



**Thirteenth Annual
College Honors Symposium**

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

COLLEGE HONORS MISSION STATEMENT

The Ramapo College Honors Program is a community of faculty and students dedicated to intellectual, creative, and moral engagement. Honors students seek excellence through continual guidance and a distinctive curriculum of critical thinking, intercultural and international understanding, experiential learning, service, and interdisciplinary studies. The end of the program is the beginning of an enriched and accomplished life. Ramapo College invites all who have the aspiration, potential, and passion for discovery to join.

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College Honors Senior Projects

Samuel Anklowitz

Information Technology Management

English and India: How an Unfortunate Colonial History Led to a Fortunate Economic Advantage

Abstract: This paper takes a look at the role that English language skill has had on the success of India's information technology sector. The main argument is India's English advantage, a leftover from colonialism, has given India an advantage in the information technology sector. To prove this, interviews of people within the India information technology industry were conducted in order to determine the role of language and English within the industry. Furthermore, a review of relevant literature is conducted which includes studies looking at the economic premiums of English, the co-location of IT firms within regions with a propensity for English education in India, and the role of colonialism on the current structure of India's higher education system. Ultimately, the study found that there does exist enough evidence and convergence between interviewees to support the connection between India's English language skill and India's advantage in the

information technology sector. However, there was not enough time to conduct enough interviews to reach saturation. Therefore, this paper should be seen as a guide on where to continue this research and not as the final say on the subject matter.

Sponsor: Professor Nikhil Varma | Reader: Professor Tim Burns

Samuel Ankowitz is an Information Technology Management major with a minor in Mathematics. He is the current Co-President and Station Manager for Ramapo College's student run radio, WRPR 90.3 FM Mahwah. He is an active member of the Executive Board for the College Honors Program and has served as the Honors Student Director of Admissions and Leadership. Sam is currently a member of Alpha Lambda Delta and Beta Gamma Sigma honors societies. He is deeply interested in the use of analytics and business intelligence as a means to solve problems. After graduation, Sam is hoping to pursue a career within the information technology industry as a business IT analyst.

Dahiana Arenas

Nursing

The Utilization of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) in the Era of COVID-19

Abstract: Each day medicine evolves and transforms, adapting to confront the challenges mankind faces over time. From the simplest of colds to the deadliest of diseases, scientists have been able to treat illnesses around the globe by extracting knowledge from sources not previously considered. Before there were pharmaceutical drugs, IVs, and administered vaccines, society began pioneering the field of healthcare with plants, extracts, and even basic meditation. While a significant number of medical practitioners have long since overlooked the "old ways" of medicine in favor of allopathic therapies, the 2019 coronavirus (COVID-19), has forced the medical community to consider every avenue in hopes of a solution. This novel virus, resistant to various mainstream methods, begs the question as to whether implementing "alternative" strategies has proven to be effective in any capacity in this unprecedented wave of sickness. This research paper examines the mechanisms of viruses, as well as the nature of CAM. It seeks to explore the ways in which CAM has functioned in past pandemics and analyze its potential outcomes and effects in today's society as it relates to COVID-19.

Sponsor: Professor Yan Xu | Reader: Professor Cristina Perez

Dahiana Arenas is a Nursing major that has been active in several organizations at Ramapo, including the RCNJ Honors Program as an Executive Board Member, the Phi Beta Delta Honor Society of International Scholars as President, and the Alpha Omicron Pi Women's Fraternity. She has been a Peer Mentor for Leaders in Service program participants, commuter students, and ENHANCE members. Dahiana is also associated with the Alpha Lambda Delta, Order of Omega, and Sigma Theta Tau Honor Societies. Through the Civic and Community Engagement Center, she has participated in several alternative break service trips including those to Ghana, Costa Rica, and India. In the summer of 2019, she studied abroad in China and examined the complementary and alternative healthcare system firsthand. Dahiana's research experiences then drew inspiration for her thesis shortly after the declaration of the COVID pandemic. Off-campus, she works as a certified pharmacy technician and patient care associate. After graduation, Dahiana will begin her career in Valley Hospital's New Graduate Critical Care Residency Program in the fall. She hopes to eventually attend graduate school as well as utilize her love of traveling to be a travel nurse, connecting with and caring for individuals all over the world.

Sevan Asadurian

Biology

Forest Dynamics: A Field Study on the Effects of an Oak Leaf Roller Outbreak in a Mixed-Hardwood Forest in the New Jersey Highlands

Abstract: From 2015-2016, a large outbreak of oak leaf rollers, *Archips semiferanus*, in the New Jersey Highlands led to substantial mortality of chestnut oak trees, *Quercus montana*, at the Apshawa Preserve in West Milford, New Jersey. This study aimed to document tree mortality and resulting canopy disturbance in the last 6 years over a 33.4 hectare study area. 808 dead trees were identified of which 544 were chestnut oaks, while the other 264 trees were an assortment of various species. The overall canopy disturbance in regards to only the chestnut oaks, was estimated to be 11.8 % of the forest or 56,963 m². The overall spatial distribution of the tree mortality was statistically significantly clustered which severely alters the environment of the forest. Tree succession has been accelerated as a result of these canopy openings. Black birch, *Betula lenta*, and red maple, *Acer rubrum*, are the main contenders for replacing the dying oak species and work in combination with climate change to further accelerate succession. Oak species represent an extremely resilient species to stress and simultaneously, provide an abundance of positive attributes to the forest similar to a keystone species. As climate change continues, it is expected these less resilient species, black birch and red maple, will become stressed which puts the forest at risk to further tree mortality. With severe climate change, we should be more mindful of what happens to the forests to prevent further disturbances.

Sponsor: Professor Eric Wiener | Reader: Professor Joost Monen

Sevan Asadurian is a senior Biology major with a 3.93 cumulative GPA and 3.97 science GPA. She has been an active member of the Ramapo College Community. She is a member of the Armenian Students Association and served as a leader for the Honors Development Groups. Further, she has worked as a personal OSS tutor for various subjects including Ecology, Astronomy, and Organic Chemistry. This senior project is a reflection of Sevan's passion for biology and the environment. After graduation Sevan would like gain experience working in a health related field such as a medical practice or a lab.

Nicholas Bykov

Political Science

Student Voter Attitudes at Ramapo College of New Jersey

Abstract: Countless scholarship has covered the recent increase in student participation in voting and politics. This is reflected in the 2019 NSLVE report findings that student voter turnout across affiliated college campuses more than doubled between the 2014 and 2018 midterm elections. To bring it home, Ramapo College of New Jersey's student voter turnout increased by 29.4 points from a mere 15.6% in 2014 to 45% in 2018. This major increase in voter turnout and participation throughout college campuses across the nations suggests not only that students are more politically motivated and engaged than before, but also that they feel higher levels of political efficacy- that they are heard, and that they can make change. Seeing the particularly colossal increase in voter engagement and turnout among Ramapo students in the last few years inspired us to build up a study that seeks to measure attitudes among the college community. The survey measured students' political attitudes, voting attitudes, and feelings of political efficacy. The survey found Ramapo College students to be highly motivated and engaged in U.S. politics, showing high levels of perceived political efficacy in regards to both the power of their voice and their vote. This is reflected by very high voter registration and turnout rates among students. While we only found a weak positive relationship between voting and perceived political efficacy, our data provides evidence that Ramapo students feel levels of political efficacy across the board. We also found a moderate positive relationship between motivation to vote in 2020 and whether one voted, providing further support for the increase in political participation among Ramapo students.

Sponsor: Professor Jeremy Teigen | Reader: Professor Dean Chen

Nicholas is a Political Science major with a minor in Psychology. He has been an active leader on campus, currently serving as the Senate Vice-President of the Student Government Association, President of Democracy Matters, and Treasurer of WRPR, the Ramapo College Radio station. In addition, he is the founding chair of Ramapo College's Divestment Committee and serves as a member of the Ramapo College Honors Program Executive Board. In addition, he is a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta and Pi Sigma Alpha honor societies. He focuses much of both his academic and activist work around voting, which is reflected both in his work experience and in his honors thesis project, Student Voter Attitudes at Ramapo College of New Jersey. For the past two years, he has worked with the Ramapo College Andrew Goodman Foundation Team as both an ambassador and team leader. In his role as a member of the Andrew Goodman Foundation team, he has worked to expand voting rights and access to voting on Ramapo College's campus, while also organizing initiatives to educate students about key political and civic issues. After graduation, Nicholas plans to attend Rutgers Law School in the fall and to eventually serve in the public interest.

Alexa Cahill

Biology

Effects of Osteoporosis: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Osteoporotic Disease, Treatment, and Broader Effects

Abstract: With the dramatic increase in the amount of individuals over the age of 65, there has also been a notable increase in the cases of osteoporosis. The bearing of this disease will only continue to grow as life span and the elderly population increase. This is why it is important to explore treatment options and bring awareness to risk factors of osteoporosis. Especially since, in this case, prevention is so much more palatable, less expensive, and more effective than the treatment options for the disease. In this paper, the author will discuss the effects that osteoporosis has on an individual and more macroscopic level using a multidisciplinary approach by considering psychological, economic, and gerontological factors.

Sponsor: Professor Jacqueline Szabo | Reader: Professor Jennifer Cole

Alexa Cahill is a Biology major with a minor in gerontology. She has served as the President of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, a Christian ministry at Ramapo College, for the last three years running. While attending Ramapo College, she performed research on osteoblast differentiation in rats which ignited her interest in the biology of bone and its broader applications for patient care and in 2020 she published this work in Gene Journal. After graduation, Alexa will go on to pursuing a medical degree at Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

Alexa's senior thesis combines her interests in gerontological medicine, biological science, and her passion for research and public health.

Prabal Chhatkuli

Computer Science

Analyzing Review Data

Abstract: Reviews, reviews everywhere. There is hardly any place or thing that we cannot find a review for. Everywhere we go, we look for reviews and ratings to make decisions. Review data can also be highly specific to a certain industry or a place and even culture. This study uses skills on web-scraping and crawling to get company data based on a geographic location. Further data is extracted using the Google Place API. Following Data extraction, the reviews and companies are processed, and a simple exploration of the data is done. The Final process involves using Data Analysis and machine learning techniques to develop insights on review data using a sample yelp review dataset for the city of Austin, TX.

Sponsor: Professor Scott Frees | Reader: Professor Ben Fine

Prabal Chhatkuli of Kathmandu, Nepal is a Computer Science major with minors in Mathematics and Bioinformatics. In his free time, Prabal loves developing applications and working on creative projects. During his time in Ramapo, Prabal has been involved in multiple on-campus and organizational programs like the Computer and Technology Club, Google Developer Student Club, and Major League Hacking Fellowship. After graduation Prabal is working in the Financial Technology industry. He also plans on attending graduate school for Data Science and Public Policy.

Aine Cullen

History

The Evolving Definition of Irish Womanhood and the Reproductive Rights of Irish Women

Abstract: This paper will discuss how British Imperialism and religious morality impacted the evolution of reproductive laws in the Republic of Ireland. As a result of British imperialism, Irish womanhood was initially defined around Catholic ideals of morality in opposition to British identity and morality, which resulted in strict reproductive laws. However, as Ireland gained greater independence and became an established state within the European Union and later the

United Nations, a more diverse coalition of activists was able to successfully argue that access to abortion not only aligned with Irish morals, but was an essential human right within a democracy.

Sponsor: Professor Roark Atkinson | Reader: Professor Mia Serban

Aine is a history major who is pursuing a secondary social studies teacher certification. At Ramapo, Aine has enjoyed getting involved with campus communities and pursuing academic opportunities. She has worked as an orientation leader and volunteered as a peer facilitator and honors development group leader. She has presented her work at the 2020 Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society Biennial Conference and the 2020 National Collegiate Honors Conference. After graduation, Aine hopes to teach social studies at the middle school level and engage students in a history education that is inclusive and empowering. She also plans to study teacher education and educational policy at the graduate level.

Danielle DeAngelis

Journalism

Tellings of Slavery in American History Textbooks: An Analysis of Damaging Misinformation and Erasure of Black History

Abstract: While contemporary texts are moving towards a more inclusive speech when regarding slavery in the United States, the majority of Americans have learned from biased, intentionally indeterminate texts while enrolled in the American school system. This paper will examine the importance of history textbooks, inspect an evolution of Howard Baker Wilder's This is America's Story and how the perspective of slavery changed overtime in separate editions of this solo textbook, and present the influence that illustration has in texts, especially when considering the pre-Civil War era and slavery in general. Most importantly, deception and censorship of truthful Black history and the honest experiences of enslaved people in our nation's historical works will be proven.

Sponsor: Professor Steve Rice | Reader: Professor Rebecca Leung

Danielle is a journalism major with minors in creative writing and English and literary studies. At Ramapo, Danielle is the editor-in-chief for the Ramapo News, a student aide for the Honors Program, the public relations chair for Alpha Phi Omega co-ed professional service fraternity, a student researcher for the American History Textbook Project, and the treasurer of Lambda Pi Eta communication honor society. She has presented research at the 2020 National College Honors

Council conference and the 2021 Northeast Regional Honors conference. After graduation, Danielle plans to pursue a career in news writing and hopes to attend graduate school.

Cassidy DeMona

Elementary Education

Utilizing Popular Young Adult Literature in the Middle School Language Arts Classroom to Teach Students About Prejudice and Racism

Abstract: Middle school language arts classrooms have been using the same novels to teach essential themes and concepts to generations of students. Middle school students tend to be reluctant readers, and being forced to read classic literature that they find “boring” and “unrelatable” furthers their disinterest in the subject. Culturally responsive teaching has shown that when students were allowed to read popular, contemporary, young adult novels instead, they were more interested and engaged in their learning, and therefore demonstrated more success academically. Middle school students are growing up in a world where equality and acceptance are on the rise. In the era of Black Lives Matter, students are more socially aware than ever before, yet educators are still using decades-old literature to discuss race and prejudice. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a timeless classic, but the idea of reading it is daunting for students, and the world has changed since its publication in 1962. Harper Lee, despite her brilliance, is also a white woman with no first-hand experience of racism. Own-voices novels written by people of color in recent years are more appealing to students’ interests, but also more relevant to their experiences. *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas is a 2018 Coretta Scott King Book Award winner that revolves around a modern teenage girl and her struggles with racism and activism.

Sponsor: Professor Julie Norflus-Good | Reader: Professor Michael Bitz

Cassidy is an Elementary Education major with a minor in English and Literary Studies. She is in the 4+1 Masters of Arts in Special Education program, which will award her a Master's degree in May of 2022. At Ramapo, Cassidy is a member of several honors societies, including Kappa Delta Pi, Tau Sigma, and Sigma Tau Delta. She is also a sister of Sigma Sigma Sigma, and served as an editor for Ramapo's literary magazine, Trillium. After graduation, Cassidy will be finishing the final year of her Master's degree while teaching middle school. She is a passionate reader and hopes to instill a love of literature in her students.

Carlyle Herman

Sustainability

The End of Factory Farming: A Case for Plant Based Eating

Abstract: Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), or “factory farming”, is used prevalently in the American food system. This system not only abuses animals, but harms people and the planet as well. In order to reduce the unsustainable practices utilized in the American food production system, a plant-based diet needs to be widely adopted by a majority of the country. To accomplish this, we must look both at the reasons people choose plant-based diets and also the barriers people report as stopping them from doing so. Looking at this indicates that a more widely adopted plant based diet can be accomplished by removing the barriers created by cost, availability, and taste of plant based options, while also proliferating information on the harms caused by the animal product industry and the benefits of a plant based diet. By adopting a multifaceted strategy of informing the public about their food choices and eliminating barriers to eating plant based, we can appeal to over half of the population that is already very willing to eat more plant-based options.

Sponsor: Professor Ashwani Vasishth | Reader: Professor Michael Edelstein

Carlyle is a Sustainability major and a Crime & Justice Studies minor. They are passionate about animals and the environment and plan on attending law school post graduate in order to make major changes in the way these two categories are treated by US law. They are not currently living on campus, but were involved in organizations such as One Step and Garden club and were the president of the Young Leftists and Progressives when they were living on campus. Now, they are living near Philadelphia working as a paralegal and are involved with Philly Socialists.

Andrea Hofstra

History and Literature

Challenging the Traditional Idea of Freedom in America: The Work of Colonial and Post-Revolutionary Women Writers

Abstract: Freedom is a cornerstone of American identity dating back to the nation’s founding in 1776. The traditional narrative says that the United States of America was established on the principles of democracy that granted greater freedom to the people of this new nation. While the affluent, land owning white men enjoyed this increased freedom, huge sections of the new American population were barred from it. Specifically women, who, despite being left out of the nation’s new freedoms, still exercised their own personal power in the private sphere and had

dreams of what freedom for women would look like in the future. In examining the writings of women from before and after the American Revolution, a picture emerges of strong individuals who believed in their own authority and looked to the future as a place where women could contribute to politics, the economy, culture, and art. These remarkable women, divided in this paper into the categories of wife, slave, and professional, wrote about their experiences and dreams, some with the express purpose of publication. Analyzing these writings reveals an alternative narrative of how freedom functioned in early America for those women excluded from the vision of the founding fathers.

Sponsor: Professor Ed Shannon | Reader: Professor Stacie Taranto

Andrea Hofstra is a history and literature double major with a concentration in creative writing and is a member of the Sigma Tau Delta and Phi Alpha Theta honors societies. In her time at Ramapo she has served as the Vice President of Leadership and Recruitment Chair in Alpha Phi Omega and as Treasurer for Ramapo Chorale. For the past three years she has volunteered as a Peer Facilitator and spent two years working in the Center for Student Involvement. She is the proud recipient of the 2020 Outstanding Leadership by a Junior Student Award and presented at the National Collegiate Honors Conference in November of 2019. Andrea is currently working as an Editorial Assistant for the Jane Addams Papers Project and plans on pursuing a similar job in digital archival work after graduation. She is also looking at graduate certificate programs in digital public humanities. Her honors senior thesis combines her love of history and literature in an analysis of early American women writers.

Mahnoor Khan

Political Science

Religiously Targeted Hate Speech in American Politics

Abstract: The 2018 Midterms were notable in the election of diverse officeholders. Representatives Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib became household names as prominent Muslim women in Congress. Their ethnic and religious backgrounds, however, invited extreme vitriol which utilized hateful language in the name of religion. Such targeted Islamophobia derives its roots from an innately nonsecular form of politics in the United States. From its foundation, the United States has incorporated concepts of ingrained patriarchy and nationalism in politics from an exaggerated version of Christianity. This development over the years witnessed the rise of far-right extremism rooted in perverted Christian principles, which inherently challenge nonconforming individuals such as Omar and Tlaib from peacefully exercising political power. The intersection of gender and religion demonstrate the intrinsic patriarchal nature of the civic

religion and how it is inextricable for Judeo-Christian sentiments. This thesis will enhance the understanding and extend the research pertaining to Muslim women in political leadership and their experience with religiously targeted hate speech as a result of nationalist propaganda and fascist ideation.

Sponsor: Professor Erin Augis | Reader: Professor Pinar Kayaalp

Mahnoor is a Political Science major with a minor in Mathematics. She is a passionate writer with a focus on politics and current events. She is involved in both the Muslim Student Association as well as the Political Science Honor Society Pi Sigma Alpha, of which she is the chapter president. She has worked at the Center for Reading and Writing as a writing consultant for three years, interacting and teaching fellow students how to become better readers and writers. She also directs the social media marketing for the Center, and hopes to incorporate her creativity with her writing skills after college.

Samrah Syeda Khan

Nursing

Reducing Agitation in Dementia Patients

Abstract: Dementia is not a normal consequence sign of aging; however, it is a very common and often under-diagnosed in the elderly population. Approximately 5.7 million living with dementia in the United States. A Major symptom of dementia is agitation, which is a state of extreme irritability. The patient loses their ability to understand their surrounding environment and it can lead to unfortunate events like falls. Patients experiencing agitation can become violent and this can affect the safety of the caregiver and patient. The purpose of this paper is to explore non-pharmacological therapies to help reduce agitation while avoiding the severe side effects of medication. Some of these alternative therapies include adjusting environmental factors, music therapy, aromatherapy, and robotic pet therapy. Studies of these therapies have demonstrated decreased agitation in dementia patients. Caregivers also reported a positive change in their patients' attitude. This paper explains ways to use these non-pharmacological therapies and the positive effects in reducing agitation in dementia patients.

Sponsor: Professor Andrea Centrella-Nigro | Reader: Professor Diane Andronaco

Samrah is a Nursing major with a minor in Biology. At Ramapo, Samrah is involved in several on-campus organizations including Nursing Student Organization and Muslim Student Association. She served as Honors Group Leader and is currently a Nursing Student Peer Mentor. Her passion for nursing comes from being a caregiver for grandmother who has dementia and contributes to

her Honors Research Project. In her free time, Samrah likes to paint, cook, bake, and do interior designing. Upon graduation, Samrah will have a New York Nursing License and do her best for all the patients she will be taking care of. She will incorporate all the lessons she learned here at Ramapo in career and represent her school with honor. Samrah wants to take this opportunity to thank her parents, friends, and Dr. Andrea Centrella-Nigro for supporting her throughout her college years.

Antoin Lazieh

Biology

Production of Immortal Rat Calvarial Osteoblasts that Retain their Ability to Differentiate

Abstract: Rats are a widely used model for studying bone formation. Osteoblasts, early in their commitment to differentiate, are able to be easily isolated from the calvaria of embryonic rat pups. Unfortunately, since osteoblasts are primary cells, they rapidly age in cell culture and soon begin to lose their ability to differentiate. In contrast, a cell line that begins with a primary cell has the potential to become immortal, therefore attaining the ability to replicate indefinitely, unlike a developed osteoblast cell line. However, since cell growth and differentiation are typically inversely linked, cell lines often lose their ability to appropriately differentiate as time progresses. The purpose of this research project is to create an immortal rat osteoblast cell line that can also retain its ability to differentiate. 39 individual colonies were isolated, grown, and frozen for further study. Cell clones 1, 14, 26, and 39 were the first to be tested for their ability to differentiate. For each clone, half of a 24-well dish was plated to assess alkaline phosphatase activity (a marker of early osteoblastic differentiation), as well as half of a 12-well dish to assess terminal mineralization. These dishes were harvested and the cells were analyzed for evidence of osteoblast activity, which was found in cell clones 1, 14, and 39.

Sponsor: Professor Joost Monen | Reader: Professor Susan Petro

Antoin Lazieh is a biology major with a strong interest in molecular biology. He has enjoyed his time at Ramapo College over the past four years, including activities such as being an Honors Developmental Group Leader and a Cell and Molecular Biology tutor. He is looking forward to graduating this Spring and moving on to graduate school and continuing his educational career.

Pietro Lombardo

Political Science

The Dynamic Relationship between U.S. Supreme Court Decision-Making and the LGBTQIA+ Community Post Bowers v. Hardwick

Abstract: This study works to answer the question: is the United States Supreme Court responsible for the evolving social change in support of the LGBTQIA+ community? I look at landmark cases in Supreme Court history starting with Bowers v. Harwick (1986) as well as the social implications and progressions following their decisions. Case studies on Massachusetts and Alabama are incorporated into the dissection of Supreme Court decisions in order to illustrate the social advancement of LGBTQIA+ rights in states holding contrary viewpoints surrounding the issue. National trends are addressed to map out how American opinions have evolved alongside Court decisions. Historical and contemporary examples are then discussed to better elucidate the limitations and true nature of the Court and its justices. I conclude that the Supreme Court does not create social change yet is more responsible for granting rights that assist in the LGBTQIA+ movement's strides in creating social change.

Sponsor: Professor Mia Serban | Reader: Professor Dean Chen

Pietro Lombardo is a versatile student majoring in Political Science and minoring in Public Policy. Pietro is an active member of the Honors Executive Board, has been a Peer Facilitator for three years, serves as the Vice President of Ramapo's Debate League, and is the Vice President of Administration for Ramapo College Progressives. He is passionate about social activism in arenas such as the Black Lives Matter movement, environmental protections, and LGBTQIA+ rights. On this note, Pietro's project tackles the evolving nature of LGBTQIA+ rights and the U.S. Supreme Court's effect on social change surrounding these rights. Following graduation this year, Pietro hopes to pursue a future in social advocacy and law.

Subin Mali

Engineering Physics

Effect of Topological Structures on the Spectrum of a Magneto-elastic Ribbon

Abstract: High malleability and low coercivity of amorphous ferromagnetic alloys are widely used in sensing technologies based on magneto-elastic coupling. These sensing devices differentiate or even proportionate outside interferences which cause perturbation in wave patterns of the ferromagnetic alloy in resonance. In this work, we explore and demonstrate the possibility of measuring environmental properties using the ringdown response of an amorphous

ferromagnetic strip. In particular, we show an example of detecting milk coagulation using our methods. Correspondingly, due to these same properties, soft ferro-magnetic materials can also be used to study the effects of defects or regulated imperfections on a resonant frequency spectrum. In addition to the ring-down response, we also induce controlled defects and create regulated patterns in the ferro-magnetic strip to study their effects on the frequency spectrum. We propose a new adaptable and inexpensive method to explore the effects of topological structures. We present here examples of such structures and their effects on the resonant spectrum of the ferro-magnetic strip.

Sponsor: Professor Catalin Martin | Reader: Professor Daniela Buna

"I am determined to establish myself in the forefront of condensed matter research," says Subin Mali, an international Honors student from Nepal. He is a senior majoring in Physics and minoring in Computer Science and Mathematics. He has a 3.98 GPA and has been on the Dean's List every semester. Subin is currently working with Prof. Catalin Martin on a research regarding study of properties of ferromagnetic alloys. In addition, he also worked with Prof. Eman Abdelfattah on classifying apps' successes using machine learning models which resulted in a publication. He was the previous President of Physics Club, and now works as a Network Support Tech in ITS. After Ramapo College, Subin is attending graduate school to pursue a PhD in Physics.

Alison Mann

Social Work

Behind the Selfie: Impact of Social Media on Body Image and Mental Health in Adolescents

Abstract: This paper takes a close look at how the rise of social media has impacted body image and mental health issues within adolescents. A vast amount of peer-reviewed literature surrounding the subject has been compiled and analyzed. Two theoretical frameworks, Psychosocial Development Theory and Social Comparison Theory, are used to help conceptualize this issue and the results found in the studies. The majority of research indicates that the use of highly visual social media (HVSM) has created body image and mental health problems for adolescents. Many of these studies only focus on adolescents who are white females, which is another issue discussed in this paper. Research surrounding treatment and interventions specific to social media and body image problems is also reviewed. A discussion on how brands play a role in preventing this problem becoming worse in the future and how two brands in particular, Aerie and Dove, can act as models for others to follow.

Sponsor: Professor Eileen Klein | Reader: Professor Dolly Sacristan

Alison Mann is a social work major with a strong passion for mental health. She has been an active part of the Honors Program as an Honors Developmental Group Leader for two years. Alison has also been part of the Ramapo Track and Field team as a pole vaulter all four years. She has a strong interest in body image-related mental health problems due to her experiences as an athlete, as well as, her experience losing her hair in first grade due to an autoimmune disorder called Alopecia. These experiences inspired her research of how the rise of social media is increasing the prevalence of body image-related mental problems in young people. After graduation, Alison will attend an Advanced Standing Masters of Social Work program in the fall and eventually secure a job in the field of youth mental health.

Audrey Miller

Accounting

Scrapbooks as Narratives

Abstract: This paper discusses common scrapbooking norms. For my research, I read anthropological dissertations, digitalized scrapbooks from The Library of Congress, and my maternal grandma's scrapbooks. I also casually interviewed thirteen family and friends about scrapbooking. During my time researching, I scrapbooked my college experience. Reading my mom's scrapbooks as a child and my mom's mentorship influenced my current scrapbooking form and content. I made connections between my experience and the research. Through the literary review, I learned of an essential quality of scrapbooks. The beauty of scrapbooks is that the maker juxtaposed the items to convey a story, which later allows the reader to create their own story from the same page. Scrapbooks are not objective documents. Rather, they express identity and a point of view.

Sponsor: Professor Pinar Kayaalp | Reader: Professor Rebecca Root

Audrey is an Accounting major. Audrey has served as an Honors Developmental Group Leader and as an Honors Program Executive Board Member for two years. She is the current President of Beta Alpha Psi, an honor society for financial information. Audrey is a brother of Alpha Kappa Psi, a professional co-ed business fraternity. She studied business abroad in Japan and South Korea on a faculty-led trip. Audrey volunteered in India on an alternative break trip with the Civic and Community Engagement Center. She is a member of Phi Beta Delta Honor Society of International Scholars. Audrey enjoys volunteering with the Hackensack Riverkeeper, a local environmental non-profit. At Ramapo, Audrey worked for the Center for Student Involvement and the Educational Opportunity Fund Program. She interns at an accounting firm in the tax

department. After graduation, Audrey will pursue her Master of Business Administration degree and Certified Public Accountant license.

Em Moxley

Contemporary Arts

Swinging Into Theatre

Abstract: Although every role in theatre is important, there is one particular role that is immensely difficult and important but yet does not seem to get the recognition it deserves. That role is the Swing. Despite the importance of swings, the history of swings is not well documented. Through this paper and my film, I hope to inspire more research and recognition for swings.

Sponsor: Professor Daniel Ciba | Reader: Professor Paul Pittman

Em Moxley is a Contemporary Arts (Contract Major) and Psychology Minor. Em is a member of WRPR, the college radio station, where they hosted a Broadway-themed radio show in which they discussed Broadway news, interviewed people in the industry, and curated playlists based on weekly themes. They are also a member of Alpha Psi Omega, the college's theatre honor society. They have also worked on some of the college's theatrical productions (She Kills Monsters and A Midsummer Night's Dream) as a dramaturg.

Christina Nyman

Accounting

Understanding and Applying Forensic Accounting

Abstract: Money has always played a significant role in the most common civil and criminal litigation cases in society. From divorce filings to drug trafficking, financial records serve as evidence trails, making it vital for legal teams and law enforcement to retain experienced financial professionals to aid their cases. This project takes a look at the importance and relevance of forensic accounting through a contemporary lens, exploring both the proactive and reactive roles a forensic accountant may play within the legal system. Examining the processes of financial analysis, investigative planning, and evidence collection, this paper describes the typical procedures of a forensic accountant and the skills associated with the profession. In addition to addressing the current legal practices in which forensic accounting services are employed, this paper also considers the future applications of forensic accounting as a crossroads between financial information and the law.

Sponsor: Professor Constance Crawford | Reader: Professor Wilson Rose

Christina is an accounting major pursuing her Masters of Science in Accounting through Ramapo's 4+1 program. She is an active member of several honor societies, including Beta Alpha Psi for financial information and Beta Gamma Sigma for business. This past summer, Christina interned at a CPA firm in Fair Lawn, working as an audit team member for local municipalities, school boards, and other government authorities. In addition to her studies, Christina is the President of the Ramapo College Dance Company, a self-taught, student-run performing arts organization, and works at her former dance studio in New Milford, managing student accounts and studio operations. Upon graduation, Christina plans to pursue her licensure as a Certified Public Accountant.

Brendon O'Reilly

Psychology

The Abolition of the U.S. Prison

Abstract: The prison system should be completely abolished in America. The prison is an institution whose main goal is to profit off of the suffering of those within it and around it. From the modern prisons creation during the post-civil war era, those imprisoned have disproportionately been people of color who have been used for their labor rather than given any actual rehabilitation. This continues in the modern-day through the use of mass incarceration and the prison-industrial complex. Those imprisoned are uncared for and overworked with a complete disregard for mental or physical health, rehabilitation is not the focus at all, money is. This punishment-based system is one that permeates deeply into our society, from our homes to our schools. Meaning the negative effects of prison extend to all of America. Since the prison serves no meaningful rehabilitative purpose and causes a massive amount of harm it should be abolished, with a transformative justice-based system becoming the main method of dealing with harm.

Sponsor: Professor Emily Leskinen | Reader: Professor Paul Reck

Brendon O'Reilly is a Psychology Major with a Technical Theatre Minor. They've enjoyed their time at Ramapo taking part in activities like the Leaders in Service program, as well as technical work for the theatre program. They are excited to graduate and move on to NYU's MSW program in the fall.

Michelle Park

Nursing

The Decreasing Influenza Vaccination Rates in the United States: Comparison to Other Countries and its Consequences

Abstract: Influenza, also known as the flu, has caused many outbreaks worldwide and continues to spread more each year. While a vaccine has been present for a long time, research has shown that the flu vaccine rates are decreasing in the United States (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). This could be one of the largest reasons why the country has a growing number of flu cases each year. This paper will present a brief history of the disease that we have come to know today and the various ways that have since been invented to try and combat the flu. This paper aims to compare the flu situation in the United States with other countries that are demographically and geographically similar. Secondly, this paper will compare the United States with a country that has a completely different healthcare system and contrast the two different flu situations. Finally, this paper will address various outcomes and teaching points for those populations who are refusing the annual flu vaccine. This paper defines the idea of vaccine herd immunity and how more people must receive the influenza vaccine to try and attain herd immunity status. This paper aims to make informed conclusions of how the future flu seasons could get worse if no immediate interventions are planned or implemented into target populations while considering the issue of accessibility and affordability of basic healthcare.

Sponsor: Professor Anne-Marie Flatekval | Reader: Professor Kaneez Odgers

Michelle is a Nursing major with a tremendous amount of campus experiences that include being on E-board for the United Asian Association, Roadrunner Pepband, and Phi Beta Delta International Honor Society. She is also an active member of the College Honors Program, Commuter Affairs as a Commuter Mentor, the Nursing Student Organization as a Peer Mentor, a tutor and student mentor for the Office of Specialized Services, and an Anatomy and Physiology tutor for the School of Theoretical and Applied Sciences. Michelle is also a member of Alpha Lambda Delta, Golden Key, National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Omicron Delta Kappa, National Society of Leadership and Success, and Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honor Societies. Currently, Michelle works at St. Joseph's University Medical Center in Paterson, NJ on a Trauma-Ortho unit. She also has experience working as a lifeguard at Camp Sunshine, a swim instructor at New Jersey Swim Group, and a Vacation Bible Study volunteer coordinator and worship director at the Presbyterian Church of New Jersey. In her free time, Michelle enjoys to oil paint, crochet, bake, swim, and golf. After graduation, she plans to enter the New Graduate Residency Program as a Registered Nurse at St Joseph's Health. She would like to thank Dr. Anne Marie

Flatekval and Dr. Kaneez R. Odgers for their support through the Honors Thesis Project. She would also like to give her parents and younger brother a huge thank you for their continued support, love, and guidance throughout her life.

Serene Rahman

Psychology

Combating Internalized Ableism: Designing a Model of Intervention

Abstract: This paper aims to discuss the development of an intervention model to address internalized ableism. People living with disabilities are forced to navigate many barriers including stigma from those without disabilities and the harmful effects prolonged exposure to those attitudes can inflict on them. For instance, ableist ideas from the outside can be ingrained as internalized ableism, impacting self-worth in a group of people whose struggles are already ignored by greater society. With a shortage of accessible intervention models available to address internalized ableism, it was important to begin the process of creating one. Due to a lack of preexisting models, I use Lin & Israel's (2012) intervention model for heterosexism among gay men. It is a set of three modules in an online program that uses several social psychological principles to combat internalized heterosexism. After adapting these modules to address issues of ableism rather than heterosexism, two hurdles for future development arose. These included the lack of existing literature on disability issues which the modules could utilize, as well as the heterogeneity of the disabled population in general, and the difficulty that arises when trying to address the varying needs of such a large population.

Sponsor: Professor Leah Warner | Reader: Professor Maya Poran

Serene Rahman is a psychology major with a minor in literature. She has always been deeply involved at Ramapo, being in Active Minds, Democracy Matters, WRPR, and more. She has also been the secretary for Global Roadrunners for three years, and a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta honors society. Her involvement has not been limited to clubs, as she has also been a tutor for students with special needs, as well as a research assistant to Dr. Leah Warner. In addition, Serene has studied abroad in Japan and South Korea on a faculty-led trip in 2018. Serene has a wide range of interests beyond her major, including civil rights issues, media studies, and art. For this reason, she intends to take a year off to further develop the content of this thesis, help write her parents' memoir, and work on a passion project to increase positive representation of the disabled as well as other underrepresented minority groups in media, before pursuing her PhD in graduate school. Finally, she would like to thank her family and professors for their continued unconditional support throughout the years.

Josemiguel Rodriguez

History

Dominican Transnationalism and American Prestige in the Cold War, 1945-65

Abstract: In this paper I argue that the Dominican Republic and its diaspora figured more centrally than peripherally in United States Cold War policy decisions. Dominican contributions to circum-Caribbean discourse in the years 1945-65 merit greater attention than they have thus far received. This paper challenges the assertion that the Cuban Revolution (1953-59) inspired other Latin American countries to rise up against totalitarian regimes. Indeed, Dominicans had risen up on numerous occasions in the years leading up to the Cuban Revolution. A number of scholars attest to Dominican exiles being at once threatened and threatening: more so than any other anti-dictatorial expatriate groups in their day. Recognizing the threat that Dominican exiles posed to American commercial and geopolitical interests in the Caribbean, United States intelligence agencies employed several informants to infiltrate Dominican political organizations. US surveillance programs targeting Dominican activists were moderately successful at disrupting their movements. This paper also explores the personal motivations of some US presidents to disrupt Dominican exile activism.

Sponsor: Professor John Gronbeck-Tedesco | Reader: Professor Roark Atkinson

Josemiguel is a History major with experience in the Ramapo College Student Government Association, Ramapo News, Northeast Regional Honors Council, Disciplinary Review Board, and Upward Bound-Math Science program. Josemiguel transferred to Ramapo from Saint Peter's University, in Fall 2019. While at Saint Peter's University, Josemiguel was Co-editor of its literary magazine and Chief Copyeditor of its student newspaper. In Summer 2018, Josemiguel interned at the New Jersey Room Archives, located in the Jersey City Public Library. It was here that Josemiguel developed a scholarly interest in the New York metropolitan area of his upbringing. The following summer, Josemiguel volunteered for First Friends, an immigrant rights' organization. From this experience, Josemiguel developed a scholarly interest in United States immigration. Together these interests form the basis of his senior project. Josemiguel is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and holds a black belt in taekwondo.

Parker Rogers

Psychology

Alcoholism, A Family Disease

Abstract: An in depth analysis of alcoholism and addiction through the eyes of Parker Rogers. Understanding that there is not an answer to every question or an excuse for an addict's behavior, but rather relief in finding inner peace through self reflection and empathy is the main focus. In order to break down feelings of uncertainty and betrayal, while also seeking to understand the actions of loved ones with addiction, Parker uses four main virtues to explore the ins and outs of alcoholism; personal reflection, artistic rendition, academic reading, and communal outreach.

Key Words; Addiction, Alcoholic, Alcoholism, Reflection, Qualifier

Sponsor: Professor Maya Poran | Reader: Professor Emily Leskinen

Parker Rogers, who uses he/him/his or they/them/theirs pronouns, works as the Trans Outreach Coordinator as well as the Lead Queer Peer Services Coordinator for the Women's Center and LGBTQ+ Services at Ramapo College where he was given the opportunity to speak as the Trans+ Day of Remembrance Keynote Speaker at Passaic County Community College. They also served as a Resident Assistant for the Office of Residence Life where he recently presented at the Student Staff Live In Conference in Baltimore on Intersectionality and the Importance of Inclusive Language. It is in these roles that he is able to advocate for the queer and trans community through a combination of education and celebration. They advocate for all spaces to be intersectional with a queer and trans centric lens. A member of the Honors College, Parker is a fourth year Psychology Major with a double minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Visual Arts. In the future, Parker hopes to attend graduate school to obtain a Master in Social Work, and someday work as a therapist with a focus on queer youth and manage an LGBTQ+ focused non profit organization. To maintain balance and focus, Parker enjoys tinkering, creating, and problem solving in their everyday life!

Niara Rowe

Engineering Physics

The Electric Brain

Abstract: In this paper, I analyze the physics of the human body. It breaks down numerous functions of the body and applies physics concepts to provide a different insight. The brain and its electrical signals are first examined due to its major role in all other bodily functions. From there forces and pressure internally and externally on the body could be evaluated followed by

an understanding of the composition of bones and joints. Lastly, a brief experiment was conducted to explore the effects of electronic pulses on the body. Through this connection of scientific reasoning and the daily operations of the body, I am able to provide a physical understanding of why the body operates the way it does.

Sponsor: Professor Daniela Buna | Reader: Professor Catalin Martin

Niara Rowe is an Engineering Physics Major with a minor in Mathematics. She is a proud member of Alpha Phi Omega, the Office of Violence Prevention, and the Peer Program. She currently works in the Center for Student Involvement as a student staff member and the Faith and Spirituality Coordinator. After graduating, Niara will be attending Hofstra University where she will be studying Medical Physics.

Eric Sorger

Finance

Can State-Level Leading Economic Indicators Explain Okun's Law?

Abstract: Okun's Law is a widely accepted and validated negative relationship between real GDP and the unemployment rate. I add to the literature by incorporating the Leading Economic Index (LEI) to explain changes in the unemployment rate. I build upon previous regional studies within the United States to investigate the magnitude differences for each region established by the Census Bureau. I employ statewide panel data in each region to improve the efficiency of real GDP and the LEI as opposed to using the more generic regional data. Economic variables such as the unemployment rate have many influential factors and using panel data allows the model to capture the effects of these factors that may be missed in the aggregated national data. I determine that for every 1 unit increase in the LEI results in a regional unemployment rate change between -0.45 and -0.97. Likewise, for every 1 percent change in real GDP produces an unemployment rate change between -0.004 and -0.008 respectively. Okun's Law is a crucial relationship for policy makers to determine the proper set of actions to mitigate increases in the unemployment rate. These findings are consistent with previous research as well as modern literature on Okun's Law discussing the changes in magnitude and the specification of models.

Sponsor: Professor Timothy Haase | Reader: Professor Jason Hecht

Eric Sorger of Millstone Township, New Jersey is a Finance major with a Math minor and has been on Dean's List since his first semester. He has a 3.96 GPA and is a recipient of the Presidential Scholarship. He is currently a member of Alpha Lambda Delta First-Year Honor Society, The Golden Key Honour Society, The National Society of Collegiate Scholars, and the Honors

Program, the Order of Omega, The Society of Leadership and Success, Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society, and secretary of Omicron Delta Kappa. At Ramapo, Eric has been active in several organizations and activities, including Leaders in Service, Enactus, The KPMG Mentorship Program, Sophomore's Advancing in Leadership. These past few years, Eric was involved as a Peer Mentor for the Leaders in Service program and he is actively involved in the Dean's Student Advisory Board. He is also the President and Treasurer of Phi Kappa Sigma, an all-male collegiate fraternity. Eric has also worked in the Budget Office at Ramapo as a Budget Analyst Intern. He now works for Commvault, as a Financial Planning & Analysis Intern. In addition, he achieved his dream Retirement Actuarial Internship at Willis Towers Watson, a leading global advisory, risk management, and solutions company. After graduation, Eric hopes to pursue his dream as a full-time actuary.

Samantha Stolker

Psychology

The Effect Of Test Anxiety On Performance Across Groups

Abstract: This study investigates the association between test anxiety and performance on cognitive tasks in ADHD, dyslexia, and typically developing college aged students (control). There were 78 college aged participants who completed the study (control group: n=63, ADHD/ADD group; n=4, dyslexia group; n=2, and 9 participants who were classified as having different types of learning disorders [example: visual processing disorders, aspergers, etc.]). Given the small number of participants in the LD, ADHD and Dyslexia groups, all 15 participants combined to form an "atypical" group and their performance was compared to that of the control group. The atypical group had 15 participants and the control group had 63 participants. To investigate whether the presence of a learning disability had an effect on the relationship between test anxiety and performance, a 2X2 ANOVA was used. While no significant differences were found, in the 2x2 ANOVA assessing the contribution of learning disorders and timing the main effect of LD presence was extremely close to reaching significance ($F(df) = 2.856$, $p = .095$). The presence of a learning disability was extremely close to having a main effect on performance, however, the p value did not reach significance. There was also no significant relationship found between test anxiety and performance across all participants. The results did not support the original hypotheses, and we did not have the participants to investigate the main hypothesis.

Sponsor: Professor Naseem Choudhury | Reader: Professor Jacqueline Braun

Samantha Stolker is a Psychology major with a double minor in Neuroscience and criminology. She has been a volunteer in Professor Choudhury's Neurodevelopmental lab on campus since

her freshman year. She has been a two year captain and a four year member on the varsity field hockey team at Ramapo, served in multiple e-board positions in her sorority "Alpha Sigma Alpha", and served as Vice President of Psi Chi The Psychology Honors Society. Samantha has a passion for studying and eventually fighting inequality and oppressive systems, primarily brought about through her work with the office of violence prevention as a violence intervention peer. After graduation, Samantha will be attending Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine to pursue her Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling.

Jenna Vasquez

Nursing

The Significance of Early Intervention in the Prevention of Postpartum Hemorrhage and Maternal Mortality

Abstract: Each day, there are advances in technology and medicine that confront the persistent burden of postpartum hemorrhage (PPH). Though a preventable complication, PPH is the leading cause of maternal mortality worldwide and its soaring incidence each year gives rise to the maternal mortality crisis at home and abroad. While medicines and manual procedures have existed for many decades, research has shown that with more education and training for healthcare providers as well as the allocation of more resources and funds, PPH cases are less likely, and thus maternal mortality rates are reduced. Such measures could be among the most effective ways to recognize PPH early on or prevent it altogether. This paper will present a brief history of the condition and why it is so significant to detect PPH early on and how to properly manage it when it does occur. This paper aims to compare the incidence of PPH in the United States with other countries around the world, specifically Tanzania. Secondly, this paper will examine cultural and ethical implications involved in the prevention and treatment of PPH as well as possible solutions to reduce PPH cases and maternal mortality rates. Finally, this paper will address legislation and evidence-based practices that must be implemented for countries to tackle the rising incidences of PPH and the resulting maternal mortality crisis. Overall, this paper aims to make informed conclusions of how PPH cases could continue to rise if no immediate interventions and legislation are implemented while considering the issue of universal access to safe, equitable, and quality care.

Sponsor: Professor Diane Andronaco | Reader: Professor Anne-Marie Flatekval

Jenna Vasquez is a Nursing major that has been an active member in several organizations on campus, including the RCNJ Honors Program Admissions Team, Nursing Student Organization, and the Ramapo Admissions Student Ambassadors Program. In addition, she has been a Resident

Assistant in Mackin and Bischoff Halls, an Honors Development Group Leader for the Honors Program, and Vice President of her sorority, Sigma Delta Tau. Jenna is also a member of Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society which she was formerly Vice President of, The National Society of Collegiate Scholars, and the Order of the Lapis Honor Society. In summer 2019, Jenna traveled abroad to Ghana where she studied Public Health in West Africa, providing nursing care in both the hospital setting and in remote villages. She has a strong passion to work in the fields of neonatology and obstetrics. As such, her research addresses the significance of early detection and management in preventing postpartum hemorrhage in maternal patients. Her research also offers possible solutions to reducing maternal mortality rates that result from this preventable pregnancy-related complication. After graduation, Jenna hopes to pursue a career in either the Labor & Delivery Unit or in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Michaela Zabel

Political Science and International Studies

The Paradox of the United States' Foreign and Domestic Policies

Abstract: This thesis addresses the paradox of the policies of the United States under presidential administrations in regards to the maintenance of American hegemony. It explores the Grand Strategies undertaken by administrations, a synopsis of the previous administration and its possible influences on the current one, the foreign and domestic policies taken in the past few years, and what strategy the current administration may choose in regards to these policies. After careful examination, research shows that the Biden administration will pursue a strategy of 'Better Nationalism' in an effort to destroy this paradox and to preserve American hegemony in a world where the balance of power is being challenged.

Sponsor: Professor Dean Chen | Reader: Professor Lisa Cassidy

Michaela Zabel is pursuing a double major in Political Science and International Studies and a minor in Italian. She is an active member of the Ramapo Honors Program, Pi Sigma Alpha, Active Minds, and Democracy Matters. She shows an interest in the world order and the role of government internationally. As such, her research addresses the issue of paradoxes in foreign and domestic policies that have influenced strategies taken by presidential administrations in recent years. Upon graduation, Michaela hopes to secure a political/cultural analyst position in the D.C. area.

January 2021 Graduates

Vanessa Bognar

Business Administration

Rising Up From Humble Beginnings

Abstract: Vanessa focused on the social and economic qualities surrounding the topic of becoming successful in the music industry. This research study analyzed the social and economic factors of big music star icons Jennifer López, Selena Perez Quintanilla, and Elvis Presley. The paper dissects how each of these stars' humble beginnings played a big role towards their music success in the United States. Although, each music artist achieved success through various motivations despite similar low-income backgrounds with little to no access to opportunities and affluent communities. Evidently, Jennifer Lopez's rise to fame is rooted from her love and passion for dancing and music as well as proving to her own parents that she can be successful while pursuing what she loves. Lopez's parents wanted Miss Jenny from the block to go to Baruch College to pursue a business education but she wants to follow her creative drive and love for the performing arts. Selena Quintanilla's motivation to become a successful artist drives from continuing her father's music legacy, helping her family with financial obstacles, and for herself as she found herself in love with singing and performing undeniably. The King of Rock and Roll Mr. Elvis Presley had a drive for singing at a young age but his main drive to pursue music was to help his family escape poverty. Thus, my research paper will dive into the lives of iconic and certainly unforgettable legends.

Sponsor: Professor Changhee Lee | Reader: Professor Gilad Cohen

Vanessa Bognar was born at Hackensack Valley hospital on August 20th, 1999. This jersey girl grew up in Mahwah, NJ. Growing up, she had a strong love for the performing arts and gravitated towards subjects such as English, Spanish, and Theater Arts. Miss Bognar found her passion for singing at the age of 8. Listening to Elvis Presley, Janis Joplin, Queen, Billy Joel, and Selena as young as 1 in the backseat of the car while her dad drove around, Vanessa was always drawn to music. Miss Bognar became drawn to pop artists such as Amy Winehouse, Adele, Demi Lovato, Kelly Clarkson, Lady Gaga, and Christina Aguilera. As a girl who had a big voice in school choir and tore the house down at school talent shows, she always knew she wanted to take music to the next level. In high school, Vanessa began pursuing her music career during her junior year. She joined a group called Iconos Kids that gave her exposure to perform for gigs in New Jersey and New York. At 17, she won the vocal competition in the senior vocalist category at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. Vanessa also got selected to perform for the White House at age

18 during her freshman year of college. She also performed at the Apollo in New York City during her sophomore year of college and won 5th place. Vanessa dedicated herself to the Ramapo College Honors Program and singing gigs throughout her college experience, which she is really grateful for. In January 2021, Vanessa earned her bachelor's degree. Today, Vanessa is pursuing her MBA at Ramapo College and hopes to graduate January 2022. Recently, she also got hired to join and work for TD Bank's team. She is so excited for this next chapter of her life and can't wait to see what the future holds for her as a well-rounded, strong-minded, intelligent young lady.

Erin Fischer

Business Administration

The Effects of Social Media in Building Brand Loyalty: An Examination of Young Americans' Perspective

Abstract: This study examines how social media brand pages affect the establishment of consumer brand loyalty and purchase decisions. Using the Theory of Reasoned Action, a model was established to investigate the relationships among social interaction, WOM behavior, attitudes toward brand information, brand community participation, intention to brand pages, brand loyalty, and purchase intention. In the model, word-of-mouth behavior and social interaction are incorporated to test attitudes toward brand information on social media and brand community participation. Also, intentions to join brand pages and brand community participation are hypothesized in the model to influence the intention of becoming brand loyal and, therefore, eventually influencing purchase intention. Data was collected by inviting college students to use an online survey and analyzed using the structural equation model. Findings show the importance of all factors. Social interaction directly influences word-of-mouth behavior and indirectly influences attitudes toward social information on social media. Therefore, this relationship highlights the significance of social media exchanges, whether amongst consumers or brands to consumers. Brand community participation is directly affected by not only attitudes toward brand information on social media, but also by social interaction. Brand loyalty is affected by intention to join brand page and brand community participation. In addition, brand loyalty has a very strong effect on purchase intention. Brand community participation and intention to join a brand page, therefore, have a strong role as they are indirect influences of purchase intention through brand loyalty. From this, managerial suggestions include the increase of positive attitudes among social media consumers, as they can have a useful ripple effect on many other factors. Also, providing brand information for word-of-mouth is important and encouraging consumers to participate in the brand community and brand page, which can lead to formation of brand loyalty and increase purchase intention, is also important. In conclusion, this research suggests that marketers should

not only provide useful brand information on social media, but also focus on consumers who are open to social interaction and word-of-mouth behavior on social media.

Sponsor: Professor Christina Chung | Reader: Professor Aaron van Klyton

Erin Fischer graduated January 2021 with a major in Marketing and a minor in International Business. During her time at Ramapo College, she was on the Dean's List and served as a member of the Anisfield School of Business Dean's Student Advisory Council since her freshman year. Erin is also a member of Beta Gamma Sigma, Alpha Lambda Delta National Honor Society, and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. She worked as a Marketing and Social Media Student Assistant for the Ramapo College Marketing Department for four semesters. Erin was also a member of the Ramapo Women's Basketball team for two years and traveled to Japan and South Korea as part of the "Exploring the Harmony of Traditional and Modern Societies" study abroad program. She had the opportunity to present her honors research project during the annual COPLAC Conference this past fall. Erin is currently working for a digital marketing company as a Project Manager and expects to further her educational pursuits and professional experiences in the coming years.