

The background image shows two individuals in a professional setting. One person is seated and pointing at a laptop screen, while another person stands beside them, also looking at the screen. The laptop displays a dashboard with various charts and data. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an indoor office or meeting room environment.

Graduate Mentorship Certification, 2024-25

OLUWATOBI ADENIJI

**DOCTOR OF MEDICAL PHYSICS,
HEALTH PHYSICS DEPARTMENT**

My program at the University of Nevada Las Vegas is Doctor of Medical Physics. I have interest in researching about cancer curative and how we can use radiation to cure diseases. Most of the radiation given to patients are too much and the problem can be dated back to the phantom we used as a Quality Assurance (QA). A phantom is a tissue equivalent material that can be used to mimic human organ. During the monthly QA, it is not possible to use human being as a quality check. We need a substitute to carry out our monthly QA. Since human being is 70-80% water. Hence, water is generally acceptable as a universal phantom. From my own perspective, other component made up our organ which is different from water. We should be able to use a material that has this components like carbohydrate, fat, ashes etc. I am planning to check the tissue equivalent of some fruits which I believe they can be used to mimic human organ. Water melon, Pineapple, Pawpaw, beets are the fruits I am trying to look at and get their physical properties like electron density, physical density, effective atomic number, linear and mass attenuation coefficient. After this, I can now proceed to the clinic to see if it can be used for our Linear Accelerator monthly QA. Compare my values to the corrected data with water phantom.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

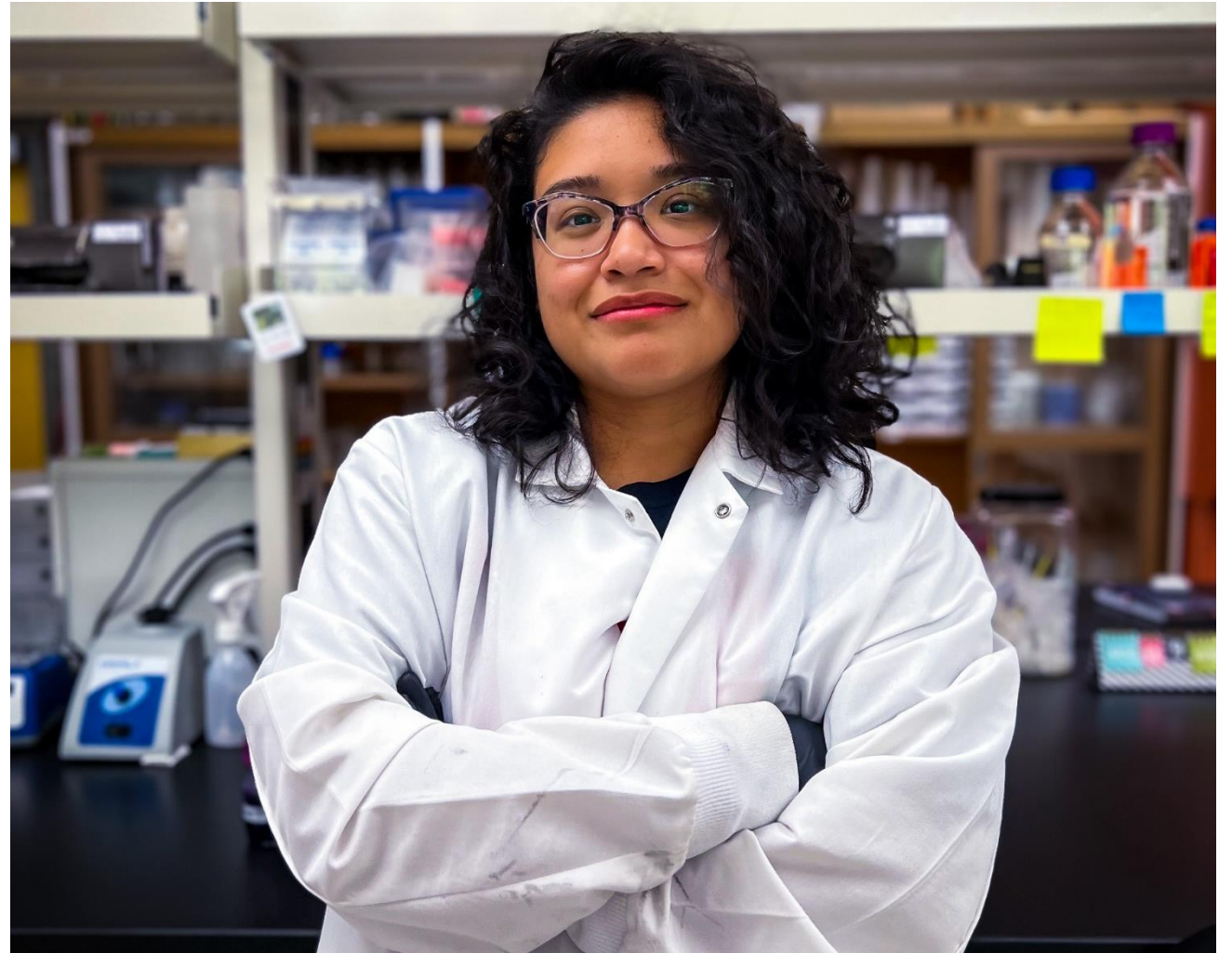
Erica Lizbeth Bacab

Chemistry Ph.D.

Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

As a graduate student in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, my research focuses on investigating the impact of sexual dimorphism and the estrous cycle on *Clostridioides difficile* infections (CDI) using rodent models. Specifically, I aim to elucidate how female mice and rats exhibit more severe CDI responses compared to males upon exposure to *C. difficile* spores. This study seeks to uncover the underlying mechanisms driving sex-specific differences in disease susceptibility.

During my undergraduate studies, I was fortunate to have an exceptional mentor who instilled in me invaluable skills and confidence. Her guidance was pivotal in my decision to pursue graduate school. Now, I aspire to follow her mentorship excellence by continually expanding my expertise and knowledge. Upon graduating from UNLV, I look forward to carrying these skills into my professional journey, empowering the next generation of leaders and paying tribute to the mentor who inspired me.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Sarah Benson

Sociology, Ph.D.

I am a third year PhD student in the Sociology department. My areas of specialization, for my degree, are in health and criminology/deviance. My research interests are primarily regarding childhood trauma. For my doctoral dissertation I am planning to investigate how Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) impact criminality.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Katherine Betts

Ph.D. Chemistry

**Department of Chemistry &
Biochemistry**

After returning to College for a career change, I am now entering the second year of the PhD program. My research aims to develop next generation rechargeable batteries and spectroscopic analytical techniques for electrode surface studies.

I hope the Graduate Mentorship Certification will help me further develop skills to support my team of four undergraduate researchers. Not only is their time valuable to me, but they all have individual goals and motivations that need addressing proactively.

I believe the Certification course will also help me make the most of the alliance between myself and my PhD advisor. The relationship between mentor/mentee is an interesting one and I look forward to discussing with others and taking the time to reflect.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Kevin Dangler

Ph.D. Student, School of Nursing

My name is Kevin Dangler and I am a second year Nursing Ph.D. student and Graduate Assistant at UNLV. My research interests focus on addressing health disparities associated with Filipino American shift workers via nursing practice. Closing the knowledge gaps around shift work and acculturative challenges will help lead the way to innovative practice solutions.

The mentorship model is an essential component to the field of nursing that facilitates the professional improvement of the mentor, mentee, and university/organization. I feel that the knowledge gained from the Graduate Mentorship Certification program will allow me to effectively foster the academic and experiential development of our students and to fortify my own growth as a future leader in academics.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Lauren Gleave

**MFA Creative Writing, Poetry—
English Department**

Lauren Gleave is a current MFA student and poet from Utah. She has an interdisciplinary background; she earned her B.A. in health, society, and policy from the University of Utah in 2022. Her work often explores identity as it interfaces with religion, mythology, and folklore. She is also interested in the social aspects of literature. Lauren has had the benefit of strong mentorship and is hoping to pay it forward. She will be mentoring a group of students this year, and would like to use the Graduate Mentorship Certification program to become an excellent resource for her mentees.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Charlene Gonzales

**M.Ed. Student,
Higher Education
Advisor: Dr. Kenyon Lee Whitman**

Charlene Gonzales received her bachelor's degree in Psychology in Spring 2023 and now pursuing a Masters of Education in Higher Education. Charlene's passion in mentorship, college and career readiness, and higher education began in middle school. She was introduced and enrolled to a college readiness program and eventually develop a passion for college preparatory paths and university and college admissions.

Throughout Charlene's undergraduate journey, she was deeply involved on and off campus including working for an non profit organization called the Love Yourself Foundation and being part of the the College of Liberal Arts Dean's Student Advisory Council.

Charlene continues to hope and gain a deeper level and understanding the value of mentorship and being able to absorb the knowledges she takes in this program into her potential careers in academic advising and student affairs.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Yuze Ji

PhD in hospitality administration

I am passionate about helping others achieve their potential and succeed in their academic and professional journeys. I believe that sharing my knowledge, experiences, and insights can make a meaningful impact on someone's growth and development.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Valerie Medina

**Ph. D. Curriculum and Instruction,
Department of Teaching and
Learning**

My current research focuses on the implementation of graphic novels in an English curriculum to improve overall literacy skills in English Language Learners (ELLs). The reason I want to participate in this program is because I would like to share the information and knowledge I know, with others who are fairly new to the college experience. During my time in academia, as both a student and instructor, I have learned a lot about study habits, time management, access to resources, but beyond that I have learned how important it is to have emotional support. I hope to become a hub of information and support to others who may begin to feel overwhelmed or like giving up on their education, to assist them in overcoming imposter syndrome, and letting them know they are not alone!



Naomi Okada

**Chemistry PhD Candidate,
Department of Chemistry and
Biochemistry**

I am nearing the end of my PhD program here at UNLV. In my limited free time, I enjoy video games, D&D, and hanging out with my animal children. I have two cats named Tesla and Ed, two rats named Onion and Marshmallow, a bearded dragon named Snow, and a Mediterranean house gecko named Shy Guy. My love for reptiles and amphibians has inspired my current work studying a species of fungus called *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*, which is a major pathogen for frogs and other amphibians. My research involves characterizing the different life stages of this fungus and determining the nutritional and chemical requirements for it to grow and develop. I am thrilled to be participating in the Grad Academy Mentorship Certification program to learn to make the most of the limited time I have with my mentees and to foster long-term mentorship relationships with both my mentors and mentees.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Chiebuka Martins Okoro

Dual MBA/MS Management Information Systems

My field of study lies at the intersection of business and technology, focusing on using data to drive decision-making and strategic growth in organizations. Management Information Systems equips me with technical and analytical skills to leverage data effectively, while my MBA enhances my leadership and business acumen. My long-term goal is to become a Senior Data Consultant, guiding organizations through data-driven transformations.

I am participating in this program because mentorship is key to personal and professional development. As I work toward becoming an effective leader, I believe it is essential to learn and actively practice how to mentor others while remaining open to guidance from experienced mentors. The skills gained through this program will help me lead diverse teams, fostering collaboration and continuous learning in fast-paced, data-driven environments.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Andrea Rangelova

Masters in Public Administration & Graduate Certificate in Business Administration Student
Advisor: Jayce Farmer, PhD

Multilingual graduate student. Andrea has a BA in Art History from UNLV, and is passionate about Art, Sustainability and Nonprofits. Her volunteer work in the Nonprofit sector brought her to the UNLV College of Fine Arts Alumni Board. She is currently Graduate Teaching Assistant and teaches undergraduate level classes with the School of Public Policy and Leadership.

Andrea has various research interests and has conducted a research for the Office of Undergraduate Research. Her Senior year of her undergraduate studies, she won Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship and was able to present her research at OUR Research Symposium.

"I believe that this program is the next step in my research career. I am excited to grow as individual and always learn."



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Dana Surwill

Master in Public Health

Environmental and Occupational Health

I am currently pursuing a degree in Environmental and Occupational Health, so that I will be able to pursue a career in Public Health after graduation. I have conducted research on resilience in the LGBTQ+ population and am currently working on brain health research for professional athletes.

In order to be an effective researcher, I will need to be able to work in various teams of people. Many of these may involve students who are just starting their research careers. Therefore, being an effective mentor is crucial to the success of my future research.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Jennifer Tidwell

Master of Hospitality Administration & Gaming

William F. Harrah College of Hospitality

As a second-year graduate student in Hospitality and Gaming, I am thrilled to be part of the UNLV Grad Rebel Ambassador Program. The MGM College Opportunity Program has allowed me to balance my employment with MGM while pursuing my academic goals at UNLV. As an ambassador, I bring a unique perspective as a working student, which I believe will contribute to fostering an inclusive environment. This opportunity in the ambassador program will enable me to connect with fellow students and share my passion for UNLV and the hospitality industry. This experience will further enhance my leadership skills and prepare me for a successful career in hospitality and gaming.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Lindsey Wigand

Stage Management MFA

Department of Theatre

Lindsey is from West Allis, WI. Currently she is in her 3rd and final year of perusing a Masters of Fine Arts in Stage Management at UNLV. She holds a Bachelors of Arts from Ripon College in Psychobiology and Theatre.

She has a great passion for mentoring and educating young Stage Managers. She currently works with the West Allis-West Milwaukee Theatre Department to mentor and teach high school theatre students.

Additionally, she enjoys teaching Theatre and Stage Management to undergraduate students at UNLV, both as an instructor and a mentor classes.

She looks forward to strengthen her mentorship skills and well as being a better mentee herself through the Graduate Mentorship Certification Program.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Kai Wingo

**M.F.A Student,
Creative Writing (Fiction)**

I am currently in my third and final year of UNLV's creative writing MFA program. My writing explores themes of repressed memory, emotion, expression, and fractured subjective experience using surreal aesthetics and techniques.

The mentorship program will provide me valuable experience collaborating with and guiding students who wish to work or creative projects or pursue creative graduate degrees. My three years working at the UNLV Writing Center as a GA has made me realize my passion for helping and teaching students in one-to-one contexts. As someone who wishes to pursue a career in higher education advising, developing an effective mentorship skillset will directly transfer to my future work with students.



THE GRAD ACADEMY