



JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Protecting Health, Saving Lives – *Millions at a Time*

Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



New Student Directory

2011-2012

PhD Program



Elizabeth Alexander

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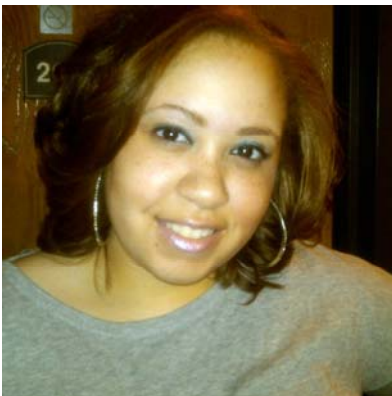
Liz was born in Connecticut and received her BA in Biochemistry and BS in Microbiology from Indiana University on the Bloomington campus. While at IU, Liz was in the IU STARS program and distinguished herself as a faculty scholar. Liz's scientific interests include prions, molecular chaperones and protein quality control, autoimmunity and marine invertebrates. She also enjoys language, swimming, water polo, hiking, biking and cooking. Some of the favorite places she has traveled to are the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve in Costa Rica, the Negev Desert in Ghana, Arches National Park in Utah and the Walls of Jericho in Alabama. Liz chose to attend BMB because of the great infrastructure and resources that Hopkins has to offer, the BMB faculty and the location.



Chynna Broxton

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Chynna was born and raised in Stratford, New Jersey. She received her BS from the College of Saint Elizabeth where she majored in Biochemistry and minored in Mathematics. Chynna distinguished herself as an undergrad by winning 2nd place at the NJACS research conference as well as being a CRC Chemistry award recipient. She is proud that she is the first member of her family to receive a Bachelor's degree. Chynna loves music and is currently learning how to play the piano and she also enjoys dancing and marine animals. Chynna's reasons for choosing BMB include the research interests of the faculty, the small program size, the mission of Public Health and the location.



Nicole Parker

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Nicole was born in Washington, D.C. but spent most of her time growing up in Fayetteville, N.C. She received her BS from UMBC with a major in Biochemistry and a minor in Sociology. She distinguished herself as a student there with memberships in the Golden Key Honor Society, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. As a person who likes to stay very busy, Nicole likes to sing and learn to play instruments as well as dance and movies. She also enjoys tutoring and community service. Some of Nicole's favorite places to visit have been Prague, Venice and Salzburg as well as Camp Boggy Creek in Eustis, Florida. Because of her strong interest in Public Health and her love of science, BMB seemed like the perfect choice to merge these two interests.

PhD Program



Sanjeev Sirpal

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Sanjeev was born and raised in Gainesville, Florida and received his BS from University of Miami and his JD from Florida International University. He distinguished himself as a student as a Coca Cola Scholar, a Tylenol Scholar, a participant in various literary competitions and as a French competition finalist. He has also served as a Director/Fellow for the Center for Professionalism and Ethics. Sanjeev enjoys spending his time hiking, swimming, reading, doing Karate, and playing chess and basketball. BMB was Sanjeev's choice because of the wealth of opportunities for academic enrichment and scientific development.



Xin Sun

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Xin was born and raised in Anlu, China. She received her BS in Biology at Wuhan University and while there published a paper in Nature Communication as a co-author. Xin has worked as a research assistant at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. She enjoys spending her free time cooking, jogging and singing. Looking forward to achieving her academic goal while enjoying her PhD life at BMB, Xin chose to come here because of our excellent reputation in the field of life sciences, the hospitable nature of the people in BMB and the proximity to her husband, who is also a PhD student at JHU.



Fengrong Wang

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Fengrong was born in Suining, Sichuan, China and spent most of her life there until attending SUNY Oswego as a Biochemistry major and graduated from the program Suma Cum Laude. Her goal is to live everyday happily, healthily and meaningfully! She loves music and enjoys spending time reading, writing, playing sports and traveling. Her favorite place to visit is Dalian-a coastal city in China-because she loves waking up and smelling the sea air. She is honored to attend JHSPH and chose BMB because she wants to be a part of tackling diseases and saving lives.

MHS Program



Tamara Arnautovic

tarnauto@jhsph.edu Advisor: Randy Bryant

Tamara was born in Indiana and graduated with a BS in Public Health Studies from JHU. She distinguished herself as a student as a MERCK Summer Scholar and was published in Epidemic Proportions. Tamara is trilingual and loves cooking, volleyball and watching the Ottawa Senators play hockey. Tamara has been to Sarajevo, Barcelona and Vienna. Tamara chose to attend BMB because she loves the JHU learning environment and felt like this program was the best fit for her goals.



Benedicta (Benny) Asamoah

basamoah@jhsph.edu Advisor: Daniela Drummond-Barbosa

Benny was born and raised in Ghana and moved to Maryland to attend UMD at College Park where she majored in Biological Sciences. She has served as a Senate Committee member and loves to read, cook, knit and travel. She especially enjoyed her visit to Glass Falls in North Carolina. Benny joined BMB because she was impressed with the vast curriculum and the flexibility offered by the program as well as the learning environment and the supportive faculty.



Keerti Balachandran

kbalacha@jhsph.edu Advisor: P.C. Huang

Keerti was born in India and moved to McLean, VA in 2008. She earned a degree in Zoology from IGNOU in India and has worked on an AAS in Biotechnology in VA. Maintaining a very high GPA throughout her academic career is a proud accomplishment. Keerti loves to cook and travel and considers London and Switzerland the most exciting places she has visited. Gaining knowledge and experience for the foundation of a career in Biochemistry from one of the best universities in the world is the reason she chose BMB.



Gerard Baldie

gbaldie@jhsph.edu Advisor: Barry Zirkin

Gerard was born in New York and grew up in Florida. He graduated with a BS in Biology from JHU and was a member of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity. Playing pickup basketball and going to the gym are hobbies that keep him busy. Gerard chose BMB because as a JHU undergrad, he felt like he had a great education and wanted to stay in a strong Hopkins program.

MHS Program



Jihoon (Jon) Choi

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Advisor: Mike Matunis

Jon was born and raised in Connecticut and came to Baltimore to major in Public Health Studies at JHU. He is a sports enthusiast and loves music and also cooking. Jon chose to pursue the MHS program in BMB because he was familiar with the faculty and school and felt like the curriculum was perfect for his goals.



Taslima Choudhury

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Advisor: Roger McMacken

Taslima was born in Bangladesh and grew up mostly in Virginia. She graduated from Emory with a dual Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology major. She was a Smithsonian intern and also received teaching recognition as a tutor and TA. Taslima loves photography, graphics editing and reading. She has visited many places including Scotland, Paris, London, and Prague...and finds all of them interesting. Taslima chose Hopkins because it is the best in its field.



Kristin Deuber

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Advisor: Janice Evans

Kristin was born and raised in Devon, PA and came to Baltimore to attend JHU as a Public Health Studies major and was the Vice President of Phi Mu while there. She placed in the top 3 in the NJ Sprint Triathlon for the past 4 years. She also enjoys cooking in her spare time. She chose BMB because she wanted to be immersed in JHSPH's unique collaboration of knowledge and purpose.



Hayley Falk

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Advisor: Janice Evans

Hayley was born in Newport Beach, CA and came to Baltimore to study Public Health Studies at JHU. While there, she was on the Dean's List and also a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma. She loves movies and the beach and also running and basketball. Hayley chose to attend the BMB program because of the academic excellence it offers and the opportunities for research within the School.

MHS Program

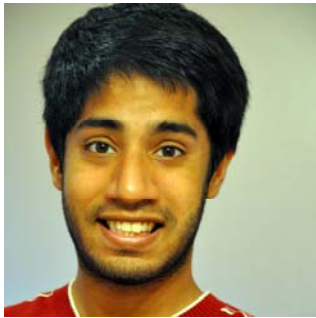


David Huang

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Advisor: Pierre Coulombe

David was born in Baltimore but also lived in Ohio. He received his BS in Public Health Studies from JHU and often made the Dean's List. He is a sports enthusiast and loves tennis, flag football and basketball and also enjoys traveling and food. David would say that Hong Kong, Cap Ferret and Whistler Blackcomb are the most interesting places he has visited. Choosing the BMB program was easy for David because he feels like this is the best school in the country and the faculty are the top in their field.



Mehdi Husain

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Advisor: Bill Wright

Mehdi was born and raised in Baltimore and received his BS in Biological Sciences from UMBC. He distinguished himself as a student as a France-Merrick Scholar and was the director of Service, Volunteerism and Awareness of UMBC SGA. Mehdi enjoys doing community service projects and traveling and exploring new places including Iran and India. The rigorous and challenging education that BMB offers is the main reason he chose to attend BMB and he hopes to enhance his academic credentials as well as contribute to the common good.



Erika Ilagan

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Advisor: Roger McMacken

Erika was born in the Philippines and also has lived in NY and San Francisco. She received her BS in Biochemistry from the University of Rochester and also volunteered abroad as a health educator in an underserved clinic for 1 year. Erika is multilingual and enjoys traveling, urban farming and cooking for parties. The amazing faculty and the world class research are her reasons for choosing the BMB program here at JHSPH.



Jenani Jayakumaran

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Advisor: Terry Brown

Jenani was born and raised in New Jersey and graduated from Monmouth University with a major in Chemistry and minors in Biology and Public Policy. She will be entering Drexel University College of Medicine next fall and enjoys yoga, cooking and art in her free time. Colombo, Sri Lanka was the most interesting place that Jenani has seen. Since BMB integrates the fields of Public Health and Reproductive Biology, BMB is a perfect choice for Jenani as she is passionate about both.

MHS Program



Matthew Jo

mjo@jhsph.edu Advisor: Bill Wright

Matt was born and raised in a town near Philadelphia and came to Baltimore to study Neuroscience at JHU. He has worked as a research assistant and enjoys photography in his spare time. Matt chose the BMB program to further pursue academic endeavors that would allow him to reach his goal of becoming a physician.



Qingwen (Wen) Kawaji

qkawaji@jhsph.edu Advisor: Scott Bailey

Wen was born in China and has lived in New England. She came to JHU to study Biomedical Engineering, Applied Mathematics and Statistics. In her free time, she enjoys singing, playing the piano, running, food and movies. Challenging academics, great people and an encouraging environment are the main reasons she chose to attend the BMB program.



Jackline Lasola

jlasola@jhsph.edu Advisor: Val Culotta

Jackline was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay area. She received her BS degree from Berkeley with majors in Developmental Studies and Molecular and Cell Biology. Proud to say she is a first generation college graduate, she distinguished herself as a Biology Fellows Program Scholar and co-authored a paper in a peer-reviewed journal. Jackline keeps busy with interests in cycling, camping, backpacking, rock climbing, dancing, reading, knitting, sewing, cooking and sports. Jackline chose BMB because of the world class faculty, the research and the diverse student body.



Vanessa Levine

vlevine@jhsph.edu Advisor: Janice Evans

Vanessa was born in New Jersey and has also lived in Massachusetts and Washington, DC. She completed her degree at Brandeis University with a major in Health, Science, Society and Policy and a minor in Business. Vanessa enjoys the outdoors and tennis and also loves to travel. Study abroad in Barcelona made for an exciting adventure and Morocco was also a favorite. After working on the policy side of Medicine, Vanessa chose BMB to help further her career in the sciences in preparation for medical school.

MHS Program



Megan Li

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Advisor: Paul Miller

Megan was born and raised in Maryland and graduated from JHU with a degree in Public Health Studies. She has worked in a lab as a technician and loves working with kids as a tutor or in general. Megan's hobbies include literature, writing, music, art and politics. She is looking forward to a challenging year here in BMB.



Beth McDaniel

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Advisor: Scott Bailey

Beth was born in California but also lived in several cities in New England. She graduated from JHU with a major in Classics and while there was the president of PSA mentoring and a tour guide for the Blue Key Society. Beth loves the Boston Red Sox (and all Boston sports) as well as ballet, cooking and baking. Travel is also a favorite and a visit to the site of the original Olympic games in Greece was an especially exciting experience. Staying another year in Baltimore was a great reason to join BMB and the chance to study at the #1 school of public health made the decision easy.



Peter Ng

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Advisor: Randy Bryant

Peter was born and raised in Baltimore and graduated from JHU with a major in Public Health. He has spent time volunteering at a health clinic and nursing home and also has done some lab research. Art, music, film and travel also fill some of his free time. China was one of his favorite and most exciting places to visit. Peter is pursuing his MHS degree in BMB to further his understanding of biology and prepare for medical school.



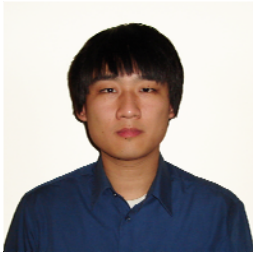
Fisayomi Nwachukwu

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Advisor: P.C. Huang

Fisayomi was born in Nigeria and has lived in Philadelphia and Ann Arbor. She graduated from Temple University with a degree in Biology and completed her MPH at the University of Michigan. While at Michigan, she held the position of vice president of the Public Health Students of African Descent. Playing the piano is a passion as is teaching kids to play. She loves sitcoms, good food and hanging out with friends. Fisayomi is looking for a quality education here at BMB.

MHS Program



Hao-Min Pan

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Advisor: Jürgen Bosch

Hao-Min was born and raised in China but has lived in several different cities in the US. He received his degree from JHU with a major in Chemistry. He has worked in several labs and was a research program coordinator in JHSPH. He doesn't have much free time but hopes to make time to just hang out. He chose the BMB program because he is loyal to JHU and wanted to stay in the Baltimore area.



Chevonne Parris-Skeete

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Advisor: Mike Matunis

Chevonne was born and raised in New York and came to Baltimore to study Neuroscience at JHU. While there she was the president of the Caribbean Cultural Society. She feels like this experience gave her more confidence and has helped her adapt better to new situations. She likes volunteering, cooking, visiting and exploring new places, with Trinidad being her favorite. She hopes to travel more in the future, maybe backpacking through Europe. Chevonne chose BMB because she thinks Hopkins has such a vast array of opportunities for students and alumni and the environment is rigorous and academically challenging.



Sarah Ryu

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Advisor: Paul Miller

Sarah was born and raised in Oregon and came to Baltimore to study at JHU, completing a BS in Molecular and Cellular Biology. She has worked as a research assistant in several Hopkins departments. Sarah is very interested in cancer research and health related issues. BMB was her top choice in graduate programs because of the reputable faculty and courses and the great opportunities.



Peter Steinwald

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Advisor: Pierre Coulombe

Peter was born and raised in Washington, D.C and came to Baltimore to study at Hopkins and earned his degree in Public Health with a minor in Economics. He enjoyed being in a fraternity while at JHU and also is a sports enthusiast. In order to further his education and prepare himself for medical school, he chose the BMB program and would like to possibly pursue a career related to public health.

MHS Program



Bhaavana Venkatesh

bvenkate@jhsph.edu Advisor: Barry Zirkon

Bhaavana was born in England and raised in Pittsburgh since the age of three. She came to Baltimore to study Public Health at JHU. Bowling, watching movies and spending time with her friends is what keeps her busy in her spare time. Bhaavana has also traveled to Rome and particularly enjoyed her time there. She is looking forward to a challenging year here at BMB.



Victoria Vuong

vvuong@jhsph.edu Advisor: Daniela Drummond-Barbosa

Victoria was born in Chicago and lived in several places while growing up including Los Angeles and London. She studied Biochemistry and Neuroscience at USC and feels fortunate to have worked in research labs in the US and abroad. She loves painting, writing, scrap-booking and photography. Traveling is a favorite pastime and she has visited some interesting places including the top of Scafell Pike in NW England, Venice during Carnival and the Honduran villages. BMB attracted Victoria because she was interested in exploring the field of Public Health before entering medical school.



Ryan Weltzer

rweltzer@jhsph.edu Advisor: Terry Brown

Ryan was born and raised in Michigan and studied International Studies at Michigan State. He worked as a youth development counselor, substitute teacher and simulated patient before becoming a lab tech in the Bosch lab. Ryan enjoys karate, travel and is a sworn news junkie. Trips to Thailand and Peru proved to be especially interesting for him. Ryan chose BMB because of the integration of science and public health.



Irem Yarali

lyarali@jhsph.edu Advisor: Jürgen Bosch

Irem was born and raised in Turkey and received her undergraduate degree in Biological Sciences and Bioengineering from Sabanci University in Turkey. While there she ranked first in her class, volunteered as a peer tutor, was on the administrative council for a biological group and was a teaching assistant. Irem loves to play tennis and table tennis. BMB was a good choice for Irem because the curriculum is perfect for her long term goals and the faculty is superb.

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Students in Alphabetically Order

Last, First	Degree Program	Page #
Alexander, Elizabeth	PhD	1
Arnautovic, Tamara	MHS	3
Asamoah, Benedicta (Benny)	MHS	3
Balachandran, Keerti	MHS	3
Baldie, Gerard	MHS	3
Broxton, Chynna	PhD	1
Choi, Jihoon (Jon)	MHS	4
Choudhury, Taslima	MHS	4
Deuber, Kristin	MHS	4
Hayley Falk	MHS	4
David Huang	MHS	5
Mehdi Husain	MHS	5
Erika Ilagan	MHS	5
Jenani Jayakumaran	MHS	5
Matthew Jo	MHS	6
Qingwen Kawaji	MHS	6
Jackline Lasola	MHS	6
Vanessa Levine	MHS	6
Megan Li	MHS	7
Elizabeth McDaniel	MHS	7
Peter Ng	MHS	7
Fisayomi Nwachukwu	MHS	7
Hao-Min Pan	MHS	8
Nicole Parker	PhD	1
Chevonne Parris-Skeete	MHS	8
Sarah Ryu	MHS	8
Sanjeev Sirpal	PhD	2
Peter Steinwald	MHS	8
Xin Sun	PhD	2
Bhaavana Venkatesh	MHS	9
Victoria Vuong	MHS	9
Fengrong Wang	PhD	2
Ryan Weltzer	MHS	9
Irem Yarali	MHS	9