

2023 Brunner Award Recipients

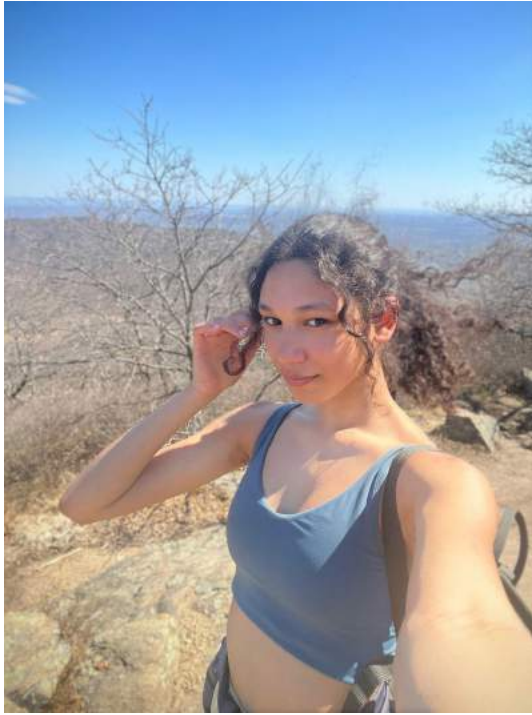


LEAH ALLEN-CHENG

My name is Leah Allen-Cheng and I am a sophomore at the Bronx High School of Science. I have always been a curious individual who has grown up with an affinity for mathematics and science. When asked what I wanted to be when I grew up, I always said that I hoped to become an engineer. My goal was to harness creativity to support the world around me and improve society as a whole. When I was admitted into Bronx Science, the number of opportunities available to me increased immeasurably. In freshman year, I had a particular fondness for the semester-long Elements of Engineering course that was offered. In this course, students were able to study civil, electrical, aerospace, and mechanical engineering. I soon determined that I wanted to continue my scientific studies and decided to join the Physical Science/Engineering Research

Program in my sophomore year. This was a challenging decision for me to make, given the fact that STEM is an academically rigorous and male-dominated field. Regardless, I knew that not all students have access to such a beneficial and educational program and chose to take advantage of this opportunity. Upon entering the program, I began to explore the various fields of physical science that could be pursued. After careful consideration, I met a professor of environmental chemistry to work alongside as he searches for new methods of pollutant filtration. The generous funding provided by the Brunner Awards will ensure that I have the necessary transportation to participate in this research while pursuing my passion for science.

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NADIRA ASGHAR

Nadira is a driven junior at the Bronx High School of Science. Whether it's participation in the track team, or delving into new areas of knowledge, she embraces every opportunity to grow and challenge herself. Nadira is a field event/sprinter on the Bronx Science track team, and has been a member since freshman year. She enjoys competing at meets, supporting her team members, and cultivating the welcoming community of the city championship-winning team. Beyond her athletic pursuits, she possesses an insatiable curiosity about people and the world around her. Nadira finds joy in engaging with individuals from diverse backgrounds and learning about their unique stories and experiences. She believes that understanding others

fosters empathy and creates bridges of connection, and with the support from the Brunner Awards, will be able to work with international students in an anthropology course over the summer. Nadira's thirst for knowledge extends beyond the social, as she seeks opportunities to expand her horizons and explore new subjects. She is interested in psychology, is fascinated with answering questions related to how we think, and enjoys participating in her Bronx Science research class. Whether it's this research, or being a part of the track team, Nadira is committed to broadening her communal landscape and exploring new subjects.

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ALEXANDRA BLEE

My name is Alexandra Blee, and I am a sophomore at Bronx Science. I have a twin brother, also at Bronx science, and a dog that I rescued four years ago (not at Bronx Science). I am a member of the Bronx Science track and Cross Country teams, and my main event is the triple jump. I am also an avid member of the Speech and Debate team in the discipline of extemporaneous speaking, and have competed since my freshman year. When I have the chance, I enjoy writing about whatever comes to mind and similarly love reading philosophy to aid my writing in my free time, and am about to launch a blog on the subject. I play the violin in the school orchestra and love listening to all genres of music from

baroque to jazz to metal. One of my favorite bands is deftones. I like going on long cycles through the city and used to be very into roller skating, but have since relaxed the time I spend doing it because of school. Because of my interest in the environment (one of the reasons I applied for this award), I enjoy recycling and altering my clothes, and sewing new pieces all together. To make the clothing a bit more interesting I spent a little bit of time learning to embroider. During the winter, I like knitting and baking on weekends, and during the summer I try to be in the ocean as many hours of my day as I can.

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JULIETTE BOURREL

Juliette Bourrel, a first-year student at the prestigious Bronx High School of Science, began her journey in the charming town of Saint-Leu la Foret, France. Born in June 2008, she cherished her tight-knit community that provided a secure and comforting upbringing, shaping her earliest memories. However, a job opportunity for her mother led to a life-altering move to New York, where Juliette faced the challenges of cultural adjustment and language acquisition during her second-grade year. Undeterred, she conquered these obstacles and achieved fluency in English within just eighteen months. Overcoming the initial difficulties of being far from friends and family, Juliette's resilience forged her into the person she is today. As a student at Bronx Science, she thrives as a member of the track team, drawing inspiration from the determination and resilience it cultivates. In her leisure time, Juliette finds joy in reading, writing, and drawing, despite acknowledging that her proficiency may not be extraordinary. Her love for the outdoors is evident, as she relishes engaging in sunlit activities. With an uncertain future, Juliette remains open to various opportunities to determine her field of study or research, exploring pathways that align with her aspirations. Juliette Bourrel embodies a tenacious spirit, driven to overcome challenges and discover her true potential.

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CONNIE CHEN

My name is Connie Chen and I am currently 16 years old. I live in Queens and I take the bus to school everyday. My interest in chemistry started my freshman year in my Regents Chemistry class. Writing double replacement reactions and learning how to name organic molecules was unexpectedly fun along with the many other concepts I

learned in this class. One of the most memorable labs I did were titrations. I was partnered with my friend and it was a reward to see the pretty light pink color at the end of many attempts. Outside of school, one of my main hobbies is reading Webtoons. An episode is released each week for a series and it is one of things I look forward to every week. The series I like to read usually surround the themes of love and the pastel colors used in the comics makes it pleasing to read after a long week. My second favorite hobby is watching One Piece and an episode is released each Sunday. Though I have not watched it in a long time, I hope to catch up once I have the time. One of things One Piece is most known for is how long it's been going on for. Even after 1000+ episodes, Luffy's perseverance to become the Pirate King did not once change and I hope to have the same attitude as him once I start research this summer and perform an original experiment in the summer next year.

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STACEY CHEN

Hi, my name is Stacy! I'm a sophomore at Bronx Science, and I'm from Queens. I enjoy drawing, listening to music, and birdwatching in my free time. I've had a passion for the sciences since I was little, as the concepts of inquiry and learning more about how the world works fascinated me. Biology was one of the biggest fields that I was interested in, since it explained so much about how we exist, why a variety of species exist, and diseases and threats to the survival of species (I recall binge watching Khan Academy videos on these topics when I was

younger).

I chose to pursue a project relating to geology, because I was intrigued by how it was intertwined with biology. A large part of the diversity of species today is due to evolution, and because evolution takes so long, humans haven't been able to physically observe it on a large scale. However, lots of evidence of evolution exists in rocks, from hundreds of millions of years ago, in fossils and sediments. Through further research in geology, I found things that surprised me. The theory that an impact killed the dinosaurs was only presented in the 1980s, yet it is so widely accepted now, through lots of debate about evidence and other potential theories. There's still a lot that isn't known about these impacts, such as how they affected fauna and flora in prehistoric times, and if other records of impacts also exist in other mass extinctions. I hope to be able to learn more through research over this summer, and also learn more about the process of research in general.

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SAM CHIN

I am an older sibling, fencer, member of stage crew, and a junior at Bronx Science. My parents are both South Korean, and I am working towards learning the language on my own time. Both of my parents are doctors, and have been part of the reason I am interested in pursuing the Premedical track. This summer, I am looking forward to conducting research for my Regeneron research project, going on bike rides, and following my interests. In addition to commuting to a research lab multiple times each week, I will be teaching myself how to code with Python. Outside of academics, I try to spend my time with family and friends, and especially the senior friends who will be graduating from Bronx Science shortly. Through stage crew, I have found a family of my own to be myself

around and grown close with far more people than I had expected to. Our work backstage allows us to enjoy quiet moments as well as living off the adrenaline that comes with making theatre productions run smoothly. And when I am not helping out at stage crew by transporting chairs, using hot glue guns to fix any last-minute issues, or triple-checking spreadsheets, I love to fence. This is my second year on the school Varsity Girls' Fencing team, and when I have the time, I practice outside of school at a fencing club. I am grateful to Mr. Brunner for creating this program and allowing me the opportunity to access my research goals.

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SALWA CHOWDHURY

My name is Salwa Chowdhury and I am currently a junior at the Bronx High School of Science. I am part of the school's Speech and Debate team, along with the Science Olympiad team where I have competed on both the regional and national level, specifically in biology events such as Designer Genes and Protein Modeling. I have earned many awards in numerous competitions and divisions and have demonstrated leadership in the team through my role of Biology Subject director. My passion for science, however, goes beyond competing and leadership. I am currently in the Biology research program, where I research under the help of a mentor at Weill Cornell Medical College. I plan on conducting my own research this upcoming summer that will focus on neurodegenerative diseases like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's Disease and their pathologies. To add on, my passion for STEM is revealed in the accelerated courses I have taken thus far here at Bronx Science. I enjoy challenging myself in a way where I can gain and learn something new from every experience, which is what excites me the most about my passion for Science. Apart from that, I am also on the school's girls soccer team where I demonstrate teamwork and communication through my position of a midfielder. In my free time, I enjoy volunteering, whether it be for the Bronx Science Key Club or even tutoring underprivileged kids for an international non-profit organization.

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ADRIENNE CUI

Adrienne Cui is a junior at Bronx Science where she is actively involved in the astronomy club, the key club, premed club, a member of the National Honor Society and the Bronx Science varsity soccer team.

Adrienne is in the biology research program and is spending her summers working at Weill Cornell Medicine in the pathology department researching the effects of different drugs to cancer resistance in lymphoma. Her team's lab research was presented at the American Society of Hematology annual symposium last fall and won an abstract achievement award with the results published in Blood magazine.

In addition to her interests in biology, Adrienne has a

passion for astronomy and is the incoming

Co-President of the Bronx Science astronomy club. Adrienne will be using the support of the Brunner Award to attend the Alfred University Astronomy Summer Institute in Alfred, New York. The program is led by Alfred University's physics and astronomy faculty at the Stull Observatory, judged to be one of the best teaching observatories in the country. This is an opportunity she would not otherwise have in New York City and she's eager to bring back her learnings to The Bronx Science astronomy club. Outside of school, Adrienne has been active in Girl Scouts since elementary school having completed extensive community service projects. She is currently completing her Girl Scouts Gold Award focusing on the rehabilitation of Under the K park, a new park located In Greenpoint, Brooklyn. The park is adjacent to heavily contaminated Newtown Creek, one of New York City's four Superfund sites. Adrienne has been working with the North Brooklyn Parks Alliance to rejuvenate a large section of the park located under the Kosciusko bridge for the public. The project includes weeding, soil testing, composting, planting flowers and environmental education efforts. It's been an invaluable experience to see the transformation of her neighborhood's industrial development along with its current efforts to combat environmental pollution and improve the health and well being of its residents. Adrienne's other interests include classical piano, traveling, eating French pastries and discovering new food sites around New York City with her friends.

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SOPHIE D’HALLEWEYN

Sophie is a junior at the Bronx High School of Science. She has been a member of the Bronx Science Math Team for three years, excelling as a top scorer in the New York Mathematics League contests. Sophie actively participates in prestigious competitions such as the New York City Interscholastic Math League, TrinMaC, and Downtown Math Invitational. Outside of school, she conducts research at Stony Brook University's Engineering Department in collaboration with Professor Anatoly Frenkel and the Brookhaven National Laboratory. Her research focuses on the application of multitask machine learning to analyze X-ray absorption spectroscopy data of nanocatalysts. Alongside her academic pursuits, Sophie spends her time dancing, volunteering at the New York Botanical Garden, and

writing. She has been dancing since she was two years old and has made some of her closest friends at ballet. She also wrote, choreographed, and danced a performance of *Night at the Museum*, and most recently played the role of Alice in *Wonderland*. Sophie's creative spirit extends to writing as well, and her remarkable talent for poetry has earned her recognition as a Scholastic Medalist in poetry. She has also received other regional accolades, including the Writopia Essay Conference and the City College of New York High School Poetry Contest.

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VEERIKA DUBE

Veerika Dube, a rising senior at Bronx High School of Science, is a passionate advocate for eating disorders and youth policy advocacy. She is a part of the eating disorder youth policy advocacy team, STRIPPED, at Harvard T.H. Chan, where she actively works towards raising awareness and promoting positive change in the field. Since her freshman year, she has been an enthusiastic member of her high school orchestra, showcasing her talent on the viola. Beyond the school orchestra, she has also been a part of musical groups such as the Chamber Music Center Con Brio Orchestra, Bloomingdale Chamber Music and the Greater Westchester Youth Orchestra Association. Also, she is a member of her high school's Varsity Swimming team. Amidst her involvement in

music and swimming, Veerika has also nurtured a keen interest in research, particularly in the field of eating disorders. Specifically, she is fascinated by the relationship between the effect of eating disorders on the brain and the brain's production of white matter. To explore this research area further, she plans to collaborate with a researcher at Harvard University, analyzing food records filled out by study participants. Through this research, Veerika aims to identify specific dietary components that are altered in individuals with eating disorders and determine the importance of various dietary components for white matter health.

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CLAIRE ELKIN



Claire Elkin is a sophomore at the Bronx High School of Science and hopes to be a journalist in the future. She is a Staff Writer and Features Editor at Bronx Science's official newspaper, the Science Survey, and is also involved in various nonprofit organizations that work to spread youth journalism across the nation, including Headliners of Summer and the Youth Journalism Coalition. Claire is also an avid member of the Bronx Science Speech and Debate Congressional Squad, having competed in tournaments both locally and nationally. She is president of the Bronx Science Institute of Fashion club (BIF) and treasurer of the Bronx Science National Organization for Women (NOW) chapter. Outside of school, Claire spends a lot of her time playing classical guitar, which she has been involved with for almost eleven years. She spends her Saturdays at the Manhattan School of Music pre-college program where she works with a musical ensemble, studies music theory and ear training, and participates in private lessons. At the Manhattan School of Music, Claire has created a community outreach program organizing musical performances from MSM performance groups at schools, senior living residences, hospices, and other community centers throughout New York. She also volunteers at the Association to Benefit Children, working at their Upper East Side preschool, Cassidy's Place, a learning center focused on helping disadvantaged children with special needs. Through her community involvement, Claire has developed a strong passion for working toward solving societal issues, particularly those faced by New York City residents. She hopes to be able to use her journalistic work to urge others to think differently about how they view the world around them and inspire change.

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YASSER ESPINOZA-GUTIERREZ

My name is Yasser Espinoza-Gutierrez. Most of my family, including myself, is from Nicaragua, where I was born and stayed shortly before we moved to Los Angeles and, not too long after, the Bronx. Since I've lived practically my whole life in the United States, it's here that I've had all of my important life experiences and developed as a person. For instance, it was in LA living with some family that I grew to love baseball and even wanted to become a professional player, though this didn't last too long and, while I still love the sport, I never got into it nearly as much as my family there. Moreover, it's also here that I've received all of my education, from Pre-K in LA to elementary, middle, and, currently at Bronx Science, high school in New York. While I

can't say for sure when or how this happened, at some point during my younger years in the Bronx my passions shifted almost entirely toward aviation as I fell in love with the idea of man-made and piloted aircraft. Perhaps it was from my memory of flying to New York or just my gradually increasing love for science, but I do know that aviation is what dominates my current motivations and pursuits in life. Besides this, I also love things like music in forms like the guitar or trombone, though these still fall short of aviation. Regardless, I hope to make all of these things equally important aspects of my life as I continue to grow and pursue these passions.

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MALENA GALLETTO



Malena Galletto is a sixteen-year-old Argentine-American junior at Bronx Science. She is an incoming captain of the Speech and Debate team, secretary of the Multicultural Club, and member of the Student Diversity Committee.

Through the speech event, Oral Interpretation, Malena raises awareness of social issues such as the hardships faced by Latino first-generation Americans. As an upcoming leader, Malena encourages individuals to express their cultural identities. In the Social Science Research Track,

she studies the effects of linguisticide on

indigenous populations and the effectiveness of language revitalization efforts.

Outside of school, Malena is a ballet and tango dancer and volunteers at non-profits such as Friends of Argentine Tango, in an effort to help restore the Tango community in NYC, which was greatly affected by the pandemic. Malena is greatly interested in the preservation and celebration of cultures on the local, national, and international scale. She seeks to pursue a career where she will be able to enact change on the policy level to ensure that governments are not participating in the destruction of cultures, but instead actively fostering an environment that welcomes and allows all cultures to thrive. As such, Malena will spend this summer studying political science and international relations at Barnard College and Georgetown University's pre-college programs. She hopes to use these programs to explore the relationship .

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LUCAS GEERKEN

My name is Lucas Geerken and I am a sophomore at Bronx Science. I live in Manhattan with my parents and two siblings. My passions and interests include soccer, music, computers, history, and geopolitics. I play goalkeeper for the Bronx Science Varsity soccer team and a club team. I play guitar, I know how to build and repair computers, and I am a member of the Bronx Science Model UN team. In addition I am one of the founding members of the Bronx Science Geography Club. I also love to travel and get out of my comfort zone by immersing myself in new experiences and cultures. I even lived in Madrid for a year in 6th grade. All these different skills and

experiences make up who I am. Something that also makes up a big part of me is that I have an unusual ethnic background. My father is Puerto Rican and Cuban and my mother is South Indian. I have spent a lot of time with my family in Puerto Rico, but the last time I went to India I was four and I am overdue in reconnecting with my Indian roots. I want to volunteer in the Akanksha program to help kids in undeserved communities in Mumbai get a free and high-quality education. In the Mumbai slums, children face many barriers to school enrollment and drop out before graduation because of the economic pressure to contribute to their family income. Education is a powerful tool to help children secure better jobs in the future and improve the economic condition of their families. I applied to the Brunner Awards for this program because I feel these kids deserve a bright future and I want to help them reach their potential.

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ALEXANDRA GHILE

Alexandra Ghile is a rising sophomore at The Bronx High School of Science. She went to middle school at The 30th Avenue School, Q300, a highly competitive gifted and talented middle school. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, reading, writing, playing piano, and playing sports. She has always taken a liking towards humanities, whether it be in her English class in school or teams outside of school, such as debate teams. One of her hobbies is debate. She has been on a debate team for 3 years now, and not only has she had great success with it, but she's also enjoyed it. Another hobby that she would like to continue pursuing is journalism. As a result, she has qualified for the journalism class that she will be taking in her sophomore year, meaning she will get to write for the

Science Survey. Additionally, throughout middle school, she's always wanted to do creative writing, but she's struggled with finding the right words, as with any beginner writer. As she learns more about writing, she wants to use this writing for good. Writing is a powerful tool for self-expression, and the right words can make a big impact on people. She hopes to get involved in many more activities related to this, such as school journals, debate leadership, and teaching languages. In the future, she hopes to be a lawyer and to help people with the power of her voice.

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CHARLES GOLDFARB

Charlie Goldfarb is a rising junior at The Bronx High School of Science. Charlie has a passion for the study of Neuroscience and Psychology. His interest lies in the study of traumatic brain injuries and specifically understanding how the brain responds to unexpected events. In addition, Charlie is also interested in studying memory loss and how the brain helps to organize memory into meaning. He hopes to apply this knowledge to further advance research on cognitive development and neurological disorders. Charlie is in the Bronx Science Research Program with a focus on Neuroscience and Biology. He is also a member of the Psych and Neuro Club and participates in several other extracurricular clubs and activities. He enjoys sports, is a member of the Bronx Science Varsity Baseball team and plays flag football

Recreationally. Outside of school, Charlie is a Red Cross Certified Lifeguard, and he is also Red Cross Certified in First Aid, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Working at a summer camp, Charlie has been a leader in training (LIT), camp counselor and participates in numerous volunteer activities. He also enjoys swimming, playing video games and card games, and playing the piano. Charlie also enjoys spending time with his younger siblings, playing baseball and other games, or bicycling together with them. He is an avid reader of mystery novels and historical fiction, and he is a big fan of movies, particularly mysteries, spy movies, and action movies or films based on historical events.

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AGATHA GRAHAM

Agatha Graham, a sophomore at Bronx Science, is interested in the way people in different settings interact and specifically how they disagree and what can be done to ensure they do so amicably. This summer she will be doing action research to analyze and influence the way rural populations in two countries approach ideological conflict. Agatha is a social being by nature and enjoys appreciating the subtleties of human interactions while she is in the midst of them, whether in a debate round, the schoolyard, or the dinner table. Social science, she would say, is about understanding who we are and how we know each other, and ideally, how we improve as members of a just society. Last summer Agatha was a HOPP participant researching targeted inhibition in thyroid cancer treatments at Memorial Sloan Kettering in Dr. James Fagin's lab. Besides research Agatha is interested in following current events and reading The NY Times Ethicist column. When Agatha is not cracking trenchant social science conundrums she plays classical piano — particularly Chopin — and experiments with guitar. She has a penchant for harmonizing with songs and people she loves. Agatha is grateful for the funding and support the Brunner Prize provides and values the opportunity to contribute to social science research.

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JOYCE HAN

I'm Joyce Han, a current sophomore at the Bronx High School of Science. Some notable classes I have taken in sophomore year and will be as a junior include SUPA Forensic Science, AP Statistics, AP European History, APUSH, AP Language, AP Calculus BC, and AP Physics 1. I am passionate about applied statistics and am learning Python in my free time. Along with a 97% on my official freshman transcript, I also play the violin in our school orchestra. During my free time, I also participate in an orchestra outside where I am section leader and we perform annually at Lincoln Center. In school, I am the head manager of Bronx Science's JV Boys' Basketball team as well as a member of the Varsity

Girls' Wrestling team. Previously, I also managed the Boys' Cross Country team. I also enjoy giving back to my community and have had excellent opportunities to volunteer all around the city at places such as Night Nation Run NYC, the Annual HK Dragon Boat Festival in NY, and United Half NYRR, just to name a few. I recently had the opportunity to help at a Memorial Day Observance and was recognized by Council Member Sandra Ung. All of these team involvement experiences taught me invaluable cooperation and interpersonal skills that I can apply to any situation.

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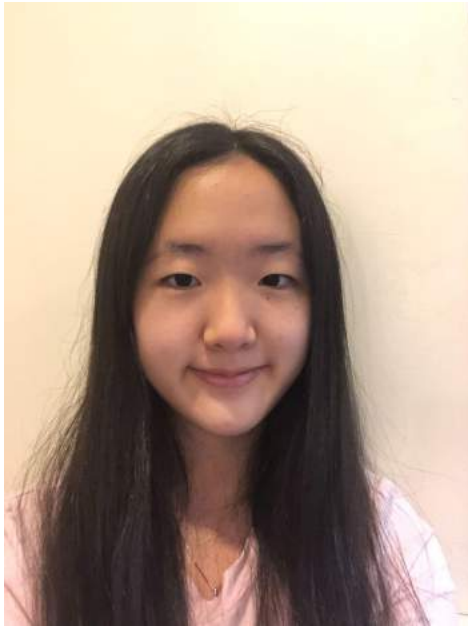


ALISON HUANG

Growing up in Queens, NY, Alison Huang has frequented the New York Hall of Science over the years, exploring the wonders of science and scientific inquiry. At home, Alison has been analyzing scientific concepts through her baking experiments, most of which have been remarkably successful. Her observations exposed her to several fragments of the intricacies of chemistry, inspiring her to pursue chemistry in Science Olympiad. She has been a part of the Science Olympiad community for over four years and has earned many medals for her work and dedication. Alison hopes to stay involved in Science Olympiad beyond her high school career at Bronx Science. Alison enjoys volunteering at Key Club events for the Bronx Science chapter across the city with her friends, as these events enable her to meet new

people and become a tourist in her own city. Besides exploring NYC, Alison appreciates the fine art of origami and folds cranes, among many other figures, to gift others. She also finds constructing 3D models using 3D printers incredibly intriguing and desires to conceive a practical usage for 3D-printed structures sometime in college. As a rising senior, Alison will continue to volunteer as a researcher this summer, experimenting with prostate-specific membrane antigens (PSMA) in order to help prove the effectiveness of PSMA as a prognostic indicator for prostate cancer at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Alison looks forward to working in person with her mentors and contributing to her lab's analyses and papers on a novel strategy for detecting prostate cancer.

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SHINYOUNG KANG

My name is Shinyoung Kang, a current junior at the Bronx High School of Science. I discovered my passion for robotics and engineering by joining the school's robotics team for all-girls and gender minorities named the Femaidens. During the meetings, I subconsciously found myself becoming louder and more energetic when tinkering with the tools to make our designs and CADs come to life as a human-sized robots. Through the experience, I learned the importance of knowing skills outside of engineering to make effective designs (after all, the robot won't move without programming and electronics). As I was already a part of the research class in school, I thought that joining a lab related to my new interest was the most effective way to learn about its real-life applications. I gained a spot as a research intern in a lab focused on robotics and computer science after reaching out to one of the professors at Cornell Tech. Since last summer, I've been acquiring skills useful in the lab by participating in their research about human-robot interaction. Ultimately, my desire to improve as an engineer by learning about its related fields developed into an interest in AI and human-robot interactions. I plan to delve deeper into the field by conducting my own research over the summer. Outside of research, I like to CAD keychains and figures for fun and sometimes 3D print. I am also a part of the school's orchestra and play the clarinet. I also love to watch Broadway shows such as Hamilton and The Phantom of the Opera!

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DAVID KATZMAN

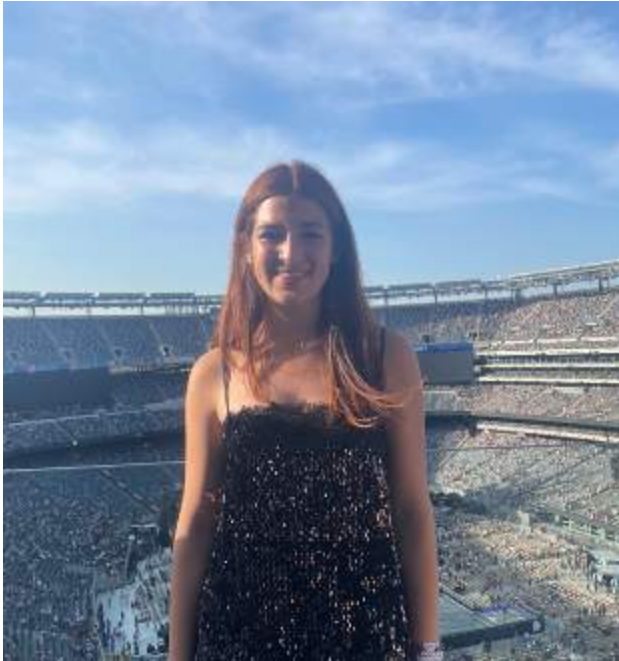
Hello, my name is David Katzman, a Sophomore at The Bronx High School of Science. Since childhood, I have always loved music, particularly classical music. For five years, I was a member of the Metropolitan Opera Children's Chorus, performing in many operas, some as a soloist. Exposed to some of the greatest performers in the world, in addition to playing the piano, as do my brother and father, I have been surrounded by music for as long as I can remember. This has led to me gaining a deep appreciation for the intricacies of music, along with what goes into producing a recital or a large-scale performance. Even though I am no longer at the Metropolitan Opera, I still

enjoy listening to classical music.

I have lived in the Bronx for most of my life, attending a Jewish day school here from nursery to eighth grade. I live with my parents and my older brother, along with my lovely cat Lacey, and our dog Snow. Almost every year, I visit my Berber family in Algeria. The Berbers are the original inhabitants of North Africa and have a rich history and culture. I have enjoyed learning about my Berber heritage.

In my free time, I enjoy playing tennis, the piano, video games, and reading. As history has been my favorite subject for many years, I have become involved with the History Club at school, gaining a leadership position as the Event and Meeting Coordinator.

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KATHERINE KENT

I am Katharine Kent, and I am currently a rising junior at the Bronx High School of Science. Outside of high school, I plan to go into medicine and make positive changes within biomedical sciences and research. I participate in the biology research program at Bronx Science, and over the summer, with the aid of the Brunner Award, I will be working in an upper extremity and nerve lab at Mount Sinai under the direction of the Chief of Orthopedic Surgery. When I was in middle school, I would spend my lunch period taking apart and putting back together one of those organ dolls in my science classroom and

inquiring about the different systems of the human body. Medicine is something that has interested me since a very young age, and I am incredibly lucky to be able to get a headstart in my pursuits so early on. Besides my academic interests, I love watching different genres of film and reading a good story. My favorite shows are probably Grey's Anatomy (of course) and New Girl. I also enjoy knitting and sewing clothes for myself and family and friends. At school, I am on the Varsity Swimming team and the Varsity Lacrosse team. Athletics are very important to me, and I always feel refreshed after a good workout. I also feel deep appreciation for the friendships I have created within these teams, and the effects they have had on me during high school. Over this summer, I am more than excited to dive into new experiences and learn amazing things about biomedicine.

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ANTHONY KIM



Anthony Kim is a motivated and ambitious high school student attending The Bronx High School of Science. As a second-generation Korean American, Anthony brings a unique perspective to his academic pursuits and extracurricular activities, striving to make a positive impact in his community and beyond.

Anthony's passion for law has driven him to gain practical experience through internships and teaching positions. Currently, he is interning at Hongik Acupuncture PC, where he has honed his organizational and communication skills. Additionally, Anthony shares his knowledge as a teacher at Saturday Korean School, inspiring a love for learning in his students. Academically, Anthony has consistently excelled, maintaining an impressive GPA at The Bronx High School of Science. He has also had the

opportunity to participate in prestigious programs such as the University of Michigan's Debate Program intercollegiate policy debate and the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth Students Summer Residential Program, where he achieved high honors. Outside the classroom, Anthony is actively engaged in various extracurricular activities. As a member of the Debate Team, he has showcased his oratory skills, achieving remarkable success at national tournaments and being recognized as a champion. Additionally, Anthony demonstrates leadership and discipline as a dedicated member of the Boy Scouts of America, and his black belt in Taekwondo reflects his commitment and perseverance. Anthony's commitment to serving his community is evident through his volunteer work. Whether assisting as an event coordinator on a church mission trip or teaching at organizations like Family Touch and Awana, Anthony consistently demonstrates compassion and a desire to make a difference. His accomplishments have not gone unnoticed, as Anthony has received numerous awards and accolades. Notably, he has been honored with the President's Volunteer Service Award, and he has received special recognition from elected officials such as Grace Meng and Assemblywoman Nily Rozic. Moreover, Anthony's academic prowess has been recognized through scholarships from esteemed organizations such as the Korean American Law Enforcement Council of Greater New York and the Korean-American Scientists and Engineers Association. With an unwavering dedication to his studies, extracurricular engagements, and community service, Anthony Kim is poised to continue his pursuit of excellence and make a significant impact in the legal field and beyond.

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DANIEL KIM

I am Daniel Kim! I am a sophomore at the Bronx High School of Science and I have a strong interest in learning about chemistry! I grew up in Queens, NY and I come from a Korean nationality. Aside from chemistry, I also enjoy classical music, key club/volunteering, and visiting places in Manhattan. I plan to spend the summer working in a chemistry lab at NYU, Manhattan. I also plan to take summer music lessons and do volunteer work all over New York City. I like to think of elements as people in chemistry. I like to think that each element is a different person with different personalities. Sodium would be an element that has an explosive personality as it's super reactive and helium would be an atom that would be an introverted person if it was a human. This makes chemistry and all its reactions so much more

interesting for me. I love volunteering and helping others as it makes me feel like I'm making a difference in such a large community. I am also a cohead of the biggest club in Bronx Science, which is key club. I manage to awards department which means helping the club get grants/money and helping the club and its members get awards. I find classical music to be the most exciting and emotional music. This is contrary to popular belief as most people believe rock music or rap music is. I believe that classical music has the perfect amount of emotion to make the listener feel a whole spectrum of emotions. Some pieces are intense and get your heart racing, while some make you feel tranquil and relaxed. Over the summer, the Brunner Award will help me greater my interest in all these things as well as put me on track for college. Thank you so much for awarding me a Brunner award!

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JONATHAN KWOK

Jonathan Kwok is a Junior at Bronx Science who is involved in various facets of school life. His vibrant personality and dedication have earned him a well-deserved reputation among his peers and teachers alike. Within the school premises, Jonathan is an active member of the Boys Varsity Lacrosse Team and participates in the sports debate club. Not limiting himself to sports and debates, Jonathan also holds memberships in the key club and the National Honor Society (NHS). Here he engages in community service projects and upholds the values of scholarship, leadership, and service. Outside of school, Jonathan's passion for self-improvement and his drive to explore diverse interests lead him to engage in a range of extracurricular activities. For the past few years, he has dedicated most of his time to tae-kwon-do and

piano. Beyond his own pursuits, Jonathan is committed to empowering and supporting others by devoting his time to assisting middle schoolers in preparing for the SHSAT. Jonathan also founded his very own volunteer branch for an organization called AYLUS. Based in Queens, this branch focuses on providing opportunities for individuals to engage in meaningful service projects, fostering a sense of responsibility and leadership among the youth. Jonathan's diverse involvement in academics, sports, community service, and extracurricular activities exemplifies his well-rounded personality and his commitment to personal growth, leadership, and service. He serves as an inspiration to his peers and a role model within his community, leaving a lasting impact wherever he goes.

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MADISON LEE

Madison Lee is a rising junior at Bronx High School of Science. She likes Math and Global History, but her favorite subject this year was AP Biology with an emphasis on proteomics, which led her to an upcoming internship at Shi Lab focusing on nanobodies for drug delivery this summer. She is excited to start this project and gain real-world experience this summer. Besides taking pride in creating color-coded study guides for her classes, Madison also enjoys doing theatre at Bronx Science where she was part of the sound crew. Despite the huge time commitment and late-night rehearsals, she is appreciative of the camaraderie and friendships formed through theatre. She started in her freshman year and

currently has four productions under her belt. Her favorite production was also the most recent, “Rent”. Outside of Bronx Science, Madison attends Sunday school as part of her weekly routine. As the oldest of four, she regularly has to babysit for her younger siblings. She loves playing with her 7-year-old sister, letting her sibling win regularly at Chutes and Ladders. During her spare time, she loves foodie outings with her friends and particularly with her parents (free food!). She also enjoys cooking and spending quiet afternoon picnics in her spare time. Madison hopes to pursue a career in bio-chemical engineering in the future particularly in research and development.

She also expresses her gratitude and thanks Mr. Brunner for creating this program.

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SOPHIA LIN

Sophia Lin is a rising sophomore at The Bronx High School of Science and has a strong passion for STEM. At Bronx Science, Sophia is an active member of the Speech and Debate Team and the Cybersecurity and Ethical Hacking Club. With these endeavors, she hopes to advance her communication skills while also developing her passion for computer science. Outside of her academic interests, Sophia is an avid artist and often spends her free time sketching intricate illustrations and sharing her creations with her family. Art allows her to express her creativity and provides a balance to her scientific pursuits. Sophia also enjoys engaging in sports such as badminton, basketball, and volleyball and playing competitively with her older sister. Her love for sports has taught her valuable lessons in teamwork and perseverance, which she has applied to aspects of her life. In addition, Sophia actively volunteers at the local

community center, where she shares her knowledge and mentors younger students in STEM-related subjects. By providing a helping hand, Sophia hopes to make a positive impact on these students and give back to her community. In the future, Sophia is determined to utilize technology to address real-world problems and improve people's lives. She envisions herself creating innovative solutions that have a tangible effect on society and aspires to pursue a career at the intersection of technology and social impact. She is eager to further enhance her passion for computer science and is grateful to the Brunner Awards for giving her the opportunity to do so.

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SURI LIN

Suri Lin is a rising senior at The Bronx High School of Science. Throughout her time here, she has possessed a passion for biology and a strong commitment to positively impacting her community. Suri is involved in the Biology Research Program, where she has been given a unique opportunity to conduct research at the Rajbhandari Lab at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Her research focuses on studying adipose-resident immune cells and their role in regulating adiposity, lipid mobilization, and thermogenesis. In school, Suri actively participates in the UNICEF Club and the Science Olympiad team to help other students foster their passions

in science. Outside of her academic endeavors, Suri finds joy in giving back to her community through volunteering. As an Education Intern and Discovery Guide at the Queens Botanical Garden, she dedicates her time to engaging with visitors, educating them on the fascinating relationship between biology and environmental science. Suri's curiosity extends to exploring how these disciplines intersect and impact the world around us. During her free time, Suri likes to spend time with her family, indulges in watching movies, and takes pleasure in cooking. Among her favorite dishes to prepare are General Tso's Chicken and the classic scallion pancakes. Suri finds the process of cooking both creative and fun, and sharing the delicious results with her family brings her great satisfaction. She is thrilled to be continuing her research and grateful to the Brunner Awards for giving her the opportunity to have an enriching summer experience.

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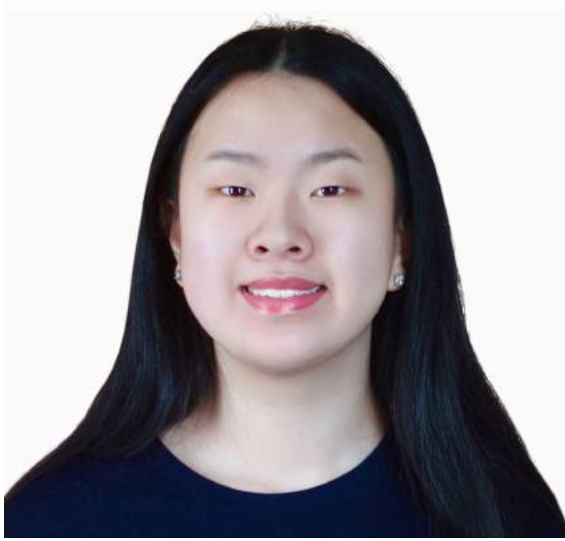
ENA LU

My name is Ena Lu and I am currently a high school student at The Bronx High School of Science. Out of the 4 main subjects in school, Math and Science is my favorite. It amazes me how everything has an explanation behind it. Ever since I was young, I've loved animals. Growing up, I've had many small pets. These include hermit crabs, birds, fishes, and turtles. Through the AP Biology course I took in my sophomore year, I learned about many aspects of nature. I loved the course and especially the Evolution/Ecology unit. I found Natural

Selection and the connections in nature extremely remarkable.

I am a social, outgoing, and determined person. I love to make friends and try new things. Some activities I enjoy doing include volunteering, ice skating, swimming, and playing the piano and violin. I've taken multiple music exams and one of the most difficult ones is the violin ABRSM Level 8 Exam that I passed in 8th grade. Even though my first year of high school was online due to the pandemic, that didn't stop me from trying out new things in my sophomore year. I am dedicated to the clubs I'm in which are Chamber Music Club, Badminton Club, and Key Club. I am the vice president of Badminton Club and the Awards Cohead of Key Club. I've received the Distinguished Key Clubber Award for the 2020-2021 service year. I am also in the Science Olympiad Team at Bronx Science. My teammate and I won 2nd place during the Lexington Competition for Anatomy and Physiology. In the future, I wish to have a high-paying job that is math or science-based.

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GRACE MAO

I was born in 2006 in Queens, New York. My father graduated from medical school and worked as a doctor, so science had always been a topic I was interested in. In elementary school and middle school, I enjoyed the hands-on experiments that were involved in my science classes. My parents also played a large role in my interests in STEM, as they often encouraged me to challenge myself with more difficult courses and participate in math competitions. Outside of school, my hobbies included drawing and reading. When I entered Bronx Science, my passion for science remained, but I also gained

an interest in writing, in particular, journalistic writing. I took a journalism class during the summer before my freshman year of high school. I really enjoyed the class and was inspired to take the journalism class at Bronx Science. Since then, I have been a writer for our school newspaper, The Science Survey, for 2 years and I plan on continuing the class next year as a senior. Going back to my STEM interests, I participated in a program called Biogen in Action during the fall of my sophomore year of high school, which sparked my interest in biotechnology and neuroscience. I also started the biology research program during sophomore year. The first year of the research program taught me invaluable lessons about collaboration and perseverance and gave me the opportunity to work in a lab over the summer. Over the summer, I started working on my independent research project with my mentor and I plan on continuing my research this summer and beginning my final research paper.

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TASNEEM MEEM



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Growing up in a Southeast Asian immigrant family, with parents whose aspirations for their children grow to be as large as our tummies during late Ramadan nights; Tasneem Meem strives to motivate the youth who are perhaps discouraged by their need to take significantly larger leaps in order to reach the same roads as everyone else. She pursues a future where minority groups can find education at the tips of their fingers, utilizing her role as a leader at Muslim Community Network to target the stereotypes and misconceptions about her culture and religion.

Currently, she dreams for this journey to begin with her involvement in the STEM field, mainly through her research with her mentor Dr. Rossella Falcone, who are both working towards understanding the intricacies of cognition and learning. Under Falcone's guidance, Tasneem has built a deep passion for research and aspires for her high school involvement in the sciences to take her far in the future.

As a rising senior at The Bronx High School of Science, she is involved in the school's Speech and Debate team, various clubs including MSA and HOSA, and is a producer for her school's student government video production team: Wolverine TV.

She mentally prepares herself for the approaching struggles of being a Muslim woman striving to work in STEM. But, whether it is spending hours reading published Nature Journal articles, spending her summer graphing data, or using her weekends to address educational inequalities, she hopes to pursue a career in the medical field and pave a path for the struggling youth she aspires to lead.

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SEBASTIAN MERKATZ

Sebastian Merkatz is a life-long New Yorker, passionate learner, and a Sophomore at Bronx Science. Outside of school, he enjoys hanging out with friends, playing with his puppy, Mabel, and spending time with family. Bronx Science has fostered numerous other interests for Sebastian, who is now a proud member of Science4Bronx, the school's external tutoring organization, secretary-elect of the Jewish Student Union, and the captain of JV Baseball.

In addition to these extracurriculars, Sebastian is pursuing interests in Government and Infrastructure both in and out of school. Since a young age, he has been fascinated by the inner workings of New York City, whether it be the subway system or the style of garbage cans on the street. Through his engaging history courses, research projects in English, and bridge-building projects in Computer Graphics, Bronx Science has provided Sebastian with many opportunities to become more knowledgeable and engaged in the Infrastructure field.

The Brunner Award has granted Sebastian the incredible opportunity to attend a conference on these very interests of city-building, and he couldn't be more excited and grateful for it. He is confident that this conference will give him the phenomenal chance to dive deeper into the field of Infrastructure, make valuable connections with those involved, and get a sense of what a professional career in urban planning may look like. This conference will also enable Sebastian to gain knowledge about fundamental city necessities in NYC, which will be helpful for his upcoming internships with City Councilman Shaun Abreu and Congressman Adriano Espalliat. He looks forward to the conference and is sincerely appreciative and excited for this opportunity.

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ZACHARY MERYN

Hello there! I am a 15-year-old student at the Bronx High School of Science, and I am really enthusiastic about the future. I've had a passion for teaching and engineering for many years. I always found science and math to be fascinating, even as a child growing up in the busy city of New York. I find myself fascinated by the way they explain the world we live in. I am particularly interested in engineering since it allows me to develop original answers to challenges that arise in everyday life. I enjoy taking on engineering tasks and challenges, and I'm always looking for methods to learn more. My aspirations go beyond engineering, though. Additionally, I have a strong desire to use my teaching abilities to change the world. I firmly think that education has the ability to improve

people's lives, and I want to contribute to that transformation. I've had the good fortune to step into the role of a peer tutor, imparting my expertise and assisting other students in getting over scholastic obstacles. Witnessing their development and success is immensely satisfying. I'm ready to seize any opportunity that presents itself as I start this wonderful high school journey.

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HEEWON MOON

My name is Heewon Moon and I am a rising senior at the Bronx High School of Science. I came to this school to get more opportunities in the science field as I want to become a doctor in the future. I have two brothers, one older and one younger, and my favorite hobby is knitting. I love to knit clothes but occasionally, I also sew and crochet. I also play Korean instruments professionally! I started to play because of my grandma, and have been playing them for 12 years. I also swim, play soccer, and do taekwondo. This school has offered me the chance and experience to help me on my path to become a doctor. I currently study cardiology at NYU Langone through the biology research class at Bronx Science. I will continue my research as it finds a correlation between air pollution and heart disease. I

hope to help redlined areas decrease their risk of developing Coronary Artery Disease with researching air filters and their effects! It is a lot of fun, and gives me hands-on experience with clinical trials and meeting patients. Coming to Bronx Science has strengthened and redefined my career choice in the future.

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MAHBUBA RAHMAN

Mahia Rahman is a rising senior at The Bronx High School of Science and is part of the biology research program. She hopes to pursue her interest in cellular biology and oncology research. Last summer, Mahia interned at Mount Sinai in the oncology and hematology department; this is where she learned and solidified her desire to pursue and continue conducting research in the future. This summer, Mahia will return to the Sidi lab in Mount Sinai and continue her project on drug screenings for cancer therapeutics. Mahia hopes to learn more about

conducting research professionally, how small molecules profoundly affect the body, and how to present her work to a crowd. Last year Mahia also volunteered around her neighborhood in food banks, park cleanups, and tutoring, which she hopes to continue this summer with the help of the Brunner Award. This summer with the help of the brunner awards Mahia hopes to expand her volunteer service and help out at larger communities and reach more people. During her free time, Mahia likes exploring new neighborhoods, taking pictures, and baking. She's excited for this summer and cannot wait to see all she can accomplish. Mahia is incredibly grateful for the Brunner Awards and the Bronx Science Alumni Foundation; with the generous support of the Brunner Awards, Mahia will pursue her passions and get one step closer to accomplishing her goal of having a meaningful impact in the field of research.

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ISHA SARKER

Hi, my name is Isha Sarkar and I am a junior at Bronx Science. My interests include listening to music, playing basketball with my friends, reading novels, and coding. I like walking in parks and visiting museums as well. In addition, I really love to sing even though it gets pretty boring reciting the same notes repeatedly every evening as assigned by my vocal teacher. But that's not the only thing I use my voice for. I am also part of Bronx Science's Speech and Debate

team. I am in Extemporaneous speaking, which specializes in speaking on the spot on a topic that you are given only thirty minutes to research on the day of the tournament. And of course, the prize goes to the competitor with the best speech presented in excellent tone, diction, flow, articulation and projection. So, you may think I was absolutely terrified when signing up for this team and you may be right. Surprisingly, I think that's why I chose it because I wanted to excel at it. I came a long way since when I first started and Extemporaneous debate is not so scary anymore. Debate made me realize I want a career in leadership and advocacy because I want to impact people. Law school is still a couple of years from now so I am still focusing on exploring my passions. In the end, I hope the experiences I gain at Bronx Science help me shape into a better and more confident person.

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AYSHI SEN

Ayshi Sen is a rising senior at Bronx Science and is passionate about science and public health. Ayshi is a part of the Bronx Science research program and is looking forward to spending her summer working on her own research project with Human Pluripotent Stem Cells at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. This summer, with the help of the aid from the Brunner Award, Ayshi will be able to continue traveling to her lab and learning more about stem cells and the latest advancements in biotechnology. Outside of the lab,

Ayshi explores her many interests through writing. Ayshi is an editor-in-chief for the Bronx Science Newspaper, The Science Survey, and enjoys writing about everything ranging from editorials to album reviews. In her junior year, Ayshi also helped co-found the Bronx Science Law Journal, which gave her the opportunity to learn more about the intersection between science, medicine, and law. As a part of the Pre-Medical Society's editorial team, Ayshi explores scientific writing by highlighting recent medical news. Ayshi believes that everyone deserves to feel included and comfortable in the environments they are in. She is on the cabinet of the Bronx Science Student Diversity Committee and loves facilitating initiatives and events such as inviting guest speakers and expanding the committee's outreach via social media. Ayshi hopes to use her experiences in science, writing, and advocacy to create a tangible impact on the community. In the future, Ayshi plans to study medicine and continue conducting scientific research.

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KEVIN SI

Hi! My name is Kevin Si and I am a rising senior at Bronx Science. I was born in New York City, but moved around quite a bit as a child, having lived in Pennsylvania and Texas as well. I now live in Queens. I have two older sisters, both of whom also attended Bronx Science. I am fluent in Mandarin Chinese, and I am currently learning Japanese at Bronx Science. Growing up, I took Tae Kwon Do and violin lessons. I still continue these extracurriculars today, and they have played a role in my experience at Bronx Science. I am a member of the Bronx Science Orchestra as well as the Martial Arts Culture Club. I am also a part of the Lunar Club, where I am a member of the lion dance team. Aside from these activities, I have a passion for fitness and love to workout in my free time. In school, I have a big interest in science and medicine. I've taken several of the Advanced Placement science courses offered at Bronx Science, and I hope to attend medical school in the future. This summer, I will be conducting research on Alzheimer's Disease at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai as well as volunteering at the New York Presbyterian Queens hospital.

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JOHN SMITHIE



I'm a sophomore, on the Varsity Soccer team, and I'm also on the Moot Court/Mock Trial team. I'm very passionate about animals and environmental conservation. Since I was little, I've always loved and been curious about that ocean and the waterways that surround the five boroughs. I'm interested in sustainability, and this is what got me involved in the Billion Oyster Project, which seeks to restore the oyster population and habitat into the New York Harbor, something crucial for clean water and biodiversity. Since I've been working on the oysters, I've seen dolphins, big fish, and seahorses, as well as crabs who grow up in the oyster cages, but then end up too big to get out. I've involved many of my friends from Bronx Science in the project, to help me clean and take scientific measurements of the oysters. Some of them have also, like me, intend to be trained to be community scientists. I hope to add an environmental club focused on New York City and its habitats, and the challenges they face, to the Bronx Science extracurriculars next year.

Although I was born in Boston, I have grown up in New York City since the age of three. My grandmother Elizabeth Grossmann('54) and older sister Alexandra Smithie('22) also graduated from Bronx Science, and I always hoped to attend. I have always been an avid athlete, and I am also on a regional soccer travel team. I hope someday to study environmental issues and sustainability in college.

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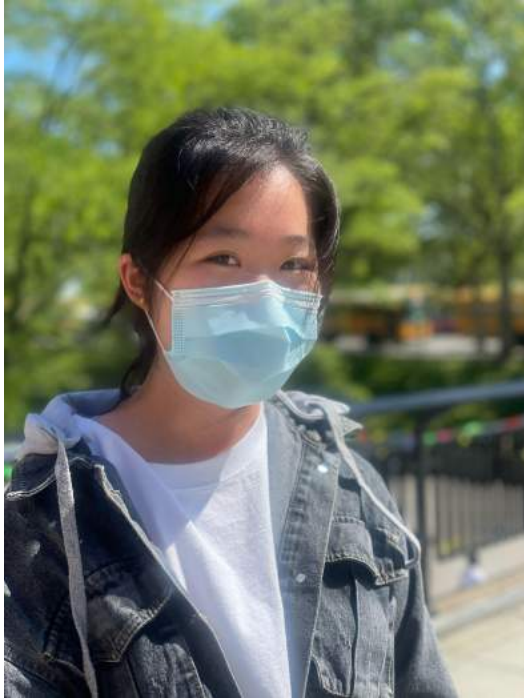


JUNJIN TAN

Hello! My name is Junjin Tan, and I am currently a junior attending the Bronx High School of Science. I've lived in Queens my whole life and absolutely love the neighborhood. It's wonderful being able to enjoy the suburbs while still being just a short train ride away from the bustling city. I feel grateful to have a comfortable life with my parents and three older siblings. Since childhood, I've had a wide range of interests and hobbies. I've always been a creative person with a deep fascination for the arts. Music is a particular passion of mine—I've been playing the clarinet for six years and the saxophone for two years. I also enjoy exploring various genres of music in my free time. When it comes to visual arts, I appreciate

both traditional and digital forms. However, digital media holds a special place for me as it allows me to freely express myself without worrying about the availability of art supplies. Another area close to my heart is community service and volunteering. As an active member of Key Club, I find immense joy in helping others. Apart from academic pursuits, I spend my time at home playing video games, engaging in sports, going shopping, and hanging out with friends. Ultimately, my aspiration is to create something that has a significant impact on others or the world.

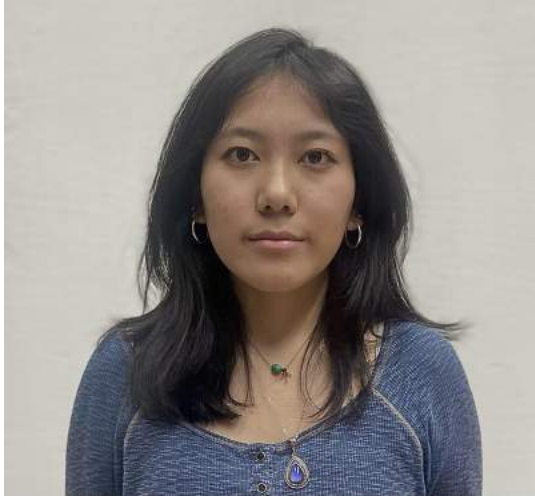
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VICKY TANG

My name is Vicky Tang and I'm a rising senior at The Bronx High School of Science. I've always taken an interest in finding out more about the world around me (resulting in a few dismantled toys and watches). When looking for high schools, the research program the school has been running immediately stood out to me. In fact, it's the main reason why I enrolled at this school. The past few years have been enjoyable for me as I've found my own place at Bronx Science: in the school's Lincoln Douglas debate squad, in the school's orchestra, in the National Honor Society, and in the biology research program. Not all my time is spent at school though, even if it may feel like it during autumn. In my free time outside, I love watching videos from channels like Defunctland, playing games with friends, and cross-stitching. As I'm entering my final year of high school, I want to spend it to its fullest and without regrets. This summer, I'll be finishing up my biology research project and getting ready for the multitude of deadlines that I'll be experiencing during the summer. With the Brunner Award, I can further enjoy and focus on conducting my research, learning more about how the epidermal tissue layer reacts to vesicants. Even with the heavy workload that I see ahead of me, I'm excited to close out this period of my life with a bang. For that reason, I'm grateful to receive the Brunner Award.

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TENZIN TSEPHEL

Tenzin Tsephe is a rising senior at the Bronx High School of Science and is incredibly thankful to Mr. Brunner for his generous, continuous support. In school Tenzin is an active, enthusiastic member of variety of clubs and is on board for DECA, S!NG, and Mental Health Association club! In her free time she enjoys reading mindfulness books, and watching The Big Bang Theory. This summer, she intends to volunteer at NYTSC (New York Tibetan Service Center) as a front desk worker and as a returning

teacher's assistant. As an individual planning to commit to studying business administration in college, Tenzin feels this step in her life is immensely beneficial to her future line of work. She volunteered at NYTSC last summer, and remembers the Metro-card fees being quite mighty and unappealing. This year, she feels she can contentedly volunteer without having to fret about travel fees, it sets her mind at ease and lets her focus on the necessary tasks at hand. She wants to give a warm thanks to Mr. Brunner for helping thousands of individuals each year pursue their goals and aspirations, single-handedly producing meaningful change in the lives of these young adults. She feels this opportunity is one she couldn't have found anywhere else and is tremendously grateful to the Mr. Brunner, The Brunner Committee, and the Bronx High School Of Science. She intends to fully utilize the funds kindly provided to her and promises to commit to excellence.

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EUAN VILLANUEVA

My name is Euan Villanueva, and I am an 11th grade student at Bronx Science. Generally going with the flow, I am a person that generally tends to spend life exploring it physically, primarily through nature and animals. I have 3 pets in the form of a fish, dog, and tortoise, and take great pride in taking care of them. I also love to play sports and am a pretty competitive person. This live for nature and physical exercise is why I am choosing to do my research on spotted lantern flies, something that has the potential to destroy these sources of life. Now, although I do love being outside, this does not mean I do not have any modern sources of enjoyment as well. As any kind of teen, I love playing and being competitive in videogames. I

also do enjoy playing videogames by myself however, in games such as Minecraft and mmorpgs. I just love the interaction with others.

It is also an important thing to note that I have epilepsy, a neurological disease that makes it difficult to study for long periods of time without seizing. Luckily I have learned to pace myself accordingly so that this does not happen, however some things such as not being able to have caffeine too much still make me hurt inside. Otherwise, I have a supporting family that helped me get through the first seizure, something that scared them more than me as I only felt tired. Now, I have learned to get through my epilepsy and really not let it take a huge toll on me. My mom usually takes the most care of me, as she constantly reminds me to take my medication and to lay off the computer, which seems to be a double edged sword. Although my life had changed a lot, I have learned to adapt and make the most of what I have now, even if school has some extra steps.

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GRACE WANG

My name is Grace Wang, and I'm a rising junior at the Bronx High School of Science. Four fun facts about me are that I enjoy watching various horror games, my favorite animals are cats, I have a habit of not falling asleep on time, and I'm a member of the Bronx Science Wrestling team: having joined in the 2022-2023 Boys season as a manager and the 2023 Girls' season as a wrestler. I definitely plan on trying out for the Boys'

season again next winter, and I hope by then I will be a better wrestler. Before having joined the team in my sophomore year, I would mostly aimlessly stay late at school in order to avoid being bored, so I'm very thankful for having been given a purpose by joining. Outside of school, I love sitting in a local café or library to study and read. Another hobby I have is solving boxed murder mystery puzzles with my friends. I also love to try baking with friends, despite having no talent whatsoever for the craft and a defunct oven at home. Besides all of that, I am also a part of the biology research program hosted at Bronx Science, where I will be using public transportation over the summer to reach my lab. I'm really grateful to the Brunner Awards and the Bronx Science Alumni Foundation for funding this unique opportunity for me to gain real experience in a laboratory setting, which I am excited to experience.

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JOANNA XU

My name is Joanna Xu and I'm currently a rising junior at the Bronx High School of Science. I'm passionate about science, literature, and learning. My favorite subject is biology, with English being a close second. At school, my favorite extracurricular is wrestling, having been committed to the sport since my freshman year. Outside of school, I enjoy a variety of activities such as running, traveling, and eating good food. From spring to fall, I often volunteer with other members of the community at the Billion Oyster Project to clean up New York Harbor. This summer I will be doing immunology research at The Icahn School at Mount Sinai, but in my free time I will be compiling a photo portfolio with pictures of different organisms, ranging from tiny, microscopic organisms to insects, birds, and other

animals. This summer I hope to travel a lot, photographing animals in parks and nature preserves found all over the state of New York. I believe this project will allow me to learn more about the world around me and expose me to experiences I've never had before.

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YIWEN XU

My name is Yiwen Xu. I am currently a sophomore in the Bronx High School of Science. I am in the speech squad of the speech and debate team. In my freshman year, I was inspired by a Ted Talk about pseudoarchaeology by Sarah Kurnick. So I did my speech based on that pseudoarchaeology Ted Talk which explained how pseudoarchaeology is detrimental to archeology and society. This sparked my interest in anthropology. In addition, during quarantine, I was bored at home. And I thought it would be a good idea to visit the numerous free museums in New York City. I was impressed by the countless artifacts in those museums. Thus, I applied to

the anthropology department in the universities in New York city this year for my biology research course. Luckily, after writing not that many emails, I was permitted to go to a research laboratory in New York University where researchers study prehistoric tool making. I will be spending my summer there, learning how to conduct authentic research which I am excited about. Other than that, I have been a regular participant in Bronx Science key club and baking club since my freshman year. In my free time, I like to watch movies for entertainment and draw for relaxation. I am not always sure about my future career. But I am grateful for the Brunner Award giving me the opportunity to explore the career as an anthropologist and a science researcher.

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DESARA ZEJNATI



I was born on June 1st, 2006 From an early age, it was clear that I had a hanker for knowledge and determination.

My journey began in New York City where I was born and raised by my family: a first generation of immigrants from Albania although neither of my parents had attended college they provided a supportive environment for my education. My family played a crucial role in fostering a love for learning and encouraged me to pursue my interests. A factor that I think helped develop my independence and ability to take on a challenge was that my parents had spoken little to no English at all so I've doubled as

their daughter and their mobile translator since I was 6. From letters in the mail to forms needing to be filled out, to conversations with people, I tried to explain information to my parents which sometimes required me needing to have an understanding of the information on my own which was a challenge at times especially when I was young and had yet to know what 'ssn' stood for. However, it pushed me at length I'm thankful for today since those moments taught me From an early age how to rely on connect clues and make connections.

My earlier years in school had been less than ideal. I had been quite behind the other students in class in terms of spelling and grammar and I rarely got the chance to get help with my homework. However, along the road, I slowly but surely adapted eventually. I started to crave competitive environments during middle school and had especially found an interest in stem fields. Today my main focus is phycology and neurology and I hope to expand in these fields in the future and give back to my parents what they have given me.

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NICOLE ZHEN



My name is Nicole Zhen, and I'm in 10th grade. I was born on June 19, 2007, in New York City. My hobbies are reading graphic novels and listening to music. My favorite ice cream flavors are strawberry and cookies and cream. I have two younger sisters that are twins, and they are five years younger than I am.

I learned a lot throughout my life. For example, when I was younger I was invited to a pool party but I did not know how to swim. After that party, I enrolled in swimming lessons. I eventually learned how to swim and my swimming instructor taught me how to flip in the water. At first, it was difficult, and I felt left behind because everyone else was getting the hang of it. However, after a ton of practice with the help of my teacher, I finally learned how to flip and it was a ton of fun. This showed me that through perseverance I could accomplish my goals.

Just like how I persevered to learn how to flip in the water, I worked hard to get into Bronx Science. It was not all fun, but through my perseverance, I achieved my goal, and went to the school I wanted. Moreover, I am thankful for my parents who helped push me to become the person I am today. Without their support, I would have never had swimming lessons to learn a new sport and skills, or have the opportunity to learn more, and be able to get into the school I set my eyes on.

2023 Brunner Award Recipients



NICOLE ZHU

My name is Nicole, and I'm currently a senior at The Bronx High School of Science. As an active member of the school community, I enjoy being involved in various extracurricular activities. For instance, I actively participate in the school's speech and debate team, which has proven instrumental in enhancing my public speaking abilities and critical thinking skills.

Additionally, I take pride in being a member of the varsity softball team, where I have gained valuable insights into the significance of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. Furthermore, I am privileged to work as a research intern at the Fisher Lab, located within at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. My lab conducts research on molecular cell biology, with a specific focus on the regulation of cell division and gene expression. Over the

summer, I had the opportunity to get hands-on experience working at the lab and learn various crucial lab techniques. This opportunity has allowed me to immerse myself in the fascinating world of scientific discovery and also allow me to experience what a job would be like working in this field. This summer, I will be working alongside my mentors to conduct my own research project. Aside from my academic pursuits, I enjoy working as a volunteer. During the summer, I dedicate my time to tutoring middle school students in preparation for the SHSAT, equipping them with the necessary tools and knowledge for success. When I'm not occupied with school or my research, I enjoy playing basketball, sewing, and crafting jewelry. .

2023 Brunner Award Recipients



LILY ZUFALL

Lily Zufall is currently a junior at Bronx Science, and is a part of the biology research program. She has been interested in climate change and the environment for years, and upon entering the research program knew she wanted to learn more about these topics. Her Brunner Award funding will go to purchasing the necessary supplies for conducting her research, which looks into the relationships between biodiversity, native plant life, and water quality. On top of the research program, Lily is also an editor for the Science Survey and loves writing articles for the paper. Some of her favorite pieces she's written have been

deep dives into parts of New York history, and she loves exploring the city, whether it's for a story or just for fun. Nearest and dearest to her heart, however, is running, and the Bronx Science girls track team. As a three season athlete and team captain, she is drawn to the daily challenge of the sport and team aspect of what seems from the outside to be an individual sport. Whether going for a long run with her teammates to destress after a day of school, working together to get through a hard workout, or cheering for one another at a competition, track (and the Bronx Science team specifically) have played a huge role in Lily's Bronx Science experience. She plans to bring the determination and dedication she usually brings to running and her other activities to her research this summer, and she's excited to see what she finds out!