

Jackson Heart Study Graduate Training and Education Center

Jackson State University

2020 SCHOLARS



Gabriel Gardner has a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from Alcorn State University, Lorman, MS. His major area of concentration was Biochemistry. He is currently enrolled in the Master of Public Health Degree Program at the School of Public Health, Jackson State University, Jackson, MS. According to Gabriel, “One of my first experiences in public health came from an annual initiative of an organization I joined while in college. Project ALPHA is an initiative that focuses on the awareness of pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease prevention amongst African American male teenagers. By going to local high schools, we were able to inform young men on topics such as absence, contraception, and testing for sexually transmitted diseases. By completing this program, I was able to see the importance of teaching about health to adolescents and how it could enlighten them on a public issue. By doing such, I began to realize that public health may be my calling”. Gabriel became interested in the JHS GTEC DHWSP at JSU for many reasons: “For one, I feel as if the university will be the perfect training ground to help me obtain my graduate degree due to the importance of public health and cardiovascular studies in the southern states. Being a native of Jackson, MS, I know that it would be an ideal location for my training in this next step of my educational career by providing me the comfort of being in my hometown, while still giving me an adequate area for learning and research.”



Raegan Bishop has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Southern Mississippi (USM), Hattiesburg, MS. Her major area of concentration was Psychology. She is currently pursuing a Master of Public Health degree at USM. She plans to pursue a career in the health research field. Raegan sees the Daniel Hale Williams Scholarship Program (DHWSP) as a valuable research opportunity that will be advantageous to her professional development. “This program would allow me to add several necessary skills including leadership, data analysis in health research, and preparing a manuscript for publications. She says that, as a graduate researcher in training, she is constantly looking for opportunities that would help her further develop as a scientist and prepare her for her future career. She believes that the Daniel Hale Williams Scholar program (DHWSP) at Jackson State University will also allow her to further investigate the cardiovascular disease (CVD) health disparities that impact African American women, using real-world data from a large cohort of African Americans. According to Raegan, she will use this training to develop a better understanding of the role of stress on CVD and the interventions that could help reduce its rates among African American women. “Training in the DHWSP would be beneficial to my future career in many ways. First, this program will allow me to establish a mentor with an extensive background in health research. As I plan to have a career in the health research field, I believe this will be very beneficial. I will be given hands-on experience and more data analytic experience. In addition, having biostatistical, epidemiological training will

mold me into a diverse and competitive candidate in the future.”



Ra'Chaud Brown has a Bachelor's degree in in Biology from Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, MS. He is currently working on completing a Master of Public Health degree in the School of Public Health at Jackson State University, Jackson, MS. His major area of concentration is Epidemiology. His career goal is to become a cardiologist. My interest in this training opportunity stems from my love of cardiovascular health and from seeing firsthand how the Jackson Heart Study program at Tougaloo College has taken initiative to create a healthier Jackson, MS. In addition to prevention, I would like to work with GTEC to offer educational resources to individuals, family members, and caregivers to improve understanding of cardiovascular health in our communities. I want to be able to provide strong health initiative programs that offer guidance, medical care, and other necessities to those in the surrounding community. By employing my knowledge and immense passion for service and uplifting others, I would hope to encourage growth in education, understanding, and compassion within our national and global community.” “My desire to become a cardiologist is not a career goal but a medical necessity due to the increasingly high rates of cardiovascular disease in the African American community and the lack of African American doctors to treat them properly and uphold the mission of the Jackson Heart Study to elucidate the reasons for the greater prevalence.”



Brittany Sanders has a Master of Public Health degree with a major area of concentration in Epidemiology. She is currently enrolled in the Dr.PH program in the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology in the School of Public Health at Jackson State University. She has long-term goals of becoming a Principal Investigator. Brittany is interested in Daniel Hale Williams Scholar Program at Jackson State University because she is passionate about cardiovascular health and research, specifically in the African American community. She says that “I continue to witness my family, loved ones, and community battle cardiovascular disease at disproportionate rates, and I would like to become more knowledgeable in this area to contribute to the overall mission of greater heart care in Mississippi”. Brittany feels that this training opportunity at Jackson State University will allow her to gain notable experience in manuscript development, data analytics, and hands-on epidemiological approaches to research. “I plan to utilize the knowledge that I gain through this training program to develop and implement community awareness and outreach resources for cardiovascular health. I am confident that participating in the Daniel Hale Williams Scholars Program aligns with my personal and professional goals of becoming a Principal Investigator specializing in cardiovascular disease research. My current research experience combined with the knowledge and skills I will gain through this program could contribute to ground breaking research for my community and for Mississippi.



Jazoria Morris has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena, MS. She is currently pursuing a Master's degree at Mississippi Valley State University with a major area of concentration in Environmental Health. Her career goal is to become an environmental epidemiologist. Jazoria is interested in cardiovascular health research because for several decades, her family has suffered from cardiovascular struggles. “I have several family members who have cardiovascular health concerns including congestive heart failure. Learning of their conditions has piqued my interest in learning of cardiovascular

health. I am aware that for my family, obesity plays a very significant role in why some of us have developed cardiovascular problems.” She wants to research and understand how the elements of the environment affects the human body and why. “Through my research, I would like to be able to provide information to, not only the community, but also the medical field in hopes of preserving and improving the health of individuals all over the world.” This training at the Daniel Hale Williams Scholar Program at Jackson State University program will directly “train me in the field of epidemiology, providing me with knowledge and experience doing what I plan to make my career of. My goal in epidemiology is to collect as much research as possible in all fields of epidemiology, to make a difference in public health.” I would use this training in conjunction with the environmental health education that I would be receiving at Mississippi Valley State University. While I am pursuing a career in environmental epidemiology, this training would provide me with the knowledge necessary to expand my epidemiology research into cardiovascular epidemiology. Participating in the JSU JHS GTEC training program “will broaden my capabilities as a researcher and broaden the field of individuals who I can affect through the findings of my research.”



Ja'Maal Luckett has the Bachelor of Arts degree in Biochemistry with a minor in Sociology from the University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS. He is currently enrolled in the Master of Public Health program at the University of Southern Mississippi. His area of concentration is in Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Ja'Maal's fascination with the health field and those who work in it stems from spending the majority of his childhood in and out of hospitals. Having severe asthma and spending much of his childhood in and out of health care facilities was the beginning of his journey to become a healthcare professional. At first, he wanted to be a medical doctor. However,

as he took more classes, his aspirations shifted. He discovered that there were other professional pathways into healthcare-like careers that focused on the risk factors of diseases. Thus, he has decided to pursue a Master of Public Health degree. Ja'Maal says that as a native Mississippian he knows well how gaps in access to health education and healthcare institutions can be harmful to people, especially poor communities and communities of color where these gaps are most prominent. He feels that his participation in the Daniel Hale Williams Scholar Program at Jackson State University will allow him to gain the tools necessary for becoming an advocate for change. He knows that, as an African American male, he is a minority in the Public Health field in terms of race and gender. He wants to serve as a trailblazer in this field for those who “look like me.” “I dream of enhancing my education and developing a plan that caters to minorities like myself. I strongly believe that being a part of the JHS GTEC DHW Certificate Program is a way for me to incorporate minority disparities into my graduate studies.”



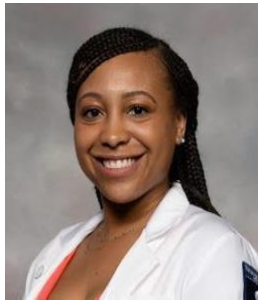
Marjada F. Tucker has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Rice University, Houston, TX. Her major area of concentration was Biochemistry and Cell Biology. Currently, she is a rising third year medical student who has completed the Pediatric Research and Clinical Education Program at University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson, MS. Marjada says that there is no time like the present to be an African American woman vested in health equity and the eradication of health disparities. She knows that Mississippi needs more physicians, and African American Mississippians need more culturally competent physicians. She says that she understands that

she is in a unique position to, not only become a Mississippi physician, but to also address the underlying need for culturally cognizant physicians who understand the multiplicity of factors that shape health and the provision of care. That is why she believes that through the Daniel Hale Williams Scholar program at Jackson State University, she can acquire expertise in clinical and population-based research that will equip her with the skills to make a difference beyond that which she can achieve solely as a clinician. She will carry along the acquired skills to advance cardiovascular disease prevention strategies in the state of Mississippi and beyond as a physician and public health leader. She expressed that the JSU JHS GTEC program and its core mission has given her an insurmountable joy to be an African American woman, training physician, and budding researcher. She is convinced that this training will serve as her gateway to translational cardiovascular disease research.



Ariel Wilson has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biochemistry and is currently a first-year medical student at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson, MS. Her career goal is to be a physician. In the summer of 2016, she was chosen to be one of 25 public health leaders to participate in a fellowship through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She has also had previous educational experience in Pharmacy, which, she says, “molded my desires to pursue a career in medicine with the intent of minimizing the progression of various chronic diseases outside of drug therapy.” As a physician, her goal is to focus on preventative health to minimize

cardiovascular related health issues. She believes that her training as a Daniel Hale Williams Scholar at the Jackson Heart Study Graduate Training and Education Center at Jackson State University will be a priceless educational experience. On her way to becoming a well-rounded physician, Ariel believes that the JSU JHS GTEC experience will provide a very, very strong foundation for the direction of, not only her future clinical research, but also ultimately her specialty. She thinks that because she has such a strong interest in preventative medicine, she can see herself using this training to pursue other outlets of cardiovascular disease research-specifically preeclampsia prevention and non-teratogenic treatment of preeclampsia during pregnancy.



Jasmine McNair has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology Pre-Health and a Master of Science degree in Biomedical and Health Sciences. She is currently a student at the University of Mississippi Medical Center with a major area of concentration in Medicine. Through her participation in the Summer Language Arts and Mathematics (SLAM) Workshop at Tougaloo College, she began to discover an interest in cardiovascular health that was reinforced as she started medical school in August of 2019. The SLAM program inspired her to pursue a career in medicine and commit herself to serve underserved populations. Jasmine insisted that while it was

fascinating learning about the mechanism behind this disease, it was also a concern that the research being presented it was by older white men. To her, it was uncomfortable hearing from someone who did not share the same cultural commonality as their research participants. “It made me realize that even though I was only a first-year medical student, I wanted to become well-versed in cardiovascular health so that when I finish my medical training, I would be able to provide my patients with practical and up-to-date information”. “This is what drew me to apply for the Daniel Hale Williams Scholars Program. It is my love for both medicine and research, which makes me believe that this training program will be very beneficial to my future endeavors as a primary care physician. I assumed that my involvement with research would have to stop at an undergraduate or graduate level; however, this program will allow me to be prepped with the proper tools to continue conducting and analyzing research as a clinical investigator.”



Michael-Ryan Lowe has a Bachelor of Science degree from Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS in biological sciences, kinesiology, and psychology. He is currently working on completing a Master of Science degree in biological sciences from Jackson State University, Jackson, MS. He also holds an Associate of Art degree from Itawamba Community College, Fulton, MS. His career goal is to become a physician-scientist with doctoral training in cardiovascular epidemiology. He plans to expand his understanding of biology, biomedical sciences, and the association it has to public health. He feels that his training as a Daniel Hale Williams scholar

at the Jackson State University Graduate and Training and Education center will enhance his knowledge and credentials with the purpose of successfully matriculating into professional doctoral school opportunities as a competitive applicant. He believes that while practicing in this profession, he can clinically investigate one of the leading causes of death within the underrepresented populations: cardiovascular disease. He intends to research, understand, develop diagnostic regimens, and further prolong the life of patients, as well as initiate public health initiatives, particularly for those who