

# RITA&ALEX HILLMAN FOUNDATION

## THE HILLMAN SCHOLARS PROGRAM IN NURSING INNOVATION

### The University of Michigan School of Nursing

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**Kristen Choi** is a fourth-year student in the traditional BSN program at the University of Michigan School of Nursing in Ann Arbor. Although Kristen had planned on attending art school for most of her life, she chose instead to pursue a degree in nursing because of her interest in health sciences, professional leadership, and advocacy for underserved patient populations. Upon exposure to the several research projects in progress in the School of Nursing at the University of Michigan, she discovered the unique opportunity to achieve her professional goal of leadership and advocacy as a nurse researcher rather than through advanced clinical practice. Kristen is interested in psychiatric and forensic nursing research, as well as women's health. Advised by Dr. Julia Seng from the School of Nursing and Department of Women's Studies, Kristen currently assists with research on post-traumatic stress disorder from childhood maltreatment and its effects on women's health during the childbearing year.



In particular, she has examined the role of the maternity healthcare provider for women with post-traumatic stress during pregnancy and how specialized education for providers can promote post-traumatic growth rather than re-victimization for this population. Kristen plans to report her findings in her undergraduate Honors Thesis. Prior to her work with Dr. Seng, Kristen worked with Dr. Annie Kao from the School of Nursing on family and adolescent health promotion research through the undergraduate Honors Program, of which Kristen is an active member. She presented her research findings on family efficacy at the Midwest Nursing Research Society Annual Conference and received scholarship recognition for her work. Kristen is also a recipient of the Sidney & Irene Shipman Scholarship, a prestigious, merit-based scholarship for talented undergraduate students at the University of Michigan. She has received numerous other awards and honors for her academic excellence and scholarly achievements at the University of Michigan.

**Jordan Harrison** is a rising senior in the traditional BSN program at the University of Michigan School of Nursing. She began college as a biomedical engineering major but decided her interests in the medical field were more aligned with nursing and its prevention-oriented perspective of health. At the initial Hillman information session for potential applicants, Dr. Marcelline Harris presented some of her work on health informatics, and Jordan realized this would be a good fit, given her interests. Dr. Harris is now one of her co-advisors, along with Dr. Marita Titler, head of the Division of Nursing Business & Health Systems. This past semester, Jordan has attended meetings for the Biomedical Ontology group at U of M, an interdisciplinary group including researchers, physicians, and data scientists that meet twice a month to discuss ontology development (frameworks for organizing data), with the goal of developing an environment for research across different types of data in health care. This summer, Jordan is working as a member of an interdisciplinary research team with Dr.



Titler on an NIH funded study involving a call light system for patients with limited English proficiency. The study is currently in the data collection phase, which includes patient interviews conducted with the aid of an interpreter, as well as an expert advisory panel and focus groups for nursing staff. The ultimate goal is to develop a commercialized product to improve patient care and safety without the need for an interpreter, while decreasing operational costs due to safety failures. Jordan will also be working with Dr. Harris to develop a safety ontology involving patient falls. Her long-term goal is to build a program of research focuses on informatics and technology to promote population health.

**Joslyn Jackson**, current University of Michigan School of Nursing senior, grew up in the small town of



Montague, Michigan. Throughout high school, she was very interested in biology and botany, conducting experiments in the school's greenhouse and animal lab. When admitted to the University of Michigan, Joslyn thought to pursue dentistry, but hadn't found a true passion. She began to become interested in the field of nursing midway through her first year of undergrad, and discovered it to be a perfect fit. Research has always been an interest of hers, and the Hillman Foundation has made pursuing a higher degree possible. Joslyn is interested in studying sexual health, and patient safety in the Veterans Affairs Health System. She currently works for the Ann Arbor VA as a patient technician. Also, Joslyn has been working with Dr. Marjorie McCullagh to analyze an intervention study promoting the use hearing protective devices in rural populations. Currently, this research team has a study aimed at adult patients that is well underway and is beginning to work with adolescents to further analyze and prevent noise induced hearing loss among farmers. Joslyn plans to graduate in the Spring of 2014.

**Emily Neff** is an Accelerated Second Career B.S.N. student at the University of Michigan School of



Nursing. She completed a B.A. in International Health and Social Issues at Indiana University in 2011. During her undergraduate career, she spent three semesters studying language, health, and development in north India, as the recipient of a US Department of Education Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship. She received the Individualized Major Program's Outstanding Senior Project Award for her honors thesis on women's health and family systems in India. While studying at Indiana University she was the director of a student organization focused on HIV/AIDS education both locally and globally, and worked as a Red Cross Certified HIV/AIDS educator. Emily's research interests include health behaviors and risk reduction, underserved populations, and technology. Currently, Emily is working on two NIH-funded grant projects with her

advisor, Dr. Antonia Villarruel. Both projects are interdisciplinary sexual-risk reduction programs aimed at Latino youth and families, and are based on Dr. Villarruel's evidence-based ¡Cuidate! intervention. These new projects will use innovative web-based programs to provide facilitator training and to support Latino parents in promoting safer sexual behavior in their adolescent children. In conjunction with these projects, Emily is exploring barriers and facilitators to the successful use of computer and internet-based interventions in vulnerable populations.

**Daphne Sy** graduated in 2007 from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, with a double Bachelors of



Science in the fields of Biochemistry and Asian Studies. She is currently enrolled in the Second Career in the Nursing program at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and is scheduled to graduate with her BSN in December 2013. Daphne has been exposed to problems related to multidisciplinary aspects of health care since her youth. She has attended two charitable medical missions in a third-world country, in which she had the chance to interact with issues related to wide-spread poverty, poor access to medical care, and inadequate nutrition. In addition, she spent many years in laboratory research during her undergraduate career, studying the growth factors released in animal models after long-term resistance exercise, as well as the biochemical basis of schizophrenia through the analysis of glutamate receptors in human brain tissue. She has experience performing many

complex hands-on techniques, such as homogenizing tissue samples for protein assays, Western blotting, and co-immunoprecipitation. Daphne has a special interest in cardiovascular issues, especially complications of stroke, which is the leading cause of disability in the United States. She is currently involved in a research project with the University of Michigan Aphasia Program (UMAP), one of the nation's oldest intensive aphasia rehabilitation centers, where patients with chronic aphasia visit from around the world to receive 40 hours a week of intensive speech therapy. She hopes to determine the ideal dose of the speech therapy intervention, as well as the ideal timing for the intervention in the difficult months after a stroke event. In addition, she is interested in studying the unique needs of caregivers of persons with aphasia, who must cope with the loss of their loved one's language capabilities, and the possibility that the coping capabilities of the caregiver may significantly impact the language recovery of the client.

**Laura Elizabeth Britton** of Carrboro, North Carolina, earned a Bachelor of Arts in Biological Sciences from



Wellesley College in 2005. For two years, she performed microbiology bench research for the Gorman Cardiovascular Research Group at the University of Pennsylvania. In 2007, she began to work with underserved populations as a Reproductive Health Center Assistant at Planned Parenthood Southeastern Pennsylvania. She was soon recruited to join their newly established Research Department. After one year as a Research Assistant, she was promoted to Study Coordinator assisting with clinical trials related to emergency contraception, gynecological tests, and the accessibility of these services to low-income patients. In 2010, she moved to North Carolina, where she volunteered as a doula at UNC Hospitals and as an English tutor at the Orange County Literacy Council. As a Carolina Health Education Counselor of Sexuality at UNC

Student Wellness, she saw students one-on-one for contraception counseling and HIV testing. She also collaborated with graduate students in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health on a campus-wide sexual health needs assessment. Her research interests include sexual health and harm reduction; perinatal care, labor support, breastfeeding, and perinatal loss; end-of-life care; health disparities affecting the LGBTQ population; and social justice in health care.

**Martha Grace Cromeens** of Bryan, Texas earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of St.



Thomas in 2002, a Master of Arts in History from Baylor University in 2007 and a Juris Doctorate from the South Texas College of Law in 2008. Her Master's thesis was entitled "A Fifty-Year Retrospective on a German Cold War Tragedy, 1953-2003." In addition to being a Licensed Attorney, she is a Certified Phlebotomist and Certified Nurse Aide. Prior to applying to the Hillman Scholars Program, she worked as a Tutor at Texas A&M University and as an Instructor at Blinn College, teaching courses in History and Government.

**Arthur John Gribensk** of Chapel Hill, North Carolina earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from



The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2011, completing an honors thesis focused on Kantian supererogation. During his time at UNC-CH, Mr. Gribensk was a Public Service Scholar, performing over 300 hours of community service in various roles. Prior to applying to the Hillman Scholars Program, he worked as a high school biology teacher at a Title I school as part of TEACH Charlotte, a highly selective program committed to raising student achievement in Charlotte-Mecklenburg County's highest need schools. His research interests include obesity, technology, and cognitive-behavioral psychology.

**Hannah Frances Roy** of Fort Wayne, Indiana earned a Bachelor of Arts in Kinesiology from DePauw University in 2012. During her time at DePauw, Ms. Roy served as the Vice President of the Kinesiology Honors Society and Treasurer of the DePauw Kinesiology Club. She was named the 2012 Kinesiology Major of the Year at DePauw for her strong representation of the department. Her senior thesis focused on the effects of stretching on sprint performance and force production in Division III athletes and physically active college students. As a Hillman Scholar, she hopes to pursue research interests in the fields of Adult/Gerontology or Oncology. With the help of her mentor, Deborah Mayer, she hopes to focus on how exercise can maintain quality of life in cancer survivors.



**Adria Nicole Spinelli** of Racine, Wisconsin earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies from Baylor University in 2011. During her time at Baylor, she was a member of the Honors College and studied abroad focusing on International Law and Organizations. Prior to applying to the Hillman Scholars Program, Ms. Spinelli served as a Center Director for the Appalachia Service Project, a non-profit home repair organization working with impoverished communities in West Virginia. As Center Director, she managed a \$50,000 budget and oversaw more than 500 volunteers. Ms. Spinelli has extensive international experience, including time spent studying in Cambodia and teaching in Spain. Her research interests include childhood obesity and childhood malnutrition.



**Julie Assis** has a B.S. in Biology and B.A. in Humanities-Literature from Messiah College, and a J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law. Prior to starting as a Hillman Scholar, Julie worked as a healthcare attorney representing hospital, pharmaceutical, and life sciences clients in a variety of transactional and corporate matters and advising healthcare providers regarding compliance with licensure, privacy, fraud and abuse, reimbursement, and other healthcare laws and regulations. She has worked in several law firms, as well as in a hospital legal department and within the compliance function at a pharmaceutical company. At the University of Pennsylvania, Julie is a pre-doctoral fellow in the Center of Health Outcomes and Policy Research (CHOPR). Her mentors at CHOPR are Dr.



Linda Aiken and Dr. Matthew McHugh. Julie's research interests include health outcomes and health policy research, particularly focusing on improving the quality and coordination of care. She is currently working with Dr. McHugh on research assessing the effect of laws in four states, which require public reporting of hospital nurse staffing levels, on nurse staffing and patient outcomes. Julie enjoys discussing issues involving process innovation, efficiency, teamwork, operations management, and human factors in healthcare. She is one of the leaders of the Penn chapter of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and recently participated in the IHI Quality Leadership Academy in Cambridge, MA. She is interested in understanding how nurses make decisions in the acute/critical care environment; how technological, environmental, organizational, and cognitive factors influence nurse decision-making; and how these human factors and clinical decisions ultimately impact patient outcomes.

**Kaitlin Best** is from Atlanta, Georgia, where she graduated from high school in 2006 and started her undergraduate education at Emory University. She pursued a degree in Chemistry as an INSPIRE scholar, a program which facilitated undergraduate involvement in research. Kaitlin conducted an independent project in a biochemistry lab for two years. During this same period, she completed her certification as an EMT, worked in the emergency department of Emory University Hospital-Midtown, and volunteered for Emory University's student-run EMS unit. After her sophomore year, she found that her true passion was in nursing, and she completed one year of pre-requisites at Emory before transferring to the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing in 2010. Kaitlin was chosen



as a Hillman Scholar following her first year at Penn, and subsequently became involved in the work of her mentor, Dr. Martha Curley. In addition to working with data from Dr. Curley's RESTORE clinical trial, Kaitlin has written a systematic review on risk factors for iatrogenic withdrawal in critically ill children, which is being prepared for publication. She graduated summa cum laude with her BSN this May and will be writing her General Exam this summer.

**Cindy S. del Rosario** was raised in Sacramento, Calif. and received a B.A. in mathematics from UC



Berkeley. Her undergraduate coursework included courses in abstract algebra, computational biology, and history of science and religion. In college, she worked as a research assistant in ecology and mathematics education projects, and volunteered as an elementary school science teacher. After graduating, she worked for Scholastic, Inc. as an editorial assistant for their website and as a coordinator for their market research team. Recently, she served two years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Tanzania, where she taught mathematics, science, health, and life skills at a rural secondary school. She also holds a certificate in massage therapy in the state of California and is an editor and writer for the health news site MedicalDaily.com. She was inspired to become a nurse through her experiences as a hospice volunteer, a health educator abroad, and as a

witness to the wonderful nursing care her family members received in the hospital. Her ultimate goal is to gain hospice nursing skills and improve the quality of end-of-life care in other areas. Her mentors are Dr. Mary Ersek and Dr. Marjorie Muecke. She works on Mary Ersek's project to develop a pain intensity measure for people with advanced dementia, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. She is also analyzing data collected by Salimah Meghani to understand antecedents to complementary and alternative medicine use in cancer patients. Her interests in nursing include: finding ways to make the lives of caregivers easier, grief and loss, and therapeutic support groups. Her lifetime to-do list includes: learning and teaching non-pharmacological techniques for pain relief, becoming very good at titrating methadone, and inventing low-tech diagnostic and treatment tools for rural areas in low-income countries.

**Whitney Eriksen**, a native of the Pacific Northwest, received her BA in Psychology from Scripps College in



2009. During the following two years, she worked as the lab manager for a neuropsychology lab at UCLA, where research focused on hemispheric communications and laterality differences in neurotypical and clinical populations. Having completed her BSN in December of 2012 and becoming an RN in February, Whitney is a full-time pre-doctoral student with the Center for Biobehavioral Research. With her fantastic advisers, Drs. Jennifer Pinto-Martin and Margaret Souders, her research focuses on children and teens with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Two of their latest projects, the first looking at eating behaviors, food beliefs and feeding habits of young children with ASD and the primary caretaker and the other addressing the impact of a secondary anxiety diagnosis on sleep

quality, recently took her to the International Meeting for Autism Research (IMFAR) in Spain to present the findings. In conjunction with her advisers and Dr. Tanja Kral, a review of eating behaviors in children on the Autism Spectrum was published earlier this year in the Journal of Pediatric Nursing. This summer she is working with Dr. Souders on a feasibility study of a tailored intervention for insomnia in children with ASD and co-morbid anxiety. Whitney's interests within the ASD community focus on transition issues from childhood to adolescence for girls on the Spectrum, particularly how puberty impacts disorder manifestation and how a diagnosis impacts quality and continuity of care as children age. She is currently the Treasurer for the Student Healthcare Alliance at Penn, which works to promote camaraderie and interdisciplinary understanding and education between students of all healthcare domains.



**Emilia Flores Rabinowitz** received her bachelor's in Industrial Engineering from Stanford University. Prior to becoming a Hillman Scholar, Emilia managed the software validation and compliance program for the



European division of Stryker, based in Switzerland. She also worked as a manager in Singapore within KPMG's Advisory practice where she focused on system analysis and compliance as well as operations management. Emilia managed a variety of clients from healthcare systems to technology firms and government agencies. At the University of Pennsylvania, Emilia is a pre-doctoral fellow in the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research (CHOPR). Her mentors are Dr. Linda Aiken and Dr. Margo Brooks-Carthon. Her current research interests center around healthcare-related technology and quality and efficiency. Emilia is interested in the role that technology can play in improving the quality and efficiency of care delivery and patient outcomes and experience. She is interested in inter-

departmental collaboration and hopes to work with business, policy, and engineering experts to improve processes and design software solutions to assist in improving healthcare access and transitions. Emilia is currently conducting a literature review on the impact of electronic medical records on nursing satisfaction and instruments and technology acceptance models for the nursing workforce. She is also identifying the types of data available and the various techniques employed for data analysis.



**Hayley D. Germack**, RN (BA [Medical Anthropology], BSN University of Pennsylvania, 2011, 2012) is a pre-doctoral fellow in the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research (CHOPR) at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. With the support of her mentors, Dr. Linda Aiken and Dr. Salimah Meghani, Hayley is studying the cyclical nature of nursing workforce shortages and implications for policy and patient outcomes. Her background is in anthropology and education and she has worked as a research coordinator for numerous studies examining the impact of after school programs on urban minority K-12 students' health and academic and behavioral performance. She has also worked as a qualitative researcher for programs in Nicaragua and Guatemala. Hayley is also

currently working on a research contract with Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia which involves merging primary and secondary national data to examine changes in nursing overtime and associated changes in patient outcomes. She has been invited to deliver a podium presentation at the Interdisciplinary Research Group in Nursing Issues (IRGNI) at this year's Academy Health ARM.

**Madelyne Z. Greene** graduated magna cum laude from Georgetown University in 2010 with a BA in Women's



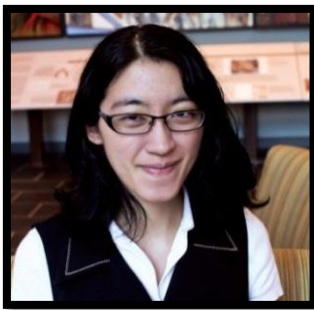
& Gender Studies. She served as an AmeriCorps volunteer and Team Leader in Chicago, IL, completing 1700 hours of service. She entered the Hillman Program in Nursing Innovation at the University of Pennsylvania in June 2012 and will complete the BSN in December 2013, continuing on to the doctoral program in nursing. Madelyne's research interests include pregnancy and birth care, focusing on the midwifery model and access to care options for vulnerable populations. She is currently working with advisor Dr. Barbara Medoff-Cooper on transitional telehealth home care for parents of infants with congenital heart disease.



**Lauren Johnson** transferred into nursing after two years of pursuing the premed track. She has now completed her 1st year of the Hillman Scholars program under the guidance of mentors Dr. Barbara Mann Wall and Dr. Karen Glanz. Her previous work includes historical analysis of Catholic medical missions in Africa and surveying food environments in Philadelphia. She was able to present 3 times this semester with research looking at faith based organizations and their contributions to improving maternal care in Ghana. Her current work looks at physical activity and sleep in cancer survivors. For her future work she intends to continue focusing on global women's health and maternal care specifically in Africa.

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**Linda Kang** hails from the plains of South Dakota after being implanted there originally from China. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania with dual degrees of Bachelor of Arts



from the School of Arts and Sciences majoring in Health and Societies with a concentration in Public Health and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the School of Nursing with a minor in Multicultural/Global Health Care. Linda is currently working with her mentors Dr. Linda Aiken and Dr. Matthew McHugh at the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research. Linda is interested in the intersection of nursing care and health policy and has presented her research internationally and nationally. Her research interest is in measuring quality of health care in various settings - community health, end-of-life care and mental health care. Her past research projects include a qualitative study of nurses in

China working in community health clinics in the urban area, nurse workforce issues in Asian countries, physician and nurse collaborations and a history of Protestant American nurses in China. Linda has had numerous experiences in social work and promoting children's educational causes, poverty alleviation causes and causes to improve health care. She has worked with various non-profits such as First Book (low income children's literacy), PowerUp Gambia (solar power for health care facilities), Givology (child education support) and World Vision (child sponsorship and rural development). Linda has also had internships with Bridging the Gaps working with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health as a patient advocate and a nurse extern at a rural area hospital system in South Dakota. Throughout her years at Penn Linda has been involved in the leadership of various community service and advocacy student organizations such as Penn for UNICEF (led Human Rights Awareness week), American Red Cross, Civic House Associates Coalition (led Public Health week), and Penn Active Minds (involved in Mental Health Awareness week) and Penn Microfinance Club (involved in planning a national microfinance conference). Linda remains active at Penn Nursing and has been a board member of Student Nurses at Penn, Graduate Student Organization and currently involved on the boards of Doctoral Student Organization and Student Healthcare Alliance at Penn.