



SPRING SEMESTER

Welcome to the February 2020 Graduate School Newsletter. Within this issue, you'll find a graduate student interview, upcoming conferences and networking events, resources to assist your next steps in your graduate career, and more. Let us know your thoughts.

-Xavier-Lewis Palmer

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STUDENT PROFILE: KENNETH DIEDRICH, M.S. COMPUTER SCIENCE



What do you study, and where are you in your program?

I am a Computer Science master's student finishing my second semester out of three. Specifically, I study machine learning (the crafting of algorithms to allow computers to learn autonomously) and its applications in Natural Language Processing (making computers able to parse human language in text and speech). Currently, I'm working with Dr. Yaohang Li on my master's project, training a program to tell one-liner jokes and puns.

What encouraged you to pursue a graduate education?

The most fascinating topics of computer science are, in my opinion, at the graduate level. There are so many questions one could ask: How do you find patterns in billions of points of data? Can you do it efficiently? Can you design an algorithm that does so automatically? I think that even if machine learning didn't typically require a master's degree that I still would have sought a graduate education. There's just too much cool stuff to learn!

What do you like most about your research or feel will be its largest implications?

One of the things I like about my research is its relatability. While the mechanisms underneath are complicated, I can tell anyone "I'm making a program that's learning to tell jokes," and they have some idea of the potential difficulty and impact of what I'm doing. My research has a visible consequence, and its effects are understandable to people outside of my field, and that's important to me.

Tell me something(s) unique about your academic path?

I am very fortunate to have known that computers were my "thing" from a young age. My father also has a technical background, and both my parents were encouraging of me diving into programming. Knowing what career I wanted early on helped a lot in terms of planning my education and finding interesting projects to work on to sharpen my skills and boost my resume.

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

Quantum computing is going to be a really big shakeup, especially when it gets commercialized. It's really not too far off in the future – I expect an interesting new breakthrough in the next couple of years.

What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?

Helping to bring the future to the present is what's really satisfying to me. The prospect of doing amazing things with technology is exciting, and bringing that excitement and marvel to other people is a fantastic feeling.

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KENNETH DIEDRICH, M.S. COMPUTER SCIENCE (CONTINUED)



In France

How do you work under pressure?

Rather well, thankfully! When it gets down to the wire, I prioritize my tasks and go to whatever lengths are necessary to finish what I started, whether that be delegating tasks or waking up extra early.

What is your philosophy of teaching and learning?

The concept of derivation is very important to me – when I am learning something, I want to not just know the end result, but to understand it and critically be able to explain why. To me, it's vital to know how to rediscover an important fact or intuition so that even if I were to forget the conclusion later on, I could retrace my steps quickly and confidently to reclaim what I lost. This paradigm has been very successful; there have been many times during tests or projects when I have forgotten a formula or something similar and have managed to remember by stepping back and starting from the beginning. I try to teach in a similar way by building from the foundation upwards.

What are your hobbies?

I was a theatre kid in high school, so I tend to gravitate towards the performing arts. Nowadays, I take lessons and compete in West Coast Swing dancing and take part in a couple of role-playing games with my friends. I'm interested in learning foreign languages and playing video games too, but unfortunately I don't have a lot of time these days to invest in either.

What are your long-range and short-range goals and objectives, when and why did you establish these goals, and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them?

In the short-term, I intend on getting as much practical experience as I can during my last few semesters as a graduate student. I'm taking independent studies and relevant coursework so that I can put into practice the theories that I'm learning and gain experience with the tools of the trade. Long-term, the ideal result is to be an NLP engineer, creating new systems to help users interact with computers more naturally. I consider my career-wide goal to explore how we can harness the power of NLP to bring people closer together through teaching foreign languages and automatic translation.

Do you have plans for continued study after?

I haven't quite decided yet. I won't ever be done studying this field, but any further education is likely to be self-directed using textbooks or perhaps one-off university courses instead of a formal degree. Computer science as a field changes quite a bit, so you have to periodically review and acquire new information.



Swing Dancing

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Office of Science Graduate Student Research (SCGSR) Program

The Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science is pleased to announce that the Office of Science Graduate Student Research (SCGSR) program is now accepting applications for the 2020 Solicitation 1. Applications are due 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, May 6, 2020. Detailed information about the program, including eligibility requirements and access to the online application system, can be found at: <https://science.osti.gov/wdts/scgsr/>. The SCGSR program supports supplemental awards to outstanding U.S. graduate students to conduct part of their graduate thesis research at a DOE national laboratory/facility in collaboration with a DOE laboratory scientist for a period of three to twelve consecutive months—with the goal of preparing graduate students for scientific and technical careers critically important to the DOE Office of Science mission. The SCGSR program is open to current Ph.D. students in qualified graduate programs at accredited U.S. academic institutions, who are conducting their graduate thesis research in targeted areas of importance to the DOE Office of Science.

NASA: #BeAnASTRONAUT

NASA is accepting applications for their next class of astronaut candidates beginning March 2nd! If you are a U.S. Citizen, have a master's degree in a STEM Field, have two years of related, professional experience, and can pass a NASA astronaut physical, apply to #BeAnAstronaut at www.usajobs.gov.

4TH DISSERTATION INSTITUTE

Applications are open for the 4th Dissertation Institute (DI), an interactive workshop for underrepresented (African American, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Hispanic American) graduate students in engineering. The application deadline is March 8th. For more information, please visit: <https://www.dissertationinstitute.com/>. If you have questions, please email them to dissertationinstitute@gmail.com.

GRADUATE RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENT DAY 2020: SUBMISSION APPRECIATION

The Graduate School would like to express appreciation for all submissions for GRAD 2020. This year we will limit the presentations on display. All who have submitted will be included within our GRAD 2020 booklet. GRAD is a great opportunity for students to showcase their research for the campus community, while networking with other students and learning about the great diversity of research and scholarship at Old Dominion University. Thus, we encourage everyone to let their family, friends, and colleagues know of their participation in GRAD 2020. Notifications of winners are aimed to be released by March 1st. If you have questions, please direct them to Mr. Xavier-Lewis Palmer at xpalmer@odu.edu.

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UPCOMING CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES EVENTS

Feb 25 2020 Education Expo- Spring 2020

Career Fair
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Ted Constant Center-Big Blue Room

Mar 24 2020 Spring 2020 Career Fair

Career Fair
11:00 am - 2:30 pm
Ted Constant Center

VIRGINIA CLINICAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE COLLABORATE 2020 APRIL 3, 2020

The Virginia Clinical Research Conference hosted on Friday, April 3, 2020, is an event that brings research teams from across Virginia together to collaborate and strengthen the statewide clinical research enterprise. For more information, please visit: <https://ocpe.vcu.edu/clinical-research/>.



SCIENCE PUBS: DR. ROBERT McNAB

Science PUBS

THE COMMONWEALTH IN 2020

FEBRUARY 25, 2020

MAKER'S CRAFT BREWERY

735 East 23rd Street - Norfolk, VA

FEATURED RESEARCHER:



ROBERT M. McNAB, PH.D.

Professor of Economics,
Director of the Dragas
Center for Economic
Analysis & Policy

Join us for a conversation with Dr. McNab for a discussion of the state of the Commonwealth and how might it fare in 2020. What are some of the areas for growth and some of the potential risks for the Virginia economy and is the future brighter for Hampton Roads? He will also discuss what marijuana reform might look like, how it would impact the criminal justice system, and whether it would help fund local governments.

Networking Begins at 6:30 p.m. – Program Begins at 7:00 p.m.

Please RSVP by February 24th at <http://bit.ly/SciPubsODU>

Science Pubs ODU is an opportunity for the community to engage with ODU researchers in an informal setting. Join us for a lively and engaging discussion; a curious mind is all that's needed!

The first 20 guests to arrive will receive a beverage ticket.



BOARD OF VISITORS: STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE OPPORTUNITY

Are you interested in joining the Board of Visitors as a student representative, being able to learn and communicate the needs of students, and learn how the university operates on more grand scale? Please apply. You must be enrolled at least six hours per semester during the regular academic year and be enrolled for both Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. Submit the following for review: a cover page with your name, address, phone number, E-Mail, and UIN; a letter of intent indicating why you wish to serve, 3 letters of reference (from faculty members, coaches, employers, supervisors, or advisors); and a current resume listing campus & community involvement. Please send completed applications to: deanofstudents@odu.edu by 5:00 p.m. on March 20th.

2020 GRADUATE SUMMER AWARD PROGRAM

The Graduate School is pleased to announce the RFP for the 3rd Graduate Summer Award Program. All instructions must be followed to be considered. Both the student's application and the faculty support letter must be received by March 6, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. to be considered complete and on-time. Late applications, including incomplete applications at the due date and time, will not be considered. Students and faculty should directly email their materials to Dr. Bryan Porter (bporter@odu.edu). A link for the RFP can be found at: <http://bit.ly/ODUGSGSAP2020>

CAREER PATHWAYS OFFERINGS FOR SPRING 2020

Career Pathways has several career and professional development events scheduled for Spring 2020 semester including career exploration events, resume and CV workshops, and workshops to prepare you for the job market. The Spring 2020 schedule is attached and can be accessed here: <https://sites.wp.odu.edu/careerpathways/2020/01/14/sp20events/>. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Wie Yusuf, Chair of the Career Pathways Steering Committee, at jyusuf@odu.edu or 757-683-4437.

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LET'S TALK GRAD LIFE

HELPING GRADUATE STUDENTS MASTER THE BALANCING ACT

Open to all graduate students and
undergraduate graduating seniors!

Use the links to RSVP!

Time: 5:30 - 7:00 PM

In-Person Sessions: 2100 Monarch Hall

Zoom Sessions: A link will be sent to
those who RSVP



INTRODUCING SELF-CARE

<http://bit.ly/GradSelfCare>

In-Person Session
Monday, January 27th

Zoom Session
Tuesday, January 28th



LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE ON A BUDGET

<http://bit.ly/GradBudget>

In-Person Session
Monday, April 20th

Zoom Session
Tuesday, April 21st



STRESS & TIME MANAGEMENT

<http://bit.ly/GradStressManagement>

In-Person Session
Monday, February 24th

Zoom Session
Tuesday, February 25th



HANDLING RELATIONSHIPS & CONFLICT

<http://bit.ly/GradRelationships>

In-Person Session
Monday, March 23rd

Zoom Session
Tuesday, March 24th



OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

The Graduate School



Center for High Impact Practices
LEARNING CENTER

ComSciCon20

June 11-13, Boston MA

A science communication workshop
for graduate students, by
graduate students.

"One of the most unique experiences I've had
in my time as a graduate student."

"ComSciCon connected me with a
community that will be leading the future
of scicomm."

"It was inspiring, engaging and really fun!"



There is no
registration fee!
Support for travel and
accommodations will also be
provided to non-local attendees.

All graduate students from US and
Canadian universities are invited to apply, and
50 will be selected to attend.

Apply at **ComSciCon.com**
For questions, contact comscicon2020@comscicon.com

NOAA AQUACULTURE GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP



NOAA FISHERIES
Northeast Fisheries Science Center



AQUACULTURE GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP
DEADLINE EXTENDED TO MARCH 13, 2020

PRESIDENT'S LECTURE SERIES: SCOTT HARRISON

PRESIDENT'S LECTURE SERIES

SPRING 2020

YOU'RE INVITED

Please join us for the award-winning
President's Lecture Series
at Old Dominion University.
The lecture series features
renowned speakers who share
their knowledge, experiences,
opinions and accomplishments.
Past speakers have included
scientists, writers, educators,
historians, business innovators,
Pulitzer Prize winners
and other prominent figures.

For more information, please visit
odu.edu/univevents



**Marc and Connie Jacobson Raoul
Wallenberg Humanitarian Speaker**

Scott Harrison

Founder and CEO, charity: water and
New York Times Best-selling Author

March 19, 2020

Big Blue Room, Ted Constant Convocation Center | 7:00 p.m.

Scott Harrison spent almost 10 years as a nightclub promoter in New York City before leaving to volunteer on a hospital ship off the coast of Liberia. Returning to New York two years later, he founded the nonprofit organization charity: water in 2006.

To address the global water crisis and help the world's 663 million people without clean water to drink, charity: water has raised more than \$350 million and funded nearly 30,000 water projects in 26 countries. When completed, those projects will provide more than 8.5 million people with safe drinking water.

He is a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader and author of the New York Times bestselling book "Thirst: A Story of Redemption, Compassion, and a Mission to Bring Clean Water to the World."

Seating is limited, guests are encouraged to RSVP at
odu.imodules.com/SHL2020.

odu.edu/graduateschool

THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY (IC) POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM



IC Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program

Recent Ph.D. graduates or doctoral students who will soon complete their degrees are encouraged to apply for the Intelligence Community (IC) Postdoctoral Research Program 2020. The fellowships offer a very competitive annual stipend and an annual travel allowance for the Postdoc, as well as a stipend and travel allowance to the host institution. The application deadline is February 28, 2020. For more information please visit: <https://orise.orau.gov/icpostdoc/current-opportunities.html>.

Award Details:

- Annual stipends range from \$75,000 to \$79,000, depending on research location
- Annual travel budget of up to \$6,000
- Appointments for two years, and option to extend for a third year
- Host institutions receive an annual laboratory budget of up to \$5,000
- Research advisors receive a \$10,000 stipend and an annual travel budget of up to \$2,000

Postdoc Eligibility: U.S. citizenship required; Ph.D. received within five years of the application deadline

ISBIOTECH: SPRING MEETING 2020



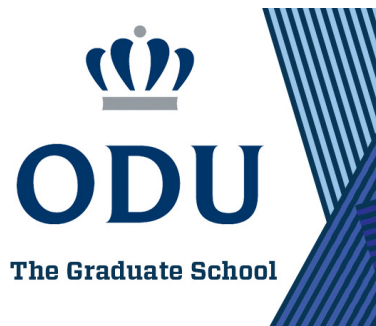
The annual ISbiotech International Biotech conference is being hosted at the Norfolk Hilton: The Main from March 23-25, 2020. Registration is waived for students who wish to volunteer their time to assist in running presentations and registration check in. Additionally, BME faculty and students are also welcome to present their posters: <https://www.isbiotech.org/springposters>. For more information, please visit <https://www.isbiotech.org/>.

ABOUT

Find Graduate School News Online at: 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.



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