

**University Achievement
Award**

Lily Derr

Travis Nolan

Erik "EJ" Rorem

**University Award for
Outstanding Scholar**

Keely McNeme

Seniors:

Elina Bougas

Lexi Eid

Brittney Hutchison

Jim Kays

Avery Nesson

Lindsey Philips

Laura Wildman

Juniors:

Caden Arras

Aisha Aslam

Ella Dabney

Caleigh Daugherty

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Kristen Edwards

Paige Edwards

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Sofia Goff

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Anne Hulme

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Ben Perry

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Anna Su

Jane Margaret Turner

Sophomores:

Gabriel Mongaras

Marcos Zertuche

Anna Kelley Zielke

Robert Stewart Hyer Society 30 April 2023

Awardees:

University Achievement Award

Lily Derr, a Dallas, Texas native, is triple-majoring in Mathematics, Political Science, and Public Policy, with minors in Environmental Engineering and Public Policy & International Affairs. At SMU, Lily is a Tower Scholar, a Dedman College Scholar, a Pre-Law Scholar, a Grand Challenges Scholar, a Provost Scholar, a Millwee Scholar, a Discovery Scholar, an Undergraduate Research Assistant, and an Engaged Learning Fellow. She is a member of the University Honors Program, where she serves as Chair of the University Honors Program Student Advisory Council and as the Student Representative on the Faculty Advisory Council. She is the Undergraduate Representative on the President's Commission on the Status of Women at SMU and next year she will serve as the Student Member of the SMU Board of Trustees Academic Policy, Planning & Management Committee.

Travis Nolan is a junior-year Dedman scholar, majoring in Earth Sciences with minors in Biological Sciences and Applied Physiology. His research currently focuses on the locomotion of tetrapods from the Lower Permian of West Texas, through the lens of geometric morphometrics. After graduating from SMU, he intends to pursue a PhD in paleontology, before looking for a research and fieldwork position with a natural history museum. Beyond formal education, he is an origami artist, and was honored last year to receive the first-place prize in the own-design category of the International Origami Internet Olympiad.

Erik "EJ" Rorem is a double-major in Political Science and Statistical Science with a minor in Public Policy and International Affairs. EJ is a member of the Dedman and Tower Scholars Programs here at SMU as well as a recipient of the Sumners Foundation's At-Large Scholarship. During his time at SMU, EJ has interned at the Fusion Industry Association in Washington, D.C., worked as a Copy Editor at the Hilltopics Honors Magazine, served as President of the Upper Division Housing Community Council, and volunteered to tutor elementary school children through Mustangs for Hope and the student-led organization Language Partners. This year, EJ was awarded both the U.S. State Department's Critical Language Scholarship and the U.S. Defense Department's Boren Scholarship, which support study abroad opportunities related to key foreign languages (EJ also participated in the Critical Language Scholarship Program virtually in the Summer of 2021). EJ will be going to Dushanbe, Tajikistan this summer to study the Persian language and he hopes to research U.S.-Iran relations as a foreign policy analyst someday.

University Award for Outstanding Scholar

Keely McNeme is majoring in Political Science, Corporate Communication and Public Affairs, and International Studies as well as minoring in History. She is a Hamilton Scholar, Tower Fellow, part of the University Honors Program, and recently published an article in the Journal of East Asian Studies. Keely is currently an Account Executive at Redwood Climate Communications, a PR firm specializing in climate tech and environmental nonprofits, and plans to continue her work there after graduation.

Student biographies to be read at Luncheon certificate presentation

Seniors:

Elina Bougas is a liberal arts triple major with a minor in Art History. She is a Distinguished scholar, a Pre-Law Scholar, and a member of Alpha Chi Omega. A few weeks ago, on April 13th, she spoke at the 2023 SUNY New Paltz Art History Symposium on her research about 18th century European singerie. She is a reporter for the Dallas Morning News and is attending William & Mary Law School in the fall.

Lexi Eid is a triple major in Political Science, Economics, and French, with minors in History and European Studies, distinction in Political Science and honors in liberal arts. She has touched every corner of SMU and has loved her time on campus. She is a Prelaw Scholar, Towers Fellow, Secretary of the Classical Studies Club, and Phi Beta Kappa initiate. She completed internships with the Paleontology Department and the Hunt Institute, and studied across the world in Italy and France. She will be attending Boston University for law school in the fall to study international law.

Brittney Hutchison is a senior double majoring in Film & Media Arts and English with a Creative writing specialization, and with minors in Arts Management and Arts Entrepreneurship. She is a President Scholar, Meadows Scholar, and in the University Honors Program. At SMU, she is the Producer of the 2021 summer feature film, Smile, an Ambassador for Meadows School of the Arts, a member of Kairos Arts and Literary Magazine, and a campus marketing intern for NBC Universal. She also recently received the Belle Mayer Bromberg Prize for Excellence from the Department of English. After graduation, Brittney will be moving to L.A. to work in film development and producing.

Jim Kays is a senior graduating with degrees in Finance and Economics with a minor in Statistical Science from McKinney, TX. He is a Dedman College Scholar and National Merit Scholar, and was selected as one of 10 Don Jackson Fellows as a part of the Alternative Asset Management Center honors finance program. Jim also served as a Portfolio Manager for the Spindletop Energy Investment Fund, Vice President of the MHPS Commons Council, a Cox Career Management Center Peer Coach, and a founding member of the PEVC Club at SMU. After graduation, Jim plans to work as a Corporate Banking Analyst for Wells Fargo in Charlotte, NC.

Avery Nesson is from Laguna Niguel, California and is a graduating senior majoring in Biological Sciences with a minor in Chemistry. She is a Dedman Scholar, Provost Scholar, Discovery Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa, member of the University Honors Program, and a member and mentor in SMU's AED Health Preprofessional Honors Society. In addition, she serves as the Blood Drive Chair of Mustang EMS and as an undergraduate research assistant in Dr. Richard Jones' epigenetics lab. Outside of SMU, she is a biology and mathematics tutor for UPchieve, volunteer medical assistant at Coastal Comprehensive Care, Sunday School leader at Shoreline City Church, and is a member of the public speaking and leadership organization, Toastmasters International. After graduation, Avery plans on attending medical school to achieve her ultimate aspiration of becoming a surgeon.

Lindsey Philips is majoring in Biology with a distinction in Genetics and minoring in Chemistry, Neuroscience, and Spanish. She is a Hamilton Scholar who has been conducting research for 2 years on the molecular pathways of Spinal Muscular Atrophy in *C. elegans*.

She is currently in the Molecular Biology 4+1 Master's program and plans on getting an additional Master's in Genetic Counseling.

Laura Wildman is a senior majoring in Anthropology and minoring in History. She is a Provost Scholar, a student in the University Honors Program, a Hamilton Undergraduate Research Scholar, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Chi, and Lambda Alpha Honor Societies. She is currently serving as President of Anthropology Club and Treasurer of Russian Club. Her interests include archaeology, medieval and Tudor history, Catholic iconography, and Russian imperial history. In her free time, she enjoys needlework, particularly hand embroidery and cross-stitching.

Juniors:

Caden Arras is double majoring in Finance and Management Science, with plans to enter the Investment Banking industry upon graduating in 2024. Currently, he is a member of the Alternative Asset Management Center (ALTS) program and the President of the Entrepreneurship Council for the Hegi Career Leaders program. This year, Caden won the Fred Hegi Legacy Award and was selected for an Engaged Learning Fellowship (ELF) to fund a venture in media entrepreneurship.

Aisha Aslam is a Junior at SMU. She is double majoring in Economics with Financial Applications and Data Science with minors in International Studies, Business, Math, and History. At SMU, she is part of the University Honors Program and the President's Scholar program, and recently became part of the International Honor Society in Economics and Phi Beta Kappa. In the future, she hopes to work in the management consulting industry and eventually get an MBA.

Ella Dabney is a Junior double majoring in Vocal Performance and Health and Society with minors in Health Sciences and Biological Sciences. In her free time, you can find her singing, running Dallas half marathons, lifting at the gym, or hanging with her friends in Delta Gamma. She plans to pursue PA or medical school, specializing in Ear/Nose/Throat for singers, in addition to performing professionally.

Caleigh Daugherty is a Junior from Denver, Colorado double-majoring in Journalism and Sport Management. She was a Hilltop Scholar and was recently named a Sport Business Scholar for her

dedication and hard work in and out of the classroom. Outside of class, she enjoys writing for the Sports Business Society Journal, working on SMU's Press Pass newscast, and contributing to the Daily Campus. She is looking forward to starting her career in Sports Communications with Tony Fay PR this summer.

Emily Dudley is a Junior from Tallahassee, Florida. She is an SMU Distinguished Scholar and is majoring in English and Spanish. She serves as the Director of Scholarship for SMU's Delta Gamma Chapter, as well as the Secretary for Mustangs for Hope. Currently, she is on the pre-law tract as a Pre-Law Scholar.

Kristen Edwards is a Junior in the University Honors Program double majoring in Environmental Engineering and Music with a minor in Global Development. Kristen is a flutist and Meadows Scholar, and is also involved in research through the Hunt Institute for Engineering and Humanities, where she is working to improve access to sustainable infrastructure in rural Tanzania through collaboration with the Kijiji Nonprofit Organization. Outside of school, Kristen is an avid cyclist and enjoys biking with several local cycling groups. She is currently pursuing a Masters in Environmental Engineering through the Lyle Accelerated Pathways program and plans to find a career in which she can work towards building a more sustainable future.

Paige Edwards is from New Orleans, Louisiana. She is a junior double majoring in Film & Human Rights. Paige's campus involvement includes being the Co-President of the Black Unity Forum, Association of Black Students, the Human Rights program, Rotunda Scholar, McNair Scholar, and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority,

Inc. This summer Paige will travel with the SMU Honors and Human Rights Programs to Ireland to conduct research on the disparities amongst Irish people. Her future goal is to obtain a law degree to serve the underserved.

Blake Gebhardt is a junior from Valencia, California, majoring in Computer Science and International Studies and minoring in Russian Area Studies and History. He currently serves as the President of the Society for Russian Studies, a Student Ambassador for the Office of Admissions, and as the Equipment Manager for SMU Football. He is an Eagle Scout, a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and a recipient of the Philip H. Solomon Award in Russian. He enjoys swimming, watching the Buffalo Bills, and traveling abroad. After graduation he plans to work as a software engineer or as a foreign service agent.

Sofia Goff is a Junior from Austin, Texas majoring in Economics and Public Policy with a minor in Education. While at SMU she interned at an immigration law firm, assisting families to obtain legal permanent status. She continued her work in immigration at the George W. Bush Presidential Center where she researched the effects of domestic violence law on migration patterns in Central America. In addition to her professional work, she serves as a John F. Lopez fellow at the National Hispanic Institute where she organizes summer leadership programs for Latino youth. After graduation, Sofia hopes to attend law school and work in international law.

Celia Handing, originally from Austin, TX, is an Honors student and President's Scholar pursuing a dual degree with a B.F.A. in Dance

Performance and a B.S. in Psychology, along with a minor in Statistics. Once her studies are complete, she hopes to pursue a career in contemporary or modern dance, with plans of eventually becoming a rehearsal director. Since she is passionate about exploring the interrelatedness of the brain and the moving body, she would also like to become involved with Dance/Movement Therapy. While at SMU, Celia has thoroughly enjoyed participating in two study abroad programs, working in the Meadows Dean's Office, and hanging out with friends on Dallas Hall Lawn.

Hailey Hazen is a Junior studying History and Philosophy and gaining a minor in French. In addition to becoming a part of the Hyer Society, Hailey is also a part of Phi Beta Kappa, the University Honors Program, a member of Hilltop Educators, and a Faith and Learning Scholar. In her free time, Hailey enjoys debating with the SMU Speech and Debate Team as well as working as a Teaching Assistant for Elementary Logic. Hailey plans to attend law school after graduation.

Ellie Hood is a junior from Seattle, Washington double-majoring in Psychology and Sociology. She is a Richter Fellow, Engaged Learning Fellow, honors scholar, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa. In addition to her studies, Ellie is very involved with Epic Movement, a campus ministry focused on Asian-American students. After graduation, Ellie plans to pursue a graduate degree in forensic psychology.

Anne Hulme is a junior from Western New York double majoring in dance performance and statistical science with a minor in mathematics. In addition to her studies, she enjoys being actively

involved on campus and is President of both the Mustang Ballroom Dance Club and Orthodox Christian Fellowship. She recently received a Richter Fellowship for her Rome and Paris honors study abroad program this summer, as well as a Meadows Grant to attend Louisville Ballet's 2023 Summer Intensive. After graduation, she plans to pursue a professional ballet career.

Sarah Mende is a junior majoring in History and Anthropology with minors in Art History and Classics. Sarah is a President's Scholar and a member of the University Honors Program. She is a member of the SMU debate team, Faith and Learning program, and Classics club. During her senior year she plans on applying to PhD programs and ultimately remain in academia.

Ben Perry is an Advertising (Strategic Brand Management) and Psychology double major who works for The Cairns Lab in applied environmental anthropology here at SMU. Ben does work in sustainable fashion for the lab in which his primary project at the moment, the Clothing Acquisition and Disposal study, inspects the intersection of clothing, the environment, and students to better understand and find improvements for the patterns that make clothing one of the world's largest global polluters. He plans to work in the fashion industry at the end of his studies and will intern at Coach this summer in their merchandising department before (hopefully) progressing on to masters programs in fashion marketing or communication upon his graduation in May 2024.

Hughes Raiford is a junior at SMU from Memphis, Tennessee. He is majoring in Finance and minoring in Political Science with concentrations in United States Politics and International Policy. As

a member of the University Honors Program and EnCap & LCM Alternative Asset Management Program (ALTS), Hughes has developed a strong interest in financial modeling and equity research. While at SMU, he has been a member of the Private Equity Venture Capital Club, studied abroad as part of the Cox in London Program, and partook in the Lead at SMU non-profit pitch competition. Most recently, he accepted an offer to work in New York City as a summer analyst for B. Riley Securities in the mergers and acquisitions Investment Banking division. After SMU, he looks forward to pursuing a career in Private Equity.

Anna Su is a junior from Southlake, TX studying chemistry and economics with minors in sociology and women's and gender studies. At SMU, she is a Dedman college scholar and works as a research assistant in the Caruth Institute working on the West Dallas STEM school project. Outside of school, she volunteers as an elementary school reading tutor and with an after school program for DISD high schoolers. After graduation, she hopes to attend medical school and work in pediatrics.

Jane Margaret Turner is a Public Relations and Strategic Communication major with minors in Music Industry Practices and Advertising. She is a Meadows Scholar and a member of the Alpha Chi Honor Society. At SMU, she has served as the Speakers and Tours Chair for SMU PRSSA, the VP: Communications for Delta Gamma, and as an event planner on the CORE Student Planning Committee for the 57th SMU Women's Symposium. This past semester she has also enjoyed studying abroad in Barcelona, Spain.

After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in the music industry working as an artist manager.

Sophomores:

Gabriel Mongaras is a Sophomore at SMU in the University Honors Program from Round Rock, TX. He is quadruple majoring in Computer Science with a concentration in Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Mathematics, and Statistical Science. He is also in the accelerated programs for a Master's in Computers Science and MASDA. He has earned numerous awards, including the Hunt Scholars and Hilltop Scholars awards, while actively participating in various clubs on campus, such as the AI club, which he leads as President. Passionate about the field of AI, Gabriel has gained invaluable experience as an undergraduate research assistant at SMU for two projects, intern at Meta for one summer, and through numerous other engineering projects. His future plans involve making significant contributions to AI research in the industry and eventually becoming a professor, teaching and inspiring students to learn about advancements in AI.

Marcos Zertuche is a Sophomore from Dallas, Texas pursuing majors in Computer Science, specializing in AI and Machine Learning, and Data Science. He is a Distinguished Scholar and has received honor roll for the past two semesters. He currently works in the Lyle Office of Recruitment, as a Teaching Assistant for Creative Computing II, and has an off-campus job. Marcos is interested in the application of AI technologies to solve modern problems. His plans include pursuing a career in the consulting industry and attending post-grad school to earn an MS/MBA dual degree.

Anna Kelley Zielke is a sophomore from Charleston, SC majoring in Dance, Political science, and International Studies. She is an Engaged Learning Fellow and currently working on understanding political polarization among college students. Last summer, she studied at SMU in Oxford under the Richter Fellowship, and this summer she is traveling on scholarship with the Human Rights Program to Ireland and the Political Science Program to Japan. After graduation, she has plans to attend law school or perform research abroad and hopes to always keep dancing whether on the stage or in the library.