

2023-24 Presidential Scholars

Kayla Andersen	Madolley Donzo	Jordyn Grady	Nicole Kemmett	Xander Michaels
Gianna Minnuto	Mack Ogden	Noé Stephens	Allyson Surowick	Julia Wallace

Kayla Andersen is a dual Applied Physics and Sustainability Studies major with a minor in Mathematics. Alongside her studies, she has participated in international research groups for engineering through New York University, Indian Institute of Technology - Mandi, and Reutlingen University in Germany. Kayla has held positions as an intern of the Office of Sustainability to lead the on-campus composting program, a laboratory instructor and undergraduate researcher for the Department of Physics and Astronomy, and an assistant in the 3D Experimental Space on campus. In 2022, Kayla and her teammates received grant funding through the Student Ambassador program for their project “Harvesting Sustainable Energy.” She is currently a mentor for the NSF/G-STEM Program and Department of Physics and Astronomy, president of the Rotaract Club, co-president of the Grow STEM Club, a member of the Phi Beta Kappa, Golden Key, and Phi Eta Sigma Honor Societies, and plays in the Geneseo Jazz Ensemble. Kayla has presented her work at three GREAT Day sessions, a departmental colloquium, and to board members of the non-profit organization she works with, Nomadic Earth Architecture. After Geneseo, Kayla hopes to continue her studies in sustainable engineering abroad.

Madolley Donzo is a dual major in Psychology and English. When she isn’t workshopping writing pieces or learning about how behavior, cognition, and emotions influence individuals, she can be found in Putnam Hall, where she serves as the Resident Assistant of Wellness (RAW) this semester. In this role, she will be able to use what she has learned in her psychology major, as well as her internship with Lauderdale Health and Counseling Services during the Spring of 2023 to provide her peers with an in-depth understanding of wellness, well-being, and health—physically and mentally. Outside of this, Madolley will also continue to serve as a Student Involvement Mentor for the Student Life department, where she helps students learn about and get involved around the Geneseo campus, while also providing technical assistance to clubs and organizations. Following graduation, Madolley hopes to attend a master’s program in school psychology.

Jordyn Grady is a double major in History and International Relations and double minor in political science and anthropology. Jordyn (“Jo”) is President of History Club, a racer for the Ski Team, member of Alpha Phi Omega (co-ed service fraternity), and member of Phi Alpha Theta (history honor society). Jo has served as the history department student representative (‘22-‘23) and will be completing a history honors thesis this upcoming year. Jo has studied international relations at U.N. Agencies in Geneva, Switzerland and also spent 5 weeks in Huaraz as part of an ethnographic research team studying anthropological issues in rural Peru. Jo is the founder of two businesses, an international video game development company and as a freelance photographer. Her artist portfolio can be found at @jogradyp photography on Instagram or jordyngradyp photography.com. Jo loves to be outside hiking, skiing, or rock climbing. Since 2022, she has solo traveled in 15 countries to learn about and document the world’s people, landscapes, history, and culture through her photography.

Nicole Kemmett is a Political Science and English double major with a minor in the Edgar Fellows Honors Program. On campus, she is the co-President of Pride Alliance, President of Alpha Delta Epsilon, an Admissions Intern and Tour Guide, Orientation Leader, and works at the CIT Help Desk. Some of her other involvements have included being a Teaching Assistant for Political Science 251: Political Analysis and serving as a student representative for three years on the campus’s LGBTQ+ Working Group. She is part of multiple honor societies, including Phi Beta Kappa – the oldest academic honor society in the United States – Pi Sigma Alpha and Sigma Tau Delta for Political Science and English, respectively. During her senior year, she will be working on her capstone project, which will compare and analyze LGBTQ+ rights in the United States and Russia. After graduation, she plans to go abroad for her Ph.D. in Political Science.

Xander Michaels is a Biochemistry major with minors in Biomathematics and the Edgar Fellows Honors Program. He conducts research with Dr. Ruel McKnight centered around G4-quadruplex DNA; Xander has presented the results of this project at local, regional, and national conferences. Entering his second year as an Assistant Residence Director (ARD), Xander has both the role of a Resident Assistant (RA) and supporting the other RAs in the residence hall. In addition, Xander serves as a subcommittee chair of the Bio-Diversity Committee in the Biology department. Through

this committee, Xander co-authored the paper titled “Re-imagining student-faculty relationships: Strengthening social justice efforts through dialogue” in hopes of detailing how other institutions may form like-minded departmental committees. Xander is also a biostatistics teaching assistant (TA), lead tour guide, chemistry mentor, and member of club volleyball. In the future, he seeks to attend dental school in hopes of becoming an orthodontist.

Gianna Minnuto is a Biology major with minors in Spanish and the Edgar Fellows Honors Program. Gianna has worked in Dr. Jani Lewis’s research lab since Fall 2021 to investigate quiescence using a vulvar cancer cell line as a model system. She has presented this research at GREAT Day events in 2022 and 2023 as well as the American Association for Cancer Research Annual Meeting 2023 in Orlando, FL. During the summer of 2023, Gianna continued her research experience at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center (Seattle, WA) in their Basic Sciences Division. Gianna has also tutored the Principles of Genetics course since Fall 2021 and currently serves on the Biology Assessment Committee. Outside of the classroom, she is a member of the Undergraduate Student Senate and the President of Alpha Sigma Tau, a national sorority. Gianna is also a Tour Guide and Intern with the Office of Admissions where she implemented and currently oversees the Knight for a Day program. Finally, Gianna is a member of TriBeta National Biological Honor Society and Phi Beta Kappa. Following her graduation from SUNY Geneseo, she hopes to continue her career by attending medical school to become a physician.

Mack Ogden is a Biochemistry major with a minor in Mathematics. He is an Undergraduate Lab Instructor for general Biology and is also a mentor in the Chemistry Department High School Mentorship Program. Mack is the Vice President of the Gamma Sigma Epsilon honor society for chemistry and is also a member of the Beta Beta Beta biological honor society. He participates in research in Dr. Jani Lewis’s lab studying vulvar cancer cell cycle progression and protein expression and has presented research at both the American Association for Cancer Research annual conference and Geneseo’s GREAT Day. He is also a member of Alpha Phi Omega, a service fraternity and frequently volunteer on SUNY Geneseo’s campus and in the surrounding community. After graduation, Mack plans on pursuing a career in medicine.

Noé Stephens is a dual Biology and Spanish major interested in pursuing a career in medicine. During his time at Geneseo, he has gained a true passion for the Spanish language and has participated in a nine-week-long study abroad program in Cusco Perú. On campus, Noé conducts research with Dr. Travis Bailey, is a member of the biodiversity committee, is the president of the medical fraternity Phi Delta Epsilon, and helped tutor Organic Chemistry I as a Supplemental Instructor. Outside of campus, Noé is an EMT for the Geneseo Fire Department. During his free time, he loves to travel and spend time with his two dogs Trixie and Lilly. If you want to find Noé on campus, you can always recognize him by his blue baseball cap. Noé is currently in the process of applying to medical school and hopes to one day achieve his dream of becoming a physician.

Allyson Surowick is a Neuroscience major preparing for a career in clinical medicine. She conducts research in Behavioral Neurotoxicology with Dr. Vincent Markowski which focuses on the longitudinal effects of prenatal and perinatal exposure to a variety of psychoactive drugs. Allyson presented her research at GREAT Day 2023 and received the Geneseo Foundation’s Undergraduate Full-time Summer Fellowship to continue research examining the effects of THC exposure on particular neurotransmitters and brain structures. She also serves as a Neuroscience Student Ambassador at Accepted Knights Day, informing potential students about Psychology and Neuroscience programs and how to get involved at the college. In addition to her academics, she is a leader on the Indoor and Outdoor Geneseo Track and Field teams. Allyson gives back to the community outside of Geneseo as a volunteer at Rochester General Hospital’s Inpatient Psychiatric Unit and Mental Health Crisis Center. After graduation, she plans to pursue a degree in nursing to later become a nurse practitioner in hopes to better the lives of many.

Julia Wallace is a Sociology major with a minor in Spanish. She is a two-year captain of the Women’s Volleyball team at Geneseo. Julia represents her team as a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. She has served as a Student-Athlete Mentor for first-year student-athletes for three semesters and will continue to do so during her Senior year. Julia also acts as a Co-Student Chair of the Athletics Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee; she has been a part of the committee since it was created during her sophomore year. Julia has also acted as the student-liaison for the Intercollegiate Athletics Advisory Board (IAAB). During the spring semester of her sophomore year, she was a teaching assistant for Dr. Eisenberg’s Intro to Sociology course. Julia is also currently studying abroad in Cádiz, Spain studying Spanish for six weeks in the Summer of 2023.