

SIGHTS and SOUNDS

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT EDITION
DECEMBER 2024



COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION

LAMAR UNIVERSITY

– NEWSLETTER –

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Can't Miss This!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Our Fall 2024 Graduates

Keilah Siyon Baaheth
Maddison Briann Bean
Arlinda Suzanna Boland
Kathleen Elise Bourgeois
JR Burrs
Mitchell C. Caldwell
Rebeca Nohemi Casanova
Ana Isabel Chavez
Benjamin H Choate
Craig Coyle
Jason Allen Drude
Micah Ray Elms
Kevin Espinoza
Jenna Lynn Garrison
Zachary C Guidry
Leslie Hernandez
Dorothy Julia Hill
Joseph Frederick Hobbs
Curtis Lee Jackson Jr.
Taylor Morgan Justice
Kyndall LeeAnn Kelley
Sonia Sarla Khurana
Hailey Brenna Kimler
Tavaurus James King
Shira Katz Kirsh
Kaleb Christopher Knight
Elena Claire Larsen
Asia T Lattimore
Darby Layton
Deric J Lewis
Tranisha Bre'Shae McClyde
Vera Lanell McDonald
Katherine Ann McGrew

Katherine Ann McGrew
Ervin Eric McMillen Jr.
Ty'Kiesha Kiara Meeks
Robyn Ann Merkel Walsh
Sterling Renee Miller
Cameron Hunter Montgomery
Sherry Diane Pedersen
Celeste Michelle Pena
Keyaira Monique Pugh
Erin Michelle Puttee
Judith Adriana Ramirez
Kiareliz Daylee Ramos
Kaitlyn Marie Rice
Gavin Allen Robertson
Joyce Robinson
Tony B. Romeo
Jaramiah Rosalez
Rylee Savannah Saltz
Selena Blanca Santana
Aubrie Michelle Self
Patrick Joseph Sonnier
Jeremy Storost
Dillon Ross Talbert
Brithany Theriot
Angela Gallegos Macias Timmer
Gabriela Valiente
Madisyn Paige Valka
Saul Samuel Ventura
Jennifer Villarreal
Helen Jestina West-Harp
Errol-Evikin Anthony White
Avery Celeste Williams
Khrystal Woodson

Hello!

I am Golden Wright, privileged to serve as the Dean of the College of Fine Arts & Communication at Lamar University. Our college is a dynamic hub housing an array of talented individuals, including students, staff, and faculty. Through this monthly newsletter, we aim to shine a spotlight on the exceptional achievements of these individuals across various disciplines within the fine arts and communication fields.

Our college boasts an exceptional student body, each pursuing their passions in fields ranging from artistry to speech language pathology, interpretation, and performance. Student success will always be our core mission here in the College of Fine Art & Communication. In this issue, we would like to take the opportunity to introduce some of our vibrant and talented students to you. These students represent come from an array of different areas and disciplines across our college.

At the heart of our college is the profound connectivity we foster among students, faculty, and staff through the common thread of communication. Each distinct area within our college relies on communication in its own unique way. Communication serves as the cornerstone of each departments' success within the college.

From the multifaceted realm of communication and media, utilizing mediums such as television, radio, social media, and newspapers to disseminate information, to the evocative storytelling of music majors who convey emotions and narratives through voice or instruments. From the invaluable contributions of speech and hearing sciences, enhancing our ability to communicate effectively, and improving our quality of life, to the empowering field of deaf studies, which enables individuals to serve as vital mediators in communication. The immersive experiences offered by theatre and dance provide an escape from reality through the interplay of movement and text. And lastly, the visual eloquence of art captures moments and places, transporting us to new dimensions and inspiring our imagination.

We hope this newsletter illuminates all of the possibilities that our College provides. We are immensely grateful for the unwavering support of our surrounding community, which generously provides funding for scholarships, new equipment, and invaluable learning opportunities. Thank you!

“THE BEST KEPT SECRET...”



Golden Wright

College of Fine Arts & Communication, Dean



VISIONS UNVEILED

Each semester the graduating students from the Department of Art & Design create a full body of work to display in the Dishman Art Museum to culminate their educational pursuits. This semester's thesis show, titled, "Visions Unveiled," will be on display in the Gallery from December 6th through December 14th and will feature works from Brithany Theriot (Studio Art – Painting), Hailey Kimler (Studio Art – Drawing), Leslie Hernandez (Studio Art – Painting), Benjamin Choate (Graphic Design), Asia Lattimore (Graphic Design), Alex Williams (Studio Art – Drawing), Gabriela Valiente (Graphic Design), Jenna Garrison (Graphic Design), Judith Ramirez (Studio Art – Photography), Zach Guidry (Graphic Design).

"Each semester is a new and interesting group, it's always exciting for me to see what each group comes up with. These are all young, contemporary artists who respond to their cultural surroundings and work incredibly hard to put on a good show," says Prince V. Thomas, Professor in the Department of Art & Design.

Please join us for the closing reception on December 12rd from 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM and get a chance to meet with our wonderful student artists! Read more about some of our student artists below and on page 5...



Meet Brithany! Brithany is pursuing a B.F.A. in Studio Art – Painting. This four-piece series contains paintings with 3D elements. Brithany's work focuses on the oppression of the Deaf community and hopes to shine a light on their struggles and experiences. *"As a Deaf person, I was able to be inspired by Deaf Artists and their experiences,"* says Brithany.

Meet Gabriela! Gabriela is pursuing a B.F.A. in Graphic Design. Gabriela has created a brand campaign for a Mexican Street Food – Food Truck called ‘Pancha’s.’ She will have three posters displayed that show the pattern design, menu boards and the wrap on the truck. She will also display her digital brand guide and stickers.



Meet Jenna! Jenna is pursuing a B.F.A. in Graphic Design. Jenna’s project is a series of four illustrated book covers along with marketing materials. *“This project is based off a previous ‘world-building project’ I had worked on for another course,” says Jenna. “When I take a step back and realize all that I’ve accomplished, it’s so rewarding.”*



Meet Asia! Asia is pursuing a B.F.A. in Graphic Design. She has designed a 24 page art book titled, “Macchiato,” featuring 10 unique illustrations. She will also have keychains, posters and stickers. *“After finishing the project, I feel a sense of relief and satisfaction,” says Asia.*



Meet Leslie! Leslie is pursuing a B.F.A. in Studio Art – Painting. Leslie’s oil paintings focus on mental health and how they connect to thyroid disorders. *“I really wanted to shine a light on the struggle, suffering, pain and frustration that come along with these experiences,” says Leslie.*



Meet Hailey! Hailey is pursuing a B.F.A. in Studio Art - Drawing. Hailey has spent the semester designing a nine-page comic book with original characters titled, “Grimskull”. The worlds and styles of “Grimskull” are inspired by the extremely popular tabletop game, Dungeons and Dragons. *“Seeing it all come together is extremely gratifying,” says Hailey.*



Meet Judith! Judith is pursuing a B.F.A. in Studio Art – Photography. Here 8 works are photographic collages that deal with themes like surrender and personal faith. *“I think it’s rewarding to use my gift, not only for thesis, but for what comes beyond graduation,” says Judith.*





BROADCASTING and *Beyond...*

Meet Kami! Originally from New Providence, Bahamas, Kami moved to the Southeast Texas area when she was six years old. Kami is a graduate from East Chambers High School in Winnie, Texas and is pursuing her B.S. in Communications with an emphasis in Broadcasting.

Kami hasn't always had her sights set on Broadcasting, or the Communications field. *"I was dead set on becoming an accountant. It wasn't until I took an accounting class in high school that I realized it wasn't for me,"* says Kami. On a whim, she took an online quiz, which is what pushed her into pursuing a career in Broadcasting. *"I'm so grateful for stumbling upon that quiz,"* says Kami.

Kami is involved with the University Press and LUTV in addition to working at the Student Setzer Center and her local Dairy Queen. *"I never say no to any opportunity,"* says Kami.

Although her focus is in Broadcasting, Kami serves as a staff writer for the University Press. *"It's not enough to tell the news, you have to be able to write the news,"* says Kami. Stephan Malick, Instructor, encouraged her to write for the University Press after reading some of the papers she wrote for his class. Kami is extremely interested in multi-media communications; working at the University Press helps her foster that passion. *"I don't want to tie myself down to just Broadcasting. I want to be well rounded,"* says Kami.

Kami is looking to find an internship over the summer with hopes of building relationships and networking so she can graduate with a fulfilling career.

The College of Fine Arts & Communication looks forward to hearing more from Kami in the University Press, on LUTV, and more as she continues her academic journey at Lamar University.



Global Perspectives

The Department of Deaf Studies & Deaf Education is proud to introduce two international graduate students: Francis Mbisso and Cristophorus Budidharma

Meet Francis! Francis is from Tanzania, where he received his Bachelors degree. Completing his degree proved to be difficult, because he was the only Deaf member of his class, and resources for Deaf individuals were limited.

Post-graduation, Francis, began teaching high school level accounting classes, which eventually became a nine year career in education.

Interested in pursuing the discipline of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, Francis decided to travel abroad and obtain his Master's degree at the Rochester Institute of Technology. *"I wanted to show my country that Deaf people CAN do everything. You can have a great education as a Deaf student,"* says Francis.

During his time at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Francis met David Meek, a Visiting Assistant Professor and Alumni of Lamar University. It was through David Meek that Francis found Lamar University. Francis explained that after meeting with some of the Lamar faculty, he knew that he would be in good hands. *"I can be involved and have access all of the time,"* he explains. The Department has designated interpreters, Deaf faculty, and ensures access for all of their students. The University also provides many opportunities and options for international students. *"The program really supports international students. It's not easy studying abroad. But Lamar offers tuition waivers, graduate assistant opportunities, and more,"* says Francis.

Francis is now pursuing his Ed.D. in Deaf Studies and Deaf Education.

Post-graduation, Francis plans to return home to Tanzania and work alongside the government. Upon returning home to Tanzania, Francis will be the only Deaf individual in the entire country to have a doctoral degree. He hopes to use this to his advantage to advocate for better resources and access for other Deaf students in his home country. *"I have friends and professors here in the USA, but I have an entire community back in Tanzania that I can support,"* he says.

Francis plans to stay in contact with the Lamar University faculty and help build a connection between the two countries for research and presentation opportunities.



Meet Cristo! Cristo is from Indonesia and originally had dreams of pursuing an education in medicine. Cristo fought for over a year to pursue a degree in Biology and Chemistry, because Cristo was always told Cristo couldn't because Cristo was Deaf. During Cristo's time in school, sign language interpreters were not always available, and even if they were, "they're all volunteers," Cristo explained. The lack of access made it extremely difficult, but nonetheless, Cristo succeeded. To finish Cristo's degree, Cristo looked for options outside of Indonesia. After extensive research, time and energy spent, Cristo found a good match.

Cristo, like Francis, also attended the Rochester Institute of Technology. "It was my first time in the USA. I was surprised to see Deaf Professors that had their Ph.D., Deaf physicians, Deaf lawyers, certified and trained sign language interpreters; we don't have any of that in Indonesia," says Cristo. "It's amazing that Deaf Americans have this level of access, because it's not common in other countries."

Cristo graduated from RIT, Magna Cum Laude, with his Bachelors's degree in Biomedical Sciences. Post-graduation, Cristo looked for job opportunities, but was overlooked for others with graduate degrees. Cristo ended up having to return to Indonesia. For five years Cristo searched for scholarship opportunities and graduate programs in the USA with little luck. About to give

up, Cristo had a friend do a tarot reading. During this reading, the tarot reader explained that Cristo was too focused on Anatomy and the medical field. "The tarot reader said, 'All the scholarships out there are for YOU, but not for Anatomy.'" The tarot reader explained that in two to three months, someone would reach out with a scholarship opportunity for a Master program that leads into a Doctoral program. And funnily enough, three months later, he was approached by a Lamar University professor, Sean Hauschildt, with a scholarship opportunity for the graduate program in the Department of Deaf Studies & Deaf Education. "Sometimes the universe just knows," says Cristo.

After finishing Cristo's Master program, Cristo plans to join the Doctoral program in the Department. Cristo's future goals include becoming an educator and role model in Indonesia with the goal of increasing the number of scholars in the Deaf community. When Cristo returns to Indonesia, Cristo will be one of three Deaf individuals with a Doctoral degree. Cristo also hopes to set up a foundation for the Deaf children of Indonesia so they can have access to a high-quality education.

We are so proud of both of these wonderful students. Thank you both for choosing Lamar University. It can be difficult to be away from your home country, but just know that you always have a home in the College of Fine Arts & Communication.



sliding in SYNC

Meet The Lamar University Trombone Quartet!

Comprised of four of the trombone studios' finest performers, Austin Muñoz (B.A. in Music), Micah Elms (B.M. Music Education), Hunter Wood (B.M. Music Performance), and Kevin Espinoza (B.M. Music Education), this quartet has had many wonderful opportunities to perform under the direction of Dr. Tim Dueppen, Associate Professor of Music.

This past May, The Lamar University Trombone Quartet was invited to perform at the 2024 International Trombone Festival hosted by Dave Begnoche at Texas Christian University in Ft. Worth, TX. This annual conference features performances by invited guest artists and ensembles from around the world. The Lamar University Trombone Quartet was one of the lucky, chosen groups given this opportunity; performing on the same stage as student ensembles from major conservatories and music schools from around the world.

The group rehearsed tirelessly throughout the 2023-2024 academic year; creating a full-length show titled, "New Horizons," featuring a diverse array of works that highlight their personal journeys. The quartet showcased "New

Horizons" at numerous schools in the Southeast Texas region, in many concerts, and at the annual Southeast Texas Trombone Festival prior to performing at the Festival.

In addition to performing at the Festival, the quartet also participated in educational clinics and presentations; opportunities which are invaluable to their educational journeys.

Each member of this ensemble has worked with each other over the course of their time at Lamar University. They each have different backgrounds, viewpoints, and skillsets. Together, these differences make the quartet stronger, with each performer offering their own unique skills and visions to benefit the group as a whole. "New Horizons" represents a culmination of four years of musical, social, and academic growth by the Lamar University Trombone Quartet.

The College of Fine Arts & Communication would like to thank these young gentlemen for their dedication to their studies and to the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music. We look forward to hearing much more of their work!



COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION

LAMAR UNIVERSITY

Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences



Labs to Leadership

Meet Andrea! Andrea Galindo is a graduate student in the Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences, pursuing her Doctor of Audiology.

Originally from McAllen, Texas, Andrea received her B.S. in Communication Sciences and Disorders from University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley. After completing her bachelor's degree, she knew she wanted to continue to graduate school, but she wanted to stay in Texas, making Lamar University a perfect fit. *"It was difficult to be somewhere you've never been before," says Andrea. "Luckily, I have a friend from the University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley who started the program here at Lamar University with me. It was nice to know at least one person so I wouldn't feel quite so alone in this new town."*

Andrea has completed a variety of research projects during her time here at Lamar. One of her favorite projects involved researching the FNIRS cap, which is used to measure changes in hemodynamics. Their research involved using this technology to determine the correlation of blood pressure and inner ear-motion sickness. This research was presented at the NASA Expo.

Her new research project involves the P300 test; which measures brainwaves. The goal of this project is to test musicians and see if they can notice slight sound changes, due to their extensive training, and if that reflects in their brainwaves.

During her time at Lamar University, Andrea has worked in the Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences under the direction of Dr. Lilian Felipe, Associate Professor, Dr. Raul Prezas, Associate Professor, and Alexandra Simeonides-Bernard, Administrative Coordinator. After working in the main office for the Department, Andrea was presented with the opportunity to work in the Dean's Office for the College of Fine Arts & Communication. *"It's nice to see how the Dean works and how he establishes relationships with others. He's set an example of what it means to be a leader. I want to be like him," says Andrea. "I also look to my other coworkers. Carol Lindsey, Senior Administrative Coordinator, is so organized. It's helped me implement organization into my personal and school lives."*

Andrea believes that all her work and school experience at Lamar University has strengthened her communication skills and prepared her for entering the workforce. Andrea has been looking into different clinics for future employment; she aspires to work in pediatrics. We are so proud of Andrea and all her accomplishments. We look forward to hearing great things from her!





A LEAP OF FAITH



Meet Tranisha! Tranisha is a graduating senior, pursuing her B.S. in Theatre and Dance with an emphasis in Dance. Originally from Houston, Texas, Tranisha began dancing in middle school, but her passion only grew as she entered High School and joined the drill team. She found Lamar through an officer camp she attended with M.A. Dance. *"I saw that Lamar had a good dance program. Not many schools have Dance majors," she explains.*

Tranisha began her educational journey at Lamar University during COVID, which meant that her original audition for the program was done virtually. *"I sent over a video of my senior solo from competition. It was so exciting to learn I was accepted into the program," she says.*

During Tranisha's first semester, she was often very quiet and reserved, but she quickly began to make friends and let her personality shine through. *"I've made some of my best friends here at Lamar," she says.*

Most recently, you may have seen Tranisha perform in last spring's 'Dance Unleashed,' in the Proud Mary number, which she touts as her favorite performance. She was also featured in multiple dances in this semester's 'Fall and Recovery,' where she continued to showcase her dazzling personality. Tranisha would like to thank Lou Arrington, Instructor of Dance, *"Mrs. Lou was the first person to cast me here, which really helped to grow a close relationship with her," she explains.* She would also like to thank Amy Elizabeth, Assistant Professor of Dance, *"She worked very hard to get me out of my shell. I appreciate her so much."*

Post-graduation, Tranisha aspires to teach the youth to appreciate and practice the art of dance as a public-school teacher. All of us in the College of Fine Arts & Communication are so proud of Tranisha and look forward to seeing her future successes.

sculpting SUCCESS



Meet Ila! Ila is a recent graduate of the Department of Art & Design, obtaining her B.F.A. in Studio Art – Sculpture this past summer. Ila has been working for the Dishman Art Museum since June.

"I feel like working at the Dishman is an incredible stepping stone for me and my career," says Ila. In addition to secretarial duties, Ila has opportunities to assist with the installation process, including getting the chance to arrange Professor Xenia Fedorchenko's work in the Faculty Exhibition this fall. *"I love it when artists allow the gallery to decide how to hang the work, because it provides opportunities for us to learn and be creative,"* says Ila. She also runs the Dishman Art Museum's social media accounts which has allowed her to explore elements of graphic design.

One of Ila's favorite aspects of her job at the Dishman is getting a chance to interact with professional artists, as she aspires to be one herself. *"It's always wonderful to get to meet the artists behind the artwork,"* says Ila, who got to meet Patrick Patterson after creating labels and collaborating on installation for his exhibition "To Live."

Ila's next steps include moving to Houston and searching for gallery jobs. She eventually wants to attend Colorado State University to obtain her M.F.A. in Sculpture. Ila believes that the Thesis requirement at Lamar University has prepared her for graduate school and has helped make her a competitive applicant. *"Thesis was so rewarding. It was such a valuable experience,"* says Ila. Her mixed media installation, "Dear Diary," explored the transition from girlhood to womanhood in a patriarchal society. To learn more about this project, visit lamar.edu/art

We would like to thank Ila for her continued dedication to the Dishman Art Museum and look forward to seeing what she accomplishes in her career.



from STUDIO *to* STATION

Meet Kenzie! Kenzie is a Studio Art – Drawing major, McNair Scholar and student worker at both the Department of Art & Design and, most recently, KVLU.

In the Spring of 2024, Kenzie was presented with the opportunity to interview Dr. Stephanie Chadwick, Chair of the Department of Art & Design, for the radio station's program, 'On Campus.' Upon entering the studio, Kenzie, who has a passion for music, was taken aback by the walls of CDs and knew that she had to join the team.

Kenzie hosts 'State of the Art,' a program that discusses local art and what happens behind the scenes. For this program, she has been able to interview Dennis Kiel, director of the Dishman Art Museum, current Lamar University Art & Design students, and other influential members of the Southeast Texas art community. To catch this program, tune into 91.3 KVLU at 7:50 A.M. on Friday mornings.

Inspired by the work she's done at KVLU, Kenzie has considered the possibility of starting a podcast with her friends that centers around all things art.

As Kenzie enters her final semester at Lamar University, she's considering what the future holds for her. "I would love to go into environmental design," she explains. When asked how KVLU has prepared her to enter the work force, Kenzie explains, "I think working at KVLU has made me more comfortable talking about what it is that I do, especially what I do well. It's allowed me to build confidence." She also believes that working for KVLU has been a wonderful networking experience for her. She recently interviewed Randall Ensley, an artist who had a solo exhibition at The Art Studio Inc. "He gave me one of his prints!" she said, excitedly. She hopes that her passion for music and art continues to fuel her interest in radio. "I would love to have public radio continue to be a part of my life," she says.

All of us in the College of Fine Art & Communication would like to wish Kenzie the best of luck as she finishes her education at Lamar University. We look forward to seeing what she accomplishes in the future!

CAN'T MISS THIS!

DEC 6

Messiah

St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica

7:30 PM

JAN 31

Collage

Susan and Jimmy Simmons Music Building

7:00 PM

DEC 6 — DEC 14

Senior Thesis Exhibition: Visions Unveiled

Dishman Art Museum

JAN 18 — MAR 8

Evita Tezeno: Piece of My Heart

Dishman Art Museum

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 30, 6:30-8:30PM

FEB 13 — FEB 15

The Self-Destruction of Emma James

Studio Theatre

lamar.edu/lutdix

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FOR EVENTS IN THE
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7:00 P.M.

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