Welcome Fellows!

2016-17 marks the seventh year of USC’s prize winning Presidential Fellowship program. To date, 159 students from 38 academic programs in 9 colleges have participated. The Graduate School is proud of your many accomplishments. We prize the leadership you display in your academic disciplines, on campus, and in your communities.

I enjoy directing the Presidential Fellows program and facilitating GRAD 801, the bimonthly seminar held on Fridays from 11:15 a.m. – 1 p.m. in Petigru 108. If I can be of any assistance, please don’t hesitate to contact me. Know too that Cheryl Addy, Dean of the Graduate School, and our colleagues in The Graduate School stand ready to assist you.

I look forward to sharing an enriching and productive year.

Jessica Elfenbein

jessicae@mailbox.sc.edu
803-777-3282
GABRIELLA ANGELONI - 2014 Scholar  
**major & degree:** History, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** San Antonio, TX  
**contact:** gna@email.sc.edu  

*What brought you to USC?*: I was primarily drawn to South Carolina for the easy access to the archival and museum collections available in the area, as well as the colonial historians on faculty in the History Department.  

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?*: I hope to make connections with local and state museums and historical societies, be involved with public history and preservation efforts, and ultimately find work as a museum curator.  

*Fun fact about yourself*: I insisted we name our dogs after Banastre Tarleton (if you’ve seen *The Patriot*, he’s the real-life “Colonel Tavington”) and Catherine “Caty” Greene, General Nathanael Greene’s wife.  

*Research Key Words*: 18th century South Carolina, Atlantic World, personal libraries, the Enlightenment, history of the book, political history

SEAN BATH - 2015 Scholar  
**major & degree:** Geography, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** Charleston, SC  
**contact:** bath@sc.edu  

*What brought you to USC?*: I owe my presence at USC to the CISA lab/program in the Geography department, which conducts the kind of work I’d love to do—helping Carolina decision makers draw connections between community decisions and climate/environmental data, especially given what changes may come.  

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?*: I hope to become more engaged in public policy in the state while I pursue my degree.  

*Fun fact about yourself*: I love history, but I prefer looking to the future. It’s all a part of how the larger context of change grounds my way of thinking.  

*Research Key Words*: community planning; climate change impacts; social, economic, and political processes; global change
BENJAMIN BELGRAD-2013 Scholar

**major & degree:** Marine Science, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Boardman, OH
**contact:** babelgra@eckerd.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I came to USC because I liked the research here and because both the university and my adviser showed that they were going to be incredibly supportive.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I hope to improve our understanding of how individual behavior is tied to changes in both one’s physiology (e.g. energy reserves, reproductive effort) and the local environment (e.g. habitat degradation). I also want to determine how behavioral changes can cause cascading effects throughout ecosystems.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I learned to scuba dive by the age of 12.

*Research Key Words:* marine biology, ecology, physiology, oceanography, animal behavior, personality, habitat degradation, trophic cascades, crabs, fisheries

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SETH BRAKE-2015 Scholar

**major & degree:** Political Science, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Denver, NC
**contact:** sbrake@mail.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* Conversations with USC faculty and recommendation from undergraduate faculty.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I want to become a more well-rounded scientist who has a grasp of the bigger (often interdisciplinary) picture of Political Science.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I love strategy games. I have a hard time thinking creatively if I haven’t recently tried to outsmart someone or been outsmarted.

*Research Key Words:* trade, power, sanctions, growth, war, development, democracy, protectionism, globalization, stability
DOUGLAS CALHL-2013 Scholar
major & degree: Geological Sciences, Ph.D.
hometown: Edison, NJ
contact: dcahl@geol.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: Searching for exciting oceanographic Ph.D. research to apply my background of physics in turned out to be more difficult than I had thought.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: Studying ocean currents using high frequency radars in the School of the Earth, Ocean and Environment at the University of South Carolina has given me all the excitement and challenges I could have asked for. New technologies such as autonomous vehicles are radically changing the way oceanographic science is conducted, and our lab is currently building our own and using off the shelf products.

Fun fact about yourself: To relax, I sail, hike, garden, and code!

Research Key Words: oceanography, drones, radar, waves, currents, erosion, beach, photogrammetry, doppler, matlab

ZAC CANNIZZO-2014 Scholar
major & degree: Marine Science, Ph.D.
hometown: Crystal Lake, IL
contact: zac.cannizzo@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I chose USC primarily for my major advisor. He was working on subjects that I found interesting and felt he would be an effective motivator.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to develop the skills necessary to be an effective scientific communicator and contributor. In particular I hope to be able to effectively communicate complicated scientific ideas to the public.

Fun fact about yourself: I have worked in a wide variety of ecosystems including: marine, estuarine, freshwater, prairie, temperate forest, rain forest, alpine tundra, and cloud forest.

Research Key Words: climate change, range shift, eco-evolutionary novel habitats, refuge habitats, novel interactions, global change ecology
CASEY COLE - 2015 Scholar

major & degree: Computer Science & Engineering, Ph.D.
hometown: Urbana, OH
contact: coleca@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I was recruited out of my undergraduate program to stay here at USC and pursue a Ph.D.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: Through my studies and research I hope to gain the needed skills to continue on into academia in either the role of a researcher or a lecturer.

Fun fact about yourself: I play a lot of soccer. It serves as both exercise and stress reliever.

Research Key Words: computational biology, bioinformatics, algorithms, neural networks, proteins, structure, dynamics, NMR

DOT COLLINS - 2014 Scholar

major & degree: Sport & Entertainment Management, Ph.D.
hometown: Baldwin, NY
contact: dorothyc@email.sc.edu

I am excited to be a part of the first cohort of Ph.D. students in Sport and Entertainment Management at USC. I earned my B.A. in Comparative Religious Studies from Lawrence University, where I was a two-sport varsity athlete. I then went on to earn a second Bachelor’s in English Literature from Southwest Minnesota State University. After college, I initially began a career in the communications field but gravitated quickly toward a full-time swim coaching career, while continuing to do some freelance sport writing. In 2012, I returned to school at Old Dominion University to pursue a master’s degree in Sport Management, and found an academic field that I love. My master’s thesis, which examined the effects of both new media and demographic factors on team identification in non-local NFL fans, represents my primary academic interests, fan identification and consumer behavior. When not working, I still enjoy coaching youth sports and teaching children to swim, as well as spending time with my partner and our three children.
NICHOLAS DANNE-2015 Scholar
major & degree: Philosophy, Ph.D.
hometown: Cedar Rapids, IA
contact: ndanne@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I followed some of the philosophy faculty in the blogosphere and professional literature, and met others at philosophy conferences, as I completed my master's degree, so I feel edified to now work with those faculty. The camaraderie of current graduate students at my campus visit also encouraged me.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I want to publish in a philosophy journal on any topic. My research currently directs me to off-beat and unorthodox conclusions, but I would still be proud to contribute. Sometimes the most helpful insights are the most obscure.

Fun fact about yourself: My mom shook hands with Spiro Agnew.

Research Key Words: idealism, Fourier analysis, metaphysics, New Natural Law, Keynes, causality, mind

ADAM DENTON-2016 Scholar
major & degree: Experimental Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Bristol, VA
contact: adamraydenton@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: One of the main factors that contributed to my decision to attend USC was the Behavioral-Biomedical Interface program (BBIP), which allows students in Psychology, Exercise Science, and Epidemiology to attain more specialized training in biomedical sciences. In addition, I found that my research interests were an excellent fit with the research being conducted by Dr. Rosemarie Booze in the Psychology department.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to acquire the skills and experiences necessary to prepare me for a faculty position at a university and to be a productive and successful researcher.

Fun fact about yourself: During my spare time, I enjoy cooking, the outdoors, reading, and playing the marimba.

Research Key Words: biomedicine, behavioral neuroscience, neurochemistry, quantitative methods, neurocognitive disorders, dopamine, HIV-1
NATE DEPROSPO-2016 Scholar

major & degree: English, Ph.D.
hometown: Hollidaysburg, PA
contact: nate.deprospo@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC because of the strong rhetoric program and the warm weather.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to learn as much as I can about the field of rhetoric while I'm here. I also want to improve my writing, reading, and teaching skills. I hope to forge lasting connections with students and teachers alike.

Fun fact about yourself: I have three sisters: one lives in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania; one is in Durango, Colorado; one is in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Research Key Words: multimodal pedagogical applications of rhetoric; sound; music; composition; social constructionism

SAHAR DERAKHSHAN-2016 Scholar

major & degree: Geography, Ph.D.
hometown: Tehran, Iran
contact: saharder@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: After the Bam earthquake in 2003 in Iran, it became my passion to seek solutions for preventing a natural phenomenon from becoming a disaster. I went back to school to study Natural Disaster Management at the University of Tehran. I received my master’s in Public Policy from UC Berkeley in 2013 and started working as a researcher at the Pacific Earthquake Engineering Research Center (PEER).

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I have been following the research done at the Geography department and the Hazards and Vulnerability Research Institute at USC, and I am very interested in learning from the faculty here.

Research Key Words: natural disasters, resiliency, vulnerability assessment, risk mitigation, GIS
CONOR DONAHUE-2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** Political Science, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Cary, NC

**contact:** cpdonahue223@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: USC provided me with so many opportunities throughout my undergraduate career. There's no place I'd rather continue my education.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to create a substantial amount of research that may help illuminate opportunities and challenges in global affairs.

Fun fact about yourself: I was the captain of the Chinese University of Hong Kong rowing team.

Research Key Words: international relations, identity, culture, nationalism, legitimacy, sovereignty, conflict, East Asia

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LEWIS ELIOT-2014 Scholar

**major & degree:** History, Ph.D.

**hometown:** London, UK via Cape Town, South Africa

**contact:** leliot@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: A faculty and advisor that were interested in my project and were a good fit for my research interests, attractive teaching opportunities and funding, and the Presidential Fellowship.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: Teach my own classes, publish, and keep winning grant money to research.

Fun fact about yourself: I toyed with the idea of trying to open a braai restaurant instead of going to grad school. I'm glad I didn't, though, not least because I met my fiancée in the Presidential Fellows program.

Research Key Words: 1800s, Caribbean, Atlantic, illegal slavery, empire, diplomacy, sovereignty, nationalism, race
SPENSER ESSMAN - 2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** Business Administration, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Kansas City, KS

**contact:** sessman@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* My research interests are human capital and strategic human resource management. I came to USC because of the faculty expertise in these areas at the Darla Moore School.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I hope to learn from these faculty and gain the requisite experience needed to contribute to these fields of study. My goal is to earn a tenure track position at a top research university upon completing my Ph.D.

*Fun fact about yourself:* In my free time, I like to spend time with my wife and our two dogs, play golf and basketball, and go to the movies.

*Research Key Words:* human capital, strategic human resource management, organizational behavior

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JORDAN EZELL - 2015 Scholar

**major & degree:** School Psychology, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Niceville, FL

**contact:** jaezell@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* My mentor and her research interests.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I hope to grow professionally, develop clinical skills, and publish awesome research.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I have moved 9 times.

*Research Key Words:* autism, differential diagnosis, anxiety, Fragile X Syndrome, early developmental trajectories
JIE FANG - 2014 Scholar

**major & degree:** Mechanical Engineering, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Shenzhen, China

**contact:** JIEF@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I am coming to USC because I wish to work with my advisor, who has a reputation in the area of fuel cells.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I am hoping to get a better understanding of my research topic and develop a novel technique to convert captured CO2 by applying a combined CO2 separation technique and solid oxide electrolysis technique.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I write and eat with my right hand, while I do other things, like playing badminton, with my left hand.

*Research Key Words:* CO2 separation, electrochemistry, membrane, solid oxide electrolyzer, chemical-dealloying, electro-chemical dealloying, long-term stability

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JILL FOUND - 2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** History, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Warrenton, VA

**contact:** jillfound@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?:* The University of South Carolina is an exceptional place because of the number of historians who study different aspects of early American history. This, combined with the exceptional public history program, makes it a wonderful center for learning how to research and convey knowledge about the United States’ past.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* As a graduate student at USC, I hope to find ways to make that history accessible to many different audiences, while maintaining academic integrity.

*Fun fact about yourself:* Rather fittingly for someone who studies early American history, I share a birthday with Thomas Jefferson.

*Research Key Words:* history, United States, colonial, slavery, race, African Americans, class, gender, public history, museums
PAUL FRAM - 2014 Scholar

**major & degree:** Educational Psychology & Research, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Reston, VA
**contact:** pfram@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I came to USC because, in conversations with professors in the College of Education, I felt excitement and support for my desire to influence policies to combat the disparities within public education – especially relating to how school discipline structures treat traditionally marginalized populations.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I hope my research will reveal how factors, such as implicit bias, impact school discipline and will help to reframe the lens through which educators view classroom management.

*Fun fact about yourself:* My children and I formed a band called The Bend in the River, whose first CD is the soundtrack for a musical, *The Corporation*.

*Research Key Words:* education, school discipline, detention, inequity, discrimination, symbolic violence, implicit bias

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TAYLOR GARRICK - 2013 Scholar

**major & degree:** Chemical Engineering, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Simpsonville, SC
**contact:** garrictr@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I knew that I wanted to pursue a degree in Chemical Engineering focused on Electrochemistry, and I had a great experience with Dr. John Weidner as an undergraduate researcher, so, despite offers from other “more prestigious” institutions, I decided to stay at USC for graduate school because of my advisor’s status within the field. The Presidential Fellowship also made the combined stipend offer from USC much higher than any other institution.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I applied to colleges for Chemical Engineering as well as Music Performance and didn’t decide what I wanted to do until the acceptance deadline.

*Research Key Words:* alternative energy, fuel cells, batteries, hydrogen heneration, industrial electrochemistry, nanoscience
GERAD GENTRY-2013 Scholar

**major & degree:** Philosophy, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Halfway, OR & Cooperstown, NY
**contact:** gerad.gentry@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?:* I came to USC to study under Anne and Konstantin Pollok and George Khushf. I also wanted to be at USC because my extended family had relocated to Columbia some eight years before. The Presidential Fellowship on top of the departmental stipend was a large influencer as well.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I will use the Fulbright to work toward completion of my dissertation at Humboldt University of Berlin in Germany this coming academic year, while also continuing to edit a book for Cambridge University Press.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I’ve lived in 7 countries (5 different continents) and visited over 20 countries.

*Research Key Words:* history of philosophy, modernism, German idealism and romanticism, philosophy of art, ethics, ethical theory, epistemology, metaphysics

STEPHANIE GRAY-2013 Scholar

**major & degree:** Public History, M.A.; History, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Kirtland, OH
**contact:** segray@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I chose USC based on the reputation of the M.A. in Public History program (it’s one of the oldest in the country) and its track record of placing alums in jobs. Additionally, I was attracted to the comparatively high graduate student stipend and low cost of living in Columbia, the ability for me to earn my M.A. degree on the way to getting the Ph.D., and, of course, the Presidential Fellowship.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I hope to establish a supportive network of colleagues both within and outside of the history department, publish in an academic journal, and explore public history opportunities in the area while I’m at USC.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I’ve been told I’m behind the times: I’ve never bought an Apple product in my life, and I still use a basic phone.

*Research Key Words:* U.S. cultural history, historic preservation, New Deal architecture, built environment
ENNAN GU - 2015 Scholar

**major & degree**: Statistics, Ph.D.

**hometown**: Harbin, China

**contact**: egu@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?*: Professors at USC have very solid statistical knowledge and also let us attach great importance to fundamental knowledge, which will pay back a lot in future research. USC also provides good fellowship.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?*: I hope I can really obtain a breakthrough in one direction in my research, although I am not for sure which direction I want to do research for in this year.

*Fun fact about yourself*: I have developed an interest in the fashion and beauty industry, so if I can do something pertaining to fashion and statistics at the same time, it would be really cool.

*Research Key Words*: data analysis, fashion, beauty, health care, big data, survival analysis, fingerprint recognition, voice recognition

MARK GUINTER - 2014 Scholar

**major & degree**: Epidemiology, Ph.D.

**hometown**: Lake Zurich, IL

**contact**: mguinter@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?*: The strengths of the faculty in the Epidemiology and Biostatistics department were a huge reason I decided to pursue my Ph.D. at USC. I knew there would be plenty of opportunities to get involved in research that parallels my interests and that I would be able to get quality mentorship under Dr. Susan Steck.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?*: I hope to refine my skills as a researcher and develop ways to answer important epidemiologic questions in a creative way. While doing so, I plan on developing strong professional relationships and benefitting from multiple mentors with a variety of backgrounds.

*Fun fact about yourself*: I (hopefully) will be a part of the first generation to see a Cubs' World Series victory in over 100 years!

*Research Key Words*: epidemiology, nutrition, dietary patterns, cancer, metabolism, chronic disease, health behavior, prevention, etiology
ALEXANDER HALL-2015 Scholar
major & degree: Experimental Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Sioux Falls, SD
contact: ahg@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: Adviser fit and competitive funding.
What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to publish and achieve other marketable experiences.
Research Key Words: measurement, factor analysis, psychology, modeling, validity, reliability, structural equation modeling

SAMANTHA HARTLEY-2015 Scholar
major & degree: Clinical-Community Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Fair Oaks, CA
contact: snh1@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: My most important graduate school selection criterion was finding a good match between the faculty’s research interests and my own, which broadly concern applying what’s been learned in implementation science to school mental health.
What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: The usual goals of a graduate student: to gain a solid knowledge base from coursework, to get firsthand experience in the clinical sphere, to develop an efficient/productive personal writing process, to become deeply familiar with the research being done in my particular areas of interest, and to help bridge the research-to-practice gap in the “real world.”
Fun fact about yourself: In high school and college, I was a message board moderator for a pole vaulting website called polevaultpower.com (along with the site’s founder and some elite vaulters, coaches, and officials). Injuries cut short my actual pv career but not my love for the sport, so my natural response was to turn into an internet nerd about it.
Research Key Words: implementation science, school mental health, adolescent suicide prevention, public policy
CASSIE HORTON - 2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** Environmental Health Sciences, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Charleston, SC
**contact:** clhorton@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I chose USC for the curriculum in the Environmental Health Science PhD program, as well as the research performed by the faculty.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* The program is very much in line with my own interests, and I think it will well prepare me for a career in microbial ecology research.

*Fun fact about yourself:* This summer, I was able to go on a research trip to San Salvador, Bahamas, with the investigator with whom I will be doing my Ph.D. work and some of his other students.

*Research Key Words:* microbial ecology, environmental health, antibiotic resistance, public health microbiology

LAUREN HUFFMAN - 2013 Scholar

**major & degree:** Clinical-Community Psychology, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Mobile, AL
**contact:** lehuffman1@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?:* I was attracted to USC by the opportunity to work with Dr. Dawn Wilson developing and evaluating evidenced-based weight-loss interventions. The Clinical-Community Psychology program and Behavioral-Biomedical Interface Program were also large draws, as they offered interdisciplinary training towards understanding the link between physical and mental health.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* My goal is to become an effective psychologist, specializing in evidence-based health and cognitive-behavioral interventions. I’ve been working towards developing a program of research with two main aims: 1) Understanding how social relationships can facilitate positive health behaviors 2) Promotion of physical activity in groups with barriers to participation (individuals experiencing mental illness, overweight/obese individuals, racial and ethnic minorities).

*Fun fact about yourself:* I collect and enjoy tea (no cream, no sugar), and you’ll almost always find me with a cup!

*Research Key Words:* health promotion, obesity interventions, physical activity, social support, social norms, cognitive behavioral therapy, evidence-based practices
LAURA IREI - 2015 Scholar

**major & degree:** Creative Writing, M.F.A.
**hometown:** Phoenix, AZ
**contact:** lirei@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC to pursue my M.F.A. in creative writing, with a focus in fiction.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I’ve met some inspiring and supportive people during my first year here, and I’m excited to see what my second one has to offer.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I have a dog called Georgie, named after George Eliot, who loves taking long walks on the canal and watching reality television with me.

*Research Key Words:* fiction, writing, creative writing, literature, English, contemporary fiction, novels, short stories

OWEN JENSEN - 2015 Scholar

**major & degree:** Geological Sciences, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Spartanburg, SC
**contact:** ojensen@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: My advisor’s interest in my project, the strength of the program, and the beautiful climate.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: Hopefully I’ll be able to call myself a good scientist, with a few publications under my belt.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I make a mean pie crust.

*Research Key Words:* geochemistry, volcanoes, igneous petrology, geology, subduction, fluid-mobile elements, trace elements, isotopes, Aleutian Islands, mass spectrometry
KATHLEEN JOCOY-2013 Scholar

major & degree: Experimental Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Fort Mill, SC
contact: kjocoy@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: Best fit.
What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: Get research and teaching experience.

Fun fact about yourself: I bought a new car last semester.

Research Key Words: statistics, heterogeneity, moderation, prediction, methods

SARAH JUDGE-2015 Scholar

major & degree: Business Administration, Ph.D.
hometown: Richfield, OH
contact: sarahjudge7@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I had a great undergraduate experience at USC, and when I was given the opportunity to return again as a graduate student, I was very excited. The faculty in my department are not only accomplished researchers, but they are also very willing to assist PhD students in whatever ways they can to help us be successful. The other PhD students in my program are also very welcoming, and that has made my first year a great experience.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: As I pursue my degree I hope to grow as both a researcher and as an educator. I am grateful to be in a program that will assist me in both these endeavors, as I will have the opportunity to be a research assistant to various faculty and also have the opportunity to teach undergraduate courses.

Fun fact about yourself: I used to be a competitive jump roper!

Research Key Words: accounting, behavioral research, psychology, audit, judgment and decision making, materiality
JOHN KINARD-2014 Scholar
major & degree: English, Ph.D.
hometown: Fort Mill, SC
contact: jandersonkinard@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: The amazing faculty of the English department, particularly those who are now on my committee.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: In addition to pursuing my own research, while I’m at USC, I hope to become a better and better teacher.

Fun fact about yourself: I saw the film Titanic seven times in the theater when I was a kid, and I do not regret a single screening.

Research Key Words: late Victorian; modernism; queer theory; the novel; camp; the novel

SAMUEL KING-2013 Scholar
major & degree: History, Ph.D.
hometown: Myrtle Beach, SC
contact: sck122890@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC primarily because of the persuasive financial aid package (including the Presidential Fellowship).

Research Key Words: Asian American immigration, Chinese restaurants, cultural history
AMBER LEE-2014 Scholar  
**major & degree:** English, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** Irmo, SC  
**contact:** ambermarylee@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?*: The faculty in the Rhetoric and Composition program are fantastic, and I knew I wanted to work with Dr. John Muckelbauer.  
*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?*: I hope to gain the skills, knowledge, and self confidence that will allow me to be a good professor, as well as establish contacts with colleagues in my department and with people in other fields.  
*Fun fact about yourself*: I can wiggle my ears.  
*Research Key Words*: rhetorical memory, forgetting, amnesia, remembering, history, time, trauma

ADAM LUTZ-2015 Scholar  
**major & degree:** Exercise Science, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** Baton Rouge, LA  
**contact:** Adlutz@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?*: I followed a former professor from physical therapy school to USC to pursue a line of research that investigates the benefits of direct access to physical therapy for musculoskeletal complaints.  
*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?*: A shift in the current paradigm of care promoting direct access to PT intervention for musculoskeletal complaints. The goal of this model is to promote early intervention with an appropriate provider (PT) resulting in lower healthcare costs, improved patient outcomes and satisfaction, and decreased likelihood of chronicity.  
*Fun fact about yourself*: Instead of a more traditional model of funding, I am funded by working 20 hours per week as an outpatient physical therapist in Greenville.  
*Research Key Words*: benchmarking, performance measures, comparative effectiveness, direct access
DANIEL LYONS - 2016 Scholar  
**major & degree:** Political Science, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** Chicago, IL  
**contact:** djlyons85@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?:* Thinking about how much time I spend reading about politics, I had one of those do what you love realization moments. I returned to school, and five years later here I am at USC.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* Studying American Politics, I hope to develop and master approaches to understanding in Political Science and pull together complex relationships within federalism, media in politics, and interest group politics.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I love to travel. My greatest thrill is to pull into a new bus or train station and begin to wander and discover a new place.

*Research Key Words:* American government, federalism, judicial, electoral, interest group, media, quantitative, critical race theory, political economy, free rider

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JENNIFER MANDELBAUM - 2016 Scholar  
**major & degree:** Health Promotion, Education & Behavior, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** Londonderry, NH  
**contact:** mandelbj@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I was drawn to USC by the incredible public health work done here, specifically in global noncommunicable disease. People at the Arnold School emphasized the importance of doing meaningful work that moves public health forward, and their integrity and optimism were contagious. I was struck by the Arnold School's focus on translating research into practice.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* Although I am still figuring out exactly what I want to accomplish here, I know that I want to conduct research that will be used to advocate for changes that will improve health (specifically related to childhood obesity).

*Fun fact about yourself:* I've been shark cage diving.

*Research Key Words:* public health; childhood obesity; global health research; prevention; noncommunicable disease
OLIVIA MANLEY-2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** Chemistry, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Rock Hill, SC
**contact:** omanley@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I came to USC because the research interests of faculty members at USC aligned with my own research interests perfectly.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I feel that at USC, I will be able to continue doing research that I am passionate about. While pursuing my degree, I hope to uncover new insight into iron-sulfur cluster formation and regulation in Mycobacterium marinum.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I love Harry Potter and haven’t been yet, but Harry Potter world is on my bucket list.


CAMERON MASSEY-2014 Scholar

**major & degree:** Clinical-Community Psychology, Ph.D.
**hometown:** N/A
**contact:** cmassey@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* The faculty in the psychology department focuses on my area of interest and provides exceptional theoretical and practical training when it comes to current trends in our field. The Presidential Fellowship also played a significant role in my decision, acting as the deciding factor when it came to choosing between comparable schools.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* While at USC, I hope to accomplish a deeper understanding of research skills in the area of psychology. I previously worked as a licensed mental health provider but did not have substantial training in non-practice elements, such as research and teaching. By the time I leave my program I hope to have a well-rounded training experience that prepares me for any career path I choose.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I am a dedicated blues guitarist. I have grown up loving rhythm and blues and have played in some capacity for the past twenty years.

*Research Key Words:* adolescents, mental health, depression, anxiety, internalizing, externalizing, rural, school-based, treatment
RICHARD MCCAIN - 2016 Scholar

major & degree: Biomedical Science, Ph.D.
hometown: Columbia, SC
contact: mccainrsj@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I was drawn to this graduate program at USC by my experiences in research with the faculty and the plentiful variety of neuroscience research opportunities here.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to further focus my research area of interest and gain the experience needed to be able to effectively conduct research.

Fun fact about yourself: I tend to be concise.

Research Key Words: brain, CNS, dopamine, dopaminergic, amygdala, hypothalamus, synapse, HAND, Tat, and glia

KELLIA MOORE - 2015 Scholar

major & degree: English, Ph.D.
hometown: Tampa, FL
contact: kellia@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I was attracted to USC as a program on the east coast with really robust National Research Council rankings.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While I work toward my degree, I also hope to mature in my thought and research and begin to produce truly useful work on 18th and 19th-century literature.

Fun fact about yourself: My 17th birthday party was Jane Austen-themed, fake British accents and all.

Research Key Words: British, 18th century, 19th century, literature, novels, women writers, Jane Austen, social history, The Lizzie Bennet Diaries, new media
ZI-JIA NG - 2013 Scholar

major & degree: School Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Singapore
contact: zijia85@hotmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC for the scientist-practitioner model of the university’s psychology program (broad coursework curriculum, in-house clinical and research facilities, and affiliated practicum sites in community settings). The significant contributions of the reputable faculty, as well as the funding and cost of living, were also factors in coming to USC.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While I’m pursuing my degree, I hope to build a solid repertoire of research and clinical skills, as well as a strong network of like-minded colleagues/collaborators.

Fun fact about yourself: I eat cake for breakfast, and I have been to 25 different countries.

Research Key Words: mental well-being, mental wellness, positive psychology, emotion regulation, adolescence, children

ALECIA NICHOLS - 2016 Scholar

major & degree: Linguistics, Ph.D.
hometown: Charleston, SC
contact: alecianichols@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I chose USC because the Linguistics program offers the ability to jump right into a specialized field, and all my interactions with the faculty have been incredibly positive and supportive.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: During my time here, I plan to publish several manuscripts and gain hands-on lab experience with psycholinguistic studies through the Institute for Mind and Brain.

Fun fact about yourself: Although I already speak Spanish and Mandarin Chinese, I’m hoping to pick up Arabic in my free time!

Research Key Words: linguistics, psycholinguistics, bilingualism, Spanish, Mandarin, Chinese, Arabic, SLA, language acquisition, language interaction
SAM NIELSON-2016 Scholar
major & degree: Geography, Ph.D.
hometown: Irvine, CA
contact: samuelpnielson@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I have been practicing law for several years. Working on two particular cases, including one against Iran for state-sponsored terrorism, reminded me that my passion lies in studying people and places; it effectively revived a dormant desire to become a geography professor. In evaluating graduate programs, South Carolina jumped out at me. Caroline Nagel and Amy Mills in the geography department had similar research and regional interests, and the school had the Rule of Law Collaborative, a unique center that would afford me the opportunity to build upon my prior legal training in my new career in academia. So here I am!

Fun fact about yourself: I met my wife in an undergraduate ballroom dance course; she was a student, I was the TA.

Research Key Words: immigrants; refugees; ethnic/religious minorities; immigrants’ social integration, religious rights, economic opportunities

CATHERINE NTUBE-2016 Scholar
major & degree: Creative Writing, M.F.A
hometown: Austin, TX
contact: ntube.catherine@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I received a bachelor’s degree in History and Literature from Harvard University, where I focused on postcolonial West African and South Asian literature and worked with PBHA, the university’s umbrella service and social justice organization.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: After one year living in Peru and four years teaching in NYC, I’m coming to USC to pursue an M.F.A in poetry, one step toward the larger goal of better balancing and enjoying the interplay between my creative, political, and academic interests.

Fun fact about yourself: Originally from Austin, Texas, one of my pipe dreams is to learn to play guitar and perform at a local venue.

Research Key Words: poetry, blackness, womanhood, repression, representation, body, postcolonial, other(ing), exile, homeland
SAMUEL ORR-2016 Scholar  
major & degree: Comparative Literature, Ph.D.  
hometown: Nashville, TN  
contact: sdorr@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I was drawn to USC by the welcoming faculty and by the structure and prestige of the Comparative Literature program, which has a valuable core sequence while remaining flexible to each student’s specific areas of interest. This program is also unique in the way it prepares students for life after graduate school by encouraging Graduate Assistantships and professional development opportunities.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While at USC, I hope to extend my knowledge of European Languages and Literatures and to expand my theoretical framework through a commitment to insightful research.

Fun fact about yourself: My grandmother was also a Professor of Literature.

Research Key Words: comparative literature, German, languages, linguistics, literary theory, French, cultures, philosophy

KWAME OWUSU-DAAKU-2013 Scholar  
major & degree: Geography, Ph.D.  
hometown: Kumasi, Ghana  
contact: owusudaaku.kn@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: My advisor and his research experience and interests in Ghana and international development. Ironically he has left. Thankfully he is still advising me “from afar.”

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While I’m pursuing my degree, I’d like to win one more award.

Fun fact about yourself: I dislike academic writing (crazy, right?).

Research Key Words: global change research, climate change adaptation, Ghana, international development, sea-level rise, qualitative research, community engagement, governmentality, social theory, human geography
CHAMBERLINE OZIGBU - 2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** Health Services and Policy Management, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Abuja, Nigeria

**contact:** ozigbu@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?:* Born and raised in Nigeria with patches of grey hair at my young age, I received my bachelor’s in Medicine (MD) from Windsor University School of Medicine, St. Kitts and Nevis, and a Master of Public Health from Walden University, Minnesota. I chose to study my Ph.D. at USC because of their high impact publications and research in Public Health in the area of health insurance coverage, healthcare financing, health disparity and HIV, which is in line with my research interests. Also, USC gives graduate students teaching opportunities, which enables them to impart knowledge to other students, in line with my long term goal as a prospective teacher.

*Research Key Words:* health disparity, primary health care, quality healthcare, healthcare financing, infectious diseases, child health, reproductive health

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IVAN PANCHENKO - 2012 Scholar

**major & degree:** Computer Science & Engineering, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Lviv, Ukraine

**contact:** panchenk@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* Basically, USC, though not my top choice, finally gave me the most long lasting and financially stable offer. Other than that, my advisor was quite friendly and was a good match in research interests.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* My personal expectations for graduate school are not limited to scientific research and getting a degree. It is also about networking, meeting people who can lead me into the realms of American hi-tech industry and engineering academia. I believe this kind of attitude is the most common among us grad students.

*Fun fact about yourself:* Too funny to disclose, so I’ll just leave it like that.

*Research Key Words:* FPGA, SoC, robotics, embedded systems, digital hardware, HDL, measurements, computer architecture, distributed computing, AC/DC converters
JIEUN PARK-2013 Scholar
**major & degree:** Business Administration, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Seoul, South Korea
**contact:** Jieun.Park@grad.moore.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I have a B.A. and M.A. from Ewha Womans University in South Korea and an M.A. from Ohio State University. My research interests include group dynamics, faultline, identification, emotion, and entrepreneurship. My prior research lies in the analysis of organizational phenomena from the multilevel perspective. Specifically, I have focused on the effects of group-level procedural justice on the relationship between psychological contracts and employees’ satisfaction and commitment using multilevel analysis and response surface analysis.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I would like to continue to study how employment relationships directly impact individual attitudes and behaviors during my doctoral studies.

*Research Key Words:* faultline, group, team, identity

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CHANDI PATEL-2013 Scholar
**major & degree:** Clinical-Community Psychology, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Gaborone, Botswana
**contact:** chandni19@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?:* The sense of community in my program was, for me, one of the most important factors in deciding to attend USC. That closeness continues and has been a huge support in working towards my degree.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I hope to grow as a researcher and clinician over the next few years and to provide the best care to the families with whom I work.

*Fun fact about yourself:* Cooking is one of my favorite ways of relaxing and unwinding.

*Research Key Words:* parenting, externalizing behaviors, treatment engagement, resilience, families and children, prevention
LORELEI PHILLIP-2015 Scholar

major & degree: Communication Sciences & Disorders, Ph.D.
hometown: Concord, NC
contact: phillilz@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: My advisor, Julius Fridriksson, is a very well respected and accomplished researcher in my field and was my first choice when considering graduate programs.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to refine some of my clinical skills and improve my knowledge of neuroimaging techniques. I’d also like to produce research that is translational and can positively impact clinical practice and outcomes for people with aphasia.

Fun fact about yourself: I really enjoy taking aerial silks classes! Unfortunately, I haven’t had the time to seek out a studio in Columbia just yet, but hope to sometime soon.

Research Key Words: aphasia, stroke, brain, speech, language, recovery, neuroimaging, treatment, assessment

ALLIE PIERCE-2014 Scholar

major & degree: Experimental Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Hickory, NC
contact: ampierce@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: The primary reason I came to USC was to work with the mentor I am now working with. The research I am interested in is the research that she does. The other reason was because of the Presidential Fellowship. This award made my offer at USC by far the most competitive one I had received.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While at USC, I hope to continue conducting and publishing my research. I also want to learn as much as I can to be as best prepared for my career when I graduate.

Fun fact about yourself: My husband and I race go-karts at a local track in SC. As funny as it sounds, they’re actually a little scary (they go up to about 45 mph) but a ton of fun!

Research Key Words: attention, EEG, fMRI, visual cortex, inhibition of return (IOR), multisensory interactions
STACEY PLOTNER-2016 Scholar

major & degree: Language & Literacy, Ph.D.
hometown: Urbana, IL
contact: splotner@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I received a B.A. in the teaching of English and a M.Ed. from the University of Illinois. I have taught high school English for the past 19 years, first in Illinois, and now here in Columbia.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I am excited to be a student again and to be able to affect change from a different position. I have a plethora of research interests including literacy theory and adolescent literature, service learning, critical reading and response to literature, writing instruction in secondary schools, developing partnerships between the university and schools, and using writing to promote social change. I am very passionate about integrating authentic, real world studies into curriculum.

Fun fact about yourself: In my spare time, I enjoy running, playing with my two children and watching them play sports.

ELIZABETH REGAN-2016 Scholar

major & degree: Exercise Science, Ph.D.
hometown: Upper Marlboro, MD
contact: eregan@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I decided to attend USC because of my interest in my mentor’s research and the chance to collaborate with other science graduate students in the BBIP program.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to expand my knowledge and experience within the research process, collaborate on exercise research for patients with chronic disabilities, and prepare myself for a career in academic physical therapy.

Fun fact about yourself: I enjoy practicing and teaching yoga in my free time.

Research Key Words: physical activity, chronic disability, stroke, exercise, balance
KATIE REIFURTH-2015 Scholar
major & degree: Sport & Entertainment Management, Ph.D.
hometown: Honolulu, HI
contact: kreifurth@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: My program offered me the most money of any program I applied to. Since I already had enough debt, and the program and faculty were well-regarded in our field, I decided to come!

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I want to produce research while I’m working on my degree.

Fun fact about yourself: I can eat over 3 pounds of shrimp in one sitting.

Research Key Words: children, loyalty, identity, community, brands, sports, teams, attachment, development

LAURA REINMAN-2013 Scholar
major & degree: Clinical-Community Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Gunnison, CO
contact: laura.reinman@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC because of the fit with my mentor’s work with children with sickle cell disease, the funding package (including the Presidential Fellowship), and the overall fit of Columbia and USC.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I want to gain experience both clinically and in my research pursuits that will propel me towards my goal of being a pediatric psychologist.

Fun fact about yourself: I grew up in one of the coldest places in the nation, Gunnison, CO.

Research Key Words: pediatric psychology, sickle cell disease, hematology/oncology, psychosocial wellbeing, coping
CAMERON REKULLY - 2013 Scholar

major & degree: Chemistry, Ph.D.
hometown: Harrisburg, PA
contact: crekully@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC primarily due to my interest in the work on applications of optical computing being conducted in my current research group. My decision was also influenced by the positive experience with faculty and students when visiting the chemistry department during my graduate school search. Receiving a Presidential fellowship offer was also significant in my decision.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While pursuing my degree I hope to make significant contributions to my field of research that will facilitate the applications of optical computing approaches to a variety of classification and calibration problems.

Research Key Words: analytical chemistry, fluorescence spectroscopy, optical computing, chemometrics, image processing, phytoplankton, instrument development, machine learning, classification

NICHOLAS RICCARDI - 2016 Scholar

major & degree: Experimental Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Columbia, SC
contact: riccardn@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I was drawn to USC’s graduate program because I enjoyed my experience as an undergraduate research assistant here.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to become a successful and knowledgeable graduate student who possesses the skills and expertise necessary to succeed in post-graduate life.

Fun fact about yourself: Every Wednesday night I go to trivia night at Village Idiot with my friends.

Research Key Words: psychology, cognition, neuroscience, language, semantics, fMRI, TMS, brain, lesions, perception
**KRISTIN ROBERTS - 2013 Scholar**

**major & degree:** School Psychology, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Zanesville, OH

**contact:** kristinr@email.sc.edu

**What brought you to USC?**
I am a fourth-year school psychology doctoral student. I came to USC in 2013 to pursue my doctoral degree in school psychology at one of the top-ranked School Psychology programs in the country. In addition to the program's reputation, after visiting USC, I was drawn to the beautiful, historic campus, as well as Columbia’s size and location, the program faculty, and the funding opportunities that USC offered.

**What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?**
While pursuing my degree, I hope to obtain a variety of both applied and research-oriented training experiences.

**Fun fact about yourself:** In my spare time, I enjoy traveling, listening to music, and photography.

**Research Key Words:** cognitive, academic, and behavioral assessment and intervention; ADHD; executive functions; working memory; and attention

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**STEPHEN ROSNICK - 2015 Scholar**

**major & degree:** English, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Fallsington, PA

**contact:** smrosnick@gmail.com

**What brought you to USC?**
A chance to move out of my comfort zone, both geographically and in terms of institution size.

**What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?**
In a sense, my degree is a slightly more intense “practice run” of what I aim to establish as my career.

**Fun fact about yourself:** I consider *The Muppets Movie* (original) to be the peak of American cinema.

**Research Key Word:** medieval, early modern, literary and cultural studies, critical theory, history, philosophy
WALKER ROSS - 2016 Scholar
major & degree: Sport & Entertainment Management, Ph.D.
hometown: Medford, OR
contact: wjross@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: While attending a conference hosted by the HRSM school here in Columbia, I was astounded to see how well the program was connected to the sport industry. Additionally, the faculty were all so welcoming, which is what sold me on the idea of coming to this institution.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope that during my time here, I can grow and develop as a scholar in sport and entertainment management. Tackling the environmental issues within sport is my main goal.

Fun fact about yourself: While traveling in Iceland I successfully ate Hákarl, which is rotten shark. It was awful.

Research Key Word: sport, event management, environment, sustainability, legacy, leverage, institutional theory, stakeholder theory, Olympic Games, and FIFA

LARA SCHNEIDER - 2015 Scholar
major & degree: Epidemiology, Ph.D.
hometown: Cincinnati, OH
contact: ors@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC 3 years ago to pursue my master's in epidemiology, and decided to stay for my doctorate because of the high quality program, excellent teachers and mentors, and great weather. I'm lucky enough to work with Drs. Liu and Wilcox on the NIH-funded HIPP Study, which is helping me gain firsthand experience in clinical research and primary data analysis.

Fun fact about yourself: I was voted “Most Mischievous” in high school.

Research Key Words: nutrition, physical activity, chronic disease
CAMERON SMITH-2014 Scholar
**major & degree:** Experimental Psychology, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Rome, GA
**contact:** camsmith1992@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?:* The opportunity to work with my graduate advisor and this fellowship.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* Be actively engaged in publishing and presenting research, as well as teaching.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I have a veritable zoo’s worth of animals: four cats, a dog, two guinea pigs, and a 10 gallon fish tank.

*Research Key Words:* psycholinguistics, spatial attention, auditory attention, visual attention, reference tracking, spatial indexing, discourse comprehension

MADELINE STEINER-2015 Scholar
**major & degree:** History, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Dallas, TX
**contact:** Steinem@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I was drawn to USC after learning about the work of my now-advisor, Dr. Lauren Sklaroff. Her work on race and popular culture in the United States seemed like exactly the type of history I was interested in writing.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* As I pursue my degree, I hope to continue to develop my skills as a researcher and writer while looking for creative ways to analyze the past.

*Fun fact about yourself:* While people know that I double majored in musical theatre in undergrad, many don’t know that I also took classes at a circus school and got pretty good at aerial silks.

*Research Key Words:* history, popular culture, performing arts, entertainment, travel, race, railroad, circus, minstrelsy, media
RACHEL STEWARD-2013 Scholar
major & degree: Biological Sciences, Ph.D.
hometown: Kenmore, WA
contact: rsteward@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC to work with Dr. Boggs on a Rocky Mountain butterfly species stuck in an evolutionary trap, where an invasive mustard is attractive to egg-laying females but lethal to their offspring.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: A main goal of my Ph.D. research is to elucidate the evolutionary forces maintaining persistent maladaptation in this system.

Fun fact about yourself: I spend the summers working at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory in Gothic, CO, and am a member of the Gothic Cricket Club, the highest elevation American Cricket Federation accredited club in the US.

Research Key Words: evolutionary genomics, landscape genetics, evolutionary traps, maladaptation, butterflies

MALIK TAHIYAT-2015 Scholar
major & degree: Mechanical Engineering, Ph.D.
hometown: Dhaka, Bangladesh
contact: mtahiyat@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: A number of things brought me to USC: fellowship offers, the research profile of my advisor, and a large pool of students from my country in USC.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While I’m pursuing my degree, I hope to write some journal papers!

Fun fact about yourself: I still watch anime(!), read comics, and manga.

Research Key Words: plasma, combustion, fluid, process control, glow-discharge, corona
WESLEY TAYLOR - 2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** Chemical Engineering, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Arab, AL

**contact:** wftaylor@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I was drawn to USC by the great research being done by Ph.D students in chemical engineering, the entrepreneurship by many of the faculty, and the opportunity for my wife and I to obtain professional degrees at the same institution.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* While in school here I hope to make many professional connections, as well as further my knowledge and gain experience in the field of drug discovery.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I have competed in several triathlons.

*Research Key Words:* drug discovery, natural products

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ASIA THOMAS - 2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** School Psychology, Ph.D.

**hometown:** Uniondale, NY

**contact:** AsiaT@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I want to build up my skill set and advocate for children whose mental health, family, individual pace, etc., frustrate their access to education as the gateway for success and opportunity.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I'm interested in research for the purpose of being up-to-date and aware of the issues at hand, working towards prevention, intervention, and ultimately positive change.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I'm still a kid at heart myself, and I think that's one of the reasons I enjoy working and advocating for children.

*Research Key Words:* early academic intervention, contextual/cultural influences, attention deficits, classroom management
CALVIN THOMAS-2013 Scholar
major & degree: Chemical Engineering, Ph.D.
hometown: Opelika, AL
contact: CalvinRobertThomas@Gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I was brought to USC through my experience as an REU student in 2012. I found the faculty in chemical engineering to be both knowledgeable and friendly. I found that the funding vs. cost of living in Columbia, SC was much better than many other schools. Furthermore, the Presidential Fellows award confirmed that I would have enough money to support myself during my graduate education.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to understand the various perspectives on chemical engineering research. Whether it be from industry or academia, understanding the goals and motivations of different sectors will help me determine my path going forward.

Fun fact about yourself: I grew up in a large family with 6 brothers and sisters.

Research Key Words: automotive catalysis, hydrothermal aging, sulfur poisoning, passive SCR, three-way catalysts

SARAH THOMPSON-2014 Scholar
major & degree: English, Ph.D.
hometown: Juneau, Wisconsin
contact: set1@email.sc.edu

I am a third-year PhD student in the English literature program, having earned my Bachelor’s degree at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and my Master’s at Marquette University. My research interests include eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British and American novels, particularly Gothic and female-authored texts. I am especially interested in the ways in which specific texts, as well as whole genres of fiction, translate from one side of the Atlantic to the other.
KITTY TRYON-2014 Scholar

**major & degree:** Exercise Science, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Elgin, SC
**contact:** tryons@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?:* I came to USC because of the nationally ranked School of Public Health and Exercise Science program, as well as my acceptance into the BBIP program, which allows me to gain research experience in various labs and complete courses in both exercise science and neuroscience. I saw the Presidential Fellowship as an incredible opportunity to network with and learn from other graduate students across different departments.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* I hope to gain the skills necessary to be a successful independent researcher and mentor in my future career, and I aim to conduct meaningful research and make an impact in my field.

*Fun fact about yourself:* I speak German after having been an exchange student to Germany in 10th grade and having lived there on a Fulbright Student Grant after college.

*Research Key Words:* acetylcholine, amygdala, anxiety, electrophysiology, glutamate, optogenetics, oscillations, plasticity, receptors, synapses

FOTEINI TZACHRISTA-2016 Scholar

**major & degree:** Business Administration, Ph.D.
**hometown:** Ioannina, Greece
**contact:** tzachristafoteini@gmail.com

*What brought you to USC?:* My ambition is to become the best I can be in Behavioral Economics in order to help society make better economic decisions.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:* While at USC, I hope to take the first steps into becoming a great researcher.

*Fun fact about yourself:* Jogging helps me concentrate and find great solutions to my work problems.

*Research Key Words:* behavioral economics, neuroeconomics, qualitative research, experimental economics, decision theory
Blaire Umhau-2013 Scholar

major & degree: Marine Science, Ph.D.
hometown: Owings, MD
contact: bumhau@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I came to USC to pursue a Ph.D. in marine chemistry, and by the time I graduate, I hope to contribute to humanity's understanding of how the oceans work and how our activities influence the marine environment.

Fun fact about yourself: I do Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.

Research Key Words: mercury, particle flux, marine science, oceanography, biogeochemistry, uranium-thorium disequilibrium, Central Pacific, South Africa

Katherine Upton-2013 Scholar

major & degree: English, Ph.D.
hometown: Fleet, Hampshire, England
contact: uptonke@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: My faculty, who are awesome.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: Write my dissertation? Publish some articles? Survive?

Fun fact about yourself: I am still the voice of Cambridge University.

Research Key Words: Southern; American studies; performance; childhood; children; childhood studies; behavior; Depression; paternalism; race; gender
RYAN WALDMAN-2016 Scholar

major & degree: Geological Sciences, Ph.D.
hometown: Northridge, CA
contact: rwaldmangeo@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: I first looked into USC based on the recommendations of my undergraduate advisor, who has collaborated with USC faculty. I chose USC partly because the College of Earth and Ocean Sciences offered the facilities and expertise to help me pursue my graduate goals, and also because I believe the faculty at USC is the best able to help me pursue my graduate goals of all of the schools I investigated.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While pursuing my degree I hope to become a more effective lecturer and to continue the research I began during my undergraduate thesis study.

Fun fact about yourself: I collect uncommon and vintage astronomical hardware, including a 1960s refracting telescope, a hand-built Newtonian telescope, and numerous older star charts.

Research Key Words: geology, petrology, geochemistry, sedimentology, planetary geology, subduction, arc volcanism, Mars

CARLA WALL-2016 Scholar

major & degree: School Psychology, Ph.D.
hometown: Southport, NC
contact: carlaaw@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: While I am certainly excited to have moved back to the South, I was primarily drawn to USC because of my new mentor, Jane Roberts, and her lab, the Neurodevelopmental Disorders Lab. The work they are conducting is the type of cutting edge, multi-method, clinical science that I would like to pursue in my career.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: I hope to develop my clinical skills, refine my own program of research, and conduct great science that is beneficial to young children and their families.

Fun fact about yourself: My birthday is also International Women’s Day—two great causes for celebration!

Research Key Words: school psychology, autism, Fragile X, gender issues, eye tracking, child development
CHRISTINE WEBER-2015 Scholar  
**major & degree:** Experimental Psychology, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** Coventry, CT  
**contact:** christineeweber@yahoo.com  

I received my bachelor’s degree in psychology from Eastern Connecticut State University, after also attending college in NYC. I’ve been passionate about psychology since I first took a course in high school, and I’ve had the opportunity to be involved in several independent research projects since then. I’m thrilled to continue my education in USC’s experimental psychology program and study how context influences behavior with Dr. Wedell. Outside of school, I love to read and spend time with my black lab.

JILLIAN WEBER-2013 Scholar  
**major & degree:** English, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** Chicago, IL  
**contact:** weberjm@email.sc.edu  

**What brought you to USC?:** The faculty and strength of the program.  

**What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?:** I’d like to build community amongst peers, while still making progress to my degree.

**Fun fact about yourself?:** I once met Dennis Rodman.  

**Research Key Words:** women, sport, athletics, race, embodiment, physical culture
ELLEN WENDERS STOWE - 2016 Scholar
major & degree: Health Promotion, Education and Behavior, Ph.D.
hometown: Milwaukee, WI
contact: e.w.stowe@gmail.com

What brought you to USC?: In addition to the opportunity to study at the Arnold School of Public Health, I selected USC to join Dr. Andrew Kaczynski’s Built Environment and Community Health (BEACH) Lab. My interests align perfectly with the studies and goals of the lab, and I look forward to learning from and contributing to the meaningful research it produces.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: While earning my degree, I hope not only to develop and refine my skills as a researcher and academic but also to create lasting relationships with other students and faculty.

Fun fact about yourself: My dogs, Indiana and McCoy, are named after two of my favorite franchises, Indiana Jones and Star Trek, as I am a science fiction and fantasy enthusiast.

Research Key Words: built environment, parks, greenspace, physical activity, exercise, obesity, community health, mental health, health behavior, health promotion

RUFUS WOFFORD - 2015 Scholar
major & degree: Counselor Education, Ph.D.
hometown: Myrtle Beach, SC
contact: wofforjr@email.sc.edu

What brought you to USC?: I grew up in South Carolina, but I was living in Georgia in 2014 while looking at PhD programs in my field. USC has a reputation for a great Ph.D. program in Counselor Education and Supervision, and from my perspective was far better than any comparable programs in Georgia.

What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?: Learn the ropes of academic research and publishing. Conduct specific research on strengths and struggles of siblings of children born with disabilities, especially ethnically diverse siblings, as applicable to the counseling field.

Fun fact about yourself: I enjoy competing in mustache contests.

Research Key Words: adjustment, disability, ethnicity, counseling, families, salutogenic effects, siblings, strengths, struggles
MELEK YILDIZ SPINEL-2015 Scholar  
**major & degree:** Clinical-Community Psychology, Ph.D.  
**hometown:** Bogota, Colombia  
**contact:** meleky@email.sc.edu

*What brought you to USC?*: The clinical-community psychology program at USC is very unique (there are probably no more than 15 programs in the country combining these two fields). Additionally, the research of my adviser, Dr. Lorenzo-Blanco, is a very good fit for my research interests.

*What do you hope to accomplish while you pursue your degree?*: As I pursue this degree I aim to become a skillful clinician, and well trained-researcher, developing my own line of research.

*Fun fact about yourself*: I went to a boarding school for two years (my last two years of high school).

*Research Key Words*: Latino mental health, culture, acculturation, immigration, gender, substance use, depression, quantitative, qualitative

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**Fall 2016 Schedule**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE FOLLOWING FRIDAYS!**

- August 26
- September 2
- September 30
- October 7
- October 21
- October 28
- November 11
- November 18
- December 2
2016-2017 Presidential Fellows at a Glance

Most popular home states
1. South Carolina
2. Ohio
3. North Carolina
4. Illinois

6 USC colleges & schools

MOST POPULAR PROGRAMS
- English
- Experimental Psychology
- Clinical Community Psychology
- History

27 states
13 countries

30 graduate programs

28 average age of a PF

83 current presidential fellows

62% enter with a previous graduate degree