



**SPRING 2019 GRADUATION EDITION**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

With the end of the Spring 2019 semester and start of the summer semester, we would like to congratulate all of our Spring and Summer 2019 graduates, as well as our faculty and TA award winners. Included in this issue are faculty and student awards, two student profiles, and coverage on a cybersecurity challenge. Let us know what you think and look forward to our next issue, midsummer! Have a fantastic break! We'll see you next semester!

**Pg 1** Faculty and Teaching Assistant Awards  
**Pg 3** Student Profile: Donta Council & VA Sea Grant  
**Pg 5** Student Award: Syed Rizvi & Summer Awards  
**Pg 6** ODU Participation in Cyber 9/12 Challenge  
**Pg 7** Student Profile: Warren Marcelino and CEPE 2019  
**Pg 8** Columbus State University Graduate Research Conf.  
**Pg 9** Columbus State University Faculty Research Conf.  
**Pg 10** Start-Up Bootcamp, Editor's Spot, & About

**DOCTORAL MENTORING AWARD WINNER - FRANK BATTEN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY: DR. SANDEEP KUMAR - CIVIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING**



Dr. Sandeep Kumar is an associate professor in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department. He has taught at ODU since 2010. Dr. Kumar has served as a mentor to a number of graduate students and has also written a number of journal papers with his students. In addition to leading national and international student design competitions, Dr. Kumar has organized international research experiences and arranged industry and national lab internships for students.



**DOCTORAL MENTORING AWARD WINNER - STROME COLLEGE OF BUSINESS: DR. LING LI - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND DECISION SCIENCES**



Dr. Ling Li is a University Professor, Eminent Scholar, and chair of the Department of Information Technology and Decision Sciences. Dr. Li began teaching at Old Dominion University in 2001, and during her tenure, has been awarded the Excellence in Graduate Teaching Award. Dr. Li sees mentorship as crucial to the success of doctoral students and as a shared responsibility to ensure the experience is both productive and rewarding.



**DOCTORAL MENTORING AWARD WINNER - DARDEN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES: BRANDON BUTLER - TEACHING AND LEARNING**



Dr. Brandon Butler is an associate professor of Teaching and Learning. He has taught at ODU since 2011. Not only has he supported doctoral students by creating unique co-teaching opportunities, he has designed special topic courses to further understand teacher education practices and research. Dr. Butler has also provided professional development and research opportunities for his students that have opened doors to advanced careers. He has written an impressive number of book chapters and articles, which often list his students as co-authors.



**DOCTORAL MENTORING AWARD WINNER - COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS: DR. REGINA KARP - INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**



Dr. Regina Karp is an associate professor and the graduate program director for the Graduate Program in International Studies (GPIS). Dr. Karp has taught at ODU since 1993. While mentoring an impressive number of students, Dr. Karp initiated activities in support of their work. Dr. Karp has overseen the growth of GPIS, both in numbers, prestige, and reputation, not just for the program, but for ODU as well.

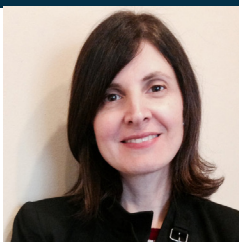


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## **DOCTORAL MENTORING AWARD WINNER - COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES: DR. MARIANA SZKLO-COXE - COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**



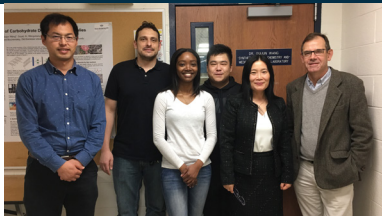
Dr. Mariana Szklo-Coxe is an associate professor for the Department of Community and Environmental Health, and she has worked with ODU since 2008. Dr. Szklo-Coxe provides support for her students' interests and endeavors by supporting new research interests, recommending specialized training and resources, as well as spending hours doing one-on-one tutorials with students.



## **DOCTORAL MENTORING AWARD WINNER- COLLEGE OF SCIENCES: DR. GUJIN WANG - CHEMISTRY AND BIOCHEMISTRY**



Dr. Gujin Wang is a professor in the Chemistry and Biochemistry department. Dr. Wang joined ODU in 2012, and during her time here, she has mentored an outstanding group of students who all proceeded to find positions in academia or industrial settings after graduation. Dr. Wang has supported graduate research by developing high-quality, externally funded, vigorous, and internationally, visible graduate research program.



## **EXCELLENCE IN GRADUATE TEACHING AWARD WINNER: DR. HOLLY GAFF - BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES**



Dr. Holly Gaff is the graduate program director for the Ph.D. in Ecological Sciences within the Biological Science Department. Dr. Gaff received her Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 1999 and joined Old Dominion University in 2007. Her excellence in graduate teaching is shown through her commitment to students. She is well-known for her dedication to students and teaching.



## **OUTSTANDING GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT AWARD - CLASSROOM AWARD WINNER: BRITTANY SAMULSKI - PHYSICAL THERAPY AND ATHLETIC TRAINING**



Brittany Samulski is currently pursuing a doctorate in physical therapy in the College of Health Sciences. In letters of support, Samulski was commended for her innate ability to engage and teach others. Samulski encourages students to problem solve and collaborate in class by creating an atmosphere that fosters learning.



## **OUTSTANDING GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT AWARD - LABORATORY AWARD WINNER: HAMED YOUSEFI - FINANCE**



Hamed Yousefi is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in business administration with a concentration in finance. In letters of support, Yousefi is commended for his professionalism, concern for students, and the quality of his instruction of Finance 323, which is considered to be one of the most difficult undergraduate courses to teach. Using an innovative approach and integration of real-world scenarios, Yousefi created a better experience for the students and motivated them to be excited about learning.



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## STUDENT PROFILE - DONTA COUNCIL (PH.D. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY)



### What encouraged you to pursue graduate education?

I wanted to pursue a graduate degree because I knew I wanted to teach at the collegiate level. After working in student affairs and the nonprofit sector, I saw the Ph.D. as an avenue to gain the skills needed to work in higher education as a career, as well as gain the research skills needed to answer some of the most critical questions in the public sector.

### What encouraged you to choose our current field?

I chose my field because at heart I am a public servant. I have always seen the value in the public and nonprofit sectors and their impact on communities. As a first-generation college student, it was important to me to be able to be engaged in both the research and practice of public service delivery. I am committed to improving the quality of life of individuals and communities, particularly those who live in the margins of society.

### Who are some guiding or influential figures in your life?

My mother is one of the most influential people in my life. She taught me most about having good character, perseverance, and strength. The intangible lessons that she has taught me have been invaluable. I admired her courage, wisdom, and tenacity to overcome and excel through life's obstacles. Because of her support, I was able to persist through graduate school.

### What do you like most about your research or feel will be its largest implication(s)?

My dissertation focuses on coastal resilience and how we can better understand how households are adapting to the changes in the environment that are related to sea level rise and climate change. This research is important as we continue the discourse on mitigating and reducing the risks associated with environmental hazards to improve the quality of life of vulnerable communities and populations. If we are able to better understand how individuals evaluate risks through theoretical approaches, practitioners will be able to target the relationships that best promote risk reduction behavior. Ultimately, we will be able to reduce the impacts associated with flooding to improve the quality of life of those who live in coastal communities.



**[LINKEDIN.COM/IN/DONTACOUNCIL](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dontacouncil)**

*Donta Council poses for a photo after receiving a travel grant from a grant through the National Science Foundation to attend a workshop on Community Flood Risk Management at the University of Central Florida*

### Why did you choose to become a professor?

I wanted to become a professor for several reasons. Throughout my tenure in academia I only had two professors that identified as ethnic minorities. During my master's program, I did not have any professors of color. After my master's program, I realized the benefit that my non-Black peers received (e.g., social capital, networking) from the mentorship and relationships that they created with the non-Black faculty. It was evident that the lack of faculty of color across the country was an epidemic, and I wanted to change that. I think it is important that students have a variety of experiences, particularly having a professor that may have socio-demographic differences. In my experiences, many of my non-minority instructors and professors have not been as sensitive to the needs of non-White students that often result in a disconnect between the professor and students. I wanted to help bridge that gap for all students.

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## STUDENT PROFILE - DONTA COUNCIL (PH.D. PUBLIC SERVICE) - CONTINUED

### What efforts have you made in the last year to become a better instructor?

Within the past year, I have participated in several programs to fine-tune my skills for a faculty position. I am completing the University's Preparing Future Faculty Program, an initiative that aims to give graduate students the knowledge and skills to better prepared in a tenure position. These workshops span a range of topics include grant writing, pedagogy, work-life balance, and classroom technology. In addition, I am a Southern Regional Education Board Doctoral Scholar. For the past two years, I have attended their annual Institute for Teaching and Mentoring. This three day workshop is geared towards preparing minority PhD students to enter into the academy. Lastly, I am also a Bill Anderson Fund Fellow. This fund supports the professional development of historically underrepresented Ph.D. students who engage in the research and practice of natural hazards and disasters. Each year, we attend three workshops around the country where we meet and receive mentorship from senior faculty members. These workshops have been extremely beneficial during my doctoral training and preparation as a faculty member.



*A fellow with the Virginia Sea Grant's initiative "Conducting Interdisciplinary Research," Donta is pictured here sitting with his research team as they developed a conceptual framework that addresses coastal resilience.*

### Tell us about your vision of the field: where do you think the field is headed in the next five years?

The field of public administration and policy is one that embodies the complexities of the public and nonprofit sectors. Traditionally, our field has focused on the management and operations of public and nonprofit organizations and their effects on society. Our field is growing as we have embraced an interdisciplinary approach to studying various policy domains. More recently, there has been a renewed interest in focusing on social equity as a pillar in our field. We are beginning to conduct research and engage in discourse that promotes equity in management, program development, public policies, and program delivery. This renewed interest will hold public administrators and policy makers more accountable to the democratic processes needed to improve the quality of life of all communities.

## VIRGINIA SEA GRANT OPPORTUNITIES



Learn more at [www.vaseagrant.org](http://www.vaseagrant.org)

### ATTENTION ENGINEERING STUDENTS

#### COASTAL RESILIENCE SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

- **OPEN** to full-time students
- **PARTICIPATE** in resilience programs with VASG throughout the summer
- **ENGAGE** in a range of activities and projects related to resilient design and/or coastal flooding adaptation
- **NETWORK** with institutional partners and members of the resilience and adaptation community

Application Deadline  
May 17, 2019

Virginia Sea Grant, in partnership with AECOM, Arcadis, Clark Nexsen, Dewberry, and Moffat & Nichol is excited to support a range of paid summer internship opportunities focused on coastal resiliency aimed at training students to become leaders in innovative, pre-disaster and resiliency design strategies.

Diversity includes, but is not limited to, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and/or health status, religion, veteran status, geographic origin, and socio-economic status. Applicants enrolled at a Virginia institution and those with prior internship experience are encouraged to apply.

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# ODU PH.D. STUDENT RECEIVES VISITING SCHOLAR AWARD



## William & Mary Graduate Research Symposium Visiting Scholar Award

*For Excellence in Scholarship in the Natural & Computational Sciences*

is presented to

**Syed Rizvi**

in recognition of outstanding contributions through original investigation to the  
2019 Graduate Research Symposium,  
on this day, the sixteenth of March, 2019.

*Virginia Torczon*  
Virginia Torczon

Dean of Graduate Studies & Research

On March 16, 2019, at an award ceremony at the conclusion of the William & Mary's 2019 Graduate Research Symposium held in Williamsburg, Syed R. Rizvi (Ph.D. student, Computer Science) was awarded the Visiting Scholar Award - a prize for Excellence in Scholarship in the Natural and Computational Sciences for his research paper titled "ASAP: An Agent-Assisted Smart Auction-Based Parking System in Internet of Things." The paper was judged blindly by an independent panel of William & Mary faculty and Graduate Studies Advisory Board members, and Rizvi's paper was deemed worthy of an award among the many outstanding submissions. Rizvi is very grateful to his Ph.D. advisor, Professor Stephan Olariu, with whom he had endless discussions and critical review sessions on several aspects of his pioneer and innovative research work.

## GRADUATE STUDENT SUMMER AWARD RECIPIENTS

The Graduate School would like to extend congratulations to the winners of the Graduate Student Summer Award Program below. The program is highly competitive and is co-sponsored by Graduate School and Office of Research. Each applicant, selected across multiple colleges and topics, had to have six unfunded weeks during the summer to devote to research. Each winner was chosen by an interdisciplinary faculty/staff committee from 35 applications. The winners are:

April Bennett (Arts & Letters – Sociology/Criminal Justice)  
Collin Bowersock (Health Sciences – Physical Therapy/Athletic Training)  
Donta Council (Business – Public Administration)  
Sarah Ehlke (Sciences – Psychology)  
Megan Hept (The Graduate School – Biomedical Sciences)  
Eric Jenkins (Health Sciences – Physical Therapy/Athletic Training)  
Erik Johnson (Sciences – Physics)  
Monica Reyes (Arts & Letters – English)  
Homa Jalaeian Taghadomi, (Engineering – CEE)  
Md Reshad Ul Hoque (Engineering - ECE)

They will each receive \$3,000 for their summer work, and they will also be eligible for an additional \$300 for travel when presenting their findings at a conference or other venue. Look for a follow-up story about their projects in the first fall newsletter. We wish them every success!

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## ODU CYBERSECURITY STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN CYBER 9/12 CHALLENGE



ODU DC CyberSecurity Student Teams led by Dr. Saltuk Karahan

sponsored two teams to compete in a national cyber-strategy competition hosted by the Atlantic Council called “Cyber 9/12 Challenge.” We competed against schools like Stanford Law, Tufts University, University of Texas, United States Naval Academy, West Point, Georgetown Law, National Defense University, and Naval War College from undergraduates to mid-career professional graduate students. The competition utilized a scenario based on current events that had an associated cyber crisis and conflict and our objective was to identify threats and recommend a response to mitigate or stop the threat.

In our scenario, a mass phishing attack disguised as an early online 2020 US Census survey targeted US citizens for their Personal Identify Information (PII) and credit card information that resulted in hundreds of thousands having their identities stolen and fraudulent credit cards charges. The angry victims posted on social media to boycott the census, further increasing government distrust and eroding public opinion of the 2020 Census. The objective of the 2020 Census is to enumerate the US population efficiently and accurately to guide the distribution of government funding for critical services for the next 10 years and the establishment of new voting districts making the US Census equally as important as the US election.

We worked with the US Census Bureau and the Department of Homeland Security to handle the public crisis caused by the phishing attack and secured an improperly implemented IT system that could have affected the operations and security of the 2020 Census. As the scenario and competition progressed, the crisis escalated, increasing the complexity of the political and technical problems we faced. In our situation, the angry citizens posting on social media were increasingly fueled by social media bots that were attributed to two possible sources: a non-state actor group with ties to Hezbollah located in Venezuela and the Internet Research Agency (IRA) also known as the Russian “Troll Farm.” Based on the intelligence reports and political climate, we created a policy brief that contained an executive summary and recommended courses of action to brief the POTUS and his advisors in the White House situation room. In developing the course of action, we had to consider US and world politics, socioeconomic, as well as the technical aspects of the scenario. After the brief, the POTUS and his advisors who are also our judges would have a Q&A period to challenge our strategy and measure our understanding of US and international policies that would go into the scoring of the team. The experience of the competition truly tested our team’s abilities to think creatively and multidimensionality. -Warren C. Marcelino

## ODU M.S. STUDENT RECEIVES FULBRIGHT AWARD

Prue Salasky, an alumna of Old Dominion University’s master’s program in applied linguistics, won a prestigious Fulbright Award from the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. This award will enable her to teach, conduct research, and provide expertise in her host country, Bulgaria, for a year. While several Old Dominion University faculty members have received Fulbright awards in the recent past, Ms. Salasky is the first Fulbright student recipient since 2014.



More information about the Fulbright Award and how to apply can be found at :  
<https://us.fulbrightonline.org/>  
Be on the lookout for workshops.



[odu.edu/graduateschool](https://odu.edu/graduateschool)



## STUDENT PROFILE: WARREN MARCELINO (M.S. CYBERSECURITY)

### What encouraged you to pursue a graduate education?

I always knew that I wanted to continue my education after my B.S. in Computer Engineering, but was not sure which field. I entered the IT field 20 years ago when the industry was rushing to modernize their operations with IT systems. Fast-forwarding 20 years later, the world is in significant need of cybersecurity professionals to secure those systems. Armed the combination of professional IT experience, a computer engineering background, and recently completing the B.S. Cybersecurity, I felt the Cybersecurity graduate degree would be the perfect fit for a mid-career professional.

### What made Old Dominion University stand out?

The faculty here at ODU care about the success of their students, and that was important to me when I decided to return to ODU. I believe the connection with the students and material provide me with the education I need to succeed.



### What encouraged you to choose your current field?

I worked in the IT field as an intern and enjoyed working with people and solving complex problems. I enjoyed being able to leave things better than the way I found them. Although I entered the IT field as a support and implementation engineer, I have always had interests in cybersecurity. In the current state of the cybersecurity, I believe that I can make a difference in any organization that I guide, and my experience and education will help me accomplish that goal.

### What are your hobbies?

Aside from challenging myself mentally, I also have an active lifestyle. I actively train and race competitively in Obstacle Courses Races (OCR). Most OCRs take place on rough terrain, and I have found myself wading across cold mountain lakes, crawling in mud, and climbing steep mountain terrain in addition to obstacle placed at key areas of the race. I enjoy the challenge, and it is fun.

### If you were given additional money for funding, what would you research and how?

I would research Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its utilization in Cybersecurity. I believe an AI system would assist cybersecurity professional identifying and mitigating threats.

## COMPUTER ETHICS - PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY COMING TO ODU

### CEPE 2019: Risk & Cybersecurity Old Dominion University | May 28 - 30

Computer Ethics – Philosophical Enquiry (CEPE) is one of the longest-running major international conferences bringing leading researchers in the field of philosophy of technology together since 1997. CEPE is held biennially and is organized by INSEIT (the International Society for Ethics and Information Technology) and is organized for 2019 in collaboration with The Ionian University Research Team, IHRC (Information: History, Regulation and Culture). For CEPE 2019, the conference will be hosted at Old Dominion University with the theme of Risk and Cybersecurity. Your support will help increase student participation through subsidizing registration rates as well as fund event expenses. All the following sponsorship opportunities include recognition across all social media outlets and invitations to attend the conference in person.

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# COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

## GRADUATE

### RESEARCH CONFERENCE



NOVEMBER 6 & 7 • CUNNINGHAM CENTER • COLUMBUS, GA

A Call for Proposals is issued for the 2019 Dr. Gregory P. Domin Graduate Research Conference at Columbus State University. Students from all disciplines are encouraged to submit their original work for discussion and review.

There are three ways to present at the conference:

- **Oral Presentation** - students have a unique opportunity to give a 15-20 minute presentation while serving on a panel with presenters who may be from other disciplines speaking on related research topics.
- **Poster Presentation** - students have the option to present their research as a poster during an open session.
- **3 Minute Thesis® Competition** - an exciting competition in which students have just three minutes and one slide to present their thesis or dissertation research.

For oral and poster presentations theoretical and practical work submitted for consideration may include, but is not limited to, research papers, thesis and dissertation work, case study evaluations, and business plans/models.

The **deadline for submission is September 13, 2019**, with proposals accepted on a rolling basis through the deadline. The conference presentation schedule will be finalized no later than October 12th.

For additional information on the conference, Three Minute Thesis, and to submit your proposals, visit [GradSchool.ColumbusState.edu/GradConference](http://GradSchool.ColumbusState.edu/GradConference)





# COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

## FACULTY RESEARCH CONFERENCE



NOVEMBER 6 • CUNNINGHAM CENTER • COLUMBUS, GA

**What:** Columbus State University will once again host, as a part of its annual Graduate Research Conference for graduate students, a one-day **Faculty Research Conference**. This is a great opportunity for faculty and students to attend together and to support one another's research presentations.

**When:** Wednesday, November 6, 2019, 9:00 - 5:00 p.m., immediately preceding the reception and 3-Minute Thesis Competition that usher in the beginning of the conference for graduate students.

**Where:** Cunningham Conference Center at Columbus State University, Columbus, Georgia

The conference gives faculty from any discipline the opportunity to present their research through a short (up to 25 minutes with Q & A) oral presentation. While research on any topic may be presented, those in which the faculty have engaged graduate students in their research are especially valued.

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Faculty are invited to submit proposals (title and abstract) via the Graduate Conference website. The **deadline for submission is September 6, 2019**. Registration for the conference will be expected shortly after confirmation that the proposal has been accepted.

For additional information and to submit a proposal, go to:  
<https://gradschool.columbusstate.edu/gradconference/faculty.php>

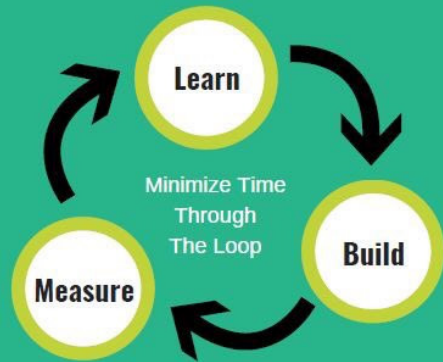


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## PROGRAM DATES

- June 1: Application Deadline
- TBD: Intro Conference Call
- June 12: Session #1 Full Day Bootcamp\*
- June 19: Session #2 Conference Call
- June 26: Session #3 Presentations\*

\*In person session hosted at Percolator Monticello Campus  
253 Monticello Avenue Norfolk, VA

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## EDITOR'S SPOT

To everyone, graduating or not, congratulations for making it through another semester. What will you do with your break? Will it be used for growth? Will it be for rest and recovery? Will it be for expansion of perspectives? Will it be to give back? Will it be for a combination of all of these or something else? Whichever it is, endeavor to make the most of it. You'll never know how it will empower you for the next step and stage of your life. As an Old Dominion University student, you carry the privilege of exposure to a wide variety of cultures, beliefs, orientations, perspectives, and drives. Aim to let that shine wherever you go. Until next time, I wish you an excellent break!  
-Xavier-Lewis Palmer



## ABOUT

Find Graduate School News Online at: [www.odu.edu/graduateschool](http://www.odu.edu/graduateschool), as well as updates on our Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter pages.

ODU doctoral student, Xavier-Lewis Palmer, compiled and edited this newsletter with help from Dr. Robert Wojtowicz, Dr. Bryan Porter, Missy Barber, Genenieve Conwell, and Courtney Nishnick in the Graduate School.

If you have an idea, event, news, or anything otherwise notable that you would like to share, contact Xavier-Lewis at [xpalmer@odu.edu](mailto:xpalmer@odu.edu).



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