



END OF SEMESTER

GRADUATE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



MAY 2024

LETTER FROM DEAN YATES

Dear Graduate Students,

Congratulations to all of our upcoming graduates! Your hard work, persistence, and resilience have paid off, and now it is time to go and make your dreams come true. With a graduate education, you will have many options available to you. Some of you may want to become leaders in industry, government, education, healthcare, or the sciences, while others may choose to pursue doctorates for careers in academia or other fields.

Now is a time to celebrate your accomplishments and look towards a bright future filled with endless possibilities. We wish you all the best in every endeavor you pursue and hope that you will stay in touch with your alma mater, Columbus State University.

Remember, Columbus State University is here for you, and we are rooting for your success every step of the way. We believe in your potential and know that you will go on to achieve great things. Congratulations again on this tremendous achievement, and best of luck in all your future endeavors.



Work hard. Have fun.
Continue to CREATE YOU!

Margie H. Yates, Ph.D.
Dean of Research and Graduate Studies
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STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

We would like to highlight three more hardworking students to wrap up the semester!

Eboni Thomas



Eboni is a previous CSU alumna who returned to get her graduate degree after 13 years. She has had the opportunity to connect with many professors in her department and has even had a chance to work with CSU's president, Dr. Stuart Rayfield. She has been working with local business EPiC in her pursuits to create her own startup marketing consultant business, and has found joy in applying the things she has learned in her graduate classes in these efforts. She has found that returning to CSU has filled her with determination, motivation, focus, and empowerment. She encourages other students to do what they can to be a part of the community they're in, and to work hard to reach their goals!

Tasha Mormon



Tasha pursued her postgraduate degree as a way to challenge herself while achieving personal growth and satisfaction. She has a passion for advocacy in education, and sees its benefits for changing lives and creating opportunities for individuals and communities to thrive. She says, "By advocating for policies and practices that prioritize educational equity, inclusivity, and excellence, we can work towards creating a more just and equitable society where every individual has the opportunity to reach their full potential through education." Tasha views graduate school as a transformative journey of learning, discovery, and personal/professional development.

Quinshada Simpson



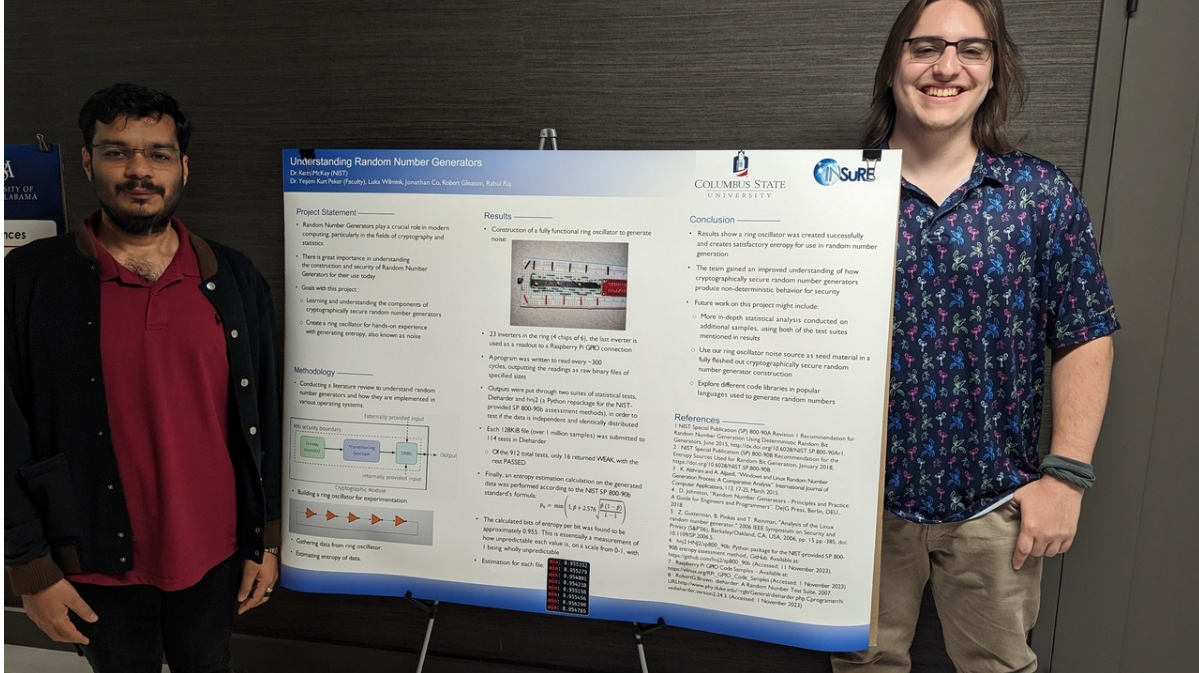
Quinshada's passion for teaching and learning has driven her to pursue her postgraduate degree, and she believes it will allow her to make a more significant impact on her field while deepening her expertise. She has found her professors to be essential in her experience, having provided mentorship, support and challenges during her time as a graduate school. She would like to enhance the educational experiences of English language learners (ELLs) in the classroom. Having taught ELLs for years, she has witnessed the challenges they face firsthand and has developed a passion for enriching their experiences. She encourages fellow graduate students to be resilient and embrace their success while facing the challenges of graduate school.

BIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT CELEBRATION



On Friday, April 19, 2024, the Department of Biology hosted a celebration of the accomplishments of the graduate students in the Biology Track of the Master of Science in Natural Science Program. Each of the currently enrolled 13 biology graduate students gave a 3-minute presentation on their thesis-based research, internship experience, or on what they hope to accomplish while a graduate student at CSU. All of the graduate students gave excellent presentations - from first-semester students to students in their final semester. At the end of the celebration, graduate students and attendees mingled during an informal question-answer session while they enjoyed baked treats together.





Two CSU students; Rahul Raj, a graduate student getting his MS Applied Computer Science with the Software Development concentration, and Luka Wilkink, a student getting his BS Computer Science in the Cybersecurity track, presented their research on secure random generation at the annual CAE Symposium in Louisville, Kentucky. Congrats to the team on their fantastic work!

GAMECHANGER AWARD



Sho Irikawa has received the “Gamechanger Award”, given once a year by the Department of Communication. This award honors an individual who has served to expand the department’s potential by providing student opportunities or selflessly serving as a valuable resource for them. Sho’s time at CSU was almost entirely spent in the studio of 88.5FM WCUG Cougar Radio, working there to develop programming, training, and education opportunities for volunteers, students, and staff. Sho is humbled and grateful for the award and hopes that their impact continues as a part of the culture of WCUG, what Sho calls, “a special and empowering space for anyone from all walks of life” and says, “to me, all the extra hours and extra work are worth it because it helps so many other people and that, in so many ways, really helped me.”

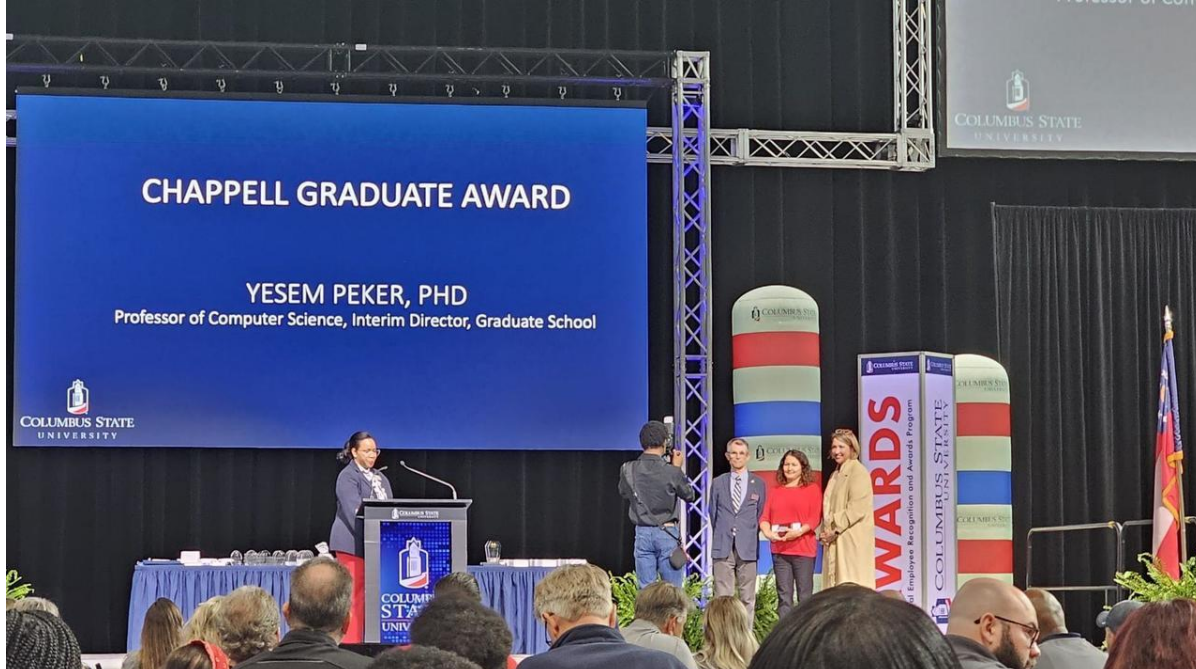
FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

RAPID-FIRE RESEARCH RACE ENCORE



On April 24th, the CSU Library hosted the encore of the Rapid-Fire Research Race. Five professors from all four academic colleges presented their research in four minutes with four slides, and answered questions afterwards in a panel session. The topics discussed ranged from research into what works in online teaching to how to transpose Bach's work for clarinet. This was a great experience for faculty and students to see the amazing research faculty are working on!





Dr. Yesem Kurt Peker has significantly enriched the graduate student experience at CSU through her exemplary teaching, guidance in student research, and dedicated service to graduate education at both departmental and university levels. As the CSU's Interim Director of Graduate Studies, she has gained valuable perspectives on graduate affairs, enabling her to champion the needs of graduate students effectively. Over the past three years, Dr. Peker has contributed her expertise to four master's thesis committees and one doctoral dissertation committee. In 2022, she played a pivotal role in securing the National Security Agency's reaffirmation of Columbus State University as a Center of Academic Excellence for Cyber Defense Education (CAE-CDE) for an additional five years. This recognition underscores the excellence of the School of Computer Science's master's program in cybersecurity at CSU. Achieving this esteemed status involves extensive efforts in data gathering and report writing on various aspects such as graduate curriculum, faculty qualifications, institutional details, and student outcomes. Dr. Peker's remarkable contributions to graduate education, innovative teaching methodologies, engagement with the broader academic community, and unwavering commitment to academic excellence render her an outstanding candidate deserving of this prestigious accolade.

OTHER NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

End of Semester Social

The end of semester social was held on the study day (April 30). We enjoyed pizza and cookies when we got to relax a little bit before the finals!



Apply for Graduate Student or Faculty Spotlights

We want to feature the stellar people in our programs!

Do you know a graduate school student or faculty member who deserves recognition for their achievements or research? We want to hear about them! We would like to include these highlights in future newsletters, and share their activities with colleagues! Apply to the proper form below to put them on our radar!

[Student Candidates](#)

[Faculty Candidates](#)

Check Out Our Social Media

Click the icons to visit the pages.





**UPCOMING EVENTS
FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS**





Finals Week Begins

Be on the look out for your final assignments and tests of the semester! The spring semester is wrapping up, so lets finish strong!

[Spring 2024 Final Schedule](#)



Graduate Hooding Ceremony

If you are a graduating student this semester, be sure to make it to the Hooding Ceremony at 6PM at the Lumpkin Center! A Hooding Ceremony celebrates the ritual of placing the Master's, Specialist in Education, or Doctoral hood on your shoulders, thereby symbolizing your attainment of an advanced degree.

[More Information!](#)



Graduation Ceremonies

Be sure to make it to the graduation ceremonies, whether you or a friend will be walking. This will be a monumental time for many people, so be sure to come out and celebrate with your peers! Check out the link below to see when your college will be having their ceremony.

[Ceremony Times](#)

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