MISSION

Established in 1991, the Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship provides academic, professional, and personal support for academically excellent graduate students interested in enhancing diversity at Washington University and in the professoriate.

Message from the Dean

“The Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship is a signature program in the Graduate School at Washington University in St. Louis. We offer a community for promising scholars across fields and disciplines in a co-academic environment. The Fellowship provides distinct research opportunities that support diversity, discovery, and innovation.”

—William F. Tate
Dean and Vice Provost for Graduate Education
Edward Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor in Arts & Sciences

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Diana Hill Mitchell, PhD
Director of the Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship Program, Associate Dean of the Graduate School

Erin Murdock
Director, Graduate Student Affairs
Since she took on the role of director of the Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship, Diana Hill Mitchell, PhD, says one of the things that stands out most about the fellowship thus far is the close-knit relationship among the fellows. She says, “It feels more like a family than a community. They show great care for one another and for the broader community.”

Making the transition from undergraduate to graduate school can be difficult. Typically, students entering doctoral programs have experienced success in their undergraduate education, which in part motivated them to continue their education. But many PhD candidates find it challenging adjusting to the rhythms and expectations of their new programs. And it’s Hill Mitchell’s goal to normalize the fact that the transition is hard. She says, “The academy can be a very isolating place, making you feel your work is disjointed from those whom you desire to impact.” She’s working to provide the right balance of events and opportunities outside of doctoral studies for fellows, without taking too much time away from their work. Last fall, she and several fellows volunteered at the St. Louis Area Food Bank and enjoyed the opportunity to connect with one another while giving back to others. Furthermore, fellows connect during group outings to attend musicals at the Fabulous Fox Theatre and to enjoy the St. Louis Symphony at Powell Hall.

Hill Mitchell’s goal is to be a good steward of the legacy she’s taken on with the Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship, ensuring that fellows complete their programs on time or early, and that they have adequate support throughout the program. She says, “We maintain a steadfast commitment in encouraging students to enter the academy for the express purpose of being instructors in the classroom. Even though the market isn’t strong, we remain unwavering in our commitment to their support, enabling them to compete for those positions nationally.”

It’s inspiring for Hill Mitchell to be a part of supporting these students who will go on to join the professoriate. She says, “They will be force multipliers. Because of what they write, publish, and produce, they will inspire more students to go to graduate school, enabling the professoriate to become more diverse in research, thought, and teaching.”
The Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship Program (CGFP) provides academic, professional, and personal support for academically excellent graduate students interested in enhancing diversity at Washington University and the professoriate. The CGFP cultivates a sense of community, professionalism, academic excellence, and service within Washington University and the St. Louis communities. The Fellowship fosters networking among current fellows and alumni to leverage relationships and to share information and resources.

SUPPORT

Annual stipend of $33,060*

Education allowance of $1,500 ANNUALLY

» Leadership & professional development
» Interdisciplinary networking with current students and alumni

* For academic year 2019–20
AT A GLANCE

2019–2020 FELLOW DEMOGRAPHICS

DISCIPLINES

49 Fellows

Demographics

INTERNATIONAL
NON-UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITY
UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITY

Gender

FEMALE
MALE
OUR 2019 COHORT

We are pleased to welcome these nine talented scholars into the Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship.

JACQUELYN COATS
Social Work, PhD
University of Michigan, BA
Washington University in St. Louis, MSW, MPH

ZACHARIAH CRUTCHFIELD
Jewish, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, AM
Columbia University, BA

ADRIAN GONZALEZ
Visual Art, MFA
University of Central Florida, BFA

DYMONN JOHNSON
Molecular Genetics and Genomics, PhD
Jackson State University, MS and BS

MACE JOHNSON
Writing Program, MFA
Harvard College, BA

TEDDY LEVY
Architecture and Urban Design, AM
Morgan State University, BS

LUEWILLA SMITH-BARNETT
Dance, MFA
Bradley University, BS
Roosevelt University, MEd
Concordia University Chicago, MA

QUENTIN TATE
German and Higher Education Administration, AM
Washington University in St. Louis, BA

ALEXA VELEZ
Visual Art, MFA
University of North Florida, BFA/BA
ADMISSIONS AT A GLANCE: FALL 2019

373 applications
33% from underrepresented groups
13 offers made (3.5% selectivity)
9 accepted (69.2% yield)
For Chancellor’s Graduate Fellow Andy Daniel, fifth-year PhD student, it’s not enough to do groundbreaking work in biomedical engineering, to have his work published, and to have filed a patent before graduating. He wants to make sure that there will be more diversity in the engineering and medical fields in the future. Daniel volunteers as a school recruiter with the National Society of Black Engineers, visits St. Louis area schools for science demonstrations with Washington University’s Young Scientist Program; chairs diversity, equity, and inclusion for Sling Health STL; and serves as the vice president of diversity, equity, and inclusion for Sling Health National. Through the Summer in Neuroscience pipeline program, he has mentored undergraduate students from minority backgrounds interested in pursuing a neuroscience PhD. Daniel says, “Many realize the need for greater impetus in getting more minority students involved in the sciences.” And he is glad to see more diversity initiatives not just among students, but in communities, to bring more people at the table. “Hopefully, what I’m doing now will make it easier for others to come after me.”

Daniel’s work with Sling Health combines his passions for science and entrepreneurship. A group of Washington University MD/PhD students started the organization in 2013 with the goal of bringing together students, faculty, staff, and entrepreneurs to come up with solutions to clinical problems. The eight-month curriculum culminates in an annual Demo Day in April, where the teams present their innovations. Sling Health has expanded to over ten universities in eight cities since starting at Washington University and has resulted in at least 25 startups thus far.

Daniel, in his fifth year of study in Washington University’s biomedical engineering doctoral program, believes that one of the things that makes Washington University a special place to do his PhD is its environment of collaboration. Daniel says, “The Fellowship has allowed me to not only maintain friendships with people in various areas, but has allowed me to collaborate in ways that wouldn’t have been possible otherwise.”

An example of that collaboration occurred a few years ago when Arts & Sciences graduate students paired up for a cancer symposium. Science students communicated their work on cancer to student and alumni artists, who then figured out a way to communicate that research through art. Daniel conducts research on the deadly brain tumor glioblastoma that has a survival rate of 12 to 15 months after diagnosis. For the symposium, he was paired with an artist alumna. The artist coincidentally had a family member who had had a glioblastoma and had kept journals about the experience with it. She used the words from those journals and Daniel’s research to create a one-of-a-kind art piece depicting glioblastoma. Daniel says it was amazing to see these fields, which are often thought of as being opposite, come together and create something unique. That experience is emblematic of his overall experience as a graduate student at Washington University.
A third-year doctoral student in the Brown School, BlackDeer uses data in system dynamics modeling to research large structural issues. She says, “Many people think that social work is child welfare or activist types of issues. But data is also very important for social workers.” She views social work as a composite of passion, advocacy, and clinical skills—and being a good consumer and analyzer of data represents one of those key clinical skills.

BlackDeer uses system dynamics modeling in her doctoral research on the intersection of sexual violence and mental health for Indigenous populations. She’s exploring the relationship between the two areas. While the prevalence of both issues is high in Native communities, she sees it as a chicken-or-the-egg question: Do Native women have mental health issues as a result of sexual violence, or are they prone to sexual assault because of unmet mental health needs? And what are the larger issues contributing to these disparities?

Currently, many intervention therapies used to address these issues are individually based, such as providing trauma counseling to victims of sexual assault. Counseling can be helpful for victims, but it doesn’t reduce or eliminate the chance that sexual assault will reoccur.

Her ultimate goal as a professor is to build a framework of structural violence and intergenerational trauma in Native populations, by creating a map that will help figure out how to address these challenges across Indian Country. BlackDeer says, “There are big issues that need to be solved before we can eradicate these disparities. We don’t have tribal sovereignty well-represented in research or practice, and urban tribal populations are disconnected from their lands, contributing further to these gaps.”

In addition to her research on sexual violence, BlackDeer serves on the university’s sexual assault investigation board, which makes a real-time difference on the subject she spends her days researching. Further, BlackDeer emphasizes the positive things she sees through her research, such as the resiliency of Native women. “I want to highlight that even though there are increased rates of assaults, Native women are thriving, and they’re healing their communities.”

While tackling these important issues, BlackDeer has been able to lean on her fellow Chancellor’s Graduate Fellows for encouragement. She says, “The Fellowship has provided me with community and support—doctoral studies can be isolating. Having a support network of other scholars and being able to bounce ideas off people across disciplines allows us to learn from one another.”

BlackDeer adds, “There are so many connections and opportunities. I’ve been able to grow professionally and to learn how to network and put myself out there.”
We are excited to follow the paths of these outstanding Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship graduates in their careers and include them in our community of impressive alumni.

Anna Hood  
PhD, Psychological & Brain Sciences  
NIH F32 Postdoctoral Fellow, Division of Behavioral Medicine and Clinical Psychology  
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital

Daniella Linares  
MFA, Writing

Elvin Lauron  
PhD, Biology and Biomedical Sciences  
Postdoctoral Scholar, Stanford University

Jennifer Everett  
MFA, Visual Art  
Artist

Juliette McClendon  
PhD Psychological & Brain Sciences  
Advanced Fellowship in Women’s Health, Women’s Health Sciences Division, National Center for PTSD, VA Boston Healthcare System

Maria Espinosa  
PhD, Biomedical Engineering  
Postdoctoral Fellow, University of California, Irvine

Pablo Zavala  
PhD, Hispanic Studies  
Lecturer in Spanish, Washington University in St. Louis

Paul Tran  
MFA, Writing  
Senior Fellow in Poetry, Department of English, Washington University in St. Louis

Reyka Jayasinghe  
PhD, Biology and Biomedical Sciences  
Postdoctoral Research Associate, School of Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis

Ryan Wilson  
MArch, Architecture  
Designer, VERVE Design Studio

Tiffany Player  
PhD, History  
Assistant Professor, Department of History, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Walter Bomela  
PhD, Electrical Engineering  
Postdoctoral Research Associate, Department of Electrical and Systems Engineering, Washington University in St. Louis

Since 1991, 194 Chancellor’s Graduate Fellows have enrolled in total.

194 Total fellows

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ALUMNI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Below are a few of the reported accomplishments among our recent alumni.

**REYNOLD BAILEY, MS ’04, PHD ’07,** was promoted to full professor at Rochester Institute of Technology.


**KARMELLA HAYNES, PHD ’06,** recently published two articles, one in *Nature* and one in *Nucleic Acids Research.*

**GARY HOOVER, MA ’95, PHD ’98,** became editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Economics, Race, and Policy.*

**KAHLIL IRVING, MFA ’17,** was awarded the Alice C. Cole ’42 Fellowship at Wellesley College.

**SHAKIR JAMES, MS ’09, PHD ’12,** accepted a new position as Chief Technology Officer for DTI Management and 1Ticket.

**FELIX LLOYD, MFA ’08,** started a new company, Beanstack, that helps libraries and schools run result-driven reading challenges.

**BERTIN LOUIS JR., MA ’03, PHD ’08,** was promoted to associate professor of anthropology and Africana Studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He also recently published two articles.

**PAUL STERZING, PHD ’12,** was promoted to associate professor at UC–Berkeley’s School of Social Welfare, where he also serves as co-chair of the MSW program.

**IAN WEAVER, MFA ’08,** completed a summer art residency at Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha.

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**YVONNE OSEI, MFA ’16**

Yvonne Osei, MFA ’16 in Visual Art, appreciates St. Louis, at least in part because she’s been able to have an impact on the city. “It’s a growing city. To leave your mark and be a part of an evolving city is a true gift. In St. Louis, you become a significant part of the building process whereas in a city like New York you become a contributing part of an already working system. So there’s a level of newness and creativity that St. Louis lends itself to that I can’t envision getting elsewhere.”

Osei, who won the 2018 St. Louis Visionary Award, and 2019 Futures Fund Award and who was recently invited by the TEDxGatewayArch to deliver a TED talk titled “The Artist Learns to Roar,” also values the impact St. Louis has had on her. “Living in St. Louis for a decade has enabled me to experience the ebbs and flows of her history, landscape, and developmental trajectory. A lot of my work has been greatly influenced by the community, including its challenges, legacy, and promise. In my most recent work, I utilize textile designs and fashion to challenge how racial history in St. Louis is remembered and memorialized.”

Her creative practice examines beauty and colorism, the politics of clothing, the authorship and control of history, and the residual implications of colonialism and post-colonialism. She sees art as being synergetic with life rather than a career and is always looking for ways to make an impact with this lifestyle.
Antibiotics are under threat. Drugs commonly used to treat many illnesses are being met with increasing antibiotic resistance. As this situation escalates, Chancellor's Graduate Fellow Chanez Symister is researching how to stay one step ahead of it.

Symister works in the Wencewicz lab on Washington University’s campus, researching how particular enzymes break down the drug class of tetracyclines. One of the most commonly used classes of antibiotics, they are used to treat everything from acne to MRSA; and their weakening impact has potentially far-reaching repercussions. Symister says of her doctoral research, “The overarching goal of our lab is to try to combat resistance. My goal is to guide the design of better tetracycline antibiotics. The drug has been around over 70 years, and we don’t want to lose it.”

Symister believes that, in part, an incredibly supportive atmosphere on campus enables her to do this research. She says, “I was surprised about how supportive all the professors are. If you have a problem, you can go to any one of them.” Her research project, guided by her principal investigator, collaborates with Washington University’s School of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. “We have a diverse range of labs,” she says. “There’s a wide breadth of opportunities for you to get your hands wet.”

In addition to the financial support the Fellowship provides, being part of the cohort of fellows has provided Symister with the critical emotional support needed to make it to the fifth year of her doctoral studies. She says, “I can send a group message to the other fellows and say, ‘I’m not having a great day’ and I’ll immediately get responses back like, ‘Where are you? Can we go to lunch? Meet on campus somewhere?’ The level of support is astonishing.” Symister finds it helpful that the Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship connects her with PhD fellows who come from all disciplines, each offering his or her unique perspective. She explains, “We’re all going to run into problems with lab-mates or moments when we’re stuck in our research; and when you have that group, it’s a perpetual support group. That’s what I love about it.”

That level of support is part of what buoys Symister to devote time and energy not just to her work in the lab, but also to be a leader on campus. She served as director of Washington University’s Young Scientist Program in 2019, traveling to schools in the St. Louis area and connecting with students about science. The goal of the Young Scientist Program is to attract students to scientific careers and increase the participation of underrepresented groups in science, by bringing resources and scientists directly to teachers and students through science presentations and demonstrations. Symister loves to explain to someone for the first time what chemistry is and what a chemical change entails. She says, “It’s a passion of mine to communicate science to the community.”

After completing her PhD, Symister hopes to either pursue a professorship in her native Antigua, or to be a part of the World Health Organization’s new centers to monitor bacterial resistance. Symister says, “In June of this year [2019], Antigua got its first university that wasn’t a medical school. They’re going to need professors, and it would be such a good opportunity to give back at home.” No matter which route she pursues, she feels that her doctoral education has prepared her well for success.
ADDOLEY DZEGEDE:
Taking Curiosity on a World Tour

Chancellor’s Graduate Fellow Program alumna Addoley Dzegede, a multifaceted artist of many talents, has traveled the globe through art residencies since graduating with her Master of Fine Arts in 2015. In her travels from Ghana to Paris and from Iceland to the Netherlands, she has used her curiosity to fuel the exploration of social issues through her work. Dzegede says, “My father’s from Ghana. Most of my family lives in another part of the world. My mind has always been on other places. I like that art gives me the opportunity to go to places with a purpose—not just as a tourist.”

Through the art she creates, Dzegede likes to explore the deeper meanings behind everyday objects. “When I was growing up, my mom had this collection of beads she had acquired from Ghana when she was a Peace Corps volunteer in the 70s, when she met my dad,” Dzegede says. “I played with them a lot when I was a kid; and then when I got older, I did some research and realized that once they were used as currency for people. This thing that seems like a harmless, decorative object has this crazy history.” The glass beads were made in Venice, and people traveled to Ghana with them to trade the beads for slaves.

Dzegede discovered another misconception about an object’s origins when she learned that the patterned fabric that many people think of as African was actually created by the Dutch. She says, “Wax print fabrics—African print—are actually a Dutch invention to try to imitate batik—but it just became very popular in Africa.” The beads and fabric inspired Dzegede to create her piece “Ballast,” for which she used wax-print fabrics to form bead shapes that she then strung together in a large-scale necklace. She explains that the name Ballast came from thinking about things that are beneath the surface.

In addition to the art that she creates, Dzegede has partnered with fellow artist Anna Ihle to host a podcast that explores a wide range of issues and life as an artist. Some of the many topics discussed with guests include finances and budgeting, career moves, networking, relationships and institutional critiques. To produce the podcast, Dzegede had to learn some new skills, but that didn’t intimidate her. “You can have a vision for something that you want to do and just do it, and if the content is good, people will be drawn to it,” she says.

Dzegede has also written a book, a collection of essays titled Elleboog (the Dutch word for elbow), with her partner, Lyndon Barrois Jr. In 2020, she’ll head to West Palm Beach, Florida, where she will take part in the Norton Museum’s artist-in-residence program. As she continues to explore themes of belonging and authenticity through her art, she remains grateful to have received the Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship at Washington University. “I started graduate school when I was 30, and I still had debt from my undergrad studies. I could only go to graduate school if I had a scholarship for full tuition. That changed my life.”
FINANCIALS

TOTAL CGFP FUNDING

$2.5M in total contributions

CGFP FUNDING:
- Student Stipends: $1,143,662
- Tuition & Fees: $3,628
- Travel: $21
- Conference: $5,958
- Networking Events: $7,100
- Programming: $1,049
- Salaries: $10,108

Total CGFP Funding: $1,171,526

UNIVERSITY FUNDING:
- Arts & Sciences: $566,899
- Engineering: $83,917
- Gifts & Grants: $360,334
- Sam Fox: $70,385
- Brown School: $266,353

Total by School: $1,347,888

STUDENT SUPPORT

99.3% of funding goes directly to fellows

CGFP FUNDING:
- Student Stipends
- Tuition & Fees
- Travel
- Conference
- Networking Events
- Programming
- Salaries

Total CGFP Funding: $1,171,526

UNIVERSITY FUNDING:
- Arts & Sciences
- Engineering
- Gifts & Grants
- Sam Fox
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Total by School: $1,347,888
How You Can Help

**Share**
Inspire others through your own story. Update fellows and alumni on recent accomplishments, positions, and career moves. Have your work featured on our website.

**Mentor**
Imparting knowledge and experience to those just emerging in their fields is such a rewarding experience. Help guide the next generation of fellows to reach their full potential.

**Connect**
Are there calls for funding proposals, internship opportunities, or open positions in your organization? Keep us in the know. Meet a promising individual? Encourage prospective students to apply.

**Engage**
To share, connect, mentor, or participate, please contact us at cgfp@wustl.edu, or visit us on our website at cgfp.wustl.edu.

**Participate**
We encourage you to attend the annual conference and interact with fellows and alumni at local and regional events.