Greetings from the UChicago PREP!

Congratulations to the 2020-21 University of Chicago PREP Scholars, who have just completed the program. We are proud of all they have accomplished and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.

We hope you are all doing well both personally and professionally. As always, we’d love to hear from you with any news or career updates. Have a great summer!

The UChicago PREP staff

UChicago PREP Symposium

The eight 2020-2021 UChicago PREP Scholars completed the PREP Program under a hybrid model this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and university protocols that have limited in-person events and meetings. While it was another unusual year on campus, the PREP Scholars were able to take advantage of both virtual and in-person research, graduate level science courses, journal clubs, lab meetings, workshops, and research presentations and seminars throughout the year. The Scholars presented their research orally at the final PREP Symposium on June 8, 2021 and completed a final written report based on their lab research conducted this year. Congratulations to all on your wonderful final presentations, your accomplishments this year, and your continued commitment to your education and training! The group is now moving on to their next career steps and have enrolled in graduate training programs at Northwestern University (2), UCLA (2), Vanderbilt, Duke, Yale, and Columbia University. Thank you to all of the PREP Mentors this year and good luck to all the Scholars in the next phases of your careers!

Welcome to the 2021-22 UChicago PREP Scholars!

The newest cohort of UChicago PREP Scholars will be joining the Program this Summer, and represent the following institutions: Northwestern University, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Colorado College, University of Georgia, DePaul University, California State University Northridge, and Florida International University. Join us in welcoming the PREP Cohort of 2022!
PREP Alum Updates

Congratulations to **Ogechi Nwadinobi, PhD**, (PREP Class of 2015) for completing her PhD at the University of Texas at Arlington this year! 38 UChicago PREP alums have received their PhD or MD so far, and overall 94% of our PREP alums have matriculated into higher education graduate programs. We are very proud of all of you! Our full list of graduates is posted on our website. If you’ve graduated recently, please let us know!

Congrats to Emory University graduate students **Yemko Pryor** (Genetics and Molecular Biology) and **Stacey Jones** (Chemistry), from the PREP class of 2019, for each being awarded the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship in 2021! In addition, **Yemko** was awarded a Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship. Great work both of you!

**Juan Apiz Saab** (PREP class of 2018) and **Christina Roman** (PREP 2015) were among the inaugural winners of the of UChicago BSD Diversity Committee **2021 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Awards**. Congratulations and well done!

Midwest Regional PREP/IMSD Symposium

The Midwest Regional PREP/IMSD Symposium, *Scientific Innovations Through Diverse Perspectives*, is on hiatus this year, but plans to return to Chicago in Spring 2022 with an in-person format. We look forward to a wonderful professional development and networking event led by and for our PREP Scholars and IMSD students.

PREP Alum Spotlight

**Daisy Castillo-Guzman** (UChicago PREP Class of 2016) is currently pursuing her PhD at University of California, Davis and was recently awarded a prestigious NIH F31 Dissertation Fellowship! Daisy’s research project title is “Uncovering Novel Roles for Splicing Factor SF3B1 in Transcription Dynamics, R-loop Metabolism, and Chromatin Structure” and her research is being performed in the Chedin Lab at UC Davis in the Molecular and Cellular Biology Department. Daisy had the opportunity to present her research in a plenary talk at the 2020 Keystone Gene Regulation Meeting. When Daisy started in her graduate program, she was first appointed to the UC Davis IMSD program and then to the MCB T32 training grant, before applying for and receiving her F31 grant. Besides working on her dissertation research, Daisy enjoys volunteering in the Young Scientist Program (YSP), an outreach program that provides opportunities that enhance K-12 science education through interactive experiments and activities in the classroom. She has also participated in the PREP program admissions committee at UC Davis, and each year gets the opportunity to talk to PREP Scholars about her experience in applying to graduate school and provides them with advice as they prepare to enter PhD programs. Congratulations to Daisy on her Fellowship award and all her success so far in graduate school!

If you have any recent awards or career news to share, please e-mail us at Irisner1@peds.bsd.uchicago.edu or fill out our 2021 PREP Alum Survey. We'd love to hear from you! Visit the University of Chicago PREP website: http://bsdprep.uchicago.edu/