



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

**PRESIDENT'S  
LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL**

**2023-24**

FALL 2023



## WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT

Friends of the University:

We are pleased to introduce you to the 2023-24 President's Leadership Council. This select group of student representatives demonstrates a commitment to UCF's vision, mission and values, which can be seen through the amazing example they set.

These students serve as ambassadors who share their unique perspectives and their passion for UCF to help the university reach its full potential. Through their stories and experiences, visitors to our campus and other members in our community learn about our true impact and what makes UCF so special.

This handbook provides information on each member, including how they go above and beyond in their leadership, service and scholarship. It also shows they are generous with their time and abilities, serving in a variety of capacities, including LEAD Scholars Academy, Student Government, athletics, research, mentoring and many other areas across campus and beyond.

The President's Leadership Council has proven to be a valuable asset to our institution and community. We hope you get the opportunity to get to know these students as we have, and to help them grow along their journey and find opportunities for them to share their passion for service with others.

Best,

*Alexander Cartwright*

**Alexander N. Cartwright, Ph.D.**  
*President*

*Melinda Cartwright*

**Melinda Cartwright**  
*First Lady*

## HISTORY

The President's Leadership Council (PLC) was established during the 1977-78 academic year to recognize students who exemplified well-rounded excellence through leadership, academic achievement, extracurricular activities and service to the university and community.

Our charter members established several goals for the PLC, among them to increase community support for UCF and to assist high school students in their knowledge of higher education. They launched a campaign to inform the Central Florida community of UCF's offerings to students and the community. They were also responsible for the development of a peer advisement program, the establishment of a President's Honor Roll and the Pegasus Professor award, and the implementation of a series of leadership seminars for students.

PLC members serve the university by acting as a student advisory group to the president. Its members represent the university in a variety of situations and settings, both on and off campus. During the 2017-18 academic year, the organization contributed more than 4,500 hours of public service to the university.



## SELECTION

To qualify for the President's Leadership Council, candidates must submit two letters of reference, along with an application, to the PLC Advisory Committee.

The candidates must be degree-seeking students of junior standing or higher by the end of the spring term in which they apply and have an overall grade point average of 3.0 or better. The candidates must also have demonstrated leadership ability through involvement in university and community activities.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The members of the PLC serve UCF as official student ambassadors at special events such as commencement, President's Appreciation Receptions, and Board of Trustees' meetings. PLC members have established a tradition of leadership for students at UCF. Members of the council are also expected to maintain a commitment to personal and professional development, and to act with professionalism while carrying out their respective duties.

In return, PLC members receive training in leadership and professionalism as a result of their interaction with campus and community leaders. In return for their service, the council seeks to cultivate and refine the skills and abilities of these top students.

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# NOLA BROWNE

2023-24 CHAIR | SENIOR

MAJOR: Psychology

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## HONORS

- » Dean's List
- » Think 30 Scholarship
- » Florida Bright Futures Medallion Scholar

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Chair**
- » UCF Office of the President **Student Assistant**
- » Center for Research and Education in Sexual Trauma **Research Assistant**
- » Burnett Honors College **Honors Undergraduate Thesis**
- » Lead Scholars Academy
- » Leadership Excellence Board (LEB) **Executive Director**
- » Research and Mentoring Program **Member**
- » Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship **SURF Fellow 2023**

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*"I've met extremely supportive friends that have been impactful to my development and growth as an individual. Also, my mentors have taught me patience and have helped me with resources and advice that assist me through my coursework and professional experiences. Being a Knight makes me extremely proud because, throughout my collegiate experience, most of my meaningful personal, extracurricular, and professional experiences have been facilitated through UCF."*

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# JAMES EVANS

2023-24 VICE CHAIR | SENIOR

MAJOR & MINOR: Accounting, Computer Science

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## HONORS

- » Pegasus Gold Scholarship
- » Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholar

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Vice Chair**
- » LEAD Scholars Academy **Member/Treasurer**
- » UCF Student Government **Senator/Coordinator**
- » Burnett Honors **College Scholar**
- » First-Year Experience **Orientation Leader**
- » Housing and Residence **Life Resident Assistant**
- » UCF Social Media **Ambassador**
- » Executive Communications **Student Assistant**

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*"Anything is possible at UCF. Every step of my journey has been an opportunity to grow – forging a path that will challenge and inspire. I've learned the power of empowerment and experienced how cultivating excellence proliferates positive change. I'm unendingly grateful for the people and experiences that push me to be my best. I hope I've left a legacy of doing the same for all Knights."*

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## FLORIAN ALUSHI

SENIOR

MAJOR: Biomedical Sciences

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### HONORS

- » The Global UCF Academic Excellence Scholarship
- » Global Professional Certificate–Knights in Shining Armor
- » Florida-Eastern Europe Linkage Institute Award
- » President's Honor Roll
- » Outstanding Volunteer Service, The American Chemical Society, Orlando section

### INVOLVEMENTS

- » Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences **Outreach Coordinator**
  - » Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences **Peer Advisor**
  - » Fifteenth Annual Medical School Admission Symposium **Executive Board**
  - » Housing and Residence Life **UCF Resident Assistant**
  - » Pre-Professional Medical Society **President**
  - » American Chemical Society **Vice President**
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*“As an international student, UCF Global captivated me in its design to empower students from across the world through the American college experience. At UCF, I have the necessary foundation and support to attend medical school and become a physician. Our vibrant student community, dedicated faculty, exceptional advisors, and inspiring mentors have made UCF my ideal university. UCF inspires me to cultivate diligence as a student, compassion as a leader, curiosity as a researcher, and belonging as a community servant. Go Knights, Charge On!”*

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## SANYA BANSAL

SENIOR

MAJOR & MINOR: Biomedical Sciences, Sociology

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### HONORS

- » National Merit Benacquisto Scholarship Recipient
- » LEAD Scholar
- » Burnett Medical Scholar
- » Burnett Honors Scholar

### INVOLVEMENTS

- » Department of Sociology **Research Assistant**
  - » Honors Undergraduate Thesis
  - » Indian Students Association **President, Events Director, Freshmen Representative**
  - » UCF Undergraduate Admissions **Student Assistant**
  - » Pediatric Association of Caring Knights **Secretary**
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*“I value community above all else, which ultimately brought me to UCF. I knew that this school was going to give me the opportunity to surround myself with like-minded individuals who would support me and push me to be better. This is also what motivates me to get involved – the opportunity to build a community for myself and for my peers.”*

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# CARLOUNE BENEDICT

SENIOR

MAJOR & MINOR: Integrated Business, Professional Selling

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## HONORS

- » Dean's List
- » 2023 Alyssa Lewis Peer Mentor of the Year Award (LEAD Scholars)
- » Rising Star Award (Volunteer UCF)
- » Integrated Business Case Competition, 2nd Place
- » Bright Futures Florida Academic Scholar

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Volunteer UCF **Special Events Director (Present), Arts and Recreation Director (past)**
- » CRU at UCF **Events Leader**
- » UCF Athletics Brand Experience **Intern**
- » LEAD Scholars Academy **Senior Peer Mentor**
- » UCF Homecoming
- » SALT Outreach at UCF

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*"The growth I have accomplished at UCF has been transformational. My journey here has changed me for the better and made what seemed impossible now possible. Professors have unlocked hidden potential, while peers and alums have challenged me to be a better student & leader. UCF has gifted me with friends that will last a lifetime, cherished memories, and opportunities that get me closer to achieving life-long dreams. I am extremely grateful to God for having UCF be a part of my story, and I am so proud to call myself a Knight!"*

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# AYLA BERNTSEN

SENIOR | MAJOR: Health Sciences, Pre-Clinical Track

CERTIFICATE: Leadership Studies

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## HONORS

- » Dean's List (Spring 2022)
- » Florida Medallion Scholarship Recipient

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Public Relations Coordinator**
- » Marching Knights
- » Sigma Alpha Iota
- » CHPS Student Advisory Council
- » Association of Pre-PA Students
- » LEAD Scholars Academy **Peer Mentor**
- » Neptune Residence Hall Association

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*"UCF has impacted me in more ways than I can count. Besides finding my place on campus through extracurriculars, it has opened up doors in my future professional career. I found what I am passionate about through the resources we have here on campus. I wouldn't be who I am today if I didn't choose UCF as my home."*

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# JACOB BERTRAM

SENIOR

MAJOR: Economics & Political Science

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## HONORS

- » University of Central Florida Legislative Scholars Award
- » UCF Student Government Legislative Senator of the Year
- » University of Central Florida Provost Scholarship
- » Bright Futures Florida Academic Scholarship

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Secretary**
  - » University of Central Florida Legislative Scholars Program **Orange County Legislative Affairs Intern**
  - » Student Government Senate **LGBTQ+ Caucus Chair, Student Body Advocacy Chair**
  - » Housing and Residence Life **Resident Assistant**
  - » LGBTQ+ Student Support Services **Council Member**
  - » President's Student Advisory Council **Student Government Representative**
  - » Activity and Service Fee Budget Committee
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*"As a second-generation Knight, UCF has profoundly impacted me by providing an unmatched opportunity to study in the country's most diverse and enterprising student body. The university's strong commitment to serving the Central Florida community has enriched my education, broadened my perspective, and equipped me with a deep sense of social responsibility I carry as I navigate the world beyond campus."*

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# RACHEL BUKSBAUM

JUNIOR | MAJOR: Biomedical Sciences & Psychology

MINOR & CERTIFICATE: Medical Sociology, Diversity Leadership Studies

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## HONORS

- » President's Honor Roll
- » Dean's List
- » Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholar
- » UCF Pegasus Gold Scholarship Recipient
- » AP Capstone Diploma

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Community Outreach Coordinator**
  - » Alpha Epsilon Phi **Academics Committee, Standards Board, Special Events Committee, Second Avenues Chair, Tutor**
  - » UCF Honors Undergraduate Thesis **Researcher**
  - » UCF Hillel **URJ Camp Coleman Ambassador**
  - » American Medical Women's Association
  - » International Society for Research on Identity
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*"Initially overwhelmed by UCF's size, I struggled with finding my place. Our community embraced me nonetheless. UCF welcomed me with open arms into Greek life, clubs catalyzed personal and intellectual development, and the Honors Undergraduate Thesis helped me to pursue my passion. This university has invested in me in ways I didn't originally see possible. Each and every student is given the opportunity to explore their interests, discover their passions, and make meaningful change to our community."*

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# JULIAN COPE

SENIOR

MAJOR & MINOR: Political Science, *Statistics*

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## HONORS

- » Published Article in Volume 6 of the UCF Department of Legal Services Law Journal

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Moot Court at UCF **President**
- » BHC Dean's Leadership Council **Member**
- » Housing and Residence Life **Resident Assistant**

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*“UCF has impacted me tremendously, but most importantly, by giving me confidence in my future career. I entered college with an interest in Law, but UCF’s professors and classes have cultivated a passion in me. From learning about Equal Protection to Substantive Due Process to the Commerce Clause, the wide range of classes available coupled with the accessibility of the professors encourage curiosity and mental development. I believe I’ve thoroughly grown as a thinker, writer, and speaker, and I’m excited to enter the next chapter thanks to UCF.”*

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# JUSTIN DAVIS

SENIOR | MAJOR: Biomedical Sciences, Biology, Biotechnology, & Political Science

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## HONORS

- » National Merit Scholar
- » Benacquisto Scholar
- » Burnett Honors Scholar
- » Knights of Distinction

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Disability Coalition **President**
- » Academic Services for Student Athletes **Tutor**
- » Student Government Judicial Branch **Associate Justice**
- » Knights of Distinction **Ambassador**

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*“UCF has been a place of unparalleled opportunities where I can pursue any passion with vigor. From the moment I stepped foot on campus, I knew I was home. In my time here, I’ve met many friends and made lifetime memories while setting myself up well for professional success.”*

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# AINSLEY ELGIN

**SENIOR | MAJOR:** Flute Performance  
**MINOR:** Performing Arts Administration

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## HONORS

- » Dean's List

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » 4Ever Knights **Ambassador**
- » First Year Experience **Orientation Leader**
- » UCF Athletics Association **Brand Experience Marketing Intern**
- » Catholic Campus Ministry **Events Coordinator**
- » College of Arts and Humanities **Marketing Intern**

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*"I entered UCF in Fall 2020, during a global pandemic. There was no one studying in the Burnett Honors College and my music lessons were over Zoom. Despite all this, I don't feel I "lost" my freshman year. When Orientation returned in person in 2022, I was thrilled to help freshmen fall in love with this campus the same way I did. Every "Celebrates the Arts" festival, athletics match, or alumni event has helped me reach my goals and pushed me to pursue the stars. I hope to offer a legacy of ambition and passion to future students of UCF."*

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# SAMEEP GAWASKAR

**SENIOR | MAJOR:** Biomedical Sciences  
**MINOR:** Health Services Administration

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## HONORS

- » Burnett Medical Scholars
- » Burnett Honors College

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Student Organ Donation Advocates UCF **President**
- » Pre-Med AMSA UCF **Treasurer**
- » American Cultured Desi UCF **Treasurer**
- » Dean's Leadership Council at BHC **Member**
- » Knights of Apollo UCF **Musical Events Director**

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*"As an out-of-state student, I thought being more than a thousand miles away from home would be a challenge, but since arriving at UCF, it has been my home away from home. I came here after hearing about the collaborative and encouraging environment from students, and now, I am glad to say that they were correct. UCF to me is a hub of opportunity like no other university - always looking for creative ways to improve. This environment has pushed me to grow as a student, leader, and individual overall."*

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# DANIELLE GRIFFITHS

## GRADUATE STUDENT

PROGRAM: Event Leadership MS

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### HONORS

- » President's Honor Roll
- » Student Leader of the Year **2021**  
(First Year Experience)
- » Florida Medallion Scholar

### INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Events Coordinator**
- » CAB **Special Events Director**
- » Late Knights **Marketing Director**
- » First Year Experience **Lead Student Assistant**
- » First Year Experience **Student Graphic Designer**
- » First Year Experience **LINK Student Assistant**

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*"UCF has had the biggest impact on me professionally by allowing me the space to grow as a young professional. UCF will be my foundation moving forward in my professional career. I was able to establish that foundation in First Year Experience, then found my passion for events in the Office of Student Involvement and have been able to gain industry experience from the Events and Engagement team. Along the way, I have been fortunate enough to meet some of the most amazing people – lifelong friends, inspirations, and support systems."*

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# LJ HALL

## SENIOR

MAJOR & MINOR: Psychology, Human Resources

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### HONORS

- » President's Honor Roll
- » Dean's List

### INVOLVEMENTS

- » First Year Experience **Orientation Leader**
- » Lead Scholars Academy **Athletics Director**
- » Undergraduate Admissions **Campus Ambassador**
- » President's Leadership Council **Socials Coordinator**
- » NAACP **Treasurer**
- » Late Knights **Executive Director**
- » Campus Activities Board **Committee Member**

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*"UCF has opened the door for so many opportunities and experiences I didn't know existed and wouldn't have had the chance to do at any other school. I've made meaningful connections and friendships that will last a lifetime."*

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# JAKE HANSON

SENIOR | MAJOR: Political Science

MINOR & CERTIFICATE:: Sociology, Anthropology of Global Health

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## HONORS

- » Sarasota Community Foundation Scholar
- » Pegasus Gold Scholarship Recipient
- » Ringling College Speaker Series Scholar
- » Dean's List
- » President's Honor Roll
- » Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholar

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Burnett Honors College Student Government *Internal Assistant Chief Justice, Associate Justice*
  - » Office of Undergraduate Admissions *Campus Tour Guide, Student Assistant, Recruitment Chair*
  - » President's Leadership Council *Recruitment Coordinator*
  - » LEAD Scholars Academy Graduate
  - » UCF Global Perspectives & International Initiatives *Intern*
  - » Honors Congress *Executive Treasurer, Director of Fundraising*
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*"UCF has allowed me to take advantage of every opportunity possible - academically, through student organizations, and with my professional development. I have had a lot of unique experiences and involvement in fields I feel passionately about, which can be very difficult to find in most places. I have also been able to meet and create meaningful relationships with so many involved and likeminded individuals from an incredibly diverse student body. We're also close to some of the best food, attractions, and activities off campus."*

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# TAYLOR HAYCOCK

SENIOR | MAJOR: Political Science

CERTIFICATES: Anthropology of Global Health, TEFL

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## HONORS

- » Walter Komanski Leadership Scholarship
- » Dr. Maribeth Ehasz Campus Involvement Scholarship
- » College of Sciences General Scholarship
- » Sara Marti Study Abroad Scholarship

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Burnett Honors College Dean's Leadership Council *Co-Coordinator*
  - » Honors Congress *Vice President*
  - » Honors Congress *Director of Social Affairs*
  - » Burnett Honors College *Student Assistant*
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*"UCF has exposed me to incredible students, researchers, professors, and mentors. To be surrounded by such talent and passion is an inspiration that enables me to continue their legacy as I make my way in the world."*

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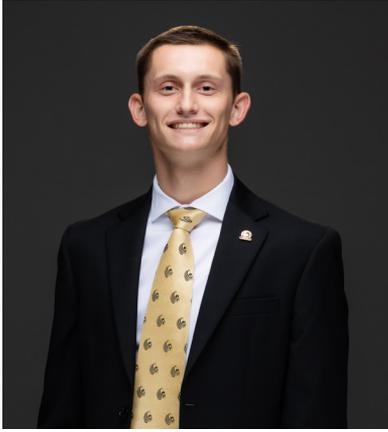
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# WILLIAM HIDALGO

**JUNIOR**

**MAJOR:** Aerospace Engineering

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## HONORS

- » Air Force ROTC Field Training Distinguished Graduate
- » EXCEL Student
- » Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Recipient
- » Norwegian Foot March Bronze Award

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps  
*Director of Training*
- » Discovery Church Young Adults *UCF Team Lead*
- » Undergraduate Research Assistant *Industrial Engineering and Management Systems*

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*“UCF has impacted me in unexpected ways. I was pleasantly surprised with the opportunities here at UCF from day one. I quickly found my groove within the Air Force ROTC program. Balancing engineering classes, a part-time job and ROTC allowed me to rely on the community involvement provided by UCF. The relationships our detachment has with the colleges, professors, and university as a whole are like no other. UCF produces some of the brightest pilots commissioning in the Air Force, and I hope to continue in the lineage.”*

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# SIERRA HOLMES

**SENIOR | MAJOR:** Political Science

**CERTIFICATE:** Litigation and Advocacy

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## HONORS

- » Princeton Prize in Race Relations Award
- » Student Government Caucus Chair of the Year (2022)
- » Coco Coalition Scholarship Recipient
- » Alice P. Earl Scholarship Received
- » Fall and Spring Dean's List (2021-2023)

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Student Government *Speaker of the Senate*
- » Student Government *Black Caucus Chair*
- » Student Government *AS&F Seat*
- » UCF Lead Scholar

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*“UCF has cultivated an atmosphere where I can thrive as a woman of color. Since I was a young girl, I knew I wanted to attend this institution. The opportunities here have guided me to become my best self. I owe my growth and achievements to not only my support system, but UCF's uplifting and affirming environment.”*

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# MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM

**JUNIOR**

**MAJOR:** Health Sciences (Pre-Clinical)

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## HONORS

- » UCF President's Honor Roll  
Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2022 & Spring 2023
- » Top Ten Knights Scholar
- » Florida Bright Futures Scholar

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Student Academic Resource Center (SARC) **Peer Tutor**
- » 4EVER KNIGHTS **Ambassador**
- » UCF LEAD Scholars Academy
- » Student Government Leadership Council
- » Judicial Leadership Council
- » Project Downtown Orlando Leadership

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*"I feel my growth path is intertwined with UCF's boundless opportunities. I'm pursuing a career as a physician, and this university has ensured that I am prepared for the journey with exceptional faculty and strategic resources. What I love most about UCF is its diversity. Our student body is large, colorful, and vibrant. Yet, it still feels like home with a community of peers and professors becoming lifelong friends and mentors. I've had the privilege of giving back to the UCF community - making an impact as a leader and learner."*

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# RAJ KHUPERKAR

**JUNIOR | MAJOR:** Biomedical Sciences

**MINORS:** Medical Sociology & Business Administration

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## HONORS

- » Burnett Honors College
- » Burnett Medical Scholar
- » National Merit Scholar
- » Benacquisto Scholarship Recipient
- » President's Honor Roll

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Pre-Med AMSA **Vice President**
- » UCF Badminton Club **Secretary**
- » UCF Village Mentors **Business Director**
- » Pre-Med AMSA **MSAS Chair**
- » Pre-Med AMSA **Volunteering Director**

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*"UCF has continuously proven itself to be the best university for me to prosper educationally and provides so many resources to grow professionally and personally. I have had the privilege to be a part of many supportive UCF communities and as an out-of-state student from Michigan, this university has quickly become my home away from home. My time here has been absolutely phenomenal and I am so excited to continue my journey at UCF for the next two years!"*

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# KRISTEN LING

## DOCTORAL STUDENT

PROGRAM: Electrical Engineering

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### HONORS

- » UCF Best in Electrical and Computer Engineering Senior Design Showcase
- » Pegasus Award Nominee
- » Duke Energy Endowed Scholarship
- » William Horton Endowed Scholarship
- » Siemens Career Path Scholarship

### INVOLVEMENTS

- » Graduate Research Assistant **UCF's ARMI Laboratory**
- » Undergraduate Student Representative **Curriculum Oversight and Review Committee**
- » Undergraduate Learning Assistant **UCF's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering**
- » Undergraduate Research Assistant **UCF's BARL**
- » Radio Frequency Design Electrical Engineering **Intern**
- » Electrical Engineering Intern **I-CON Systems Inc.**
- » HMI Display Engineer Intern **NASA**

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*"The University of Central Florida has had a tremendous impact on my life by providing an environment that nurtures growth and offers countless opportunities. The support of my professors guided me to discover my passion for engineering while expanding my skills and knowledge. Throughout my undergraduate years, I was constantly amazed by the new doors that UCF opened for me. I am genuinely excited to continue exploring the endless possibilities that lie ahead as I embark on my PhD program."*

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# ALEJANDRO LOPEZ ZELAYA

JUNIOR | MAJOR: Photonic Science and Engineering

MINOR: Bioengineering

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### HONORS

- » Princeton Prize in Race Relations Award
- » Student Government Caucus Chair of the Year (2022)
- » Coco Coalition Scholarship Recipient
- » Alice P. Earl Scholarship Received
- » Fall and Spring Dean's List (2021-2023)

### INVOLVEMENTS

- » Student Government **Speaker of the Senate**
- » Student Government **Black Caucus Chair**
- » Student Government **AS&F Seat**
- » UCF Lead Scholar

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*"UCF has given me the opportunity of continual growth by allowing me to pursue my personal, academic, and career goals. From the various events held by the university and its colleges, like the College of Optics and Photonics, I've had memorable interactions with great and like-minded students, faculty, job recruiters, international research society leaders, corporate leaders like CEOs, and friends. These interactions have furthered my growth in the classroom by seeing beyond the textbook, and career-wise, by doing internships outside the university."*

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# TIANA MASON

## GRADUATE STUDENT

PROGRAM: Higher Education Student Personnel

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### HONORS

- » Dean's List
- » National Society of Leadership and Success
- » President's Honor Roll
- » Lead Scholars Medallion

### INVOLVEMENTS

- » Homecoming and Knight-Thon **Graduate Assistant**
- » Volunteer UCF **Special Events Member**
- » Campus Activities Board **Special Events Member**
- » Housing and Residence Life **Resident Assistant**
- » Late Knights **Special Events Member**
- » First Year Experience **Orientation Leader**

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*"As an undergrad Knight and now graduate student, I can confidently say I have been blessed to attend UCF. I've grown socially, mentally, and spiritually throughout the last few years. The people I've met and the organizations I've been a part of have all developed me into the person that I am today. I cannot thank this school enough for not only welcoming me, but teaching me each day to reach for the stars."*

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# REBEKAH MAY

## SENIOR

MAJOR: Nursing

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### HONORS

- » National Merit Scholar
- » Winner of Service of Children and Families at Amy-Zeh Service Learning Showcase
- » Light the Way Nursing Endowed Scholarship
- » Orlando Health Nursing Honors in the Major Scholarship
- » Dean's List

### INVOLVEMENTS

- » UCF Arboretum **Bee and Pollinator Intern**
- » LEAD Scholars **Graduate**
- » Volunteer UCF **Humanitarian Committee Member**
- » Burnett Honors College **Member**

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*"I am a student with big dreams and UCF opened the door to reach them. With UCF's size comes many opportunities and possible connections that can be matched only by the enthusiasm of advisors offering them to you. Its diversity of cultures and thought have challenged me to widen my perspective about what life should be. UCF's nursing program has taught me to learn from and genuinely serve our Orlando community. I am better and better off because of UCF."*

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# MICHAEL MESTRE

**JUNIOR | MAJOR:** Hospitality Management  
**CERTIFICATE:** Theme Park and Attraction Management

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## HONORS

- » Dean's List
- » Pegasus Scholarship

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » UCF Homecoming **Associate Director**
- » Rosen College Leadership Council  
**Dean's Student Ambassador**
- » LEAD Scholars Academy **Selections Director**
- » UCF Homecoming **Spirit Splash Director**

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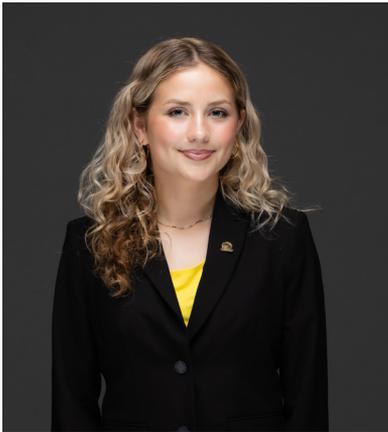
*"UCF has given me so many opportunities to excel and give back to the community. It has shaped me as a leader and provided me with the best hospitality education in the nation. I have had the opportunity to meet many people from different backgrounds and cultures. UCF has helped me become the person I am today."*

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# SHELBY MORGAN

**JUNIOR | MAJOR:** International and Global Studies  
**MINOR:** Diplomacy

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## HONORS

- » President's Honor Roll
- » Dean's List

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » UCF Student Government **SGLC program member**
- » UCF Student Government **Associate Justice**
- » UCF Student Government **External Assistant Chief Justice**
- » Honors Undergraduate Thesis Program

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*"UCF has given me the opportunity and the resources to truly find my passions and pursue my goals, both personal and professional. The people this university has introduced me to have led to me making some of my greatest friendships, as well as building professional connections. I am beyond grateful for all this university has offered me thus far, and I am proud to call myself a knight."*

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# PAULINA MUNOZ

**SENIOR | MAJOR:** Political Science (Intelligence and National Security) **MINOR:** Terrorism Studies **CERTIFICATE:** Criminal Profiling

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## HONORS

- » College of Science Dean's List
- » President's Honor Roll
- » ICCAE Scholar

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Undergraduate Admissions Office **Campus Ambassador**
- » Undergraduate Admissions Office **Training Chair**
- » The Women's Network **Former Vice President of Finance**

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*"UCF has granted me countless scholarship opportunities, which has allowed me to continue my education as a first-generation student. Additionally, the numerous networking opportunities with UCF's resources have aided my career aspirations within the intelligence field."*

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# EBONY PARSONS

**SENIOR | MAJOR:** Biomedical Sciences  
**MINOR:** Health Science

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## HONORS

- » Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholar
- » Knights of Distinction
- » Burnett Honors Scholar
- » Think 30 Scholarship

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Agape Global Health for Haiti **Intern**
- » International Medical Outreach **President, Vice President**
- » UCF College of Medicine Global Health Working Group **Secretary**
- » First Generation Medicine **Founder, President**
- » Honors Undergraduate Thesis (Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences) **Researcher**
- » Physics **Learning Assistant**

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*"UCF inspired me to pursue my first experience as a student leader (become the founding president of First-Generation Medicine, increase the matriculation rate of first-generation students in medical-based careers). I am in the process of building a cistern in Haiti and working on conducting educational workshops within the community with local doctors. I am also able to conduct lab research on women's health. UCF has actively worked to help me thrive and make real-world change. As I believe is possible for every UCF student."*

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# MARIANA SORROZA

**SENIOR | MAJOR:** Mechanical Engineering/International & Global Studies  
**MINOR:** Leadership Studies & Mathematics **CERTIFICATE:** TEFL

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## HONORS

- » Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholar
- » Knights of Distinction
- » Hispanic Scholar Designation
- » LEAD Scholar Graduate
- » Engineering Leadership Google Spring Competition
- » Machining Technologies Vocational Diploma
- » Global Competency and Solidworks Certified

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Historian**
- » Student Code of Conduct Board **Student Representative**
- » Students Advisory Council **Student Representative**
- » Undergraduate Admissions **Campus Ambassador**
- » Girls Excelling in Math and Science (GEMS) **Mentor**
- » DOE National Nuclear Security Administration **Intern**
- » STEM Ambassador

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*"UCF has impacted me in every aspect of my life. Academically, I have been able to learn about the many topics I am interested in. Career-wise, I am able to implement what I learn as I learn it while serving others. Socially, it is a privilege to create life-long friendships with a diverse group of students. Spiritually, I feel grateful I get to be at UCF. I am blessed to be at UCF doing all the things that I love in one place; being a UCF Knight is truly a transformative experience!"*

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# MICHAEL SOTO

**SENIOR**

**MAJOR:** Photonic Science and Engineering

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## HONORS

- » President's Honor Roll
- » Dean's Internal Advisory Board for CREOL

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » Student Government **Election Commissioner**
- » Society of Optics Students **Treasurer**

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*"UCF has allowed me to become the person I am today. With the university's wide range of learning opportunities and events, I have been able to enrich my education and find my true passions that I will maintain for the rest of my life. Beyond academics, UCF has fostered a sense of belonging and community that has made my college experience truly unforgettable."*

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# UMA SRIRAM

**JUNIOR | MAJOR:** Biomedical Sciences  
**MINOR:** Women and Gender Studies

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## HONORS

- » President's Honor Roll
- » Burnett Medical Scholar

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » PERIOD.@UCF **Treasurer**
- » Honors Congress **Treasurer**
- » UCF Department of Sociology (Gender Division) **Research Assistant**
- » UCF College of Medicine (Population Health Sciences) **Research Assistant**

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*“As an out of state student, UCF has provided me with a strong support system that has inspired me to pursue a career in medicine. The RSOs and faculty advisors have always welcomed me with open arms and helped me realize my potential for making a difference in the UCF community. With goals of attending medical school, UCF has been the ideal environment to connect with experienced faculty, students, and community leaders that want to see students succeed.”*

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# DARYA SULKOUSKAYA

**SENIOR**  
**MAJORS:** Biomedical Sciences and Spanish

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## HONORS

- » Allyn M. Stearman Research Scholarship
- » Raymond H. and Beryl Dean Penick Memorial Scholarship
- » Burnett Medical Scholar
- » National Merit Scholar
- » Benacquisto Scholarship
- » Mary E. Babcock Scholarship
- » Free Enterprise Academy Entrepreneurship Scholarship

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Events Coordinator**
- » Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences **Research Assistant**
- » Puerto Rico Research Hub **Research Assistant**
- » Pre-Medical AMSA **MSAS Chair, Sergeant at Arms, Research Director**
- » Korean Culture Club **Vice-President, President**
- » Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences **Peer Mentor, Teaching Assistant**

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*“My first year at UCF showed me that I chose the right place to be my home away from home for college. I found myself feeling welcomed by all the organizations, advising, and traditions that UCF had to offer. Since then, the sense of community at UCF has fueled my desire to give back and aid newer students in finding their way at the university.”*

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# ISABEAU TYNDALL

SENIOR

MAJOR & CERTIFICATE: Biology, German Studies

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## HONORS

- » Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholar
- » UCF President's Leadership Council Endowed Scholarship
- » Second Chance Foundation Scholarship
- » SAG-AFTRA Foundation
- » John L. Dales Scholarship Recipient
- » Amy Zeh Service Learning Student Showcase "Best in Public Education" award recipient
- » University Club of Orlando Scholarship Recipient

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Recruitment Coordinator**
  - » Burnett Honors College **Honors Undergraduate Thesis Candidate**
  - » Campus Connect Newman Civic Fellowship **Presidential Nominated Fellow**
  - » UCF Department of Housing and Residence Life
  - » Student Support Foundation Club **President**
  - » Foundations of Leadership Class **Peer Mentor**
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*"UCF has embraced me with myriad resources, mentors, and opportunities for success. The motivation behind my involvement at UCF has been to connect with underserved groups in our community through civic engagement, leadership, and volunteer work. My central philosophy is when we focus on brightening the lives of the people and communities around us, it too can have a tremendous impact on greater society."*

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# NOELIA VALENCIA

JUNIOR

MAJOR: Biology

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## HONORS

- » President's Honor Roll
- » Dean's list
- » Latin American and Caribbean Scholarship
- » MASS Excellence in Action Award

## INVOLVEMENTS

- » President's Leadership Council **Recruitment Coordinator**
  - » UCF Housing and Residence Life **Resident Assistant**
  - » UCF First Year Experience **Orientation Leader**
  - » Knight's Hospitality **Ambassador**
  - » MIT Laboratory **Undergraduate Research Assistant**
  - » Orlando Regional Medical Center **Volunteer**
  - » Honors Congress **Fundraising Committee Member**
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*"I pursued my dreams in the US. The new culture left me adrift, but UCF and my loved ones' support sparked transformation. It offered experiences I wouldn't have had in Peru, fueling my growth. While being active in UCF, I found belonging and genuine peers. As a Knight, I harness my background, inspiring boldness while being dedicated to serving. My time has unveiled advocacy and passion for research, aligning with my medical and advocacy aspirations. Reflecting on the past two years at UCF, I'm thankful and eager to give back and continue."*

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The following organizations and honors are among the most distinguished at the University of Central Florida. We are proud to recognize the membership and achievements of these *President's Leadership Council* members.

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## THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

FLORIAN ALUSHI	RAJ KHUPERKAR
SANYA BANSAL	ALEJANDRO LOPEZ
JACOB BERTRAM	ZELAYA
NOLA BROWNE	REBEKAH MAY
RACHEL BUKSBAUM	SHELBY MORGAN
JULIAN COPE	EBONY PARSONS
JUSTIN DAVIS	MARIANA SORROZA
AINSLEY ELGIN	UMA SRIRAM
JAMES EVANS	DARYA SULKOUSKAYA
SAMEEP GAWASKAR	ISABEAU TYNDALL
JAKE HANSON	NOELIA VALENCIA
TAYLOR HAYCOCK	

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## LEAD SCHOLARS PROGRAM

SANYA BANSAL	MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM
CARLOUNE BENEDICT	TIANA MASON
AYLA BERNTSEN	REBEKAH MAY
JUSTIN DAVIS	MICHAEL MESTRE
NOLA BROWNE	EBONY PARSONS
JAMES EVANS	MARIANA SORROZA
LJ HALL	MICHAEL SOTO
JAKE HANSON	UMA SRIRAM
SIERRA HOLMES	ISABEAU TYNDALL



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