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Mannie L. Jackson

**Illinois Academic
Enrichment and
Leadership Program**



**2023
Student Awards**

I-LEAP

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Message from the Director

Elizabeth Mason

Message from Academic Skills Specialists

Joe Cross and Ron Threadgill

Awards

Emerging Leader Award

Savannah Guo

Excellence in Transition Award

Nicole Roddan

Mannie L. Jackson Award

Delaney Rummell

Outstanding Senior Award

Anastasia Adjei

Peer Mentor of the Year Award

Eghonghon Eromesele

Research Scholar Award

Rahil Sadruddin

Edmund J. James Scholars

Graduating Seniors

Additional Recognition

Message from the Director

Elizabeth Mason

I am so proud of all of you! You have adapted to meet every challenge, and utilized the resources available to give yourselves the best opportunities for success. This year I have seen so many of you exemplify the pillars of I-LEAP. Upperclassmen stepped up to be mentors to another large incoming class. I-LEAP Scholars are part of significant research being done throughout the College of AHS and the university. And our Student Advisory Board created events and opportunities that were creative and relatable for their peers. Our scholars have provided service to the Urbana-Champaign area and their home communities through volunteering. You have adapted to various learning methods and overcome the most unexpected situations to get here. To graduates, you've done it! You've completed your journey at Illinois. We are excited to celebrate your accomplishments. Watching you grow and develop over the years has been an honor, and I look forward to seeing the greatness that you pursue on the next leg of your life journey. For continuing students, take advantage of this coming break. Whether that means resting, taking classes, researching, volunteering, working or some combination of these, use this time. Take advantage of opportunities that you weren't able to before because of restrictions. I look forward to seeing your faces and hearing your stories once we are back on campus. No matter what your next step is, remember that we are here for you. I'm always excited to hear from students about what is going on in their lives, so keep in touch. In the meantime, let's continue to keep living out the pillars of I-LEAP. As always, keep doing great things!



Messages from the Academic Skills Specialists

Joe Cross, Ph.D.

To this Senior class, the wait is over, YOU DID IT! You journeyed through life's collegiate challenges and now you alone stand on this grand graduation stage. No doubt your life was disrupted. No doubt there was added stress. No doubt there was uncertainty. Despite these challenges, or more accurately because of them, you are stronger. Through it all you've stayed the course, you hung in there, you didn't quit and you have succeeded mostly because you and you alone chose to do so.

When you look back on your time at the University of Illinois, I hope you reflect on the things you did and not the things you didn't do. I hope you remember the risks you took and the goals you accomplished. You've held on tight to your academic dreams that you've been pursuing for years and you didn't let it get away. In the midst of a global crisis, you continued to live out the dream you've had on the inside. You know quite well by now: struggle and criticism are prerequisites for greatness. Truth be told, that is the law of the universe and no one escapes them.

But for now, just this one day, in this very moment, in the presence of absolutely no one.... DANCE like no one's watching. LAUGH like everything's funny. SING the alma mater like no one's listening. CELEBRATE like there's no tomorrow. YOU DID IT!!! Here's to your new beginning.



Messages from the Academic Skills Specialists

Ron Threadgill

To this Senior class: congratulations on completing your final semester and becoming an Illinois graduate! You should take pride in your four-year academic journey. You have encountered various challenges and have met them with exceptional effort.

When you look back at your time at the University of Illinois, I hope you reflect on your personal growth throughout the four-year journey. I hope you acknowledge that you thrived at a world-class institution and that you made your family proud with this accomplishment of graduating. Ultimately, I hope you remind yourself of your complete journey and reflect on how you can continue to get better and become the best version of yourself as you accomplish your goals as well.

The sky's the limit to your personal growth and future accomplishments! Lastly, I will leave you with this awesome quote from Maya Angelou: "The horizon leans forward, offering you space to place new steps of change."



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I-LEAP AWARDS

Emerging Leader Award

This award is presented to a freshman student who exemplifies the attributes of a distinguished leader. The recipient of this award has exhibited excellence in community service or in a leadership role within I-LEAP or the campus community and demonstrated a potential for continued leadership.



Savannah Guo

Savannah, a Community Health major, plans to graduate with a B.S. in Health Planning & Administration in 2026. She plans to become a physician. She did her undergraduate research with SHS Department Head Dr. Pamela Hadley in transcribing naturalistic parent-child interactions through audio/video files in order to study early language acquisition. Volunteer with the Library of Congress: By the People. About I-LEAP, she said, “As a first-generation student, I think that I-LEAP has served as a great resource in helping me acclimate to the college environment and the various challenges that come with this new transition. This award is, essentially, an accumulation of the support that’s been provided to me as a result of this program.”

Excellence in Transition Award

This award is presented to a new transfer student who has successfully transitioned as a student at Illinois. This student has integrated into the Illinois campus community, excelled academically and is actively involved in campus life. The recipient of this award participates in student organizations, research opportunities and/or community service at the campus or Champaign-Urbana level.



Nicole Roddan

Nicole, an Interdisciplinary Health Sciences major, plans to graduate with a B.S. in December 2023. She plans to become a physician's assistant and work in women's health. Last summer, she worked at Raging Waves Waterpark in Yorkville, Ill., as a first aid worker, which involved treating guests' minor and major injuries and illnesses. She

is currently a student worker for Special Populations Health Program at McKinley Health Center where she helps facilitate health promotion events. Nicole, who attended the University of Pittsburgh before coming to Illinois said, "Transferring to such a large institution was not easy and I am very appreciative to be recognized for this award. I-LEAP has given me the opportunity to adjust to this campus, network with peers, and further my leadership skills."

Mannie L. Jackson Award

This award is presented to a student athlete who is a leader on campus. The recipient of this award is a student athlete that has demonstrated the characteristics of Mannie L. Jackson including academic excellence, self-discipline in balancing academic and athletic responsibilities and serving others within the campus and Urbana-Champaign community.



Delaney Rummell

Delaney wants to be an athletic director. She wants to ensure that student-athletes are provided and led to an overall holistic experience. Next year, she is planning to earn her master's degree in Business Management. She is currently interning within the Illinois Athletic Department in the Student-Athlete

Development department. She's grateful for the award, saying, "I-LEAP fuels students with empowerment, a sense of belonging and numerous engagement opportunities and I am so grateful for this community!"

Outstanding Senior Award

This award is presented to a student who is a model of excellence. The award is based on the ideals of I-LEAP. The recipient of this award best exemplifies outstanding commitment to academics, community service, and leadership.



Anastasia Adjei

Anastasia is graduating in May with a B.S. in Community Health with a concentration in Health Education and Promotion. Her goal is to become a physician—specifically an OB/GYN. She said, “I-LEAP has helped me achieve so many goals and opportunities never thought I could accomplish. As a first-generation college student, I-LEAP has

helped me combat my imposter syndrome and has provided me with the skills necessary to succeed in the real world.”

Peer Mentor of the Year Award

This award is presented to a student who has shown an outstanding commitment to mentoring first year I-LEAP students. The individual has had a significant impact on his/her mentee by helping them transition to college, encouraging I-LEAP and campus involvement and promoting academic success.



Eghonghon Eromesele

A Community Health major, Eghonghon plans to graduate in May 2025 and plans to become a doctor and public health program coordinator. Eghonghon had the opportunity to work in the Renal and Cardiovascular Disease Lab under the DISARM-HD study. The lab's main purpose was to focus on

non-pharmacological methods such as dietary intervention for improving the lives of patients with chronic kidney disease. Of the award, Eghonghon said, "This award is a testament to my firm belief in always spreading knowledge to those who can benefit. I-LEAP jump started my college career and I will continue the work it has put in all of us in any way possible."

Research Scholar Award

This award is presented to a student who has participated in individual or faculty-led research. Research activities include conference or poster presentations, publications, etc. Rahil's goal is to attend medical school and become a physician.



Rahil Sadruddin

Rahil has been president of the I-LEAP advisory board, a volunteer at Carle Foundation Hospital and an undergraduate research assistant in the Exercise Psychology Laboratory. Of the award, Rahil said, “Receiving the Research Scholar award has conveyed that my contribution to the field of academia is not being overlooked, and

continues to fuel my drive to delve deeper into what research can provide for all.”

Edmund J. James Scholar

The Edmund J. James Scholar Program is among the most prestigious honors that an undergraduate can earn at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The program is named after the fourth president of the University, who believed that scholarship and research were fundamental to human progress. The James Scholar program in the College of Applied Health Sciences seeks to recognize the highest academically achieving undergraduate students and to challenge them to engage in advanced scholarly activity. The following students in the I-LEAP program were 2021-2022 James Scholars:

Aamina Adebayo

Eghonghon

Naima Mays

Sam Adeoye

Eromosele

Jillian Moffat

Anastasia Adjei

Zamantha Figueroa

Kirsten Osborn

Angela Anum

Danielle Fuller

Allison Page

Beatrice Benavent

Brenda Galan

Anjali Patel

Emily Butryn

Alanis Garcia

Ramiro Ramirez

Aubrey Cervantes

Savanna Guo

Fernanda Romero

Valerie Chen

Samaria Harris

Brielle Ross

Jaquelin Conchas
Lopez

Elena Hawkins

Rahil Sadruddin

Linda Corral

Jules Heberer

Ariana Sanchez

James Cuevas

Daniela Hernandez

Jorie Schirmacher

Cassidy Das

Mia Jayes

Camryn Shirley

Kalia Davis

Claire Kakac

Haley Smith

Brenda de Souza
Soares da Rosa

Rijha Kamran

Nia Smith

Alejandra Diaz Ortiz

Jacob Katsifarakis

Sofia Vasquez

Karly Dolin

Abigail Keasler

Taski Velasquez

Martine Duplessy

Grace Kim

Lauren Vicencio

Stella Emezue

Katherine Kondelis

Pedro Young

Josephine Lapapa

Elvia Malacara

Graduating Seniors

Congratulations and good luck, Class of 2023!

Anastasia Adjei

Guillermo Beltran

Eddie Burras

Ivette Camacho Perez

Kennedy Campbell

Masiya Chhen

Andrea Cowper

Tianna Davis

Aaron Dille

Zamantha Figuero

Danielle Fuller

Summer Garrison

Deztinee Geiger

Nikayla Gordon

Ricky Guerrero

Elena Hawkins

Jules Heberer

Brianna Hernandez

Daniela Hernandez

Grace Hessler

Kathryn Huang

Mia Jayes

Francisca Kabu

Ricardo Lopez

Nixie Lopez Leon

Elvia Malacara

Mia Martinez

Ryan Meed

Alondra Munoz

Taylor Murray

Akintoyosi Omokaiye

Kirsten Osborn

Delaney Rummell

Jorie Schirmacher

John Slubowski

Skyy Sumlin

Maria Tenuta

David Threat

Mia Townes

Jonathan Tran

Samantha Trevino

Jonathan Trotter

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ADDITIONAL RECOGNITION

Dean's List (spring and fall 2022)

To be eligible for Dean's List recognition, students must successfully complete at least 12 graded semester hours and have a grade point average in the top 20 percent of their college class. The following I-LEAP Scholars were in the top 20 percent of their degree programs (Community Health, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences, Kinesiology, Speech and Hearing Science and Recreation, Sport, and Tourism).

Samuel Adeoye	Nadia Hernandez	Diana Quirino
Anastasia Adjei	Melinda Jara	Ramiro Ramirez
Albert Bang	Sara Jass	Samantha Ramos
Andrea Barajas	Mia Jayes	Nicole Roddan
Tania Barragan	Serena Jimdar	Angel Rodriguez
Beatrice Benavent	Ethan Juarez	Madelyn Roseman
Daniel Boachie	Francisca Kabu	Jorie Schirmacher
Emily Butryn	Rijha Kamran	Haley Smith
Isabella Castro	Jacob Katsifarakis	Skyy Sumlin
Andrea Cowper	Abigail Keasler	George Tawfic
Kalia Davis	Grace Kim	Maria Tenuta
Cindy Deng	Katherine Kondelis	Sofia Vasquez
Stella Emezue	Josephine Lapapa	Lauren Vicencio
Eghonghon Eromosele	Nixie Lopez Leon	Vinh Vo
Otniel Fernandez	Iman Love	Violet Wendling
Danielle Fuller	Jocelyn Miranda	Nolan Woodring
Brenda Galan	Kasey Nguyen	Julia Wronska
Christian Grays	Patrick Niec	Pedro Young
Savannah Guo	Kirsten Osborn	Anne Yuen
Jules Heberer	Allison Page	

Student Advisory Board

The I-LEAP Student Advisory Board is an important part of the I-LEAP leadership team. Working alongside the faculty and staff, these elected board members assist in planning and delivering events and workshops designed to help I-LEAP students meet their academic and professional goals.

Jules Heberer, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Rahil Saddrudin, Kinesiology

Alegandra Diaz, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Emily Butryn, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Beatrice Benavent, Kinesiology

Jae'da Thompson, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Montserrat Ponse, Community Health

Tera Sparks, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Ethan Juarez, Community Health

Aubrey Cervantes, Kinesiology

Alyssa Fisher, Kinesiology

Julia Wronska, Community Health

Emily Tracy, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Talitha Akoto, Community Health

Tasdiq Khan, Community Health

Nicole Roddan, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Ishan Patel, Kinesiology

Samyla Williams, Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Denise Diaz, Community Health

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**College of Applied
Health Sciences**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN