

## FRIENDSHIP AND THE FOUNDERS

*Alumni and friends of the Program gathered to appreciate each other and art*



*Benedict Voit ('04) and Grace Topete ('14) were among the many alumni who attended this annual event hosted at Dan Patterson's house*

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

#### Annual Alumni Potluck & White Elephant Gift Exchange

*December 14, 2019*

Join alumni for our annual holiday party in Dallas! Check your email for full details and sign up information.

#### Finalists' Weekend 2020

*February 27 - March 1, 2020*

Look for an invitation for the alumni events that will be taking place during Finalists' Weekend. If you are interested in reading applications, please see Sherry's email from earlier this fall.

This November, we had the great privilege of gathering together with some Friends of the Program at the home of Dan Patterson. Dan has been a great supporter both of the Program and the Association, and we were delighted to be invited to see some beautiful pieces of artwork he had acquired from Mrs. McDermott's collection.

As he took us through the house to look at the mostly modern works, he described the impact that Mrs. McDermott had not only on his collection, but also on his appreciation and taste in artwork. "I've learned that with modern art, you can kind of tell what it is, and postmodern you can't!" he joked with Bonnie Pitman, one of our Friends in attendance.

As Dan talked about his pieces, I reflected on how Mrs. McDermott had influenced my own appreciation of Dallas as an emerging art city. It struck me that most of my experiences at galleries and museums in the city (and indeed across the world) have been with friends.

I don't know about you, but seeing a great work of art with somebody is a completely different experience than seeing it alone. I often find that the pursuit of what is beautiful and true and good in the world requires dialogue. The experience is magnified and multiplied, as through a kaleidoscope, when I can see intimately through someone else's perspective, and they through mine.

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## PRESIDENT'S DESK

### *Opportunity and Excitement Ahead*

It is with great pleasure that I have begun my two-year term as President of our Alumni Association. First and foremost, a big thank you to the outgoing President, Megan Coker ('06), for her fantastic leadership since 2017 as the Association grew in size, scope, and involvement. (Megan, thankfully, continues to serve the Association as the Grants & Special Ventures Chair.)

With a new term now in progress, our current Board and Committee volunteers are already pushing forward. (Visit [www.mcdermott.org](http://www.mcdermott.org) to see our current leadership. Plus, it's never too late to get involved!) The Association paid off our \$100,000 commitment to UTD for our sponsored reflection pool via your strong fundraising. Going forward, with your continued support and revenues from our fund, the Association is looking to grow our influence and charity both on campus and across Dallas.

The Association has been meeting with the President's Office, along with several serving Vice Presidents (as well as the McDermott Program, of course), to find meaningful opportunities to increase our impact. A big goal of the Association is non-monetarily related: improving communications with UTD as a whole, coordinating with UTD development projects, establishing easier personal links within the Program (both for social relations and job/graduate school advising), and establishing social engagements for McDermott Alumni groups anywhere in the world! As one example, the Association just hosted an Alumni gathering and arts appreciation event last month in Dallas. We expect upcoming events in Austin, Washington, D.C., and other graduate-school hotspots throughout the next year.

Many other projects are already in motion. As an update:



*Benedict with his family, Jessie Voigt ('05), Emma (20 months) and Abby (2 months).*

- Next May, the University is hosting its first Awards Gala to celebrate its 50th anniversary next May and the Association is excited to be a selected sponsor as we honor UTD's beloved Founders. More information to come in our Spring publication.
- For those in Dallas, Dr. Jamison, Vice President for Facilities & Economic Development and a close friend of the Association, has offered to host a tour of campus highlighting its amazing growth in the past decade as well as the vision for the next few years (e.g., construction of the UTD DART line stop, on schedule for 2022). A happy hour will follow.
- With encouragement and assistance from the Association, UTD's Vice President, the McDermott Program, and UTD's Office of Development and Alumni Relations will begin working on a legal and structural data-sharing

program. This structure will allow the Association to share and receive information with the McDermott Program and the University to better stay in touch with each other and the University, mentor current McDermott Scholars, build our own networks (whether geographical, business, cultural), and more.

- Our involvement with Finalists' Weekend continues to grow and is now an (the?) integral part of the process. Application reading will start soon for those willing and able to help and our annual Association meeting will occur at UTD on Finalists' Weekend, which begins Thursday, February 27, 2020. Whether or not you are participating directly in Finalists' Weekend (interviewing, presenting, etc.), please come to the Association's social and formal events that weekend.

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- As noted above, with additional revenues now available the Association has tremendous opportunities to expand our Grants program as well as to invest in Dallas-based support programs, especially in the arts and education. As one example, the Association has already been asked to be the major sponsor for an annual Dallas art festival next fall.

2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the University, and the fall of 2020 marks the 20th anniversary of the McDermott Scholars Program. Both are of great pride and both provide terrific opportunities for us to provide support.

As such, send us your thoughts and suggestions on events, projects, and opportunities; provide any personal updates and ensure your LinkedIn profile is current; and send pictures and stories of your experiences with the Program

as we compile a presentation for our 20th anniversary celebration this fall. Over the summer the Association made communication easier than ever: simply email [communications@mcdermott.org](mailto:communications@mcdermott.org).

All the best for the rest of 2019, and keep an eye out for our annual year-end class conversations.

Whoosh!

*Benedict Voit ('04), President  
Eugene McDermott Scholars Program  
Alumni Association*



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Many thanks to Alumni for their support and participation*

Dear Alumni,

Thank you for continuing to make the McDermott Program a part of your life. From the remarkable participation in Finalists' Weekend each year (almost 50 of you came to FW19) to the range of ongoing involvement (resume review, mentorship, Broomball, etc.) with the current Scholars, your influence is invaluable and appreciated.

Special thanks go to everyone who helped make the 2019 class. Your role can't be overstated; from file-reading, interviewing, and selection, to making testimonial calls and answering candidates' emails, so many of you filled needs that only alumni could fill. And to those who have already committed to helping us create the next cohort, thank you (let Sherry know if you want to review files...).

Beyond growing in membership annually, EMSPAA continues to develop as an organization, with impressive fundraising and other initiatives. We value the ongoing partnership in stewarding the Program and its culture.

With UTD celebrating its 50th birthday and the McDermott Scholars Program about to mark the 20th anniversary of its founding gift, your thoughts on how the McDermott community can best recognize these milestones are needed.

Thank you for all that you are and do.

Sincerely,

*Reena Schellenberg, Director  
Hobson Wildenthal Chair  
Eugene McDermott Scholars Program*

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Highlighting the success and uniqueness of our alumni

**Name:** Dina Shahrokhi

**Nicknames:** Oh dear... I pass

**Spouse / kids / pets (and if so, names):**  
I just bought a plant that I named Tutu (it's a peace lily). One can only hope it's still alive by the time this is published...

**Class:** '007

**Major:** Political Science

**Graduate school or degree (if applicable):** Harvard Kennedy School, Master's in Public Policy

**Hometown:** Houston

**Home teams:** Rockets, Texans, and Astros - it was tough going until 2017

**Current location:** Washington, DC

**Occupation:** I'm a Foreign Affairs Officer at the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration at the State Department. We bureaucrats love long titles, but in layman's terms I oversee funding for and policy regarding internally displaced people in Syria for the State Department. You may have seen the news of a mess involving Turkey, Kurdish authorities, Russia, the United States, etc. in northeast Syria. My role is to help guide U.S. policy to ensure that there is minimal impact on over one million civilians in the area and that those who are affected have access to what they need. I worked on similar issues related to Iraqis when we retook Mosul from ISIS and I just got back from four months in Dhaka, Bangladesh as the US government's Refugee Coordinator responding to the one million stateless Rohingya refugees. [If I sound like I'm trying to recruit young, ambitious, passionate McDermotts for the State Department.... I am]

**Cooler part about your job:** Meeting refugees around the world who receive life-saving assistance funded

by taxpayers. The U.S., which provides about a quarter of all humanitarian assistance in the world, has a lot to be proud of y'all.

**Dream end-of-career job:** Secretary of State

**Future non-career ambitions:** To continue traveling and helping people.

**Outside talents (e.g. sports, music, theater, trivia...):** I'm very good at Super Nintendo Donkey Kong Country and, for those born after 2000, Buck Hunt (arcade only).

**The most dangerous / exciting thing you've done:** I thought I was going to die on an overnight hike in Jordan a few years ago. I was told the hike was perfect for beginners but I think they envisioned someone a little taller; my 5'2" self spent about half the hike chest deep in fairly rapid water surrounded by bamboo, which is not a forgiving creature. (FACT: I also lost my pants in that water, but thankfully I was wearing leggings underneath or I would have been very "haram" for those who know what I mean). Anyway, I'm not sure if that was real or perceived danger, but being told to follow the donkeys to find civilization felt pretty iffy to me.

**One surprising thing Alumni wouldn't know about you:** I negotiated on behalf of the U.S. at the UN Security Council earlier this year on issues related to Afghanistan and children in armed conflict. It was kind of like Model UN, except both more fun (no position papers) and less fun (the stakes are high and some players don't play by the rules) at the same time.

**Favorite part about UTD:** It's a tie between the most incredible staff and faculty of any university on the planet and The Mermaid Building.



**Favorite McDermott memory:** When the night before graduation, I let my fellow 007s make a few revisions to my speech - to include reference to our mascot looking like a giant, flaming.... well, go TEMOC!

**What you want to tell the McDermott Scholars:** a) stop worrying and enjoy the experience, b) [if you can] take some classes for fun - those will likely be the lessons you remember most after you graduate, and c) don't forget to be kind and thank everyone, no matter the title, who has gotten you here, who is helping you, and who will continue to support you wherever you go. Mostly because you're a McDermott and you should, but also because people will support those who are nice, and you never know when you will need the support.

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*Want to be our next spotlight, or know of an awesome alum we should feature? Send [mcdermottalumni@gmail.com](mailto:mcdermottalumni@gmail.com) an email today!*

## 2019 FUNDRAISING KICKOFF

*Alumni donations are an integral part of our organization's success*



*Alex Garcia Topete ('07), Grace Topete ('14), Lewis Chang ('07), and Monica Niewiarowski ('09) at UTD's 2019 Celebration of Support*

Throughout the past year, we've had the pleasure of seeing many alumni faces, new and familiar. We've been thrilled to hear about the exciting new chapters you've embarked on. Pursuing passions into graduate school. Defending dissertations. Wrapping up your first jobs. Starting companies. Finding life partners. Welcoming new members into your families.

Through the ups and downs, we've found comfort in seeing our community stay close knit, a testament to the enduring value of a shared Scholar experience. Those formative relationships built on late night conversations, exploring new places together, and many a shared meal were only made possible by Mrs. McDermott's decision to found the Program we all know and love.

As the McDermott Alumni Association closes out its ninth year, we reflect on how we can serve as stewards of a remarkable legacy. We're well positioned to tackle bold proposals across charitable giving, development of the arts, and community engagement.

We need your support to achieve those goals in the coming year.

In the coming weeks, we are discussing commitments to various impactful projects including the DISD Tornado Relief Fund, the recently acquired Crow Museum of Asian Art, a UTD-UTSW medical volunteerism initiative, and a technology platform to better connect our community.

On campus, our presence continues to be felt through the

programs we have endowed, such as student-led initiatives like UEMR that support critical medical infrastructure, Worsfold grants that fund projects across food waste reduction and human rights advocacy, Excellence in the Arts awards for media/arts projects, spearheaded by Elyse Mack ('14).

Here's how you can help!

- Donate [online](#)
- Set a [reminder](#) to donate before the end of the year!
- If you already contribute, consider [making one more end-of-year gift](#)
- [Check whether your employers offer gift matching](#)
- Use [AmazonSmile](#) as you shop and pick the Alumni Association as your charity of choice
- Mail a check to: Eugene McDermott Scholars Program Alumni Association, PO Box 190330, Dallas TX 75219-9998

Finally, if you are interested in becoming more involved with the Alumni Association, we would love to hear from you! We wish you a happy holiday season and look forward to seeing many of you at the next local or regional event or at Finalists' Weekend 2020.

Warmly,

*Siddharth Sant ('12), VP of Development  
Benedict Voit ('04), President*

## FRIENDSHIP AND THE FOUNDERS



*Felecity Lenes Voit ('05), Don Glendenning, and David Bindel ('05)*

*(continued from page 1)*

As we approach the 50th Anniversary of our alma mater, I have been thinking more and more about how Eugene McDermott, Cecil Green, and Eric Jonsson achieved such a feat.

I believe that it was the friendship of the three founders that allowed them to reach for ever higher goals. Together, three individually great men were able to establish a place for the convergence of great ideas, and without the contributions of each of them, I don't think that UT Dallas would be the place we know and believe in.

Indeed, this is the legacy that Mrs. McDermott left for us in the Program – a place where great minds could come together, support each other, and push the city around them to strive for what is true and good and beautiful.

We are now fully in the second generation of McDermott Scholars. This year's freshman cohort were mostly born the same year the '01s started their tenure at UTD.

As the Alumni Association reaches

its first decade, I think it is important to reflect both on our role moving forward, and on who it is that have helped us reach this point. As I looked around at the people who were able to join us at the event, I was deeply moved by all the faces of those who

chose to come around us and support our efforts.

Between mouthfuls of empanada and what might have been the best Pinot Noir I've ever had, I loved getting the chance to chat with friends like Barb Sypult about what we – and they – were up to in the city and the world.

We would not be who or where we are without friends like Dan Patterson and Mary McDermott Cook, the Glendennings, Bonnie Pitman, the Sypults, the Program Staff, and so many others – the New Founders, if you will.

And indeed, I wonder how we might embody this spirit of camaraderie in the future. Whether it's reaching out to Scholars with similar interests or getting together with other Alumni far from home, our strength is in the way that we support each other, as we seek to fill the world with beauty.

*-- Grace Topete ('14)*



*McDermott alumni and Bonnie Pitman listening to Dan Patterson speak about the art in his home*

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Getting to know one of our amazing UT Dallas faculty members



Dr. Whitney Stewart is an Assistant Professor in the School of Arts & Humanities, specializing in American History, Race, Material Culture, and Public History

**Name:** Whitney Nell Stewart

**Hometown:** Born in Mobile, AL, raised in Houston, TX

**Family members:** David, Marsha, and Heather Stewart (father, mother, and sister--all live in Houston)

**Rank order of siblings:** I am the youngest of two

**Undergraduate and Graduate programs:** BA summa cum laude, University of St. Thomas; MA and PhD, Rice University

**Dissertation:** "The Racialized Politics of Home in Slavery and Freedom"

**Teaching/Research Concentration:** Material Culture; History of US South; Public History; US History

**Current Research:** I'm currently finishing up a National Endowment for the Humanities Long-Term Fellowship at the American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, MA), where I've been researching and writing my first book, tentatively titled *This Is Our Home: The Struggle for Homeplace on Southern Plantations*. It examines how enslaved people manipulated the architecture, landscape, and material culture of southern plantations to realize their aspirations of home, even within the terrible constraints of slavery. It focuses on six plantations throughout the US South--including Patton Plantation in Brazoria County, TX--but also

incorporates regional and national debates over the meaning of home and the spread of slavery in the nineteenth-century United States. I'm also working on two articles from this research, as well as several other projects related to my public history work.

**Cooler part of your job:** The opportunity to read, write, think, and talk for a living. I love being able to do these things in the classroom and at cultural institutions like museums and historic sites. Working with students, in particular, is an incredible gift, as it gives me sincere hope that a better future awaits us.

**If you could teach any other elective, what would it be:** It's outside what I was hired for, but: dance! I grew up in tights and a leotard, participating in dance competitions from the age of 7 and later attending Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts for dance. You'll often see my hair in a bun because it still comes so naturally.

**Dream end-of-career job (besides UTD, obviously):** I want to be an endowed full professor, still teaching and writing, and working with various cultural institutions at the local and national level to make better history.

**Future non-career ambitions:** I want to pass (at least) level 2 of the sommelier exam. I also want to travel much, much more, especially to cities outside North America.

**Outside talents:** I am (no modesty here) an excellent cook. My southern roots mean I make some killer fried chicken, but I'm also an adventurous cook, very willing to spend hours in the kitchen.

**Favorite part(s) about Dallas:** As a Houstonian, I know I should say NOTHING, but... Dallas (and the wider metroplex) is affordable and easy to get around, which after spending four months in the Boston-area is even more important to me. DFW also has great restaurants, a cool music scene, and some great museums. Plus, UTD is wonderful.

**One surprising thing UTD doesn't know about you:** I'm a hot sauce fanatic. I always have at least four different types in my fridge: Sriracha, Crystal (best Louisiana hot sauce; come at me, Tabasco people), Valentina, and something crazy (currently New Orleans' Cochon Butcher sweet potato habanero). I have also been known to carry packets of hot sauce in my bag.

**The most exciting thing you've done:** In high school, I performed at Sadler's Wells Theatre in London in front of a crowd of thousands. Terrifying and exhilarating. Another exciting performance moment: a few years ago, while at a stand-up comedy show in New York, I got called up on stage and ended up improv-ing with the comedian for ~10 minutes. This included me soft-shoeing across the stage.

**What you would do with \$1 million:** Responsible me: invest half in a mutual fund and donate the rest to non-profits working in the humanities. Reckless me: BOAT.

**What you would do with stopped time:** Probably be terrified that time stopped.

**If you could have any superpower:** To make all pets love me when they meet me.

**What you want to tell the Alumni Association:** The McDermott Program is a gem. It is truly unlike any other undergraduate program I've come across, not only in Texas but in the United States. On a more personal level, I am always so excited when I have a McDermott scholar in my classroom. I know they will not only be incredibly smart, but also exceedingly curious and hard-working. It is such a pleasure to work with and get to know these exceptional young people.

## THE PLACE WE CALL HOME

*Taylor Kyes ('17) and Kannan Sharma ('18) traveled to East Carolina University for a Scholar Summit*



*Taylor Kyes ('17) and Kannan Sharma ('18)*

The Eugene McDermott Scholars Program is a cohort-driven family consisting of around 80 scholars who grow as servant leaders, are supported by five incredible staff members, and are dedicated to promoting the legacy of the late Margaret and Eugene McDermott.

Last month, we, Kannan Sharma ('18) and Taylor Kyes ('17), had the opportunity to represent the Eugene McDermott Scholars at the Scholar Summit for the Undergraduate Scholars Program Administrators Association (USPAA). There, we interacted with scholars from 23 different scholars' programs across the United States.

Through meeting scholars from amazing institutions, including Georgia Tech, UNC Chapel Hill, and Clemson University, we learned about many different programs and gained a great deal of renewed respect, admiration, and appreciation for the place we call home.

Over the course of three days, we talked with other scholars about

unique aspects of their programs, how they are run, and what lies at the core of their scholarships. It was so wonderful to get to see so many amazing things reflected in these programs around the U.S., and we wanted to share what makes our program so unique!

We are a cohort-based family. From the first moment that you become a McDermott Scholar, you are welcomed into a lifelong family of love, support, and fulfillment. From Game of Thrones watch parties to annual McFamily cookie decorating parties, each cohort and person has a unique sense of belonging.

We are surrounded by our best friends who push and support us throughout our four years of college and beyond (and make sweet secret handshakes that will last for a lifetime).

This sense of family does not just come from your individual cohort. It is

reflected and reciprocated throughout the generations of McDermotts that have come before us and those that will come after. Our alumni mentor us, help cultivate our passions, and challenge us to intense game nights. We are family through and through.

We are supported by five incredible staff members. These five staff members lead our program, support us through our days regardless of their working hours, and are passionate about creating the best environment for us in which we will thrive.

They push us to become the best in our fields and inspire us to enjoy the little things in life. Their doors are always open (literally always) and they welcome us with open arms whether we want to talk about our futures or debate about the newest Marvel movie.

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*Representatives from the University of Texas (40 Acres), University of Texas at San Antonio (Top Scholars), and University of Texas at Dallas (McDermott Scholars)*

## THE PLACE WE CALL HOME

*(continued from page 8)*

We are dedicated to promoting the legacy of the late Margaret and Eugene McDermott. We are beyond blessed to have the amazing opportunities provided to us because of the generous gifts from the McDermott family.

We have the opportunities to study abroad and broaden our horizons, from summers in Vienna to semesters in Seoul. We are inspired, by the worldly attitudes of the McDermotts, to learn from other cultures and approach the world with open minds.

Our focus on professional development allows us to find where our passions intersect with what the world needs and how we can best serve our community. From attending conferences in Boston to spending summers preparing for graduate school to interning for Microsoft, we become better prepared to take on the world. Cultural activities teach us to value the arts as Margaret and Eugene once did.

Our appreciation for the arts can be seen in Performing Arts minors, trips to the Dallas Museum of Art, or



*Taylor with attendees from Georgia Tech, East Carolina University, Emory University, and the University of Richmond*

excursions to operas like *Carmen* or plays like *A Christmas Carol*. Regardless of our interests, we get to spend our time pursuing our passions because of the McDermott family.

Spending 72 hours with student scholars from around the U.S. opened our eyes to incredible new ideas and allowed us to create new friendships,

but there is nothing like coming back to our caring family, our amazing staff, and the incredible opportunities in the McDermott Program, a place that we will always call home.

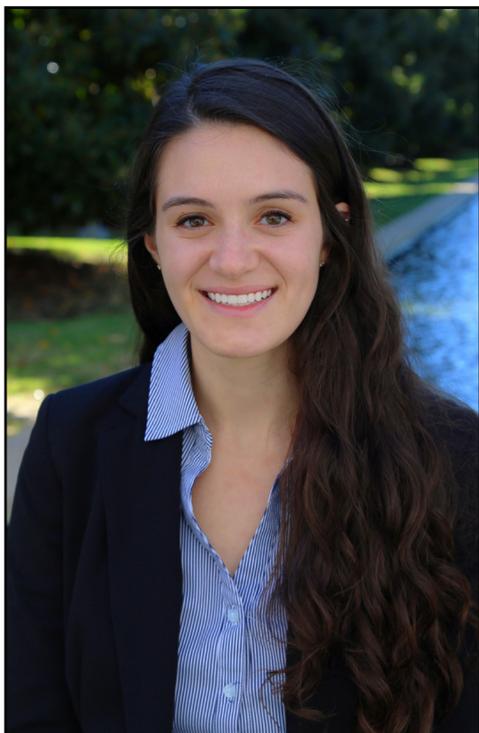
*-- Taylor Kyes ('17)  
& Kannan Sharma ('18)*



*All of the attendees at this year's Scholar Summit*

## FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

Meet Allison Stiller, a 2016 McDermott Fellow



**Name:** Allison Stiller

**Nicknames:** My family calls me Alli.

**Significant other / kids / pets (and if so, names):** My fiancé's name is Marlen and right now, my only pets are my lab rats.

**Class:** 2016

**Major:** Biomedical Engineering

**PhD Program:** Biomedical Engineering

**Current Research:** I'm working on polymer-based brain probes for future applications in brain-machine interfaces. Brain probes allow us to record neural data that can be used in a variety of clinical and research scenarios.

**Dissertation:** My thesis work is focused on improving the chronic biocompatibility of brain probes, primarily through looking at the mechanical interactions between devices and the surrounding brain

tissue. Just like a razor blade cuts through Jell-O, brain probes can cause damage to the brain as they are usually made from very stiff materials. Ultimately, this damage can cause the devices to stop working in a relatively short amount of time. However, when we use softer materials to fabricate devices, we can mitigate some of these negative effects with the overall intent of improving the functional lifetime of the devices. It's important that brain probes can last a human lifetime to prevent repeated brain surgeries when these devices finally see widespread clinical implementation!

**Hometown:** My dad was in the Army so we moved around every 1-3 years growing up. I was born in Tennessee but we moved away 6 weeks later.

**Home teams:** My dad is from Detroit so I was raised a Lion's fan. I'm also a Boston sports teams fan as my fiancé is originally from the Boston area!

**What's next after graduation:** After graduation, I'll be moving to Boston to take a job as a consultant at Clearview Healthcare Partners, a life sciences consulting firm.

**Dream end-of-career job:** At this point, I have no idea! I'm excited to see where consulting takes me over the next few years.

**Future non-career ambitions:** I absolutely love cooking and one of my goals is to publish a cookbook at some point in my life. My fiancé and I both have food allergies so I love testing out ways to remake dishes that we normally can't eat.

**Outside talents (e.g. sports, music, theater, trivia...):** I've been playing piano since I was 5 years old. Unfortunately, I haven't practiced consistently since I started college but I still like to play!

**The most dangerous / exciting thing you've done:** When I was in college, I did a summer study abroad trip to

Ecuador. Fortunately, I was able to do a lot of traveling with my cohort. One weekend, we went to a town called Baños, which is known for extreme sports. We were walking around town and ran into a group of locals who were bridge jumping and they invited us to try it. I didn't realize that we would be attached to a rope, as opposed to a bungee cord, but finally understood this when they kept telling us we needed to jump out as far as we could to prevent us from falling straight down and injuring ourselves from the impact. It was definitely an adrenaline-filled experience!

**One surprising thing Alumni wouldn't know about you:** I was one of the founding members of the Graduate Student Assembly, a student group geared towards professional, social, and academic development of grad students. I've served as the President for the last year and a half and I'm really proud of how far the group has come in such a short time. We've put on several social and professional development events and I've met so many students that I never would have met otherwise.

**Favorite part about UTD:** The people! I've made great friends here and received a lot of great mentorship. The new food delivery robots are pretty cool too...

**Favorite McDermott memory:** The holiday book party is definitely one of my favorite McDermott traditions. Going out with current students and riding my first mechanical bull during recruitment is a close second!

**What you want to tell the McDermott Scholars or future Fellows:** I would say that one of the most important things to do in school is to take advantage of all opportunities that come your way. As a Fellow, I was lucky enough to do a lot of research-related traveling supported by my research stipend and one of these trips resulted in me landing a summer internship.

## THE 2019 McDERMOTT SCHOLARS

Learn more about the newest class of McDermott Scholars



The 2019 class of Scholars is made up of 9 women and 9 men with 11 students from Texas, 6 from out of state, and 1 from Bangladesh. Collectively, this class has an average two-part SAT score of 1560, and 15 of the 18 received recognition from the National Merit Scholarship program.

### Cady Baltz

Hometown: Germantown, TN  
High School: Houston High School  
Major: Computer Science

### Taylor Crockett

Hometown: Allen, TX  
High School: Allen High School  
Major: Computer Science

### Harrison Dal Ponte

Hometown: Tucson, AZ  
High School: BASIS Oro Valley  
Major: Mechanical Engineering

### Lydia Grant

Hometown: Cincinnati, OH  
High School: Turpin High School  
Major: Undeclared

### Areeba Hafeez

Hometown: Southlake, TX  
High School: Carroll Senior High School  
Major: Neuroscience

### Elijah Harbut

Hometown: Huntington Woods, MI  
High School: International Academy  
Major: Biochemistry

### Paulina Hruskoci

Hometown: Shrewsbury, MA  
High School: Shrewsbury High School  
Major: Political Science

### Pratik Koppikar

Hometown: Coppell, TX  
High School: Coppell High School  
Major: Molecular Biology

### Avirut Mehta

Hometown: Sugar Land, TX  
High School: William P. Clements High School  
Major: Undeclared

### Bhaash Pathak

Hometown: Irving, TX  
High School: Coppell High School  
Major: Neuroscience

### Neha Philip

Hometown: Lewisville, TX  
High School: Hebron High School  
Major: Neuroscience

### Cari Reinert

Hometown: Wylie, TX  
High School: Texas Academy of Math and Science  
Major: Undeclared

### Anna Scully

Hometown: Keller, TX  
High School: Central High School  
Major: Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

### Ted Shi

Hometown: Overland Park, KS  
High School: Blue Valley Southwest High School  
Major: Undeclared

### Katie Strand

Hometown: Frisco, TX  
High School: Independence High School  
Major: Mechanical Engineering

### Khalid Hossain Tawohid

Hometown: Dhaka, Bangladesh  
High School: UCSI International School Springhill  
Major: Computer Science

### Vivian Tran

Hometown: Austin, TX  
High School: Westwood High School  
Major: Biochemistry

### Varun Venkat

Hometown: Frisco, TX  
High School: Independence High School  
Major: Electrical Engineering

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*Read about the class of 2019's Santa Fe experience on the blog: [mcdermottscholars.wordpress.com](http://mcdermottscholars.wordpress.com)*

## WELCOMING THE NEW ALUMNI

*The class of 2015 joins the Alumni Association's ranks*



### **Bhargav Arimilli**

UT Southwestern Medical School

### **Morganne Blaylock**

Master's in Energy Science, Technology & Policy at Carnegie Mellon University

### **Zachary Boult**

JD at Harvard Law School

### **Joseph Campain**

UT Southwestern Medical School

### **Matthew Carpenter**

PhD in Systems, Synthetic, and Physical Biology at Rice University

### **John Chan**

Working at Amazon Web Services

### **Harris Chowdhary**

Urdu Scholarship in Pakistan

### **Kiara Dandridge**

Master's in Nursing at Duke University

### **Emily Fine**

MD/MPH at Texas Tech School of Medicine

### **Joanna Haug**

Working at Unity for Greater New Orleans

### **Ayesha Karnik**

Working at Dalberg

### **Rachel Kyes**

Master's in International Relations at the University of Denver

### **Quang Le**

Working as a Clinical Researcher

### **Nidhish Lokesh**

UT Southwestern Medical School

### **Monica Lou**

Baylor College of Medicine

### **Rachel Meade**

PhD in Genetics & Genomics at Duke University

### **Umer Nadir**

UT Southwestern Medical School

### **Justin Raman**

University of Florida College of Medicine

### **Neel Reddy**

Working at Bain & Company

### **Daniel Rodricks**

Baylor College of Medicine

### **Sydney Sherman**

PhD in Medical Engineering and Medical Physics at Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology

### **Andrew Swanson**

Working at GEICO

### **Richard Wu**

Working as a Medical Scribe

The 2015 McDermott Scholars have studied abroad in 20 different countries.

Notable accolades:

- Barry M. Goldwater Scholarships (three!)
- Phi Kappa Phi 1897 Fellow
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program
- 14 Phi Kappa Phi members

They have contributed over 80,000 hours to community service, campus leadership, personal development, and professional growth.