

## Office of Academic Innovation & Engagement



## Annual Report

FY 2024-2025

**WE BUILD TEAMS THAT WIN  
IN LOUISIANA FOR THE WORLD**

The Office of Academic Innovation and Engagement offers opportunities for students to come together and shape a collaborative future for STEM.

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Geaux Science Explorations

The LSU College of Science is dedicated to offering high-quality outreach activities for the Baton Rouge community, supporting the early engagement of science enthusiasts. With assistance from our top scientists and mathematicians, we provide hands-on, science-focused events in our outreach series: Geaux Science Explorations!

STEM & Stories

- The LSU College of Science invited children in kindergarten through third grade to explore the worlds of math and science through an exciting science story time adventure led by some of the university’s top scientists and mathematicians. Each story time was followed by fun, hands-on activities that allowed young scientists to feed their curiosity and take an even deeper dive into a math and science discovery. We partnered with the East Baton Rouge Parish Library system to host story times at three locations through the metropolitan Baton Rouge area.

LSU

College of Science

Geaux Science Explorations

STEM & Stories

Saturday, January 25, 2025

10:30 AM - 11:45 AM

Locations:

Main Library at Goodwood, Eden Park

Branch Library, Greenwell Springs Road

Regional Branch Library



HALLIBURTON





**From left to right:** Dr. Rabi Musah reading "Charlotte the Scientist Finds a Cure" at the Eden Park location; Graduate student and member of NOBCCChE, Kadeem Hayes, showing participants the elephant toothpaste experiment at the Eden Park location; Participants making geometric shapes with magnatiles at the Greenwell Springs location; Participants ask questions to Dr. Agullo and Dr. González at the Goodwood location.

- **Readers:**

- Dr. Ivan Agullo and Dr. Gabriella González, physicists and professors in the LSU Department of Physics and Astronomy who read "How to Hear the Universe: Gaby Gonzales and the search for Einstein's Ripples in Space-Time" by Patricia Valdez.
- Dr. Rabi Musah, chemist and professor in the LSU Department of Chemistry who read "Charlotte the Scientist Finds a Cure" by Camille Andros.
- Dr. David Shea Vela-Vick, mathematician and professor in the LSU Department of Mathematics who read "I'm Trying to Love Math" by Bethany Barton.

- **Date:** January 25, 2025

- **Time:** 10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

- **Locations:** Main Library at Goodwood (physics themed), Eden Park Branch Library (chemistry themed), and Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library (math themed)

- **Audience:** K-3rd graders

- **Participants and Volunteers:**

- K-3rd Grade Impact: 77 Participants/Families
  - Main Library at Goodwood: 37
  - Eden Park Branch Library: 21
  - Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library: 19
- LSU Faculty: 6
- LSU Staff: 4
- LSU Undergraduates: 28

## Feedback from Parents

*"So inspirational. My son (and daughter) really enjoyed the hands on nature of the experiments. My daughter especially enjoyed making ice cream with liquid nitrogen. Such a neat and educational lesson. Also enjoyed the presenter's discussion on dinitrogen."*

*"My daughter looks forward to coming every year and always leaves with a refreshed enthusiasm for STEM!"*

## Kids' Day at the Museum

- The LSU Museum of Natural Science and College of Science hosted its 9th Kids' Day at the Museum. The support provided by Halliburton allowed 36 kids in grades 4 through 6 to spend a day exploring the reptiles, birds, fish and other exciting collections in the internationally recognized Museum of Natural Science (MNS) at LSU. Participants lunched and chatted with some of LSU's scientists, and participated in eight hands-on activities hosted by a variety of LSU science, technology, engineering, and math programs including the MNS, the Department of Chemistry, the Department of Geology & Geophysics, the Department of Biological Sciences, LSU Geaux Teach, and the LSU Herbarium. Scientists featured during the lunch chats included Dr. Nicholas Mason – biologist/ornithologist and professor at the LSU Museum of Natural Science, Dr. Michela Negro – physicist and professor in the LSU Department of Physics & Astronomy, Dr. Christine Lattin – biologist and professor in the LSU Department of Biological Sciences, and Dr. Clifton Wagner – chemist and professor in the LSU Department of Chemistry.
- Participants must apply and be selected to participate in the program. The application requires a one-page essay about what important question they would like to answer as a scientist or mathematician, why this question is important, and how you would use science and math to answer your question.
- The event also includes a “Coaching Your Child for STEM” session for parents. The session gives parents pertinent information to help them encourage their child's interests in math and science. Session activities also include a tour of the MNS. This year, 50 students applied and 40 were selected to participate.
- **Date:** February 15, 2025
- **Time:** 10:30 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
- **Location:** LSU Museum of Natural Science and LSU Hill Memorial Library
- **Audience:** 4th-6th graders



Kids' Day at the Museum participants exploring the museum, chatting with Dr. Negro and Dr. Mason, and enjoying the science activity stations.

- **Participants and Volunteers:**
  - 4th-6th Grade Impact: 36 Participants
  - Parent Participants: 32
  - LSU Faculty: 7
  - LSU Staff: 7
  - LSU Graduate students: 12
  - LSU Undergraduates: 33
  - Other volunteers: 3

## Feedback from Parents

*“Great event with points of interest for everyone. My son and I both enjoyed it. The staff, volunteers, and organizers showed lots of passion and it was greatly appreciated. Thank you.”*

*“I have lived in BR for 50 years and graduated from LSU. I had no idea this museum existed! I learned so much and my daughter had the BEST experience!”*

*“This was very helpful to parents and so much fun for kids.”*

## Our Earth, Our Laboratory

- The LSU Department of Geology & Geophysics and the College of Science hosted its 5th Our Earth, Our Laboratory — a day of fun earth and energy science activities led by some of LSU’s top geologists. Participants explored the different properties of mineral samples and viewed thin slices under a microscope, learned about the structure and color of minerals, toured LSU geology labs, and met LSU geologists and geology students. The faculty lead on this program was Dr. Matthew Loocke. Similar to Kids’ Day at the Museum, participants must apply and be selected to participate in the program. The application requires an essay about what interests them about geology and what questions do they have about the topic.
- **Date:** April 12, 2025
- **Time:** 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **Location:** LSU Howe-Russell Geoscience Complex
- **Audience:** 7th-8th graders
- **Participants and Volunteers:**
  - 7th-8th Grade Impact: 10 Participants
  - LSU Faculty: 2
  - LSU Staff: 1
  - LSU Graduate students: 1
  - LSU Undergraduates: 7





Our Earth, Our Laboratory viewing mineral thin slices through a microscope, mapping :geological sites," and viewing rocks and minerals under ultraviolet light.

## Geology Summer Camp

- In June 2024, we launched a new free, two-day summer camp for 4th-8th graders. Geology Summer Camp was joint sponsored by Halliburton and the LSU Department of Geology & Geophysics. Kids got the chance to learn about the history of geology by participating in experiments that replicate major milestones in the development of modern geologic thought. This included exploring the structure and properties of minerals, learning how to use a compass and map geological research sites, and how to make observations as a scientist. For summer 2025, we added one more day, increased the participant count to 50 and changed the age range to 6th-12th grade in order to reach a demographic that our other programs do not target. The theme for the 2025 camp is Exploring Earth's Mysteries. Dr. Matthew Loocke from the LSU Department of Geology & Geophysics was the faculty lead.
- **Date:** June 11 - 13, 2025
- **Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- **Location:** LSU Howe-Russell Geoscience Complex
- **Audience:** 6th-12th graders
- **Participants and Volunteers:**
  - 6th-12th Grade Impact: 45
  - LSU Faculty: 2
  - LSU Graduate students: 2
  - LSU Undergraduates: 2
  - Other volunteers: 1



## Feedback from Parents

*"This was an amazing opportunity for my 15yo! Dr. Loocke is just fabulous and we were thrilled to get to work with him. My daughter learnt so much and is very grateful to have had this opportunity."*



**Left:** Geology Summer Camp group photo; **Center:** sifting sediment; **Right:** Participants learning about careers in geology.

## SCI Lead

SCI Lead, a student council within the LSU College of Science, assists students in developing professional, leadership, and communication skills. Our members participate in a variety of professional and community opportunities that are designed to help students network with others in their field and prepare them for a career in science. Our goal is to support professional skill development through creative thinking, leadership training opportunities and community outreach, while also helping students establish their professional identities.



Members of SCI Lead receive the following opportunities during their time within the council:

- Participate in a Leadership Learning Laboratory (a series of workshops designed to strengthen leadership skills)
- Collaborate with fellow members to address challenges through strategic student-led initiatives for the LSU and Baton Rouge Community
- Engage in the development and implementation of outreach events and activities for their peers and K-12 students

## 2024-2025 SCI Lead Members

| Name                       | Classification | Area of Study                             |
|----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Aaron Scott                | Senior         | Physics - Secondary Education             |
| Benjamin Erdozain          | Senior         | Biochemistry                              |
| Cy Daigle                  | Sophomore      | Biological Sciences                       |
| Faith Rispone              | Junior         | Biological Sciences                       |
| Grace Smith                | Senior         | Mathematics, Industrial Engineering       |
| Havan Pleasant             | Senior         | Biological Sciences                       |
| Jamar Whitfield            | Junior         | Mathematics, Computer Science             |
| Joel Penalber              | Senior         | Biochemistry                              |
| John Lee                   | Junior         | Biological Sciences                       |
| Lilia Lopez Medina         | Junior         | Chemistry                                 |
| Mihir Babbar               | Junior         | Biological Sciences                       |
| Owanaemi Krakrafaa Bestman | Senior         | Biological Sciences - Secondary Education |
| Sydney Lawson              | Junior         | Biological Sciences, Mathematics          |
| Zoë Schuster               | Senior         | Biochemistry                              |

## Leadership Learning Laboratory

**October 7, 2024**

### SCI Lead Orientation

Valerie Stampely, *Program Manager, LSU College of Science*

Dr. Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy, *LSU Science Associate Dean for Academic Innovation & Engagement*

Rasidah Ali, *SCI Lead co-coordinator*

- Program expectations and commitments
- Working as a Team

**October 15, 2024**

### Strategic Planning

Valerie Stampely, *Program Manager, LSU College of Science*

Dr. Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy, *LSU Science Associate Dean for Academic Innovation & Engagement*

Rasidah Ali, *SCI Lead co-coordinator*

- What is Strategic Planning?
- Effectively identify problems plaguing the science department and how to tackle those issues
- Brainstorm ideas to address challenges

**October 22, 2025**

### Networking 101

Dr. Ague Mae Manongsong, *Assistant Professor, LSU School of Leadership and Human Resource Development*

- What is networking?
- Give strategies to help students reduce fears/concerns around networking
- Discuss why networking is important
- Elevator Pitch and Importance

**November 12, 2024**

**Emergenetics Workshop**

Dr. Rebecca Burdette, *Director, Communication across the Curriculum*

- Understanding our thinking preferences and their effects on interpersonal communication
- Role of diverse thinkers in the workplace and how personal preferences influence assumptions, biases, and interpersonal communication

**November 19, 2024**

**What is Leadership?**

Dr. Missy Korduner, *LSU School of Leadership & Human Resource Development*

- What kind of leader are you? - Leadership skills, traits, styles, and behaviors
- Reflection on personal values

**December 3, 2024**

**Strategic Planning Part II**

Rasidah Ali, *SCI Lead co-coordinator*

- Decide on council initiatives
- Begin outlining event, assign roles

**January 18, 2025**

**Spring Retreat**

**Leadership Workshop\***

Marquita Qualls, *Entropia Consulting*

- Basic Principles of Exceptional Leadership
- Building Credibility as a Leader
- Leading with and Developing a Vision
- Maximizing Collaboration and Engagement
- Effectively Leading Innovative Teams

\*this workshop was open to several student groups within the College of Science, not just SCI Lead.

**Project Planning and Budgeting**

Valerie Stampley, *Program Manager, LSU College of Science*

- Project Planning
- Event Logistics
- Forms and Approvals

**March 10, 2025**

**Arbinger Training, Part I**

Chynsia Robertson, *Learning and Development Manager, b1 Bank*

- Developing an outward mindset to improve collaboration and team effectiveness

**March 12, 2025**

**Arbinger Training, Part II**

Chynsia Robertson, *Learning and Development Manager, b1 Bank*

- Implementing an outward mindset that produces results

**April 15, 2025**

**Leadership Talk: Taco Tuesday**

Rasidah Ali, *SCI Lead co-coordinator*

- Book discussion for "Snapshots of Great Leadership: Research and Practice"
- Leadership Styles

**April 21, 2025**

**SCI Lead, SOARS, and LAMP Networking Event - Escape Room**

- Escape room experience and lessons learned
- Best practices for working with a team to accomplish a common goal
- What worked well within their teams and what could they do better



SCI Lead Spring Retreat

## SCI Lead Initiatives

Council members participate in the Leadership Learning Laboratory and then use the skills developed to lead activities for others. In this way, they give back to the community as they learn!

### December 2024 | Toy Drive

- Description: Organized a holiday toy drive to collect new and gently used toys for children whose families are in need.
- Goals: Engage LSU College of Science students, raise awareness about SCI Lead and its mission, and give back to the Baton Rouge community.

### April 14, 2025 | Science & Shenanigans

- Description: A social event for College of Science undergraduate students to compete with LSU professors over a science themed gameshow.
- Goals: Increase awareness of resources available to students, bridge gap between professor and student relationships, and provide networking opportunities for students in various career fields.

### April 28, 2025 | Sneaux Cones with SCI Lead

- Description: A cool-off event, so CoS students can decompress from the stress of studying for finals with a free snowball. Yard games were also set up for students to play and interact.
- Goals: Give students a break during a stressful period in the academic year, increase awareness of SCI Lead within the CoS, allow students to bond with one another over snowballs and games, and promote the SCI Lead Instagram, where they increase awareness of CoS events.
- From this event, they increased their Instagram following by 250!



**Left:** Science & Shenanigans flyer. **Right:** Sneaux Cones with SCI Lead.

# SOARS

## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AIMED AT RETAINING SCIENCE SCHOLARS

SOARS is an NSF-funded scholarship program for College of Science students based on academic excellence and financial need. It is designed with a more holistic approach not only offering financial support, but also academic, professional, and personal support. Those selected receive up to \$10,000 annually for up to four years, 1:1 mentoring, career coaching, personal and professional development, preparation for research opportunities, and a science bootcamp in the summer.

During the 2024-2025 school year, the program supported 13 seniors and an additional five qualified students added to maximize the funding impact.

In spring 2025, the SOARS program came to a close. In total, the program engaged 37 students. Of those students, 24 graduated with STEM degree, two graduated with a non-STEM degree, seven were still pursuing a degree, and four did not complete their degree. Five of the graduating students are continuing their education at the graduate level and pursuing research careers.

Funded by NSF S-STEM AWD-1930474



## Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 SOARS Graduates

Each graduate receives blue and yellow cords for successful completion of the SOARS program.

| Name           | Area of Study                                  | Post Graduation Plans                             |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Abbie Bui      | Biological Sciences, Interdisciplinary Studies | Attend medical school for pediatrics              |
| Alexandra Ball | Biological Sciences                            | Enter the workforce as an environmental scientist |
| Dykia Williams | Biological Sciences                            | Attend graduate school for epidemiology           |
| Erica Clement  | Mathematics - Secondary Education              | Teach at a high needs high school                 |
| Jayden Turner  | Mathematics - Actuarial Science                | Enter the workforce as a data analyst             |
| Jelani Smith   | Biological Sciences                            | Attend medical school                             |
| Lauren Rogers  | Biological Sciences                            | Attend medical school for emergency medicine      |

## Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 SOARS Graduates continued...

| Name             | Area of Study                         | Post Graduation Plans                                              |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Liam Lopez       | Mathematics - Mathematical Statistics | Enter the workforce as a data analyst                              |
| Madison Ferguson | Biochemistry                          | Attend medical school at LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans |
| Nena Nguyen      | Biochemistry                          | Attend medical school at LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans |
| Reem Qayssar     | Biological Sciences                   | Attend dental school                                               |
| Ryan Brown       | Physics - Astronomy                   | Enter the workforce in observational astronomy                     |
| Toby Mosher      | Biochemistry, Microbiology            | Attend graduate school for microbiology and infectious disease     |
| Zoe Mixon        | Mathematics - Mathematical Statistics | Enter the workforce as a data analyst                              |

## Spring 2025 Additional SOARS Scholars

| Name            | Classification | Area of Study       |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Havan Pleasant  | Senior         | Biological Sciences |
| Iyanna Robinson | Junior         | Microbiology        |
| Jada Yeboah     | Junior         | Biochemistry        |
| Laura Beaubrun  | Junior         | Biochemistry        |
| Whitney James   | Senior         | Biochemistry        |

# LS-LAMP

LOUIS STOKES LOUISIANA ALLIANCE FOR MINORITY PARTICIPATION

**LS-LAMP** is a comprehensive, statewide, coordinated program aimed at substantially increasing the number and quality of minority students enrolling in and completing baccalaureate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and subsequently going on to pursue graduate studies in STEM disciplines. **LS-LAMP** is one of the many National Science Foundation alliance programs nationwide.

The **LS-LAMP** Program at **LSU** focuses on helping its scholars navigate their **STEM**

degree programs by providing individualized mentoring, professional development, research training, and preparation for graduate school programs. Scholars join a small community of like-minded STEM students, who share similar goals and are motivated to succeed. In addition to participating in program activities, all LAMP Scholars also engage in undergraduate research and community service.

## 2024-2025 LS-LAMP Scholars

| Name             | Classification | Area of Study                                      |
|------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Daianna Williams | Junior         | Kinesiology - Human Movement Science               |
| Giancarlo Lara   | Junior         | Biological Engineering                             |
| Iyanna Robinson  | Junior         | Microbiology                                       |
| Jada Yeboah      | Junior         | Biochemistry                                       |
| Laura Beaubrun   | Junior         | Biochemistry                                       |
| Madison Woodson  | Junior         | Environmental Management Systems - Policy Analysis |
| Whitney James    | Senior         | Biochemistry                                       |

## SOARS and LS-LAMP Monthly Seminar Topics

### September 16, 2024

#### In-Person - Escape Room and Dinner

- Networking social for SOARS and LS-LAMP scholars

### October 21, 2024

#### Preparing for Presenting at a Research Conference

Dr. Becky Carmichael, *LSU CxC*

- How to present your research at a conference; practicing; poster dos & don'ts

### November 18, 2024

#### The Art of Storytelling: How to Sell Your Professional Self on Social Media

Whitney James, *LSU Senior*

- How to use storytelling on social media for post-graduate pursuits

### January 27, 2025

#### Graduate School/Medical School Experience

Panel of current graduate students: *Ria Salway (graduate school), Anna Leyrer (medical school), Jady Lewis (dental school), Dominic Adrewie (graduate school)*

- Navigating graduate school once you are in - expectations, culture, advisors

### February 17, 2025

#### Financing Graduate School/Managing Money

Tyler Flynn, *Program Manager, Graduate Student Success, Strategic Initiatives of the Pinkie Gordon Lane Graduate School*

- Getting money for graduate school, how to manage an assistantship budget

### March 17, 2025

#### Beyond Research: Science for Society

Dr. Treva Brown, *Physical Scientist, U.S. Naval Research Laboratory and LSU alum*

- Serving the community in addition to your career; bringing your science to the community

### April 21, 2025

#### In-Person - Escape Room and Dinner

- Networking social for SOARS, LS-LAMP, and SCI Lead students



**Clockwise from top left:** ERN group photo after networking dinner; Lauren Rogers next to her poster; Toby Mosher next to his poster; Lauren Rogers with her 1st place award; Abbie Bui during her oral presentation; Laura Beaubrun next to her poster.

## SOARS and LS-LAMP at ERN

Part of the SOARS and LS-LAMP scholarships include travel support for research conferences. In April 2024, six SOARS scholars and four LS-LAMP Scholars attended the Emerging Researchers National Conference (ERN) in STEM in Atlanta, GA. The students had a fantastic time meeting other students who are involved in research. The trip also included a group networking dinner with the other LSU student groups that attended the conference - Bridge to Doctorate (BD) fellows and the Graduate Future Scholars.

### Four students presented their research at the conference:

- Abbie Bui - oral presentation: *"Testing the effects of physiological leptin replacement during a 72-h fast in Sprague-Dawley rats"*
- Laura Beaubrun - poster presentation: *"Dipeptides as Biocatalysts"*
- Lauren Rogers - poster presentation: *"The Symbiotic Nature of Plant Microbiomes for Plastic Degradation"*
- Toby Mosher - poster presentation: *"Development of a robust gene deletion system for the horse pathogen (SEE)"*

Lauren Rogers won 1st place in the Undergraduate Poster Presentation - Biological Sciences category and Whitney James won an iPad in the drawing.

# Beckman Scholars

The Beckman Scholars Program is a 15-month paid immersive leadership and research program within the College of Science funded by the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation. The program is a collaboration between the College, The Office of Undergraduate Research, and LSU Communication Across the Curriculum (CxC). In addition to research experience, Beckman Scholars receive an \$18,200 stipend; comprehensive professional development opportunities including personalized mentoring; community building; expert guidance in science communication; leadership development; and community engagement.



Recruitment for the 2025-2026 program began in February and was open to all College of Science students who met the following criteria: Good academic standing; Completion of at least one semester with a declared major in biochemistry, biological sciences, chemistry, or microbiology; Full-time student; Citizen or permanent resident of the U.S. or its possessions, or hold DACA recipient status; Strong verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills; Plans to pursue a Ph.D., MD, MD/Ph.D., or another scientific career path

Two scholars were selected in April - **Jada Yeboah**, biochemistry junior working under Dr. Graca Vicente, and **Jordan Brooks**, microbiology sophomore working under Dr. Patrick DiMario.



Newly selected Beckman Scholars Jada Yeboah (top) and Jordan Brooks (bottom).

## Current Beckman Scholars

| Name              | Classification | Area of Study                    | Mentor              | Year Active |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Benjamin Erdozain | Senior         | Biochemistry                     | Dr. Bret Elderd     | 2024-2025   |
| Jada Yeboah       | Junior         | Biochemistry                     | Dr. Graca Vicente   | 2025-2026   |
| Jordan Brooks     | Sophomore      | Microbiology                     | Dr. Patrick DiMario | 2025-2026   |
| Sydney Lawson     | Junior         | Biological Sciences, Mathematics | Dr. Fatima Rivas    | 2024-2025   |

# SCI 1001

## First Year Seminar for Science and Math Majors

SCI 1001 is a part of a comprehensive effort in the LSU College of Science to advance student success at the critical juncture of the first year as a college student. This course covers basic information, concepts, and methods to foster a strong start as a science or math major at LSU and focuses on supporting students' integration into the campus; development of essential academic skills, personal growth/self-awareness, and career exploration; and instilling a sense of community within science/mathematics, the campus, and beyond.



The theoretical framework guiding practice within the course design centers on fostering community. Tinto's work on retention found that students who are academically and socially integrated into a campus community are more likely to be retained. This work suggests that strategic practices that help students navigate critical junctures in their acclimation to college and their majors have a higher likelihood of supporting their success. In many ways, the work of supporting students' integration into the campus community supports students' sense of belonging and identity development as a member of the scientific community. Communication and teamwork are essential components of career readiness and the development of all students. We strategically focus on communication skills-building through the writing of reflections and through the development of a team project, which we also use to help students build their collaborative skills.

Our instructional team consists of a faculty member and peer mentors (two to three depending on class size). This design has provided semester long-role models that our first-year students can access. There is also multi-faceted development for our senior students through this process too. The peer mentors develop their leadership and communication skills while supporting the transition of our incoming first-year students. Herein, we integrated active learning pedagogies with limited lectures from instructors accompanied by small discussions and other activities led by peer mentors.

# LSU ESTEEMED

**ENHANCING SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATH EDUCATIONAL DIVERSITY**

Dr. Zakiya S. Wilson-Kennedy, Associate Dean for Academic Innovation & Engagement at the College of Science, secured a significant \$1 million R-25 training grant from the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) under the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The grant leveraged collaboration with two professors from the College of Engineering, Drs. Cristina Sabliov and Dorin Boldor.

The program supported by this grant is **LSU ESTEEMED**, which supports scholars to learn foundational academic and research skills through academic enrichment, advising, financial support, multimodal mentoring, and training in biomedical research laboratories. It is specifically designed for students who are motivated to seek careers in the biomedical and behavioral sciences that require Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D. degrees. Students enter the **ESTEEMED** program through a six-week summer bridge program, which prepares them to enter and conduct research in biomedical sciences and take introductory-level classes. After two years in **ESTEEMED**, scholars receive priority consideration for other campus undergraduate research programs and apply to the Honors College.

Valerie Stampley and Dr. Supuni Dhameera Silva of the College of Science served as Project Administrator and Project Coordinator, respectively.



LSU Scholars and Mentors at the Fall 2025 Mentoring Event followed by a Dinner

## 2024 - 2025 ESTEEMED Scholars

| Name            | Classification | Area of Study          |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Kayden Price    | Freshman       | Biological Engineering |
| Olivia Springer | Freshman       | Biological Engineering |
| Rayanne Thaljah | Freshman       | Biological Engineering |
| Staicy Triminio | Freshman       | Biological Engineering |
| Tulona Hossain  | Freshman       | Biological Engineering |

# LSU ESTEEMED Summer Bridge Program

## July 8 - 12, 2024

### Summer-Bridge Program (Week 1)

- Orientation, team building, and leadership (Dr. Zakiya S. Wilson-Kennedy)
- Engineering advising services (Nicholas Totaro)
- Center for Academic Success (Nyles Walker)
- Individual Development Plans (Valerie Stampley)
- Mathematics (Dr. Vinicio Rios)
- Mathematics Study Hall

## July 15 - 19, 2024

### Summer-Bridge Program (Week 2)

- Entering Research - Developing an identity as a researcher and an understanding of the research environment (Dr. Zakiya S. Wilson-Kennedy)
- Entering Research - Understanding Research Mentor Roles (Dr. Zakiya S. Wilson-Kennedy)
- Entering Research - Research Group Diagram (Dr. Zakiya S. Wilson-Kennedy)
- Mathematics (Dr. Vinicio Rios)
- Mathematics Study Hall
- Chemistry (Dr. Ly Ngo)
- Research Ready Lab Tours (Dr. Joyoni Dey)

## July 22 - 26, 2024

### Summer-Bridge Program (Week 3)

- Entering Research - Aligning Mentor and Training Expectations (Dr. Zakiya S. Wilson-Kennedy)
- Mathematics Study Hall
- Chemistry (Dr. Ly Ngo)
- Research Ready Lab Tours (Dr. Philip Jung, Dr. Tammy Dugas, Dr. Kenneth Matthews, and Small Animal Imaging Facility)

## July 29 - August 2, 2024

### Summer-Bridge Program (Week 4)

- Research Skills - Data Collection and Management (Dr. Jessica Eberhard)
- Research Skills - Scholarly Communication (Dr. Jessica Eberhard)
- Research Skills - Scientific Method (Dr. Jessica Eberhard)
- Mathematics (Dr. Vinicio Rios)
- Mathematics Study Hall
- Biology Study Hall
- Research Ready Lab Tours (Dr. Todd Monroe and Dr. Bruno Rego)

## August 5 - 9, 2025

### Summer-Bridge Program (Week 5)

- Research Skills - Numerical Modeling (Dr. Dorin Boldor)
- Mathematics (Dr. Vinicio Rios)
- Mathematics Study Hall
- Biology Study Hall
- Research Ready Lab Tours (Dr. Kevin Hoffseth and Dr. Cristina Sabliov)

## August 22 - 24, 2024

### Summer-Bridge Program (Week 6)

- Geaux Engineering

# LSU ESTEEMED Seminar Series and Initiatives

## September 16, 2024

### In-Person Escape Room and Dinner

- Networking social for ESTEEMED, SOARS, SCI Lead, and LS-LAMP scholars

## September 30 - October 2, 2024

### Early-semester One-on-one Mentoring Session with Dr. Supuni Dhameera Silva

- One-on-one check-ins and mentoring sessions for long-term and short-term goal setting
- Revisit and review Independent Development Plans (IDPs)
- Recognize potential challenges and mitigation techniques

## October 8, 2024

### Applying for Internships

- Mackenzie Heath, *Career Coach, LSU Olinde Career Center*
- Resources offered by the Olinde Career Center
- Introduction to Internships
- Timeline for industrial internships
- Application process

## October 15, 2024

### Health and Wellness

- Ella Marrus, *Wellness and Health Promotion Department, LSU Student Health Center*
- Importance of health and wellness
- How to take care of health and wellness during

college

- Resources offered by the LSU Student Health Center

### October 22 and November 26, 2024

#### Journal Club for Scientific Reading

Dr. Supuni Dhameera Silva, *ESTEEMED Project Coordinator, College of Science*

- How to read a journal paper
- Identifying research questions and hypotheses
- Evaluating the methods and experimental design
- Interpreting data and results
- Understanding the discussion and conclusion

### November 5, 2024

#### Financial Planning and Management

Zacki Soliman, *Business Development and Financial Education Officer, Campus Federal*

- Difference between Savings and Checking Accounts
- Importance of budgeting
- Budgeting and financial management tools and strategies

### November 14, 2024

#### Mentoring Event and Dinner with Faculty Mentors

- All members of the LSU ESTEEMED community (students and faculty mentors) shared their background and heritage, passion for STEM, interest in biomedical research, motivations, values, aspirations, and goals

### November 25 - 27, 2024

#### Mid-Semester One-on-one Mentoring Session with Dr. Supuni Dhameera Silva

- One-on-one check-ins on mid-term grades
- Mentoring sessions for effective study habits and strategies
- Revisit and review Independent Development Plans (IDPs) and self-evaluations
- Recognize potential challenges and mitigation techniques

### December 3, 2024

#### Introduction to REUs and LSU Discover

Sarah Ferstel, *Director, Office of Undergraduate Research*

- Distinguished Undergraduate Research Program
- LSU Discover Day
- Finding REUs and summer research opportunities
- Resources offered by the LSU Office of Undergraduate Research

### January 27 - 31, 2025

#### Early-semester One-on-one Mentoring Session with Dr. Supuni Dhameera Silva

- One-on-one check-ins and mentoring sessions for long-term and short-term goal setting
- Revisit and review Independent Development Plans (IDPs)
- Recognize potential challenges and mitigation techniques

### February 13, 2025

#### REU Personal Statements

Erwin Torres, *Manager of Student Services, LSU Olinde Career Center*

- What is a personal statement
- Writing an effective personal statement
- Resources offered by the Olinde Career Center for personal statement writing

### February 20, 2025

#### Journal Club for Scientific Reading

Staicy Triminio and Kayden Price, *ESTEEMED Scholars*

- Identifying research questions and hypotheses
- Understanding the methods and experimental design
- Interpreting data and results
- Understanding the discussion and conclusion
- Critiquing the experimental design and the overall research

### February 27, 2025

#### Bloom's Taxonomy

Dr. Supuni Dhameera Silva, *ESTEEMED Project Coordinator, College of Science*

- What is Bloom's taxonomy
- Levels of Bloom's taxonomy
- How to use it to succeed in college
- Effective study and notetaking strategies under Bloom's taxonomy

### March 27, 2025

#### Journal Club for Scientific Reading

Olivia Springer and Rayanne Thaljah, *ESTEEMED Scholars*

- Identifying research questions and hypotheses
- Understanding the methods and experimental design
- Interpreting data and results
- Understanding the discussion and conclusion
- Critiquing the experimental design and the overall research

# MissDelta

## MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA TRANSITION INITIATIVE

The Workforce Development Initiative (WDI) of the Mississippi River Delta Transition Initiative (MissDelta), funded by the National Academies Gulf Research Program, aims to create a broader, talented, and resilient STEM workforce, especially in coastal and environmental sciences, in the GCR by creating a robust support network that promotes engagement in research, mentorship, and academic advancement in coastal and environmental science for K–20 students. This initiative leverages multiple partnerships across institutions, including the local universities within the GCR and Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON), to embed coastal and environmental themes into educational pathways. The K–12 program introduces students and teachers to regional challenges through field experiences and provides mentoring from researchers to foster early exposure to coastal and environmental sciences. The teacher professional development equips educators with tools to spark student curiosity and interest in coastal and environmental research. Undergraduate students also engage in hands-on research aligned with the Gulf Scholars Program’s core themes and participate in place-based field learning experiences, mentoring opportunities, and tailored curricula at participating universities. Graduate-level initiatives provide advanced experiential research, professional development, and a multi-layered mentoring model, drawing on the successful framework of the National Science Foundation Bridge to Doctorate program of Louisiana State University (LSU). A comprehensive evaluation framework investigates the effects of these WDI efforts with respect to science identity, interest, self-efficacy, and workforce readiness. By creating opportunities for coastal and environmental research for students within the GCR, the MissDelta WDI supports their academic and career trajectories and builds capacity for a sustainable and expanded coastal research community.

## Eva Legard Center Swamp Tour

- About: The MissDelta’s Workforce Development Initiative supports Eva Legard Center for a place-based learning field trip in the Fall semester. The 6th and 7th graders learned about flora and fauna of Louisiana swamps on the Cajun Pride Swamp tour.
- **Date:** October 24, 2024
- **Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- **Location:** Cajun Pride Tours at LaPlace, LA
- **Audience:** 6th-8th graders
- **Participants and Volunteers:**
  - Eva Legard 6th-8th graders: 35
  - Eva Legard teachers and staff: 5
  - LSU Faculty: 1



Eva Legard Center takes a fieldtrip to the Cajun Pride Swamp tour Oct. 24, 2024.

## MissDelta Interactive Coastal Science Activities

- About: 6th, 7th and 8th graders from the Eva Legard Center visited LSU campus for a day of seven interactive coastal science activities led by faculty and students from the MissDelta Initiative, the Geology and Geophysics department at LSU, College of the Coast and Environment, Southern University, and Alcorn State University.
- **Date:** April 1, 2025
- **Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- **Location:** LSU Energy, Coast, & Environment Building
- **Audience:** 6th-8th graders
- **Participants and Volunteers:**
  - Eva Legard 6th-8th graders: 66
  - Eva Legard teachers and staff: 21
  - LSU, SUS, and Alcorn Faculty: 10
  - LSU Graduate Students: 7
  - LSU, SUS, and Alcorn Undergraduates: 12



**Left:** Undergrad Jameson Woodall and grad student, Maddie Kurtz talking to Eva Legard students about sediment cores from the Gulf and coastal marshes. **Center:** Dr. Matt Hiatt guiding and discussing with Eva Legard students in their Delta Design Activity. **Right:** Dr. Giulio Mariotti and grad student Samuel Zapp demonstrate and discuss with the Eva Legard 6-7th grade students on how deltas form and change with their Delta Table activity.



**Left:** Eva Legard 6-7th grade students experience virtual reality. **Center:** Alcorn participants, Dr. Monica Burr and her undergraduates teaching about the importance of the water cycle and natural filtration of soil and sediments with in the Rain Garden activity. **Right:** SUS faculty, Dr. Jaqueline McCombs, and Dr. Crystal Vance, and SUS undergrad Nickolas Lawrence helping LSU undergrads teach about deltas and the importance of barrier islands in the Coastal Speed Bumps activity.

## MissDelta Undergrad Excursion to LUMCON

- **About:** Students learned how to take field samples and experience hands-on data collection in the marsh and along the coast through two LUMCON activities. Students went on a four-hour R/V Acadiana boat trip gaining educational hands-on oceanographic data and sample collection experience. Students participated in the collection of plankton, nekton, and benthic samples to learn more about bay ecosystems and estuaries. All activities on board are about collecting data that helps LUMCON monitor the area around the Marine Center. Students also participated in a second activity within the marsh next to LUMCON facility. The students conducted a study of salt marsh ecology from vegetation transects, periwinkle assessment, and water quality analysis. Students also learned about marsh accretion rates and the importance of tropical storms in providing sediment to the marshes from collecting a sediment core using a Russian Peat Corer.
- **Date:** April 11-13, 2025
- **Location:** Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON)
- **Audience:** Undergraduates
- **Participants and Volunteers:**
  - LSU, JSU, SUS, and Alcorn faculty: 5
  - LSU Graduate Students: 1
  - LSU, JSU, USM, SUS, and Alcorn undergraduates: 32



**Left:** Undergraduates testing the water quality at LUMCON. **Center:** Undergraduates learning how to conduct marsh transects. **Right:** Group 1 after completing the marsh transect and water quality activities.

## R/V Point Sur Excursion for Undergraduates

- **About:** Undergraduates from various institutes and Gulf Scholars programs received hands-on experience on an ocean research vessel. Undergraduates took a 1-day cruise down Southwest Pass and along Louisiana coast on the Point Sur research vessel to learn about various oceanographic data collection methods such as column conductivity-temperature depth profiles, seafloor sediment collection by multicore and gravity core, and geophysical survey data collection. It was led by Dr. Sam Bentley and Dr. Emily Wei along with their research team.
- **Date:** June 16-18, 2025
- **Location:** Venice, LA
- **Audience:** Undergraduates
- **Participants and Volunteers:**
  - LSU, SUS, University of Alabama Birmingham and Alcorn faculty: 10
  - LSU Post Doc: 1
  - LSU Graduate Students: 5
  - LSU, UAB, Xavier, SUS, and Alcorn undergraduates: 37

## MissDelta summer REU program

Five undergraduates participated in a 10-week-long MissDelta REU program at LSU Baton Rouge campus from May 27 - August 2, 2025. The students engaged with LSU faculty in MissDelta research projects and developed skills thru research-immersive learning experience. The program ends with a culminating event at LSU's Summer Undergraduate Research Forum which the REU students will present their summer research.

| REU Student           | Home Institution | Mentor                | Project                                                                                    |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Elizabeth Blankenship | LSU              | Carol Wilson          | Geophysical properties of natural and managed wet-land soils of the lower Birds-foot delta |
| Alba Romero Martin    | Cadiz University | Emily Wei/Sam Bentley | Sediment dynamics in the submarine regions of the Lower Mississippi River Delta            |
| Lila Duarte           | Tulane           | Traci Birch           | MissDelta Environmental Competency and Local Ecological Knowledge Engagement               |
| Wesley Rawlins        | USM              | Guilio Mariotti       | Tracking the Mississippi River sediment plume through remote sensing                       |
| Cyra Ford             | SUS              | Xiaochen Zhao         | Spatial and Temporal Variability in Discharge in the Mississippi River                     |

# MissDelta REU Orientation and Workshops

**May 27, 2025**

**Mentor and Student Orientations**

**June 6 and 10, 2025**

**Career Pathways & Research**

- MissDelta REU mentors' career pathways and research. The REU students learned about the REU mentors research and the various career pathways.

**June 24, 2025**

**Miss Delta Graduate Panel**

- Four graduate students working with MissDelta talked about their experiences as a graduate student and applying to graduate programs. The REU students got the opportunity to ask questions and discuss graduate school.

**July 11, 2025**

**Peer Review and Constructive Feedback**

- Students attended CEDS internship Friday group presentations where they observed oral presentations and constructive feedback from the mentors and professionals at CEDS.  
- Following this activity, the students learned and discussed the importance and what effective peer review and constructive feedback is.

**July 22, 2025**

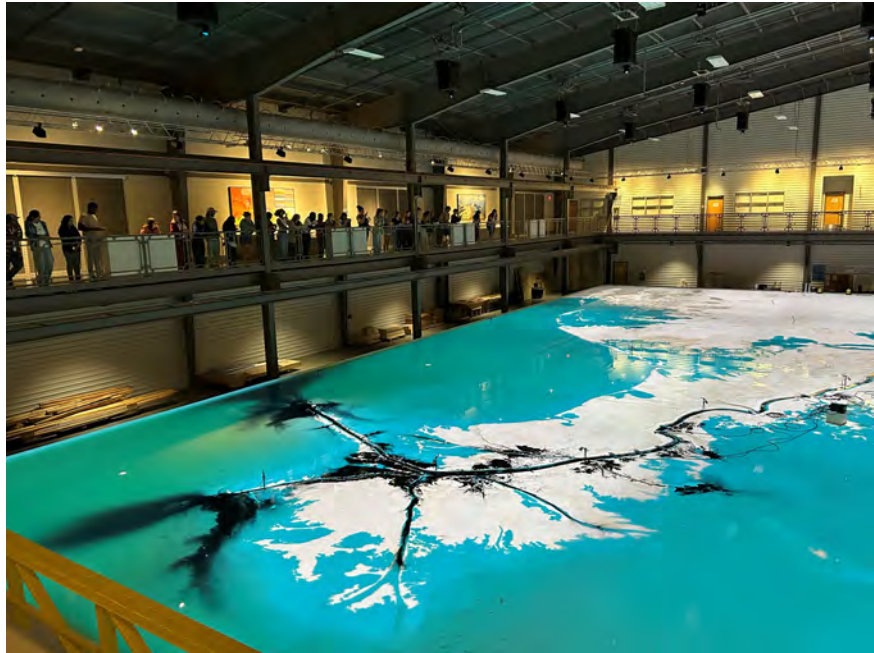
**Poster Draft Feedback**

- REU Students walked through their drafts and received constructive feedback from their peers.

**July 29, 2025**

**Practice Poster Presentations**

- REU students gave their presentation to the MissDelta group as a practice run through and last minute feedback before the end of the week SURF event.



MissDelta's 2025 REU students touring LSU's Center for River Studies with CEDS interns.

# Student Presentations

**Abbie Bui.** *Testing the effects of physiological leptin replacement during a 72-h fast in Sprague-Dawley rats* [Oral presentation]. 2025 ERN Conference, Atlanta, GA.

**Abbie Bui.** *GI Exposure Is Required for the Leptin Lowering Effect of Ethanol Treatment* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

Aeryn Sindiong, Jasmine Anderson, and **Whitney James.** *Comparative Analysis of Alcohol Dehydrogenase in *Drosophila melanogaster*, *Thermoanaerobium brockii*, and *Saccharomyces cerevisiae** [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Benjamin Erdozain.** *Effects of Climate on the Coevolution between an Insect Host, an Agricultural Pest, and Its Lethal Pathogen* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

Claire Burton, Quyen Duong, and **Zoe Mixon.** *Does Mitochondrial DNA Recombine or Can Limitations in DNA Analysis Explain Gene Tree Discordance?* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Dykia Williams.** *Characterizing Structure-Function Relationships on the Acceptor Side of Photosystem II* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Laura Beaubrun.** *Dipeptides as Biocatalysts* [Poster presentation]. ABRCMS, Pittsburgh, PA.

**Laura Beaubrun.** *Dipeptides as Biocatalysts* [Poster presentation]. 2025 ERN Conference, Atlanta, GA.

**Laura Beaubrun** and Samantha Lao. *The Effect of Different Light Intensities on the Production of Biomass and Fucoxanthin in *Phaeodactylum tricornutum** [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Lauren Rogers.** *Kinetic analysis of fucoxanthinol production from fucoxanthin* [Poster presentation]. 2024 S-STEM Meeting, Chicago, IL.

**Lauren Rogers.** *The Symbiotic Nature of Plant Microbiomes for Plastic Degradation* [Poster presentation]. 2025 ERN Conference, Atlanta, GA.

**Lauren Rogers.** *The Symbiotic Nature of Plant Microbiomes for Plastic Degradation* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Kayden Price.** *Deceleration Index Comparison for Female Collegiate Soccer Players with and without Past ACL Injuries* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Olivia Springer.** *The Effect of Lignin on the Properties of Electrospun Polycaprolactone Films* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Rayanne Thaljah** and Hanna DeVillier. *The Role of Basement Membrane Laminin on Glioblastoma Migration* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Staicy Triminio.** *Relation of Deceleration Index from a 1080 Sprint Device to Markerless Motion Captured Hamstring Force in Collegiate Soccer Players during Acceleration and Deceleration Transitions* [Visual Display]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Sydney Lawson.** *Biological Evaluation of Novel Abietane Analogues as Selective Therapeutic Agents against Triple Negative Breast Cancer* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Toby Mosher.** *Development of a robust gene deletion system for the horse pathogen (SEE)* [Poster presentation]. 2025 ERN Conference, Atlanta, GA.

**Tulona Hossain.** *Bovine Cortical Bone Sample Preparation for Mechanical Testing* [Poster presentation]. 2025 LSU Discover Day, Baton Rouge, LA.

# Current Grants

**National Academies of Sciences - Gulf Research Program #SCON-10000883**, "Mississippi River Delta Transition initiative (MissDelta). Consortium Lead: Sam Bentley; Consortium Budget: \$21,998,885, Period: 8/2023-7/2028. **LSU Workforce Development Initiative: Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy (Lead), Budget: \$1,716,744**; Period: 12/2024-7/2028.

**National Science Foundation #2444876**, "PAESMEM Conference: Igniting Excellence in STEM Mentoring," **PI: Zakiya S Wilson-Kennedy, Budget: \$100,000**, Period: 9/2024 – 8/2026.

**National Institutes of Health #1R25EB035579-01**, "LSU ESTEEMED" **PI: Zakiya S Wilson-Kennedy**, Co- PI: Dorin Boldor, Cristina Sabliov, **Budget: \$1,094,164**, Award Period: 04/03/2024 – 03/31/2028 (terminated 3/31/2025).

**National Science Foundation #2216631**, "RaMP: The Louisiana Graduate Network in Applied Evolution (LAGNiAppE) to strengthen regional connections and broaden the STEM workforce," PI: Laura Lagomarsino; Co-PIs: Nicholas Mason, Morgan Kelly, **Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy**, Jeremy Brown; Site: Louisiana State University; Period: 9/1/2022 – 8/31/2026; **Budget: \$2,999,753**.

**National Science Foundation #2204741**, "LSU BD 9 2022 Cohort, LA-BRIDGE: Louisiana Broadening Resources for Increasing Diversity in Graduate Education," PI: James Spencer, Co-PI: Tyrslai Williams, **Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy**, Patrick Mensah, and Guoqiang Li; Site: Louisiana State University; Period: 9/1/2022-8/31/2025; **Budget: \$1,075,000** (terminated 5/2/2025).

**Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Driving Change Learning Community Grant**, PI: Stacia Haynie, Co-PIs: **Cynthia Peterson**, Dereck Rovaris, Jeremiah Shinn, Jose Aviles, **Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy**; Site: Louisiana State University; **Budget: \$60,000**; Award Period: 03/01/21 – 03/31/26

**National Science Foundation #2009765**, "Louis Stokes Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Pathways and Research Alliances: Louis Stokes Louisiana Alliance for Minority Participation (LS-LAMP)," PI: Patrick Mensah, co-PIs: Diola Bagayoko, Gloria Thomas-Fuller, Carrie Robison, and Christopher Guillory, Site: Louisiana Board of Regents, Budget: \$6,200,000; LSU Campus Coordinator: **Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy**, **LSU Budget: \$205,000**, Award Period: 2020 – 2025.

**National Science Foundation, #1930474** "Scholarship Opportunities Aimed at Retaining Science Scholars (SOARS)," **PI: Zakiya S Wilson-Kennedy**, Co-PIs: CB Peterson, E. Kennedy, J. Madden, Gloria Thomas; Site: Louisiana State University; **Budget: \$999,986**; Period: 10/1/19 – 9/30/25.

**National Science Foundation #1826826**, "LS-PAC MODELS," Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Center, PI: I.M. Warner, Co-PIs: L Hooper-Bui, G. Li, **Z.S. Wilson- Kennedy**, T. Williams, and D.Zhang; Site: Louisiana State University; **Budget: \$2,499,999**; Award Period: 09/01/18 – 08/31/25 (terminated 5/2/2025).

**National Science Foundation #1826824** "NSF International Center of Excellence (NICE)," Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Center, PI: S. Dupris, Co-PIs: A. Hamme, **Z. Wilson-Kennedy**, D. Yates, S. Penouilh; Multiple Sites: Salish Kootenai College, Jackson State University, Louisiana State University, and University of Illinois Chicago; Budget: **\$1,305,580 (PI of LSU Budget for #1826738: \$629,245)**; Award Period: 09/01/18 – 08/31/25 (terminated 5/2/2025).

**Halliburton Foundation, Inc. #2024050100** "The LSU-Halliburton Pathways to Explore Science and Geosciences," **PI: Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy, Co-PI: Valerie Stampley, Cynthia Peterson, Budget: \$11,000**, Period: 9/2024 – 8/2025.

**Chevron**, "Mentor Training for Graduate Students," **PI: Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy, Co-PI: Cynthia Peterson, Budget: \$5,000**; Period: 9/2024-8/2025

**Shell Foundation**, "Problem-Based Learning," **PI: Zakiya Wilson-Kennedy, Co-PI: Cynthia Peterson, Budget: \$15,000**, Period: 9/2024 - 8/2025.

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