

Jackson Heart Study Graduate Training and Education Center Jackson State University

2021 SCHOLARS



Michelle Egbujor has a B.S. in Public Health Sciences from Western Kentucky University. She is enrolled in the School of Public Health in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at Jackson State University. She is hoping to expand her public health skills to address cardiovascular disease. She is very passionate about reducing the shortage of minority public health professionals operating in underserved communities. Michelle states that this program will allow her to understand the full scope of research better while acquiring the skills needed to impact the communities she serves.



Angela Ikenga has a Bachelor of Science in Biology with a minor in Chemistry from Mississippi Valley State University. She is enrolled in the Environmental Health Program in the College of Arts and Sciences at Mississippi Valley State University. She hopes to examine environmental factors that impact heart disease and stroke. She states that health and the environment are intricately interwoven because health is always affected by the environment. She anticipates that the training in the Daniel Hale Williams Scholars Program will give her the needed skills to pursue this goal. She hopes to organize educational town hall meetings to talk and discuss measures to improve environmental issues and sensitize communities, especially those living in poor rural areas, on the importance of maintaining and living healthy lifestyles.



Joshua Jefferson has a Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration from Jackson State University and a Master of Science in Health Sciences from the University of Mississippi Medical Center. He is enrolled in Research Management at the University of Southern Mississippi. He hopes that this program will enable him to conduct research and gain a comprehensive understanding of the public health concepts that will advance his capacity to excel in cardiovascular epidemiology. He intends to maintain the standard of excellence set by the University of Southern Mississippi, Jackson State University, and the Jackson Heart Study Daniel Hale Williams Scholars Program.



Joseph McBride is currently pursuing a Doctoral of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology at Jackson State University. Despite all the adversities and chronic discrimination and ethnic-related experiences, he still rises above it all and stands as a 4.0 *summa cum laude* college graduate, mentor, and biobehavioral researcher, with copious academic accolades. His broad range of experiences has contributed to providing him with a unique perspective to understand the world around him and examine health-related phenomena. “These experiences have contributed to developing my fully engaged mindset and devotion to learning as much as possible about my chosen field in relation to the world of research.” He strongly believes the DHWS program will provide critical scholarship opportunities to investigate significant mental health-related objectives aligned with the strategic plan of the Jackson Heart Study. “Actively engaging in the DHWS program will assist me by providing an academic atmosphere conducive to my career goals and capable of successfully propelling into the next stage of my career.” Furthermore, matriculation through the DHWS program will catalyze his long-term goal of becoming a scientist dedicated to improving lives through evidence-based research.



Rodney Nga is a second-year medical student in Osteopathic Medicine at William Carey University. He inspires to become a physician, preferably a surgeon. His specialty goal is Cardiology and Cardiovascular surgery, for he has always been fascinated about cardiovascular diseases since the passing of a loved one. He believes this research would be beneficial in helping him better understand cardiovascular epidemiology and statistics. Additionally, he states, “the advantage that I enjoy is having the opportunity to meet researchers who have JHS data and interacting with them.” As a Daniel Hale Williams Scholar, he is confident he will learn the epidemiology of cardiovascular diseases, which will aid him to better understand the frequency and severity of these diseases in the United States. Through the added training, “I would be better equipped for cardiovascular research in the future and would use some JHS data from researchers to assist in research. “



Brendon (Bre) Reems has a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Health and Society from Southern Methodist University. She is enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Clinical Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts at Jackson State University. She has an interest in depression and coping strategies. She plans to use this training to develop expertise in cardiovascular disease research and apply the acquired knowledge when treating patients in the future. She feels that the Daniel Hale Williams Scholars program is an excellent opportunity to provide her with the knowledge and experience she needs to enter a career as a culturally competent health psychologist.



Sean Taylor is a graduate student of Health Care Administration in the school of Public Health at Jackson State University. Growing up, Sean could remember saying he would one day be a football player, which eventually changed to sports medicine after attending college in undergrad. Although still along the lines of sports in his mind, this also changed as he began to view the health epidemic within our nation. After witnessing a dear family member battle Epilepsy, Sean began to see Public Health and its effect as a whole in a new light. He states, “Watching all of this unfold right in front of me I want to do something on a greater level, than just what was being revealed to me on my level of exposure.” He feels this training opportunity will enable him to conduct effective research protocols while gaining proficiency as an independent researcher.



Michael Wilson has a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences from the University of Southern Mississippi. He is enrolled in the Master of Public Health at the University of Southern Mississippi. Michael's interest in research originated from the McNair Scholars' program where he researched *msaABC*R and T.C.A. cycle genes from persister cell dependent on ATP content of *Staphylococcus aureus* cells. Michael is interested in understanding more about the epidemiology of cardiovascular disease. He wants this training to show him the proper techniques for gathering and analyzing data pertaining to cardiovascular disease and the effects it has on the human body.