



Harvard School of Public Health



*Summer Program in Quantitative Sciences
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Back left to right: Steele Valenzuela, Henry Jackson, Ashia Wilson, Amanda Alexander, Sarah Anoke, Michelle Rendón; front left to right: Gabrielle Milner, Kate Cauthen, and Cassandra Baker.

2011 Participant Directory



Amanda Alexander was born and raised in Edina, Minnesota. In 2011, she completed her first year at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia where she is part of the dual degree engineering program. Within this program she plans on majoring in mathematics and biomedical engineering. She is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society, the Ethel Waddell Githii Honors Program, and is a Spelman presidential scholar.

Amanda's extracurricular activities include participating on the Spelman College basketball team where she was named to the GSAC all-freshman team, and also awarded the coaches' rising star award for the 2010-2011 season. Also, Amanda serves as a math tutor for elementary and middle school students at the Annewakee Falls subdivision of the D.A.N.N.Y. Center.

In her spare time, Amanda enjoys baking, watching movies, reading, and spending time with her friends, parents and older sister.



Sarah Anoke was born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She is the oldest of 6 children, all of which reside in Oklahoma with her parents.

During her time as an undergraduate, she had a wide range of scientific experiences, including work in biochemistry, biomedical engineering, and structural biology labs, mathematical model programming, and teaching calculus to college underclassmen.

Although she graduated from Harvard University with a degree in Chemistry, she has always enjoyed learning and teaching math, and is planning on pursuing a PhD in Biostatistics. She is currently enrolled in a Post-Baccalaureate program in Mathematics at Smith College, the only of its kind in the United States. While at Smith, she will spend a year taking upper-level undergraduate math courses in preparation for graduate school.

In addition to statistics, Sarah enjoys learning computer languages, outdoor running, and soap operas.



Katherine Cauthen was raised in Kansas City, Missouri, and she will graduate Summa Cum Laude from the University of New Mexico with two bachelors degrees in the fields of psychology, biology, and statistics in May 2011. Katherine completed two undergraduate honors thesis at UNM. Her psychology thesis explored the relative importance of personality traits and situational factors in predicting altruistic behavior, and it was awarded best honors thesis in her year. Her biology

thesis assessed the relationship between parasite stress and the differential allocation of altruistic behavior towards in-group and out-group members.

At UNM Katherine tutored undergraduate students in statistics and biology, advised students in the University Honors Program, studied internationally in India and Argentina, and was involved in a wide breadth of research in the psychology and biology departments. Among her most notable distinctions, Katherine received an honorable mention for the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa. She intends to pursue graduate studies in either biostatistics or evolutionary psychology and to use an epidemiological approach to research the cross-national patterns of disease prevalence in predicting social behaviors and attitudes.



Henry Jackson Jr. resides in Long Island, New York where he is currently a senior at the State University of New York College at Old Westbury pursuing a B.S. degree in Mathematics. Outside of his own classroom, Henry has tutored aspiring high school students in Math and Physical Sciences via the Science and Technology Entry-Level Program at SUNY Old Westbury. On multiple occasions Henry has collaborated in major environmental research projects addressing human health,

one of which he presented competitively and was ranked third in a statewide research presentation competition.

When away from his studies Henry commits to volunteering Emergency Medical Services as an EMT with his local ambulance corp. There he has received four “Life Save” awards for changing the fate of sick and injured individuals during their darkest hour. While he sits dormant awaiting to be called to the scene of his next emergency, Henry serves actively in food pantries and clothing drives throughout his local communities. Henry now sets his sights on a career in health and medicine where he can actively engage himself in public service.



Gabrielle Milner hails from New York City. She graduated from the Bronx High School of Science and was named a National Merit Scholar in 2009. She recently completed her first year of studies at Harvard College.

While in high school, Gabrielle was accepted into the Columbia University Science Honors Program. She also carried out an original research project relating to the link between obesity and sleep

disorders at Columbia University Medical Center - NYS Psychiatric Institute. Gabrielle submitted her project to the Young Epidemiology Scholars Competition in 2009. She was named a Regional Finalist in the competition, and had the opportunity to present her work to a panel of epidemiologists in Washington, D.C.

At Harvard College, Gabrielle participated in the First Year Leadership Initiative and took on leadership roles in two student organizations. She is a board member of Women in Science at Harvard-Radcliffe, serving on the community service committee. Also, she is on the executive board of Harvard College Stories for Orphans as the outreach director. The group writes original, personalized stories for specific children living in orphanages around the globe. Gabrielle recently enjoyed organizing a multicultural literacy celebration to recognize El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day).

As a life-long resident of the Bronx, Gabrielle is concerned about the health disparities, including high rates of asthma, obesity and diabetes that exist among residents in low-income areas there, such as the South Bronx. This concern has sparked her interest in public health.

Additionally, Gabrielle is interested in health journalism, and has been involved for the past few years with a youth media organization, mentoring young reporters and writing articles relating to quality of life issues that impact children and teens in poor neighborhoods. Last summer, Gabrielle helped to coordinate a newspaper column that gave children a chance to have their concerns addressed by politicians and other community leaders. In February 2011, a newspaper article that Gabrielle wrote focusing on asthma and its impact on the educational achievement of low-income urban minority youth was published in the New York Amsterdam News. In July 2010, she wrote about the lack of adequate funding for summer youth employment, and the Amsterdam News also published this article. She previously co-authored many published newspaper articles on topics ranging from gang violence to the environmental hazards posed by a toxic landfill in the Bronx.

Gabrielle is also involved in several tutoring initiatives and social justice organizations. In her leisure time, she enjoys dining out with friends, going to the movies, reading and listening to music – especially “Doo Wop,” the rhythm and blues/vocal group harmony of the 1950’s.



Michelle Rendón was born in Tucson, Arizona and has lived in Littleton, Colorado for the past 14 years. Michelle attended the University of Colorado Denver and received a bachelors of science in Mathematics and a minor in Economics in December of 2010. While at the University of Colorado Denver Michelle was the president of the Mathematics club and the student representative for the undergraduate math committee. She also participated in the mathematics competition

in modeling in 2009 and 2010. Both years her team's project was awarded top eighteen percent internationally.

During the summer of 2010 Michelle lived in Berlin, Germany doing mathematics research at the Freie University. From October of 2010 to May of 2011 Michelle had an internship with the City of Denver doing energy analysis for the Utilities department. She also works full time as a Pool Manager for her local Parks and Recreation District.

Michelle is planning on attending graduate school for either statistics or biostatistics. In her spare time she enjoys running, swimming, playing piano, hiking, and reading.



Steele H. Valenzuela was born on the Yakima Reservation in the state of Washington. Steele was raised by his mother until his step-father, aka dad, married his mother and had two more siblings during their time on the Yakima reservation. Soon after, the family moved back to their roots near the Omaha Reservation to Decatur, Nebraska and had two more children. Steele currently attends Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, pursuing a degree in

mathematics and minors in political science and public health. Influenced by his mother's strong will, his main research interests include diabetes, breast cancer, and other health disparities on Indian reservations. For summer research, he is currently researching health policy with the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Steele's mother has always pushed for him to go as far as he can in his education because she never finished her degree from college. She pushed him to apply for many scholarships so nothing would have held him back from higher education. As a result, he is a recipient of the Gates Millennium Scholarship. Much of Steele's volunteer and service hours come from helping his Student Support Services (SSS) adviser, Tami Buffalohead-McGill, with her program of

assisting disadvantaged students from around the Omaha area apply for scholarships, such as the Gates Millennium Scholarship, in order to attend Creighton University and other schools so they are not a financial burden. In previous fall and spring breaks, Steele, his adviser Tami, and many students from SSS, have traveled to the Navajo and Winnebago reservations to help students with scholarships and to volunteer and serve the community. They hope to complete similar service trips in the near future.

After undergraduate, Steele plans to pursue his M.S. and Ph.D in a public health related field. He hopes to dab into a bit of health policy and biostatistics and then work to greatly improve Indian Health Services. His dream career is to work for the World Health Organization and the United Nations. In his spare time, Steele loves to play ping-pong, attempt to cook unique cuisines, discover new bike trails, and spend time with his family.



Ashia Wilson is a native of Washington DC. She graduated from Harvard with a degree in Applied Mathematics and a minor in Philosophy. While at Harvard, she researched water policy in China, and control algorithms for microscopic robotics. During her year off, Ashia plans to perform research in epigenetics at the school of public health.

In her spare time Ashia enjoys spending time with friends and family, running, reading, drawing and dancing. She plans on pursuing a doctorate in Biostatistics or Statistics with a focus on developing statistics methods in genetics research.