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GRADUATE SCHOOL *of*  
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**MOLECULAR MEDICINE AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE GRADUATE PROGRAM  
STUDENT PROFILES**

Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program  
Student Profiles



**Salomat Abdulkhuseynova, MD**

**Third Year PhD Student, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2021**

**Email:** [sabdulkh@wakehealth.edu](mailto:sabdulkh@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** Pirogov Russian National Research Medical University,  
2017 Medical Residency, N.N.Blokhin Russian Cancer  
Research Center, 2019, MD

**Research Mentors:** Shay Soker, PhD  
Lance Miller, PhD

**Research Interests:** Cancer biology; cancer immunology; immune  
response; cancer treatment; tumor organoids; translational science



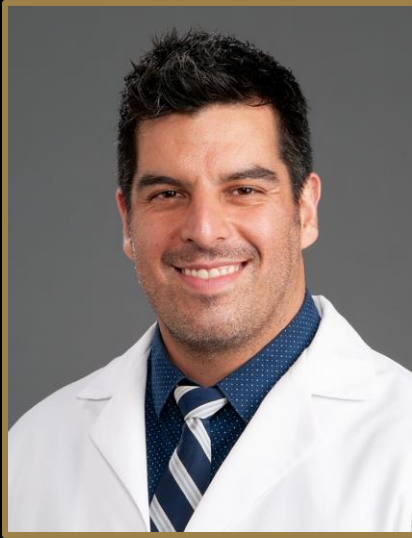
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Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program  
Student Profiles



**Edward Beck**

**Sixth Year PhD Candidate, 2024- 2025**

Orthopaedic Surgery Physician Scientist Program

**Year Matriculated:** 2020

**Email:** [ebeck@wakehealth.edu](mailto:ebeck@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** BS- Microbiology, Minor in Chemistry; University of Arizona, Masters in Public Health; University of Arizona, MD; University of Illinois

**Research mentors:** Dr. Kristen Nicholson, PhD (MMTS); Dr. Brian Waterman, MD (Dept of Orthopedic Surgery)

**Research Interests:** Cartilage preservation and regeneration; cell biology; patient clinical outcomes



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Student Profiles



**Madeleine Bibby**

**Second Year PhD Student, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email: [mbibby@wakehealth.edu](mailto:mbibby@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education:** Washington State University, BS in Neuroscience and Biology

**Research mentor:** Graca Almeida-Porada, MD, PhD (WFIRM)

**Research Interests:** Bone Marrow; immunotherapy; hematological malignancies and conditions; organoids; immune system regeneration



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**Student Profiles**



**Marcel G. Brown, MD**

**Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024- 2025**

**Orthopaedic Surgery Physician Scientist Program**

**Year Matriculated: 2022**

**Email:** marcebro@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** MD, Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth, 2022  
BA, Chemistry, Williams College, 2015

**Research Mentor:** Xue Ma, MD, PhD (Orthopaedics)

**Research Interests:** Regenerative medicine and applications of amniotic fluid stem cells; Degenerative joint disease; Arthroplasty; Degenerative disc disease and disorders of the spine; peripheral nerve injury and repair



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Justin Campbell

Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025

Year Matriculated: 2022

Email: [jdcampbe@wakehealth.edu](mailto:jdcampbe@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** BS Biology; Minor in Pre-Health; Winston-Salem State University; Associate in Applied Science; Major in Biotechnology; Major in Nanotechnology; Forsyth Technical Community College

**Research Mentors:** Thomas Shupe, PhD (WFIRM); Frank Marini, PhD (Cancer Biology)

**Research Interests:** Cell biology; virology; tissue engineering; regenerative medicine



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**Samuel P. Carmichael II, MD**

**Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2022**

**Email:** [scarmich@wakehealth.edu](mailto:scarmich@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** MD, University of Kentucky College of Medicine, 2013

**Research mentor:** Anthony Atala, MD (WFIRM)

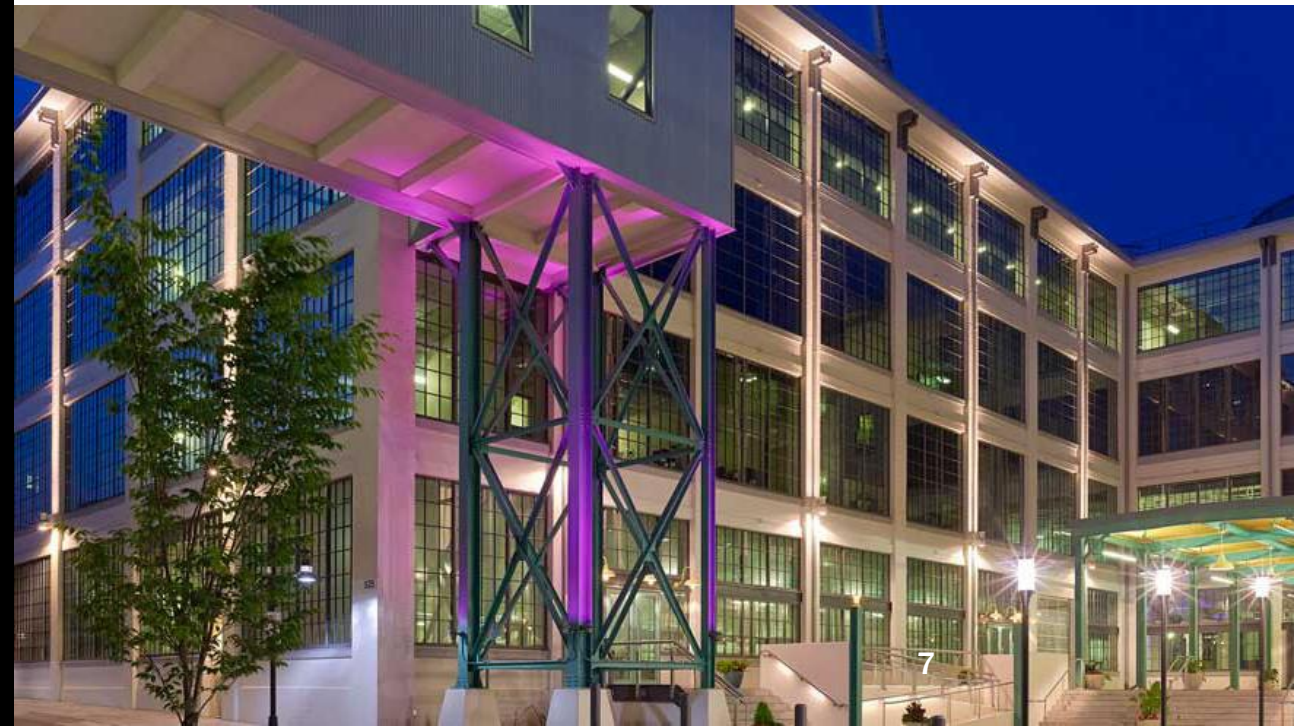
**Research Interests:** Shock resuscitation; intra-Abdominal adhesion



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**Student Profiles**



**Alicia Costa-Terryll**

Second Year PhD Student: 2023-2024

**Year Matriculated:** 2023

**Email:** acostate@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** BS Biology, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro,  
2019

**Research Mentors:** Dr. Michael Munley, PhD, Dr. Jeffrey Willey, PhD

**Research Interests:** Relative biological effectiveness; radiation oncology  
and proton therapy



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**Tameka Dean, DO, MS**

**Fifth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Orthopaedic Physician Scientist Program**

**Year Matriculated: 2021**

**Email:** tamdean@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine; Doctorate of Osteopathic Medicine, 2021; MS, Biomedical Science, 2021

**Research mentor:** Xue Ma, PhD (Orthopedics)

**Research Interests:** Ischemia-reperfusion injury; skeletal muscle physiology



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Hope Didier

**Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2021**

**Email:** hdidier@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** Kennesaw State University; BS Molecular & Cellular Biology,  
2021

BA Dance, 2021

**Research Mentor:** Karen Haas, PhD

**Research Interests:** Cancer immunology; translational Science;  
b lymphocyte response/differentiation; tumor associated carbohydrate  
antigens; anti-tumor immune response



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**Maryssa Ellison**

**Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated:** 2021

**Email:** [maelliso@wakehealth.edu](mailto:maelliso@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** BS, Biology Major; Molecular Biology & Biotechnology concentration; Palm Beach Atlantic University, 2016

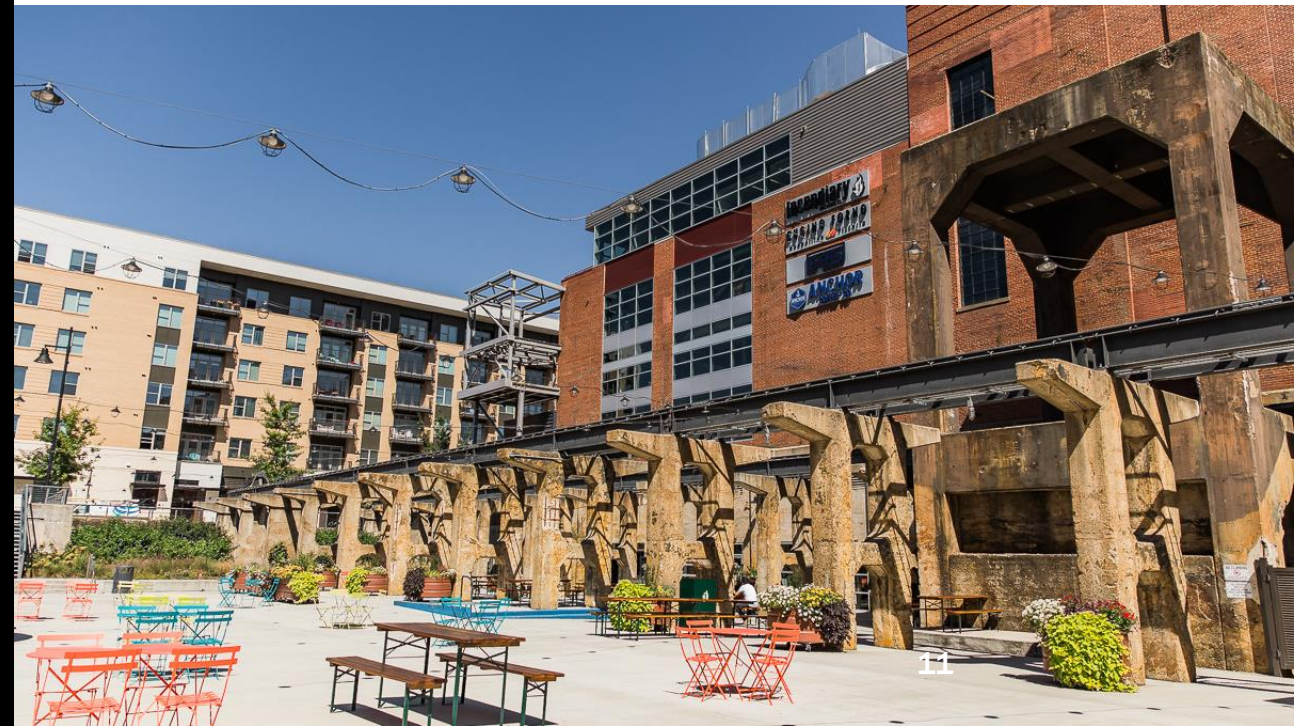
**Research mentors:** Anthony Atala, MD and Victoria Weis, PhD, (Regenerative Medicine)

**Research Interests:** necrotizing enterocolitis; mucosal immunology; intestinal stem cell niche; placental stem cell-based therapeutics; regenerative medicine



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**Aya Abdel Raouf El- Taibany, MD**

**Fifth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2021**

**Email:** aeltaiba@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** MD, School of Medicine, Alexandria University, 2008  
Internship School of Medicine, Alexandria University, 2010; MS, Medical  
Genetics, Alexandria University, 2016

**Research mentors:** Michael Seeds, Ph.D. (WFIRM) and Anthony Atala, MD  
(WFIRM)

**Research Interests:** Neurodegenerative; neuroimmunological; blood  
brain barrier; molecular genetics; drug discovery and translational  
research



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**Lindsey Farris**

**Sixth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2019**

**Email: [lfarris@wakehealth.edu](mailto:lfarris@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education: BS, Biology & Chemistry, Western Carolina University,  
2019**

**Research mentor: Leslie Poole, Ph.D. (Biochemistry)**

**Research Interests: Cancer therapeutics & translational  
medicine**



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**Yosuri Fernandez Figuereo**

**Third Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated:** 2023

**Email:** [yfernan@wakehealth.edu](mailto:yfernan@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** BS; Ecology and Environmental Management; Pontificia Universidad Catolica Madre y Maestra-PUCMM; Associate in Applied Science; Biotechnology; Forsyth Technical Community College

**Research Mentor:** Stephen J. Walker, PhD (WFIRM)

**Research Interests:** Autism spectrum disorder (ASD); intestinal stem cells; intestinal organoids; gut- bran axis; genetics and genomics; microbiology



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**Mackenzie Fitzpatrick**

**Fifth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2020**

**Email:** mackrobe@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** BS Neuroscience, Duke University, 2019

**Research mentor:** Leah Solberg Woods, PhD (Molecular Medicine)

**Research Interests:** Genetics; translational science; obesity; diabetes



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**Austin Foster, MD**

**Second Year PhD Student, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email:** jeafoste@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville, MD;  
Furman University, BA in Business Administration

**Research Mentor:** Jeffrey S. Willey, PhD (Radiation Oncology)

**Research Interests:** Radiation and cancer-induced bone injury; bone health and metabolism; pathologic fractures; bone pain; analgesia



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Student Profiles



**Sarah D. Kaye**

**Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2019**

**Email: [sdkaye@wakehealth.edu](mailto:sdkaye@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education:** BS in Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology, UC Santa Cruz

**Research Mentor:** Dr. Pooja Jadiya, PhD

**Research Interests:** Mitochondrial calcium signaling; extracellular vesicles; biomarkers; Alzheimer's disease and related dementias



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**Balqees Khader**

**Second Year PhD Student, 2024- 2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email: [bkhader@wakehealth.edu](mailto:bkhader@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education:** MS; Biology/ North Carolina A&T State University, 2023, BS;  
Biology/ Physics Minor, North Carolina A&T State University, 2021

**Research Mentor:** Baisong Lu, PhD (WFIRM)

**Research interests:** Cellular therapy; gene editing; lipid nanoparticle  
regenerative medicine



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Sudarshan Krishnamurthy

Fourth Year MD/PhD Dual Degree Candidate, 2024-2025

**Year Matriculated:** MD 2020, PhD 2022

**Email:** sukrishn@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** BS Biomedical Sciences, University of South Florida, 2019

**Research Mentors:** Dr. Timothy Hughes, PhD and Dr. Trey Bateman, MD, MPH

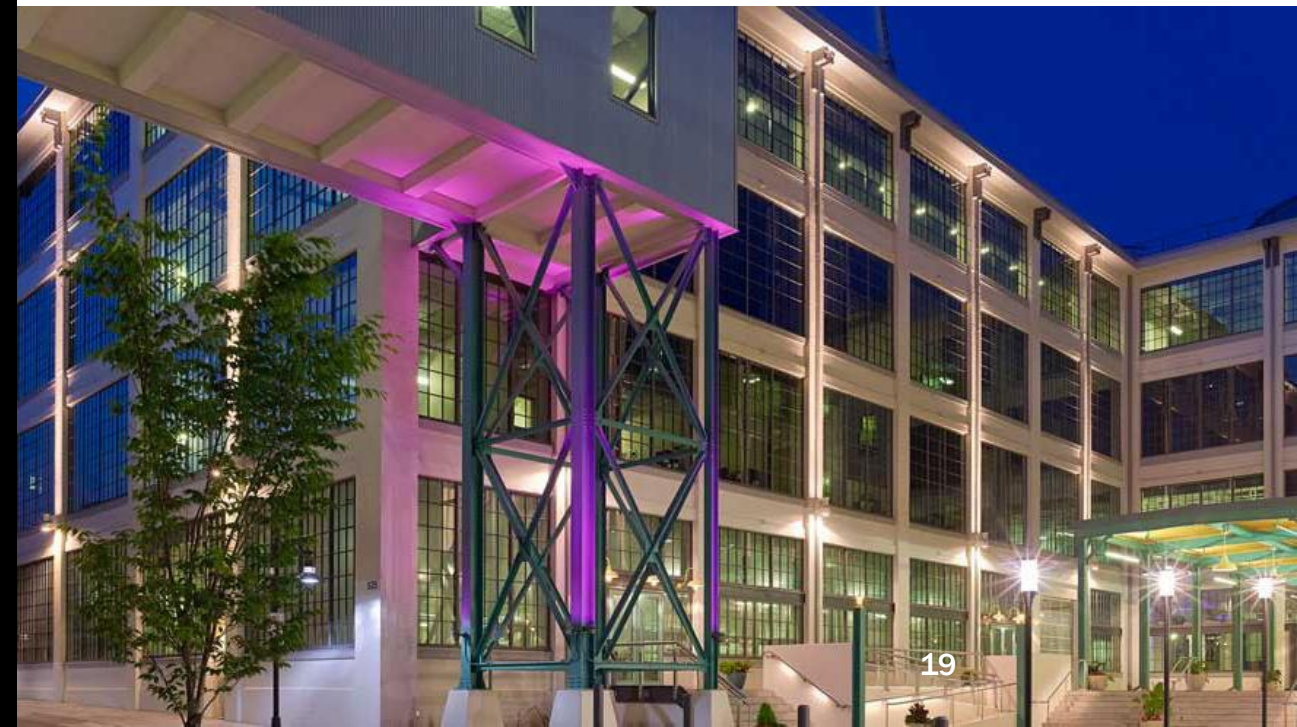
**Research Interests:** Aging; Alzheimer's disease and related dementias; cardiometabolic index; social deprivation; health disparities; health equity



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Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate  
Program Student Profiles



**Caroline Kuczynski**

**Sixth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2019**

**Email: [ckuczyns@wakehealth.edu](mailto:ckuczyns@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education: BS, Biophysics with Honors, Wake Forest University, 2018**

**Research Mentor: Graça Almeida-Porada, MD, PhD (WFIRM)**

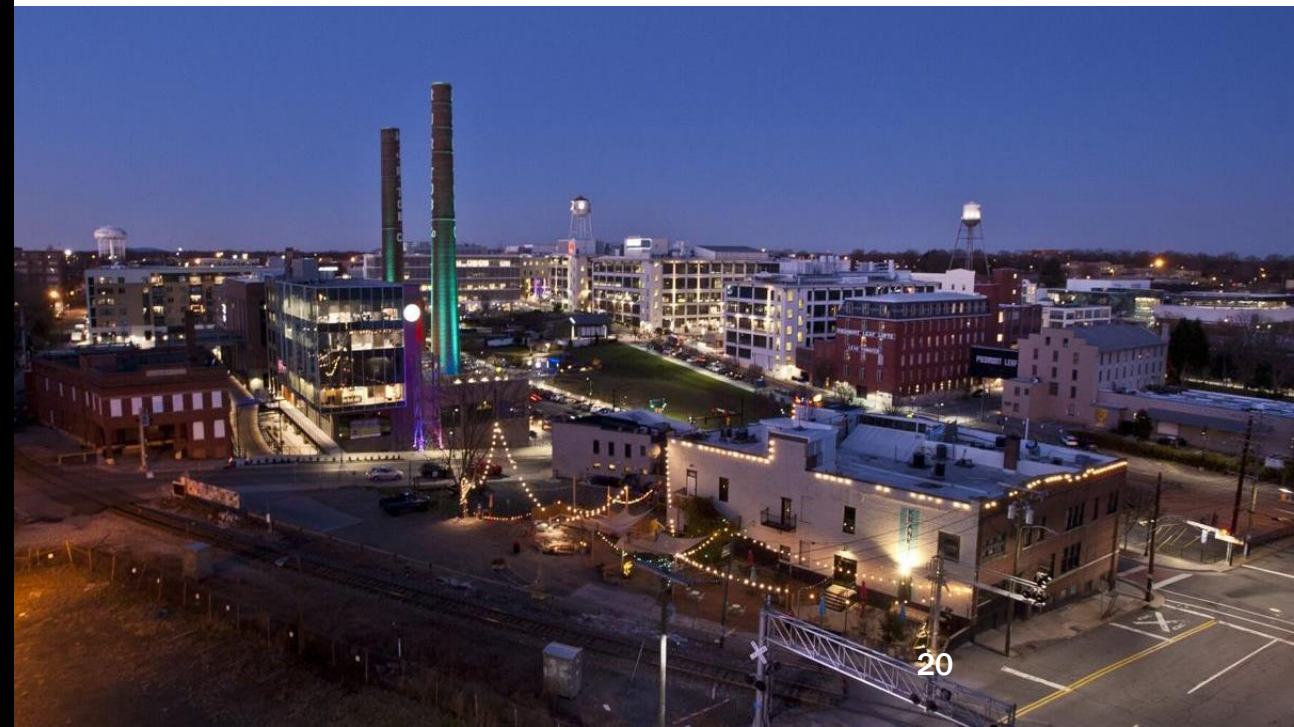
**Research Interests:** Genetic hematologic disorders (particularly sickle cell anemia and other hemoglobinopathies); adeno-associated virus (AAV)-based gene therapy; prenatal gene therapy; and molecular dynamics (MD) simulations



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Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program  
Student Profiles



**Hannah LaMond**

**Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2022**

**Email:** hlamond@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** BS; Biochemistry/Molecular Biology Major; Writing Minor, Loyola University Maryland, 2020

**Research mentor:** Dr. Ellie Rahbar, PhD (Biomedical Engineering)

**Research Interests:** Inflammation; immunology; liver; polyunsaturated fatty acids



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**Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program**  
**Student Profiles**



**Daniel Lara, MD**

**Eighth Year PhD Candidate, 2024- 2025**

**Orthopaedic Surgery Physician Scientist Program**

**Year Matriculated: 2017**

**Email:** [dlara@wakehealth.edu](mailto:dlara@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** BS, University of Notre Dame, 2011 MD, Creighton University School of Medicine, 2016

**Research mentor:** Thomas Smith, PhD (Orthopaedic Surgery)

**Research Interests:** Neuromuscular junction/peripheral nerve trauma and regeneration



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**Student Profiles**



**Nequesha Mohamed, MD**

**Fifth Year PhD Candidate, 2024- 2025**

**Orthopaedic Surgery Physician Scientist Program**

**Year Matriculated: 2020**

**Email: nmohamed@wakehealth.edu**

**Education:** MD – University of Medicine and Health Sciences St. Kitts, 2016;  
BS – University of Toronto, 2011

**Research Mentor:** Jeff Willey, PhD (Orthopaedics)

**Research Interests:** Arthritis, diabetes, joint replacement, healthcare disparity



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**Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program**  
**Student Profiles**



**Courtney S. Moore**

**Second Year PhD Student, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2024**

**Email: [cosmoore@wakehealth.edu](mailto:cosmoore@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education:** Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine, DVM and  
University of North Carolina at Pembroke, BS in Biology

**Research mentor:** J. Mark Cline, DVM, PhD, DACVP

**Research Interests:** Genetic mutations; radiation-induced sarcomas



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**Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program**  
**Student Profiles**



**Alexis Elizabeth Morse**

**Third Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email:** [aemorse@wakehealth.edu](mailto:aemorse@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** MS Biomedical Science; Concentration in Cancer Biology; Wake Forest University; Bachelor of Science Chemistry; Minors in Biology and Mathematics; Wingate University

**Research Mentor:** Karen Haas, PhD

**Research Interests:** Microbiology and immunology, immune responses to vaccines, vaccinology



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Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program  
Student Profiles



**Ayobami S. Ogunsola, MD**

**Third Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Orthopaedic Surgery Physician Scientist Program**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email: [aogunsol@wakehealth.edu](mailto:aogunsol@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education:** Medical degree (MB; BS) - University of Ibadan, 2015;  
Master of Public Health (MPH) - Texas A&M University, 2021

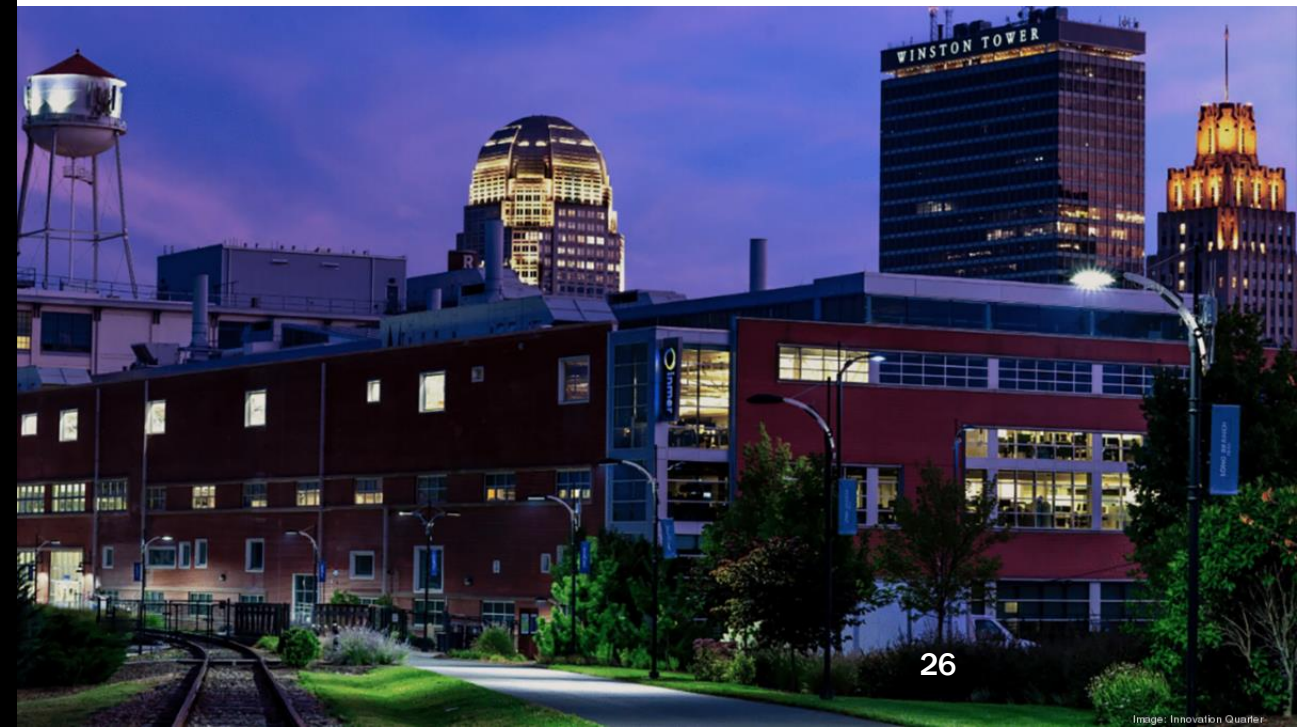
**Research mentor:** Xue Ma, MD, PhD (Orthopaedics)

**Research Interests:** Clinical outcomes, mortality epidemiology, and  
molecular biology

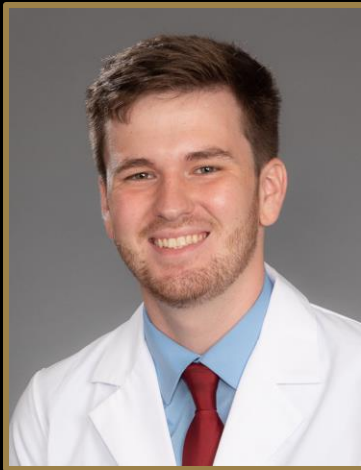


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**Student Profiles**



**Patrick Ralph**

**Fourth Year MD/PhD Dual Degree Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated:** MD 2019, PhD 2021

**Email:** pralph@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** BS Biology, William Peace University

**Research Mentor:** Sang Jin Lee, PhD (WFIRM)

**Research Interest:** Tissue engineering; model development; neurobiology; regenerative medicine; neurodegeneration; behavioral neurology; neuropsychiatry



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Student Profiles



**Emma Parsons**

**Fifth Year PhD Student, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2020**

**Email:** [ecparson@wakehealth.edu](mailto:ecparson@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** BA Biology and Sociology; Minor in Chemistry, Wake Forest University, 2018

**Research Mentor:** Anthony Atala, MD (WFIRM)

**Research Interest:** Immunology, translational science; osteoarthritis; immunomodulatory Cell-based treatment; cellular and molecular mechanism



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Student Profiles



Daniela A. Key- Planas

**Second Year PhD Student, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email:** [dkeyplan@wakehealth.edu](mailto:dkeyplan@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** BS Computational Biology, Florida State University, 2021

**Research Mentor:** Michael Olivier PhD, (Molecular Medicine)

**Research Interests:** OMICS research; mass spectrometry technologies;  
cardiovascular diseases; genetics



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**Student Profiles**



**Kaitlyn Reno**

**Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2022**

**Email: kreno@wakehealth.edu**

**Education: BS Biology, Chemistry Minor, Virginia Tech, 2021**

**Research Mentor: Jeff Willey, PhD**

**Research Interest:** Identifying novel biomarkers of bone damage due to radiation therapy; identifying novel biomarkers of NSCLC progression and radiation resistance; radiation oncology; identifying biomarkers of progressive fibrosis and pneumonitis in NSCLC



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**Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate  
Program Student Profiles**



**Gemma Nomdedeu-Sancho**

**Third Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2022**

**Email: [gnomdede@wakehealth.edu](mailto:gnomdede@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education:** BS in Human Biology from Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain), 2020; MS in Biomedical Research from Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain), 2021

**Research Mentors:** Shay Soker, Ph.D. and Anthony Atala, MD

**Research Interests:** Skin biology; in-vitro 3D models; organoids; melanoma; regenerative medicine



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Student Profiles



**Christina Stevens, DVM**

**Third Year PhD Student, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email:** [chmsteve@wakehealth.edu](mailto:chmsteve@wakehealth.edu)

**Education:** BA, Biological Sciences, Barnard College, 2018; DVM, Colorado State University, 2022

**Research Mentor:** Kylie Kavanagh, DVM, MS, MPH (Pathology, Comparative Medicine)

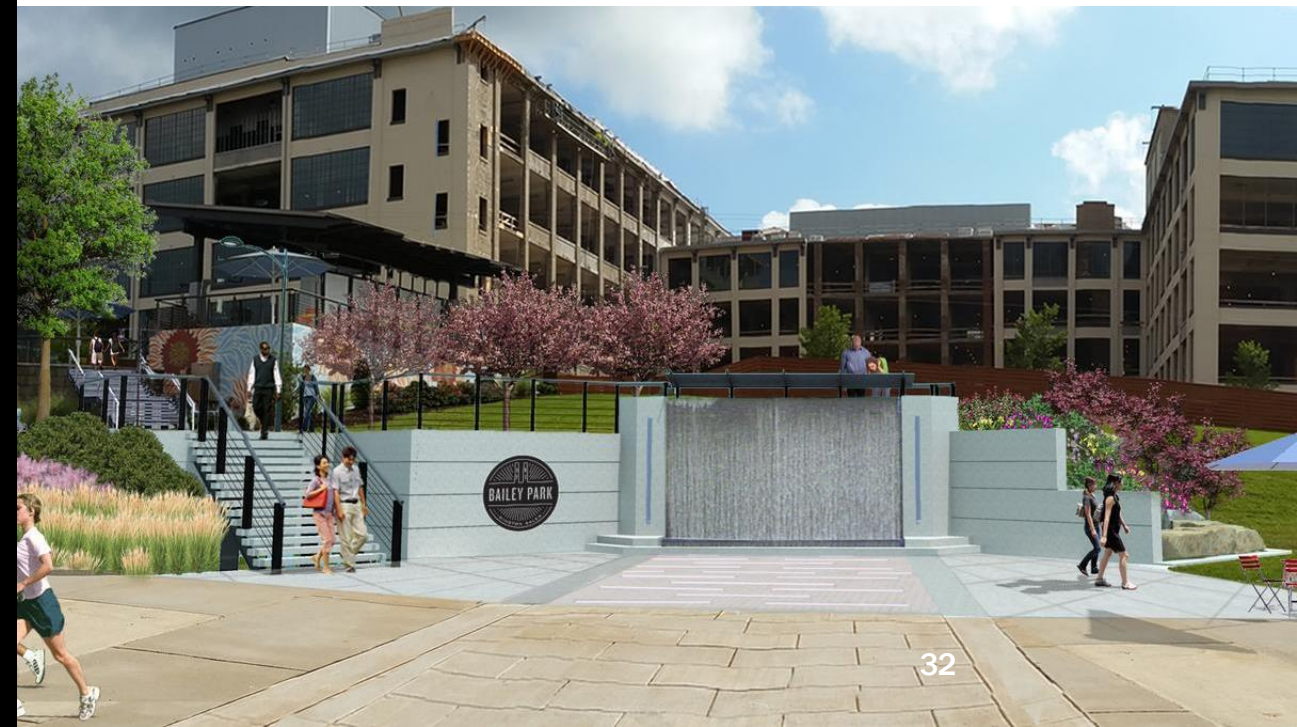
**Research Interest:** Colon; mucosal immunity; inflammaging; digital pathology



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Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program  
Student Profiles



**Vy H. Young**

**Third Year PhD student, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email:** vvuong@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** BA, Cell & Molecular Biology, Barnard College, 2019

**Research Mentor:** Patrick McNutt, Ph.D. (WFIRM)

**Research Interest:** Ocular toxicity, vapor exposure,  
injury & wound healing



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Student Profiles



**Sarah Wachtman**

**Third Year PhD Candidate, 2024-2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2023**

**Email: [swachtma@wakehealth.edu](mailto:swachtma@wakehealth.edu)**

**Education: BS, Biology, Florida State University, 2022**

**Research Mentors: Graça Almeida-Porada, MD, PhD (WFIRM) and  
Christopher Porada, PhD (WFIRM)**

**Research Interests: Stem cell and gene therapy; molecular genetics;  
adeno-associated virus (AAV)-based therapeutics for hemophilia A**



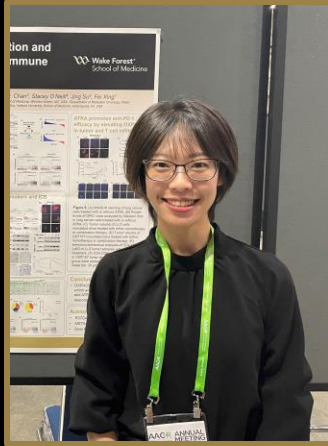
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Student Profiles



Yuezhu Wang

**Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2024- 2025**

**Year Matriculated: 2022**

**Email:** yuewang@wakehealth.edu

**Education:** MS in Genomic and Bioinformatics, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2019; BS of Medicine, Soochow University, 2018

**Research Mentor:** Fei Xing, PhD (Cancer Biology)

**Research interests:** Cancer genetics, lung cancer; brain metastases



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