

ALUMNI PANEL SPEAKERS

Estrella Calderon



University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy
Medication Therapy Management Pharmacist Intern, Hennepin Healthcare

Estrella Calderon (she/her/hers) is a fourth year pharmacy student at the University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy. She works as a medication therapy management pharmacist intern at Hennepin Healthcare. She assists the medication therapy management department and the clinical pharmacists on the team. She also has experience working in inpatient and community pharmacy at Hennepin. She is currently applying to pharmacy residencies. She hopes to match into a one-year residency program that focuses on ambulatory care and hospital pharmacy so that she can work as a clinical pharmacist.

Sonia Chavez-Meza



Management Assistant, Los Angeles Housing | Development & Finance

Sonia Chavez- Meza (she/her/they) is an emerging urbanist with three years of experience in policy and planning. They've contributed to Universal Broadband infrastructure research and financing affordable housing projects, addressing disparities highlighted through the COVID-19 pandemic. Gaining skills across the housing industry, she aims to build a firm focused on design and development for small businesses and homeowners. A graduate of the University of Southern California, she holds a Bachelor's degree in Art & Design, Master's degree in Urban Planning, and California Real Estate License. They enjoy creative pursuits, nature, and exploring new hobbies.

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Yinka Famodu



Rotational Development Engineer, Pfizer

Yinka Famodu (he/him/his) is a graduate from Richfield High School in Richfield, Minnesota, as well as an alumni of the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio, where he received a Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering.

In college, he was a Resident Assistant and held leadership positions both on the executive board of Biomedical Engineering Society (BMES) and The National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE). He completed R&D internships at Boston Scientific, and now currently works at Pfizer as a Rotational Development Engineer.

Outside work, he's active in his church and his men's community, "The Standard."

Adali Florez-Mendoza

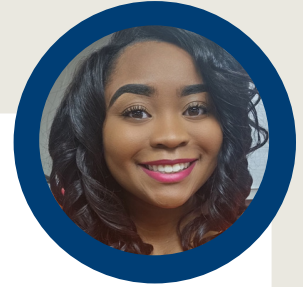


Bilingual Program Events Coordinator, Big Brothers Big Sisters Twin Cities

Adalí Flores-Mendoza (she/her/hers/ella) is a proud first-generation daughter of Mexican immigrants. She graduated in 2023 from the University of St. Thomas with triple majors in Communication Studies, English, and Spanish, initially aspiring to work in social media. After being laid off from her first post-college job as a Media Coordinator, she faced five months of uncertainty. However, she found my path at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Twin Cities as the Bilingual Programs Events Coordinator. Now, she is thriving in the event planning industry, excited to grow and build a meaningful career.

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Niara Gardner



Master's Level Psychotherapy Intern

Niara Gardner (she/her/hers) has a genuine, client-centered approach that values the qualities and individuality of every person. She creates an environment that respects the various experiences and backgrounds of her clients by being compassionate, understanding, and nonjudgmental. Through meaningful encounters that empower and elevate clients, Niara supports clients with supportive inquiry, sensitivity, and a welcoming environment. She wants clients to “Believe in yourself, and know that you have a strength that surpasses all challenges”.

Therapy: She can work with clients using a variety of interventions, including Person-Centered, Strengths-Based, Cognitive Behavioral (CBT), Motivational Interviewing, Solution Focused, Mindfulness, and trauma-informed approaches. She also uses play-based interventions when working with children.

Emilia Garrido Vasquez



Bilingual Research Coordinator, Hennepin Healthcare Research Institute
Dance Instructor, St. Paul Ballet

Emilia Garrido Vasquez (she/her/hers) is originally from Ecuador and moved to the United States when she was 14. She graduated in May 2023 with degrees in Psychology from St. Catherine University and Theater & Dance from Macalester College. Her journey as an artist and researcher has been shaped by her intersecting identities as an immigrant, queer, BIPOC Latina woman, and neurodivergent individual, fueling her passion for diversifying the arts and advancing equitable healthcare. Emilia’s background includes professional dance, choreography, and founding Ballet Explorers, a community initiative offering free ballet classes to children from minoritized communities. These experiences reflect her commitment to amplifying marginalized voices and creating inclusive spaces. Currently, Emilia is a Clinical Research Coordinator at Hennepin Healthcare Research Institute for the Children’s HealthWatch project. In this role, she merges research and social justice, collecting data to understand how societal structures impact the development of children aged 0-3.

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Keyla Nguenkam

Business Analyst, Accenture

Keyla Nguenkam (she/her/hers) is an analyst working in consulting firm with experience across industries like pharmaceuticals, consumer goods, and aerospace & defense. She specializes in projects ranging from data migration and software implementation to sales strategy and more.

Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, exploring new destinations, and in her quest for a suitable workout which she believes boxing is top of the list. Lastly, you'll sometimes find her in a crochet project or tackling a challenging puzzle.



Benjamin Vang

Software Engineer 1, Jamf

Benjamin Vang (he/him/his) loves playing volleyball, high-action video games on his PC and watching anime, sci-fi in particular and spending quality time with friends as well. Although an introvert, he looks forward to meeting new people to share laughs and fresh perspectives.

During college, Benjamin realized his passion for helping people and has found it at Jamf where their software is used at places like hospitals and schools to manage their Apple devices. Benjamin is currently working on maintenance of Jamf products and resolving issues but is transitioning to coding new features soon.

