NextGenPop

Next Generation of Scholars in Population Research

NEXTGENPOP @ University of Minnesota | June 7 – July 19, 2026

2026 NGP Fellow Biographies



Fatima Arellano (She/her). Fatima is a rising senior at California State University, Monterey Bay, majoring in Psychology with a minor in Social Work. She is passionate about social psychology and social equity, with research interests in culturally grounded practices in community programs and nonprofit organizations. In graduate school, she intends to pursue evidence-based interventions that support well-being and positive social change for low-income, Latino, and disabled populations, as well as address contemporary systemic inequities through advocacy and community-based research.



Monse Barrientos (She/her). Monse is currently a third-year student attending the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). She is currently trying to double-major in Political Science and Sociology. She is really interested in politics, especially when they affect members of the Hispanic and Black communities, and is interested in migration rates and the economic impact they may have. She plans to study population trends and migration patterns to understand their economic impact more and utilize that data to help advocate for more equitable policies and expanded rights for the migrant community.



Cranston Coke (He/him). Cranston is a rising senior at the University of Washington - Seattle, majoring in Public Service and Policy & Sociology, with a minor in Geography. His interests broadly encompass urban sociology, housing, and built environments, which has informed his work to improve inclusivity and civic engagement within local and on-campus institutions. He plans to pursue a career in public policy analysis to help inform and shape knowledge on community-centric approaches to creating equitable governance systems. He hopes to later pursue a master's degree in public policy or administration.



Glensi Coxolca (She/her). Glensi is an Indigenous student from Guatemala majoring in Sociology of Law, Criminology, and Justice and minoring in Business Law at the University of Minnesota. As she enters her senior year, Glensi is committed to breaking stereotypes, amplifying underrepresented voices, and advocating for human rights, especially for Indigenous women in Guatemala. Her research interests involve policies that empower marginalized populations. She is also interested in pursuing graduate school in the future as she continues exploring her academic and professional path.



Brandon Dickson (He/him). Brandon is a senior attending Bowling Green State University. He is currently pursuing a major in Sociology and a minor in History. His future career goals are to use his experience to obtain a law license, submit a proposal to become an officer in the United States Navy, and potentially work in a field where he can study and analyze veterans' experiences to promote equity among the fighting forces of the United States as they transition to their new lives outside of the military's rigid structure.



Noah Graham (He/him). Noah is a rising senior at the University of Southern Mississippi studying Sociology with a minor in Speech Pathology and Audiology. He has many academic interests, including health disparities and social determinants of health, language and communication, and social interaction. Noah is considering multiple career pathways, such as pursuing a Master's in Speech Pathology or Public Health.



Mia Harrison (She/her). Mia is a rising senior at the George Washington University pursuing a double major in International Affairs and Economics with a concentration in International Economics. Her research interests center on the gendered impacts of U.S. foreign policy and neoliberal economic development, specifically through the integration of transnational feminist thought into international relations. Following graduation, she plans to live abroad and seek fellowships such as a Fulbright or Rhodes Scholarship to support continued global research. Mia aims to build a career that applies these critical gendered perspectives to complex challenges in international economic systems.



Ellen Jones (She/her). Ellen is a rising senior at Mercer University pursuing degrees in Public Health, Biology, and French. She is interested in understanding population health trends, especially in infectious diseases, sustainable global health, and women's health. She hopes to incorporate community and population methods to reduce health disparities. After graduation she plans to pursue international service learning before seeking a PhD in Population Health.



Grace Kamau (She/her). Grace is a rising junior studying public policy at Cornell University Brooks School of Public Policy. She is particularly interested in healthcare, social welfare, and AI policy, with a focus on healthcare equity, system processing efficiency, health data and privacy, and patient–provider relationships. Grace plans to pursue a J.D. specializing in healthcare law to further explore these issues.



Arianna Karbassian (She/her). Arianna is a rising junior at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, double majoring in Human Development and Family Science and Global Studies. Her research interests center on the intersection of political participation, population trends, and social inequality, with a particular focus on housing and civic engagement in the U.S. She is also interested in migration and policy in the Middle East. After graduation, she plans to pursue a graduate degree in the social sciences or a JD.



Lesley Kraemer (She/her). Lesley is a senior at California State University-East Bay, double-majoring in Psychology with an Industrial-Organization concentration and Statistics. Her research interests include measurement methodology, diversity, leadership, and teamwork. Lesley plans to pursue a PhD in psychology with a focus on organizational research.



Pallas Lemarchand (She/her). Pallas is a rising senior at the University of California, Santa Barbara, triple majoring in Economics, Sociology, and Mathematics. Her research interests lie at the intersection of demography, health economics, and gender inequality, with a focus on how reproductive and maternal health policies shape women's socioeconomic outcomes. After graduation, Pallas plans to pursue a PhD in Economics to study the socioeconomic impacts of public policy, with a special interest in fertility decision-making and declining fertility rates.



Grace Meier (She/her). Grace is a graduating senior at Bowling Green State University, majoring in Sociology with a minor in Human Development and Family Sciences. Her research interests include the life course perspective, family structure, child development, and mental health. Following graduation, she will begin the PhD program in Sociology at Bowling Green State University, where she plans to specialize in Family Demography.



Bryn Nurczyk (She/her; They/them). Bryn is a rising fourth-year Bachelor's/Master's 4+1 student at the University of Florida, studying Statistics with minors in Mathematics and Sociology, and pursuing a Master's in Biostatistics. Her research interests sit at the intersection of infectious disease ecology and health disparities with particular interest in the application of stochastic processes to modeling health behavior and decision-making. With a commitment to equitable quantitative methods, she plans to pursue a PhD in Epidemiology or Sociology to address data gaps and improve health outcomes for underserved communities.



Thomas Sanchez (He/him). Thomas is a recent Sociology graduate of University of California, Santa Barbara. During his time as an undergrad, he has involved himself in extensive research regarding low barrier methods on HIV prevention and decision-making patterns behind student loans. His academic interests center on examining violence as a social construct via cultural and conversational analysis through qualitative methods. His future prospects are attending the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey to pursue Master of Arts in Threat Intelligence or International Policy and Development.



Makaylee Sanders (She/her). Makaylee is a rising senior at Campbell University, pursuing a degree in Health Communication double-minoring in Honors and Health and Wellness. Her current research interests include grief experiences within healthcare contexts following the loss of a parent, the impact of death on family functioning and communication dynamics, as well as other related topics that explore how individuals and families navigate bereavement and meaning-making after loss. She is currently conducting research with her faculty mentor on the impact of parental death on illness and healthcare perceptions, particularly focusing on college-aged individuals. Makaylee plans to pursue a master's degree after graduation, followed by a PhD, to build a career in Public Health.



Brooke Thomas (She/her). Brooke is a rising senior at the University of Pennsylvania, majoring in sociology with a minor in history. Her academic interests focus on structural inequality within urban life and education. This summer, Brooke is conducting research for her honors thesis, which examines the experiences of Black families navigating the high school selection process in Philadelphia. After completing her undergraduate studies, Brooke plans to pursue a PhD in sociology.