janet Smith

Thomas Schutzius, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering: Large-area Coating and Patterning of Functional Nanocomposites: Design, Synthesis, and Characterization; Advisor, Constantine Megaridis

Yang Yang, Biopharmaceutical Sciences: Interactions of Dendritic Nanomaterials with Skin Layers and their Applications in Topical Drug Delivery; Advisor, Seungpyo Hong

Graduate Mentoring Award
The Graduate Mentoring Awards are designed to encourage and award excellence and innovation in all aspects of graduate mentoring. Awards are given annually. This year’s winners are:
Tom Driver, Associate Professor, Chemistry; Nicholas Huggett, Professor, Philosophy; Barbara Risman, Professor, Sociology; Gregory Thatcher, Professor, Medicinal Chemistry & Pharmacognosy

Dean Colley giving Dr. Barbara Risman, Professor in Sociology, the Graduate Mentoring Award.
OUR PROUD ALLY
THERESA CHRISTENSON-CABALLERO RECEIVES 2015 UIC GENDER AND SEXUALITY CENTER’S ALLY AWARD

The Graduate College is proud to congratulate Theresa Christenson-Caballero, Assistant Director of Graduate Student Outreach and Career Development, as a recipient of the 2015 UIC Gender and Sexuality Center’s Ally Award.

The award was presented at the 9th Annual Lavender Graduation ceremony Wednesday, April 29, which celebrated students of the LGBTQ+ community graduating this spring. Symone Simmons, Program Coordinator of the GSC explained the Ally Award. “The purpose of the Ally Award is to [acknowledge those who] demonstrate a commitment to LGBTQ issues and identities, and foster a more inclusive environment, from Chicago to the world -- it is someone who demonstrates that in both actions and words.” The Ally Award is given annually to two UIC affiliated individuals and/or units.

The GSC highlighted some of the reasons for selecting Christenson-Caballero for this prestigious award: the programming she has facilitated for Graduate College faculty and staff for Safe Zone trainings, dialogue dinners for graduate students centered on issues and discussions critical to the LGBTQ+ population, and campus workshops in which she has made sure to acknowledge and promote sexual diversity. She herself has completed the Safe Zone training series.

Safe Zone trainings, dialogue dinners for graduate students centered on issues and discussions critical to the LGBTQ+ population, and campus workshops in which she has made sure to acknowledge and promote sexual diversity. She herself has completed the Safe Zone training series.

In a powerful speech, Christenson-Caballero credits her beliefs and activism as originating with her mother, “a powerful Chicana and former educator of 35 years who taught me about justice and love from the time that I was a little girl. She taught me to stand up and speak up whenever it was needed because if I wasn’t going to do it who else would? She taught me to be fierce and fearless, vocal, compassionate and kind.”

This ingrained sense of activism translated to Christenson-Caballero fighting her high school prom’s anti-queer policies, to her solidarity with the push for more ethnic studies coursework at UIC, and to her support of the undocumented and “undocuqueer” student movement.

Along with her full-time position in the Graduate College, Christenson-Caballero is an adjunct lecturer in Latin American and Latino/a Studies, where she tackles topics such as Mexican American History, Race Class and Gender, and Latina constructs. As she explained, “I teach from a queer framework and a lens of racial, gender, and economic justice. LGBTQ+ histories, struggles, theories, and discussions of identities are integrated into all of my classes. My goal for each class is to cultivate a safe environment for all of my students to feel comfortable sharing about all aspects of their identities as they relate to class discussions.”

In her personal life, through her volunteer and social activities, supporting and empowering marginalized populations and championing ethnic studies and awareness are a constant.

She dedicated her award to her uncle—a gay rights activist and ardent supporter of queer youth disenfranchised by their families—who passed away last December.
VERSATILE PHD PROVIDES NON-ACADEMIC CAREER INFORMATION FOR PhD STUDENTS AND POSTDOCS IN THE HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND STEM DISCIPLINES. IT IS A PORTAL TO OPTIONS OTHER THAN TENURE-TRACK ACADEMIC CAREERS. IT HAS A PhD CAREER FINDER THAT LISTS AND DESCRIBES NON-ACADEMIC CAREERS BY DISCIPLINE; A VIBRANT COMMUNITY WHERE STUDENTS CAN GET SUPPORT AND ADVICE; AUTHENTIC RÉSUMÉS AND COVER LETTERS THAT HELPED PHDS LAND THEIR FIRST NON-ACADEMIC JOBS; INSIDE INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC CAREERS; AND A POWER SEARCH FEATURE THAT CONNECTS STUDENTS WITH NON-ACADEMIC CONTACTS AND MENTORS.

THE GRADUATE COLLEGE-PAID SUBSCRIPTION ALLOWS ANYONE WITH A VALID UIC NETID (INCLUDING ALUMNI FOR UP TO ONE YEAR AFTER GRADUATION) TO ACCESS ALL OF THE SITE’S CONTENT AND FEATURES.