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Brief Investigations



Genes to Genomes

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Congratulations to the Fall 2023 Undergraduate Travel Awardees!

By [Editorial Staff](#) on January 10, 2024



To promote excellence in undergraduate research and education, GSA established the [Undergraduate Travel Award](#), which supports travel costs for undergraduate members who are presenting at and attending a GSA conference.

**THIS MONTH'S
JOURNALS**

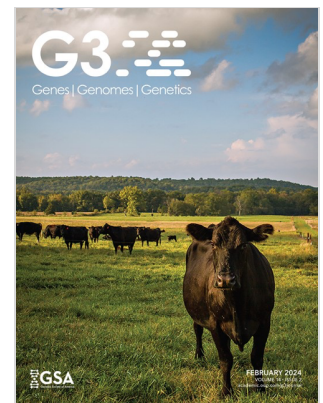
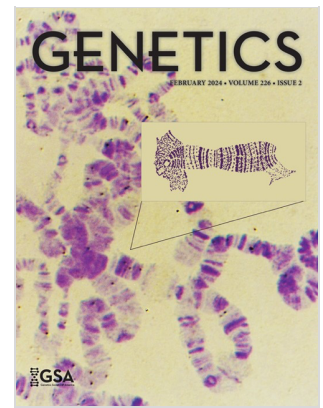
Congratulations to the 2023 awardees!



Trace Ackley

Truman State University

I genetically modify roundworms to help us better understand the sperm maturation process.



Morgan Apolonio

University of California, Berkeley

I research the possible correlation between long intergenic non-coding RNA (lincRNA) and tocopherol (Vitamin E) abundance in maize using Genome Wide Association Studies and Transcriptome Wide Association Studies.





Nkechinye Baadi

Colby College

My research focuses on studying the role of the gene MMS21 in DNA damage repair and response pathways in *S. Cerevisiae*.



CeOnna Battle

Christopher Newport University

My research examines the connection between gut health and the aging process of the muscles and the brain using *D. melanogaster*.



Dimitrios Bikas

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

I interrogate the roles of KMT2C and KMT2D in chondrocyte differentiation and subsequent bone formation.

Joseph Butler

University of Western Ontario

My research pertains to genomic signature analysis using machine learning tools.

Jacqueline Cho

Brown University

My current research interests revolve around understanding how genetic variations impact sleep mechanisms and contribute to sleep disturbances. To explore this, I am employing the model organism *C.*

elegans to investigate the role of GOA-1—a gene encoding a G-protein alpha(o) subunit involved in G-protein signaling complexes — in sleep.

Arthur (Araceli) Colunga

University of Massachusetts, Lowell

I examine phenotypes arising from epigenetic modifications in the model *C. elegans* using immunofluorescence assays.

Lydia Cruce

Grand Valley State University

The research I am involved with is determining the in vivo role of the AANATL-7 gene in histamine metabolism and effects on the male reproductive system in *Drosophila*.

Ismael Curiel

Elmhurst University

We assessed the development of the nerve ring in GFP tagged *C. elegans* by measuring the expression levels of ADM-4 after incubation at 28 degrees Celsius.

Jayden Cyrus

Duke University

This project explores the role of various proteins, like Draper and Spastin, in neurodegeneration.

Madeline Daniel

Lewis and Clark College

I study the pathways of formation of lysosome-related organelles in the developing *C. elegans* embryo.

Leah Ding

Austin College

The PGM2 gene in yeast helps manage sugar levels and calcium balance which is crucial for many biological functions. Without PGM2, cells grow slower and struggle with maintaining proper calcium levels. I am currently investigating a relatively unexplored gene, YDL206W, to see how it might be connected to these problems and whether it could teach us more about similar issues in humans.

Julinette Gines-Garcia

Goucher College

We are using zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) to study the cell cycle dynamics of Müller glial cells in retinal neuron regeneration.

Lexis Grandel

College of the Holy Cross

I am in an undergraduate research lab that uses fruit flies to study how glia, a cell type in the brain, modulate seizure susceptibility.

Rutuja Gupte

University of Wisconsin, Madison

I study the effects of mutations on the fitness of haploid and diploid yeast.

Reiley Heffern

University of Missouri, Columbia

I am currently investigating the genetic basis of learning and memory skills in *D. melanogaster*.

Tapasya Katta

University of Alabama, Birmingham

I am using yeast as a model organism to identify genes that play a role in the escape of mitochondrial DNA.

Iris Kazzi

West Chester University

I am currently exploring novel Intracellular Pathogen Response Triggers in *C. elegans* and analyzing the impact of ethanol on intestinal permeability and its implications for innate immunity in humans.

Eleanor Laufer

University of Oregon

My research investigates the evolutionary fitness of interacting genes which contribute to drug resistance in the model system *C. elegans*. We use novel genetic engineering and ultra large populations to track fitness over several generations.

Nicolas Lee

University of Oregon

I am characterizing mutations that affect the heat tolerance of proteins in *C. elegans* cells responsible for reproduction.

Siqi (April) Li

New York University

My project aims to generate cell-type-specific genetic tools to study *Drosophila* neuronal development in the optic lobe.

Cheung Li

Colby College

My research focuses on deciphering the genetic interactions between the C-terminus of MMS21 and RAD5, two genes vital to the DNA damage response and repair system of budding yeast.

Kayla Ly

University of California, Irvine

My research aims to discover novel genes contributing to transposable element-mediated heterochromatin formation in *D. melanogaster*.

Jennifer Madu

Emmanuel College

I am investigating GEF and GTPase function in the mitotic exit network in *S. cerevisiae* by further analyzing the impact mutated MEN proteins has on regulation and activation of growth

Sergio Moreira-Antepara

Cornell University

I use genetic approaches to study the regulation of body size and BMP signaling in *C. elegans*.

Mai Tien Nguyen

Colorado College

My research looks at the inventory of inner kinetochore proteins in budding yeasts, which are important for accurate chromosome segregation. This offers insights into the coevolution of centromeric DNA sequences and associated proteins, providing directions for future experimental work in the lab.

Mara Stout

Morehead State University

I am investigating linear versus circular chromosome structure during cellular division.

Mingyang Tang

Bryn Mawr College

My research strives to understand how changes in DNA chemistry affect gene expression, specifically the mechanisms responsible for establishing and maintaining these chemical modifications.

Erika Tsukamoto

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

I am investigating the mechanism of maternal mRNA clearance during the oocyte-to-embryo transition in *C. elegans*.

Zoe Upham

San Jose State University

I am investigating how the cells that form the intestinal lining coordinate themselves to create a hollow tube capable of digestion, and I am specifically interested in understanding the roles of two highly conserved proteins, PAR-1/MARK and UBA-2/UBA2, in this process.

Peri Wivell

George Washington University

My research involves studying the role of macrophage populations during development and in diseases of the prostate.

◆ Awards & Prizes, Early Career Scientists, Fundamental Research, TAGC, TAGC 2024

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Congratulations to the Fall 2023 DeLill Nasser Awardees!

GSA is pleased to announce the recipients of the DeLill Nasser Award for Professional Development in Genetics for Fall 2023! Given twice a year to graduate students and postdoctoral researchers, DeLill Nasser Awards support attendance at meetings and laboratory courses. The award is named in honor of DeLill Nasser, a long-time GSA supporter and National Science Foundation...



Congratulations, Spring 2024 Victoria Finnerty Travel Award recipients!

The Victoria Finnerty Travel Award supports conference-attendance costs for undergraduate GSA members who presented research at the Annual Drosophila Research Conference. #Dros24 will be held in conjunction with other model organism meetings at TAGC 2024 in the Washington, DC, metro area and online from March 6–10, 2024. Victoria Finnerty, who died in February 2011, was...



New GSA program offers up to \$2,000 microgrants year round

GSA announces a new funding opportunity for members. In the ever-evolving landscape of scientific research, access to funding is often a significant hurdle for scientists and researchers. Recognizing our membership's potential to create change and the need for funding, GSA has developed a new initiative: the Starter Culture Microgrant Program. Use funds to design your...

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