



*The Phi Beta Kappa Society
Beta Chapter of Nebraska*

New Member Initiation

SPRING 2024





History of the Phi Beta Kappa Society

On December 5, 1776, a group of young men who were then studying at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, met to create a secret society, at once intellectual and social in purpose. The president's greeting to new members in 1779 reads in part: "Here...you are to indulge in matters of speculation, that freedom of inquiry that ever dispels the clouds of falsehood by the radiant sunshine of truth. ..." In their clandestine meetings, the members seriously debated a host of questions, such as "Whether a wise state hath any interest nearer at heart than the education of the Youth." The establishment soon afterward of chapters at Yale and Harvard insured that Phi Beta Kappa would survive the arrival of General Cornwallis' troops at Williamsburg.

A little over a century later, more than 25 branches of the society were in existence, and it was felt that a national structure was needed to bring together the scattered chapters into some uniformity. In 1883, the organization known as the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa was founded; it has its headquarters today in Washington, D.C. From its offices come most of the ongoing programs and publications described in your Handbook for Members. In 1875, Phi Beta Kappa enlarged its membership to include women. The society now more than 500,000 living members, elected over the years by the 270 chapters at colleges and universities throughout the country. In addition, more than 50 local alumni associations lend the society their support and provide members an opportunity for a lifelong relationship with Phi Beta Kappa and its activities and goals on the community level.

Phi Beta Kappa continues to take great pride in its origins. It retains a number of the symbols that were devised for it at the time when the American Republic was coming into being. The present Phi Beta Kappa key, for example, virtually reproduces the design originated by the young founders of the Society at William and Mary. On the front, it bears the Greek letters ΦΒΚ, the initials of the words **Φιλοσοφία Βίου Κυβερνήτης** meaning "Love of learning is the guide of life." The three stars in the upper left-hand corner on this side symbolize the aims of the society: Friendship, Morality, and Literature (or Scholarship). A pointing hand in the lower right-hand corner stands for aspiration. On the reverse side are

inscribed the letters S and P, which stand for the society's second motto, the Latin words Societas Philosophiae, meaning "philosophical society." Below them appears the date of the founding of the first chapter: December 5, 1776; the member's name and electing chapter are engraved above.

Although Phi Beta Kappa ceased to be a secret society over 150 years ago, tradition has preserved two "secret" signs, which are shared with initiates. When members met, they greeted each other by drawing the backs of the index and middle fingers of the right hand across the lips from left to right; thus, apparently, affirming that their lips were sealed. They followed this sign with a handshake, one of the traditional forms of which will be revealed to you at the end of this ceremony of initiation. The society's symbols and purposes are now well known across the land. These purposes were eloquently summarized in the following statement by one of the society's most eminent members, Charles Evans Hughes, the late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court:

The particular interest of Phi Beta Kappa is in liberal education. ...Intensive critical study of educational aims and methods has found nothing to take its place. It means the development by careful training of the capacity to appreciate what has been done and thought, the ability to make worthwhile appraisals of achievements, doctrines, theories, proposals. It is liberal because it emancipates; it signifies freedom from the tyranny of ignorance, and, from what is worse, the dominion of folly... [Phi Beta Kappa] holds aloft the old banner of scholarship, and to the students who have turned aside from the easier paths and by their talent and fidelity have proved themselves to be worthy, it gives the fitting recognition of a special distinction.

Creighton's application to shelter a chapter was approved at the 43rd Triennial Council meeting in August 2012 in Palm Beach, Florida. The chapter, Beta of Nebraska, was installed November 29, 2012.

Proposed Members-in-Course

Aruna Bashir

Aruna is a senior from Omaha, Nebraska, majoring in biology and minoring in public health. She is heavily involved in community service through her volunteering at the Magis Clinic, a free healthcare clinic, as well as at Open Door Mission, cooking and serving meals for those experiencing homelessness. Outside of her local community, she has gone on a service trip to the Dominican Republic to test the water quality of rural areas. She has spent time performing prostate cancer research, being a teaching assistant for general biology lab, and a medical assistant at a private practice. In her free time, she enjoys going on runs, reading, and playing tennis. After graduation, Aruna will begin medical school in the fall of 2024.

Katherine N. Berrian

Katie is a senior from Castle Rock, Colorado majoring in biology and minoring in behavioral and cognitive neuroscience and dance. Katie has conducted lab research on chronic kidney disease on low-income agricultural workers, focusing on the role of nano-sized toxins. She has also conducted clinical research on insulin affordability in the field of pediatric endocrinology. To continue her involvement with diabetes, she volunteers as a leader for Type 1 diabetes camps through the American Diabetes Association, coordinating health-based activities and inspiring kids to gain independence with diabetes management. In addition, Katie is a certified crisis counselor and volunteers for the National Suicide Hotline and Crisis Text Line. Katie has been a biology and chemistry teaching assistant, a leader and coordinator in Campus Ministry, a member of the Creighton Dance Company, and a member of the Creighton golf team. She is a member of the Alpha Sigma Nu honors society. Katie will attend medical school in the fall of 2024.

Carissa Joy Besonen

Carissa is a senior from Madison, Minnesota majoring in neuroscience and minoring in biology and business administration. During her time at Creighton, she has been a member of the Honors Program and a member of Dr. Vanessa Minervini's Behavioral Pharmacology Research Lab. She also conducts surgical research with the Mayo Clinic's Department of Surgery. She was previously the Director of Academics for Pi Beta Phi sorority and is a current member, as well as serving as a teaching assistant for the biology and chemistry departments. Carissa is thankful for the opportunities to serve; volunteering with North Star as a tutor and Hillcrest Hospice Care in Omaha and recently serving with MEDLIFE in Peru. She would like to thank her family, friends, and faculty for their unwavering support. Carissa will be attending medical school in the fall of 2024.

Benjamin Borgmeier

Ben is a senior from Rochester, Minnesota majoring in biology and minoring in behavioral and cognitive neuroscience. He works as a phlebotomist at CHI Lakeside and is a part of the Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity on campus. He has enjoyed spending a semester abroad in Italy and four weeks in the Dominican Republic as a volunteer in the ILAC summer health program. He enjoys weightlifting, playing guitar, and spending time with friends. He would like to thank his friends, family, and professors for their support throughout his college journey. He is taking a gap year to work, travel, and continue to do research with the Translational Hearing Center at Creighton while applying to medical school.

Morgan Casetta

Morgan is a senior from Erin, Wisconsin and is majoring in biochemistry. During her time at Creighton, Morgan revived and led the pre-optometry program. She also served as a leader in her sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma, and volunteered for the Red Cross. Morgan worked as a chemistry tutor for Creighton's success center, sharing her love of chemistry with underclassmen. Under the supervision of Dr. David Dobberpuhl, she conducted research on ester degradation in wine. Embracing the opportunities afforded by the Honors Program, Morgan explored diverse interests such as poetry, choir, literature, and sustainability. She also had two opportunities to travel abroad: first on a service and learning trip to the Dominican Republic, and later to study literature at the University of Glasgow. Morgan is grateful for all of the friends, family, and mentors that have supported her through college. Following graduation, she will attend SUNY College of Optometry in NYC.

Austin A. Charles

Austin is a senior from Phoenix, Arizona, majoring in biochemistry and minoring in health administration and policy. In the chemistry department, he has served roles as a tutor and a teaching assistant. Austin is a published researcher investigating the prion protein with Patricia Soto, PhD in Creighton's computational biophysics lab and works as an emergency department technician at Methodist Hospital here in Omaha. He serves the Omaha community through his volunteer efforts with the Heart Ministry Center and at deFreese Manor, an affordable housing complex for senior citizens. Austin had the chance to study abroad at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, where he deepened his passion for experiencing new cultures. He is also a proud member of the Jesuit honor society, Alpha Sigma Nu. After graduation, Austin plans to attend medical school to fulfill his dream of becoming a physician.

Proposed Members-in-Course

Ava Chaves

Ava is a senior from Stillwater, Minnesota majoring in biology and minoring in public health. She plans to pursue a career as a physician's assistant following graduation. Ava is currently a member of the Phi Sigma Biological Honors Society, the National Society of Leadership and Success, and Gamma Phi Beta Sorority. Throughout her time at Creighton University, she has worked as a certified nursing assistant at The Lakes in a memory care unit, as well as a teaching assistant in the biology department for both anatomy and the general biology laboratories. Ava has enjoyed volunteering at Valley Outreach, which is a local food shelter in Stillwater, as well as at Gomez Heritage Elementary School where she has served as a Girl Scouts group leader. Ava deeply appreciates all the opportunities and relationships she has encountered during her four years at Creighton University and is hopeful to attend Creighton's Physician Assistant School.

Emily A. R. Cronin

Emily is a senior from Chagrin Falls, Ohio, majoring in psychology and minoring in philosophy. At Creighton, Emily has enjoyed being a part of the Honors Program as well as Alpha Sigma Nu, the Jesuit Honors Society, and Psi Chi, the psychology honors society. She has also been involved in Creighton's Fraternity and Sorority Life, Campus Ministry, and service through the SCSJ. Emily spends much of her time working as a research assistant under Dr. Dustin Stairs, investigating the rewarding effects of aerosolized cannabinoids. She also serves as a teaching assistant in the psychology department and as a desk receptionist for Creighton's Department of Residential Life. When she is not on campus, Emily spends her time teaching swim lessons to children in the surrounding community. After graduation, Emily plans to pursue a Ph.D. in behavioral pharmacology.

Emily Daffer

Emily is a senior from North Sioux City, South Dakota double majoring in biology and classical civilizations. In her time at Creighton, Emily has been involved with the College of Arts and Sciences Honors Program, the CURAS Ambassadors program, and volunteering at Holy Family to serve the unhoused population in Omaha. She is currently the president of the Classics Honors Society, Eta Sigma Phi. She has enjoyed working on campus as a teaching assistant in the biology and chemistry departments. Emily has also participated in research in the neuroscience department under Dr. Annemarie Shibata, focusing on inflammation induced hearing loss. She got the opportunity to present her research at the International Society for Neuroscience conference in Washington D.C. She will be attending medical school in the fall of 2024.

Jackson E. Diers

Jack is a senior from Fremont, Nebraska and is majoring in neuroscience and minoring in philosophy. At Creighton, he is a student in the College of Arts and Science Honors Program, a drop-in biology tutor, president of the Neuroscience Honors Society (Nu Rho Psi), and a former teaching assistant for developmental biology lab. Jack has demonstrated a passion for academic research, spending the last three years researching hair cell regeneration in the mouse cochlea under mentors Jian Zuo and Litao Tao. He has presented his work at national conferences (such as the Association for Research in Otolaryngology), has published in peer-reviewed journals, and was recognized as a Goldwater scholar for his research efforts. After graduation, Jack will pursue a PhD in developmental and regenerative biology.

Grace Elizabeth Dirks

Grace is a senior from Omaha, Nebraska and is double majoring in physics and theology. She plans to commission into the United States Air Force following graduation. For the past five years, she has been active in Air Force ROTC, holding various leadership roles and notably serving as cadet wing commander. Grace also fostered her passion for aviation and accumulated over 90 flight hours, including four solo flights. In the Creighton campus community, she is involved in physics club, and she volunteers as an EMHC and altar server at St. John's. In the academic realm, Grace furthers her physics studies through research. Previous projects include creating and detecting magnetic skyrmions and photon correlation spectroscopy in pyrophosphate glass melts, the latter of which she co-authored a published paper. Her involvement in theology sparked a passion for chaplaincy, and she plans to explore this interest through Creighton's Christian Spirituality Program Internship. Grace envisions serving in a scientific capacity within the Air Force before transitioning to a chaplaincy role, allowing her to make meaningful contributions to both fields.

Mary Catherine Dudley

Mary is a senior from New Prague, Minnesota, majoring in English and philosophy. Throughout her time at Creighton, she has been an active member of Campus Ministry, serving as a small group leader for the freshman retreat as well as the Encounter with Christ Retreat. She also served as the president of Creighton Students For Life, a vice president for Alpha Sigma Nu, and a resident advisor on campus. She led Supplemental Instruction for Introductory Nursing Anatomy and has enjoyed leading reading groups for fourth grade students at Jackson Elementary through her sorority, Pi Beta Phi. She loved studying English and philosophy during her semester abroad at the University of Glasgow, and she will be continuing her studies next year as she works towards a masters in English. She hopes to teach high school English and is passionate about offering others the opportunity to learn and seek truth as she has been blessed to throughout her education.

Proposed Members-in-Course continued

Samuel Ellerbeck

Sam is a senior from Omaha, Nebraska, majoring in Biology and minoring in science & medicine in society. During his time at Creighton, he has been involved as a leader within the Residence Hall Government, his fraternity, and as a teaching assistant in biology and ecology laboratories. Sam participates in undergraduate research, working alongside Patricia Soto Becerra, BA, PhD in the study of the pathological misfolding process of prion proteins.

Throughout his time at Creighton, he has appreciated the opportunities to grow and learn in Ignatian leadership through the College of Arts & Sciences Dean's Fellows program. Off campus, Sam works as a nursing assistant at the Buffett Cancer Center in Omaha and as an honor caddie at the Omaha Country Club. Sam is beyond grateful for his Creighton experience and for the friendships and guidance he has received along the way.

Emma E. Foley

Emma is a junior from Minnesota majoring in biochemistry and minoring in communications. Emma is involved in undergraduate research in Dr. Lynne Dieckman's lab. She is grateful to be funded by Creighton's INBRE program. Emma spent this past summer doing graduate research at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, and was awarded the Richard Holland Future Scientist Award for the presentation of her findings. Emma works on campus as a communications tutor in the Com Center. In her free time she volunteers with Endless Journey hospice, where she enjoys making personal connections with patients in all stages of life. Following graduation next spring, Emma will further her knowledge in the biomedical sciences and pursue a Ph. D. in immunology.

Matthew Freeman

Matthew is a senior from Dallas, Texas majoring in Spanish with minors in biology, theology and justice studies. On campus, he works in the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice on the local community engagement team leading weekly service to the Siena Francis House on Thursday afternoons. During the fall of 2021, he participated in Encuentro Dominicano, Creighton's academic-service learning program in the Dominican Republic and returned last summer as a coordinator for the ILAC Summer Health Program. He currently serves as one of the Vice Presidents for Alpha Sigma Nu, the Jesuit Honor Society. After graduation, he plans to spend a service gap year abroad in Latin America before applying to PA school.

Wyatt John Greco

Wyatt is a senior from Sacramento, California, double-majoring in history and international relations. As a member of the Global Scholars Program and Ashton Welch History Fellows Program, Wyatt has studied abroad three times (in Italy, the Dominican Republic, and Spain) and has conducted research in multiple subject areas during his time at Creighton. His internship experiences include positions with a D.C. think tank and with state government leaders in both Nebraska and California. Wyatt would like to extend his immense gratitude to the family, friends, mentors, and supervisors who have supported his academic and personal journey thus far. After graduation, Wyatt will begin a two-year Master of Public Policy Program at the Pepperdine University School of Public Policy in Malibu. Afterward, he hopes to begin a full-time career in policy analysis.

Michael J. Guerra-York

Michael is a senior from Kansas City, Missouri majoring in philosophy and minoring in business administration and justice and peace studies. Throughout his time at Creighton Michael has invested heavily in the Philosophy program, serving as an executive for Phi Sigma Tau, the philosophy honor society, as well as planning and executing Creighton's Annual Midwest Undergraduate Philosophy conference. He has served on several committees vital to the student body including the Disciplinary Committee, and Creighton Student Union's appropriation committee. Additionally, Michael has taken time to engage in and coordinate several service and justice trips through the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice in a variety of locations throughout the country. In his free time, Michael enjoys weightlifting, board games with friends, and working as a legal runner for Cline Williams Wright Johnson & Oldfather. Next year Michael will take a year of service teaching high school students while preparing for law school.

Jessica Quan Hua

Jessica is a junior from Omaha, Nebraska, majoring in psychology and minoring in business administration. Inspired by her parents' experiences, she assisted Surbhi Malik, PhD, in oral history research of Omaha's refugee women and leads weekly service with Omaha Public Schools' English Learner Family Involvement Program for immigrants and refugees via the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice. She also serves cancer patients at University of Nebraska Medical Center, works as a teaching assistant in the Chemistry department, and is a member of Alpha Sigma Nu and Psi Chi. In her free time, Jessica is a creative writer exploring the nuances of social justice, philosophy, and psychology from a cross-cultural perspective. As she continues her journey, she carries the utmost gratitude for her family, her professors, and the community that teaches her more every day. After graduation, she plans to enter dental school.

Proposed Members-in-Course continued

Katie I. Huisman

Katie is a senior in the College of Arts and Sciences studying chemistry and economics with a concentration in undergraduate research and scholarship in the Honors Program. During her time at Creighton she has served as the president of the Pre-Dental Society and Sign Language Club, and enjoys being a Chemistry Drop-In Tutor for the Office of Academic Success. Katie has been a part of the BlueBox Project at Creighton and hopes to return to the Dominican Republic regularly as a practicing dentist. When Katie is not busy with class or other extracurriculars, you can find her in Dr. Villa's inorganic chemistry research lab and presenting her projects both regionally and nationally. Katie will be continuing her education at Creighton University School of Dentistry this fall.

Grace Jaworski

Grace is a senior from Downers Grove, Illinois majoring in biology. She has been actively involved in undergraduate research, studying protein biochemistry in the lab of Dr. Lynne Dieckman. She is an INBRE Scholar and a Clare Booth Luce Scholar, which are two research scholarships directed to fund full-time research experiences and support scientific training. Grace is most passionate about communicating science with others and has loved working as an organic chemistry attached tutor, genetics teaching assistant, and a peer tutor for general biology, chemistry, and physics. Grace serves as the Student President of the Honors Program at Creighton. One of her proudest accomplishments in this role was founding a volunteer program with Holy Family Community Center. She is also a proud decurion, group fitness instructor, and member of the Creighton Dance Company. Grace is starting a Human Genetics PhD program in the fall to pursue a career as a researcher and ultimately a professor of biology.

Alexis Diane Johnson

Alexis is a senior from Phoenix, Arizona, majoring in Biochemistry. She is an SCSJ Team Leader who has led service sites to Refugee Empowerment Center, Siena Francis House, and Completely Kids Gifford Park. She also has led educational social justice programs focusing on criminal and migration justice through the SCSJ and attended a service and justice trip. She was a volunteer at the non-profit RISE, at the CHI Women's Clinic for three of her undergraduate years, and at the Intercultural Senior Center. Alexis played Division 1 soccer for the Creighton Women's Soccer team for three of her undergraduate years, logging 1,831 career minutes on the pitch. She played semi-pro soccer for FC Arizona in 2022, earning All West Conference Second Team. She was a tutor for the athletes at the university for three of her undergraduate years. She is a pianist who has been studying music for fourteen years and is a member of the Alpha Sigma Nu Honor's Society. Alexis plans to attend Creighton Medical School in Phoenix this coming Fall.

Zade Anton Kidess

Zade is a senior from Eau Claire, Wisconsin, majoring in biochemistry and minoring in math and biology. Zade is very proud of his Palestinian origins. His father was born in Nablus, Palestine and grew up in Palestine and Jordan until he came to the United States after medical school. Zade has been involved in the Creighton Honors program and research in electrochemistry with Dr. Erin Gross. In his research he has developed a cheaper electrode for an inexpensive cyclic voltammetry system. After graduation, he plans to work as a medical scribe while applying to medical schools during a gap year.

Spencer K. Knaak

Spencer is a senior from Plainview, Nebraska majoring in mathematics and studio art and minoring in Latin. She is a member of Pi Mu Epsilon, Eta Sigma Phi, Kappa Pi Art Society, and she is a Scheerer Scholar. Her artwork was previously accepted into two undergraduate exhibitions and will also be in this year's 2024 Creighton Undergraduate Exhibition, Spectra. Spencer has spent the last two years working for the Mathematics Department as a Calculus I, II, and III teaching assistant, where she works to help students excel in their mathematical skills. Since last fall, she has also been working as a mathematics tutor for student athletes at Creighton University. She has spent time volunteering at Siena Francis House, where she participated in art activities with women in the Miracles Program. After graduation, Spencer plans to pursue a career in the mathematical field.

Maisie Laughlin

Maisie is a senior from Carlisle, Iowa, majoring in biology and minoring in Spanish and music. In her time at Creighton, she has been involved in activities such as pep band, symphonic band, sorority life, study abroad, the CURAS Ambassadors program, the College of Arts & Sciences Honors Program, the Dance Marathon leadership team, and has also held jobs on campus as both a Teaching Assistant in the Biology Department and as a campus tour guide. Over her four years, Maisie has also enjoyed working with the Learning Community Center in South Omaha, where she volunteers as an ESL classroom aide. She has also been active in undergraduate research during her time at Creighton, working in Dr. Brockhouse's genetics lab studying sex-determination in black flies. Last summer, she was part of Creighton's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program, and she hopes to continue working in genetics research next year in graduate school.

Proposed Members-in-Course continued

Ellysia Caitlyn McElroy

Ellysia is a junior from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, triple majoring in English, classical civilizations, and classical languages. She is the Vice-President of the Classical Honors Society, Eta Sigma Phi and the Head Editor of the Shadows Literary and Arts Magazine. She has found a home in the Center for Henry James Studies as an Undergraduate Researcher. She has given a talk for the Consideration Initiative on ancient werewolves and she has also won 1st place nationally in DAR Women's Issues Committee Essay Contest. Ellysia is looking forward to her senior year and seeing all that Phi beta Kappa has to offer.

Matthew P. Meyer

Matthew is a senior from Sioux Falls, South Dakota double majoring in biology and musical theater. He is following in the footsteps of his mother, Margaret Meyer, and his older brother, Jacob Meyer as an alumnus of the College of Arts and Sciences. For the past four years Matthew has been involved with Student Senate, worked as an attached tutor on campus, done research in Dr. Vanessa Minervini's pharmacology lab, and regularly performed in Creighton Theatre productions. Speaking of, tonight (April 12th) on the LECA mainstage at 7:00 PM is one of three more productions of Heathers: The Musical, a Creighton musical that Matthew is performing in as part of his senior thesis. This upcoming fall, Matthew will continue studying at the University of Nebraska Medical Center to earn his medical degree.

James Pfaff

James is senior in the College of Arts and Sciences double majoring in biology and economics. He is a Dean's Fellow on the pre-medicine track. He has had the pleasure of working with L'Arche communities on two SCSJ trips and has also been lucky enough to help with meals at the Siena Francis House here in Omaha. While in school James has also been working as a phlebotomist for the past two years through Octapharma Plasma. He currently is involved in undergraduate parasitology research with Fr. John Shea, more specifically he has worked both with insect diversity and nematomorph related projects. After graduation, James plans to attend medical school and continue his education while working to become a physician.

Brita K. Quello

Brita is a senior from Sioux Falls, South Dakota majoring in biology and minoring in social entrepreneurship. Brita is a member of the College of Arts and Sciences Student Senate, Gamma Phi Beta sorority, and Honors program. Throughout her time at Creighton University, she has worked in sterilization at River Ridge Oral Surgery, as a Youth Director for children with intellectual and physical disabilities at the Here4Youth Summer Program, as a Teaching Assistant for the biology department, and as a Trip Leader for a travel adventure company, Moondance Adventures, where she had the opportunity to lead students throughout Utah and Madeira, Portugal. Brita is grateful for the opportunity to have traveled to the Dominican Republic with the ILAC Water Quality Program, where she spent time visiting rural campos, analyzing their water samples, correcting faulty filters, and getting to know the communities. Furthermore, she is a member of Dr. Eric Haas's, PhD, research lab, where she studies the derivatization of short-chain fatty acids. She is extremely grateful for the unique opportunities, individuals she has met, and learning experiences she has had while at Creighton. Brita will be attending dental school next year at the University of Iowa College of Dentistry.

McKenzie Reagan

McKenzie is a senior from Omaha, Nebraska majoring in biology. During her time at Creighton she has been involved in the New Student Orientation program as a Summer Preview Executive and Decurion. She has enjoyed service in the Completely Kids program through the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice. She has conducted research in the Functional Hearing Lab at Boys Town National Research Hospital investigating the impact of vestibular loss on spatial hearing in children with cochlear implants. She has worked as an Attached Tutor through the Academic Success Center and as a Teaching Assistant in the Biology Department. She is a member of the Alpha Sigma Nu Jesuit Honor Society, the Dean's Fellows Program, and the Gamma Phi Beta sorority. After graduation, McKenzie will be attending medical school in the fall.

Proposed Members-in-Course continued

Shreya Reddy

Shreya is a junior from Granite Bay, California majoring in sociology and minoring in Women and Gender Studies. Throughout her time at Creighton, Shreya has been heavily involved in conducting research at Creighton University's School of Medicine. She also currently serves as the president of Creighton's chapter of Project Sunshine, which serves children and families at the Ronald McDonald House in Omaha, an establishment that houses families that stay in Omaha for medical care. Shreya is active within the Omaha community as a peer buddy with Creighton's chapter of Best Buddies, which is an organization that promotes meaningful social interaction with the population of Omaha that has intellectual and developmental disabilities and aims to foster inclusion. Shreya tutors students at Creighton as an attached TA for Creighton's Chemistry and Biochemistry Department, and has also contributed to the Omaha community as a part of Alpha Phi Omega, through which she has volunteered for multiple organizations, such as the Omaha Children's Museum and the Heartland Hope Food Pantry. She is also a member of Creighton's chapter of Alpha Sigma Nu.

Landon J. Reichmuth

Landon is a junior from Lincoln, Nebraska majoring in biology and minoring in Spanish & Hispanic Studies on the pre-medicine track. He works in Dr. Ann Cavanaugh's cell biology lab studying protein evolution and completed a Dr. and Mrs. Randolph Ferlic Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship in 2023. Landon is also a member of the Honors Program. One of his favorite experiences at Creighton has been studying abroad through an immersion program in Valparaíso, Chile to learn Spanish and experience a new culture. Outside of the university, he volunteers at OneWorld Omaha teaching English to second language learners and at Clinic with a Heart Lincoln as a patient guide. He would like to thank his family, mentors, and friends for all their support, as well as Creighton University for the community and opportunities it provides.

Derek Antonio Ignacio Remitar III

Derek is a senior from Wichita, Kansas, majoring in neuroscience. Throughout his time at Creighton, Derek has been involved in undergraduate research with Michael Nichols, PhD, applying novel biophysical optic imaging methods to observe metabolic changes in skin cancer. He is a member of the College of Arts & Sciences Honors Program and Nu Rho Psi Neuroscience Honor Society. Outside the classroom, Derek has served in a multitude of clinical environments as a virtual COVID-19 scribe, nursing assistant, and hospice care volunteer. He is thankful to have received a holistic, interdisciplinary education at Creighton University that has allowed him to explore his interests and fully discern his vocation. Derek plans to attend medical school in the fall and hopes to serve others as a primary care physician.

Ellie F. Simmons

Ellie is a senior from Portland, Oregon double majoring in sociology and justice & society, with minors in women's & gender studies and theology. In her time at Creighton, she has enjoyed a myriad of opportunities which she is very grateful for. This has included conducting research in both the Department of Theology and the Department of Cultural and Social Studies, serving as a Decurion for a freshman RSP class, and teaching others about access to undergraduate research through the CURAS Ambassadors Program. She is also a member of the Creighton Honors Program, and has enjoyed building important relationships through her experiences within it. After graduation, Ellie intends to pursue a PhD in sociology with an emphasis on studying gender, education, and social movements. She intends to use both the practical skills and personal values she has gained from her Creighton education to conduct research which promotes justice in broader society.

Proposed Members-in-Course continued

Avery N. Spyers

Avery is a senior from Omaha, Nebraska majoring in psychology. While at Creighton, she has been actively involved in research with Alicia Earl, PhD and has worked together with lab members to finalize a research manuscript focused on attributional style, resilience, and emotion regulation. In addition, she plans to attend the American Psychological Association Conference this August to present two poster presentations on related research findings. Avery has also worked in the Psychology Department as a teaching assistant for Vanessa Minervini, PhD and is a member of Pi Beta Phi sorority and Psi Chi Honor Society. Outside of Creighton, Avery has been very involved at the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Munroe-Meyer Institute where she did an internship at the Autism Care for Toddlers Clinic and currently works in an anxiety and neuroscience focused research lab. Following graduation, Avery plans to pursue a PhD in school psychology and hopes to work with children with neurodevelopmental disorders and anxiety disorders.

Joshua Taylor

Joshua is a senior from around the world as a military child, with a major in biology and strong interest in anthropology on the pre-medicine track. His journey at Creighton saw extensive involvement in CU Fellowship and Alpha Phi Omega, proudly serving as president of Circle K International twice, and significant service with CHI Immanuel and Charter Healthcare in his passion for medicine. Both in studying abroad in Europe and family travel to Japan, he hopes to continue pursuing a love for new experiences while attending medical school in the coming fall. He also plans to continue pursuing interests in studying the natural world and vast universe around us and embracing anything and everything to do with Star Wars.

Jakob A. Teeter

Jakob is a senior from Victoria, Minnesota, studying biology and Spanish. At Creighton, Jakob is in the Honors Program, Phi Delta Theta fraternity, and the College of Arts and Sciences Student Senate. Starting his sophomore year, he was a teaching assistant for introductory biology laboratories and continued to work as a TA for his favorite class, Developmental Biology. Jakob also works as a tour guide at Creighton and a Patient Attendant at Nebraska Medicine. Currently, Jakob is a member of Dr. Marie Adomako's soil microbiology laboratory. He is investigating the bioremediation of soil contaminated by toxic waste in Mead, Nebraska. Jakob is very appreciative of his time spent in Sevilla, Spain, where he studied Spanish for a semester. One of his favorite activities has been volunteering for New Student Orientation, where he served as a Welcome Week Guide. He also has had the opportunity to volunteer at two local Latino centers, where he taught a citizenship class to Spanish speakers and helped with translation at events. Jakob plans on attending medical school after taking a gap year, where he will serve as a Faith and Service Volunteer at the Creighton ILAC center in Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic.

Camille Rose Vigil

Camille is a senior from Albuquerque, New Mexico, and is double majoring in political science and Spanish & Hispanic Studies and minoring in Theology. Camille has enjoyed participating in a variety of organizations on campus, having experience working as a bio-calculus TA, PARC tutor, data analyst intern, and undergraduate research assistant, in addition to being involved in Campus Ministry and Run Club. In the spring of her junior year, Camille participated in the Capitol Hill Internship Program (CHIP), where she spent a semester in Washington, D.C., interning on Capitol Hill and learning from a variety of leaders. She is grateful to the many amazing professors that have helped her to pursue her varied interests, to her friends for supporting her, and to her parents for making everything happen. Camille is excited to return to D.C. after graduation to work as an analyst.

Caroline Voss

Caroline is a senior from Mount Vernon, Iowa majoring in psychology with a biology minor, looking to pursue a career in medicine. During her time at Creighton, she has also enjoyed being involved in many different activities on campus alongside her studies. She participated in both Welcome Week and Summer Preview as a New Student Guide in her freshman year and continued her involvement as the Campus Connections Executive sophomore year. She has also found joy in working on the executive team for her sorority, serving as the Vice President of Programs as well as the Chapter President. Currently, she works in a psychology research lab focusing on learning and memory with Dr. Amber Witherby, Ph.D., and serves as a teaching assistant for Dr. Maya Khanna, Ph.D. in the psychology department. This semester, she is also completing an internship at CHI Immanuel's Partial Hospitalization Program.

Proposed Members-in-Course continued

Ethan Wilkins

Ethan is a senior from Racine, Wisconsin majoring in biology and minoring in music. Ethan is in the Honors program and is a recipient of the Grace Keenan Music Scholarship. He has been involved with the Creighton Chamber Choir for all four years of undergrad. He has been heavily involved with the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice and has been leading weekly service as a reading buddy at local public elementary schools. He also had the opportunity to travel to Rwanda with a class at Creighton to learn about reconciliation post-genocide, and is currently involved in research on that subject. In his free time, Ethan enjoys working out, being outside, cooking, trying new things, and playing the banjo. This coming fall, Ethan will be attending medical school.

Liza Zaruba

Liza is a senior from Columbus, Nebraska, majoring in health administration and policy with minors in biology, public health, and global health equity. On Creighton's campus, Liza was the VP of Membership for her sorority, Gamma Phi Beta, as well as the VP of Programming for the Health Administration and Policy Student Association. She works as a tour guide across campus and volunteers throughout the Omaha community as a Girl's Inc. mentor and a Girls on the Run coach. Liza was recently published as a co-author on a study focused on nutritional marketing restrictions across Australia, Fiji, and Thailand. Liza has volunteered in medical settings within Ecuador and Togo, and this past summer, she interned in Geneva, Switzerland at Unitaid - a partner of the World Health Organization - to address intellectual property rights barriers to access to medicines in low- and middle-income countries. Liza was chosen as a member of the inaugural class for the Obama Foundation Voyager Scholarship, and most recently Liza was awarded with the Mary Lucretia and Sarah Emily Creighton Award for her advocacy for women. After graduation, Liza plans to continue pursuing her passion in health equity and access and is incredibly thankful for the lessons and mentors she gained while at Creighton.

Alumni Initiate

Nancey Claire Murphy

Prof. Nancey Murphy (B.A., 1973, Philosophy and Psychology) is Senior Professor of Christian Philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA. She earned her Ph.D. in Philosophy of Science from the University of California-Berkeley and later received a Doctorate of Theology from Graduate Theological Union. Her research interests have focused on the intersection of theology with modern and postmodern philosophy, philosophy of the mind, and the intersection of science and religion.

Prof. Murphy's first book, *Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning* (1992), won the American Academy of Religion's Award for Excellence, and her 1996 book (co-authored with George F.R. Ellis), *On The Moral Nature of the Universe: Theology, Cosmology, and Ethics*, was awarded the Templeton Prize. She has authored, co-authored, or co-edited twenty-one books, including *Did My Neurons Make Me Do It? Philosophical and Neurobiological Perspectives on Moral Responsibility and Free Will* (Oxford University Press, 2007) and, most recently, *A Philosophy of the Christian Religion for the Twenty-First Century* (SPCK, 2018). Prof. Murphy has served on the international editorial board for the *Journal of Philosophical Theological Research* based in Qom, Iran, and she has also been a member of the Planning Committee for conferences on science and theology sponsored by the Vatican Observatory.

In 1998, Prof. Murphy was named Creighton University's alumnus of the year, and she has been honored as one of *Los Angeles Magazine's* 100 most influential people. In her rigorous pursuit of truth across the fields of philosophy, theology, neuroscience, and neurobiology, Prof. Murphy exemplifies the spirit of both Phi Beta Kappa and the Jesuit, Catholic mission of Creighton. Recommended by both Patrick Murray and Gene Selk, Prof. Murphy would be a richly deserving alumni inductee of Creighton's chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

Honorary Initiate



Littleton Alston

Littleton Alston is Professor of Sculpture at Creighton University, where he has taught for over 30 years. He also maintains his sculpture studio in Omaha. His artwork ranges from classically sculpted cast bronze figures to monumental abstract sculptures made of stainless steel. His works are included in many public and private collections and have been exhibited nationally and internationally. Following a national competition, Alston was selected to create a bronze sculpture portraying author Willa Cather to represent the state of Nebraska in the National Statuary Hall Collection of the United States Capitol. He was the first African American artist to be included in that collection. The statue was dedicated in Washington, D.C. in 2023.

Littleton was featured in a PBS News Hour story in 2022, as well as the 2021 Nebraska Public Media documentary film, 'A Sculpted Life'. He has been an artist in residence at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha and has also completed residencies in France and Italy. He earned a B.F.A. degree from Virginia Commonwealth University and an M.F.A. from the Rinehart School of Sculpture at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

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Thank You

Our sincere gratitude to the faculty, staff, administration and students of the Creighton community for dedicating time and talents to this collaborative effort.

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