

Graduate Dean's Award 2012 Recipients

The Graduate Dean's Award (GDA) promotes diversity of views, experiences and ideas in the pursuit of research, scholarship and creative excellence within graduate education at Kent State University. The GDA seeks to enhance Kent State's recruitment and support of academically excellent graduate students with diverse backgrounds. Each GDA recipient is awarded \$5,000 from the Division of Graduate Studies, an enhancement of a full-time graduate assistantship stipend. The GDA is a reflection of the wide range of students and disciplines at Kent State.



Leah Bergquist
Ph.D. Chemical Physics

Women are underrepresented in the field of chemical physics, constituting less than 20 percent of the graduate population. The disparity is greater at the doctoral level, making Leah Bergquist's contribution even more significant. According to her nominator, Bergquist "holds promise for high performance in her graduate studies" due to her strong academic background and previous research experience, which aligns with that of the program faculty.



Dana Pugh
Ph.D. Clinical Psychology

After his great academic success as a Kent State undergraduate, the clinical psychology faculty were pleased that Dana Pugh decided to stay for his master's degree. Pugh's GDA nominator described him as a highly qualified applicant who will greatly contribute to the diversity of the clinical psychology program and the discipline overall, as there is a drastic need for a more diverse pool of trained psychologists. Pugh holds many academic achievements, including being named Kent State's outstanding senior psychology major.



Dayana Calvo
Ph.D. Clinical Psychology

Due to the strong need for more psychologists from underrepresented populations, Dayana Calvo is an attractive candidate for the GDA. Academically, Calvo is praised as an exceptional student, and her referees are enthusiastic about her conscientiousness and understanding of theory and complex scientific concepts. Based on her high GPA and experience in research, Calvo is sure to excel in the field of clinical psychology.



Alma Moore
Ph.D. Counseling

There is a great need for more minority counselors to better reflect the diversity of the nation. As a nontraditional minority student in the counseling program, Alma Moore is promoting diversity within the discipline and profession. Because of her extensive professional experience combined with a strong academic background, the counseling faculty are pleased that she selected Kent State for her doctoral studies.



Cadey Korson
Ph.D. Geography

Women are underrepresented compared to their male counterparts within the field of geography. Nationally, 35 percent of geoscience Ph.D.s are awarded to women. Cadey Korson's published work, experience in several education-abroad programs and her interest in international development deemed her an exceptional student and an ideal selection for the GDA.

The Division of Graduate Studies names 10 Graduate Dean's Awards annually, to students beginning graduate school in the fall semester. Nominations must come from faculty within the academic program of the student. For more information about the Graduate Dean's Award and the nomination form, please visit <http://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/faculty-staff/deanaward.cfm>.



Ashleigh Stepp
M.S. Geology

Although women are gaining ground in education and occupation in geology compared to their male counterparts, there is still a significant gender disparity in the field. Ashleigh Stepp's nominator described her as the top M.S. applicant to the program.

Her previous accomplishments include receiving a competitive Undergraduate Research Assistantship and the McKinney Paleontology Scholarship, making her an ideal selection for the GDA.



Amanda Lewis
M.A. Philosophy

Compared to their representation in other disciplines within the humanities, women are underrepresented in the field of philosophy, constituting only 17 percent of full-time faculty. Amanda Lewis' background in

philosophy and astrophysics brings a unique perspective, as most women studying philosophy drift towards ethics or gender studies. Lewis' academic qualifications, such as a strong GPA and GRE score, have deemed her a worthy award recipient.



Caleb Berkemeier
Ph.D. Literature

The English faculty were pleased that Caleb Berkemeier decided to continue at Kent State for his Ph.D. after earning his master's here. His high academic achievement made him a strong candidate for the GDA.

Berkemeier's nominator regards him as being in the top one percent of students she has ever taught for the quality of his intellect. As a visually impaired Ph.D. student in English literature, Berkemeier makes a unique contribution to diversity within the discipline.



Gary (Tré) Myers
Ph.D. Sociology

For the field of sociology; African Americans account for only 12 percent of total graduate enrollment and only 7.9 percent of the doctoral degrees awarded. Gary Myers received high praise from faculty for his academic

achievements as well as his great potential to excel within the discipline. His personal statement stressed the importance of community and included his desire to immerse himself in rich and diverse experiences during each step of his academic development, making him an ideal selection for the GDA.



Darryl Lewis
M.M. Music Performance

Darryl Lewis is a strong, talented performer with skills and aptitude in both musical and nonmusical theatre performance. His career goals and strong academic qualifications make him an ideal selection for the GDA. Many students pursuing music

performance dream of Broadway. However, the percentage of minority actors within the Actors' Equity Association is only 17 percent, which illuminates the need for a more diverse representation in the discipline. Thus, Lewis' presence within Kent State's School of Theatre and Dance provides visibility for other minority students pursuing theatre arts.



Sandra Najar
Ph.D. Translation Studies

As a first-generation minority student, Sandra Najar surpassed cultural barriers and succeeded as a high-achieving student. While studies reveal that Hispanic Americans have made progress, they continue to have the

lowest college completion rates, which contribute to lower graduate enrollment. Due to her background and academic accomplishments, Najar's faculty perceive her as a role model for other first-generation minority students pursuing graduate education.

