

## 2022-2023 Student Award Winners

Join us in congratulating our 2022-2023 Chemistry Student Award winners. Chemistry faculty select each award recipient. It is always a difficult choice due to the strong competition. The College of Science and Mathematics held its awards ceremony on April 18 in the Bailey Science Center auditorium and broadcast on Facebook so that family and friends could participate.



Pictured, from left to right: Carlton Francis, Dr. Kurt Winkelmann, Thomas Mancil, Kaylee O'Quinn, Jason Phillips, Katie Copenhaver, and Michael Rice

We are grateful to the family of Dr. M. Elizabeth Derrick and all of our VSU Chemistry donors for their generous financial support of our students. Winners of this year's chemistry discipline awards demonstrate excellence in specific courses and fields of research. The winners are:

Polymer Chemistry in Organic Chemistry Award

**Michael Rice**

Undergraduate Award in Analytical Chemistry

**Jason Phillips**

Undergraduate Award in Inorganic Chemistry

**Danielle Sauls**

Undergraduate Award in Biochemistry

**Larra Williams**

Undergraduate Award in Physical Chemistry

**Yeong Hun Jeong**

The Chemistry Department recognizes many aspects of student excellence, including research, service to the Department, and overall academic performance. The winners of this year's awards are:

American Institute of Chemists Award

**Thomas Mancil**

Awarded to a student showing exceptional promise as a chemist.

Outstanding Chemistry Senior Award

**Thomas Mancil**

Given to a senior demonstrating overall excellent academic performance.

Outstanding Freshman Chemistry Award

**Katie Copenhaver**

Given for achievement in first-year Chemistry courses.

Southwest Georgia ACS Optima Chemical Award **Carlton Francis**

Recognizes outstanding service to the Chemistry Department and SMACS.

Chemistry Undergraduate Research Award

**Princess Wynn and Karli Icard**

Awarded to a student showing superior skill as a chemical researcher.

Dr. M. Elizabeth (Betty) Derrick Award

**Kaylee O'Quinn**

Provides a scholarship to an outstanding female student majoring in Chemistry.

We asked each awardee to tell us their future plans, favorite VSU class, and their extracurricular activities. Here are their responses.

**Michael Rice**, Polymer Chemistry in Organic Chemistry Award

Michael will start the Doctor of Pharmacy program at Campbell University in North Carolina in Fall 2023. His favorite classes were Organic Chemistry I & II with Drs. Gupta & Sreenilayam. He is a coffee lover so he especially enjoyed the experiment for extraction of caffeine.



**Danielle Sauls**, Undergraduate Award in Inorganic Chemistry

Danielle is double majoring in Chemistry and Biology. She serves as President of the student chapter of the American Chemical Society (SMACS), she is a peer mentor with the college's GUIDES program, and she tutors at the Academic Support Center, and.

**Larra Williams**, Undergraduate Award in Biochemistry

Larra plans to gain lab experience in a medical diagnostic lab. Her favorite class was Biochemistry Lab taught by Dr. Gosnell. Her favorite part of Chemistry is chromatographic techniques.

**Jason Phillips**, Undergraduate Award in Analytical Chemistry



Jason is seeking an environmentally sustainable job and will pursue a Chemistry PhD later. He especially enjoyed Inorganic Chemistry and Quantitative Analysis and working with Dr. Linda de la Garza. The most exciting thing about Chemistry is being able to create new and interesting things.

**Yeong Hun Jeong**, Undergraduate Award in Physical Chemistry)

Yeong graduated in December 2023 and returned to South Korea to work at the Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power Company. He thanks Drs. Sreenilayam and de la Garza for everything that he learned in their classes.

**Thomas Mancil**, American Institute of Chemists Award and the Outstanding Chemistry Senior Award



Thomas plans to earn a Master's degree in Biology then pursue a PhD in Chemistry. He enjoyed his Inorganic Chemistry course because the lab experiments were a lot of fun. His favorite faculty are Dr. Gosnell and Dr. Sreenilayam. Thomas enjoys learning about new chemical reactions, especially those that involve reactions of medications in our bodies.

**Katie Copenhaver, Outstanding Freshman Chemistry Award**



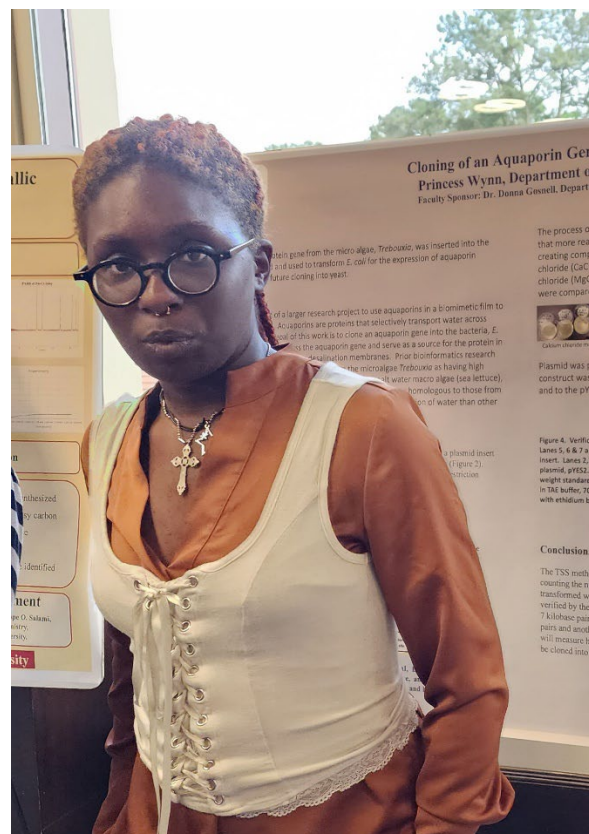
Katie plans to earn a Doctorate in Pharmacy (PharmD) and work as a Pharmacist. Her favorite class is Dr. Gupta's Organic Chemistry. Katie enjoys learning about chemistry within our bodies.

**Carlton Francis, Southwest Georgia ACS Optima Chemistry Award**



Carlton plans to earn a Master's degree in Chemistry then begin a career in forensics. His favorite class was Quantitative Analysis with Dr. de la Garza because writing the lab reports helped him improve his writing and the experiments were fun. He is impressed that chemistry can explain so many different phenomena, especially for identifying samples in forensic analysis.

**Princess Wynn Chemistry Undergraduate Research Award**



Princess is a member of Dr. Donna Gosnell's research group. Princess will pursue a graduate degree in biochemistry, work for a biotech company, and eventually teach chemistry. She enjoyed Dr. Manning's General Chemistry II class the most. She enjoys chemistry because a molecule's different functional groups can explain so much about a material.

**Karli Icard**, Chemistry Undergraduate Research Award



Karli is a member of Dr. Tolu Salami's research group. She will attend medical school to specialize in Radiology. Her favorite professor is Dr. Salami. She is fascinated by the way that Chemistry works and fits in ways that make people unique.

**Congratulations to our outstanding 2022-2023 student award winners!**

**Kaylee O'Quinn**, Dr. M. Elizabeth (Betty) Derrick Award



Kaylee plans to attend dental school after graduation. She enjoyed Dr. Sreenilayam's Organic Chemistry 2 class the most because of all the extra help that he provides for his students. Kaylee loves being in the lab. Such small atoms and molecules that we cannot even see react with each other based on specific rules. She says that Chemistry is a good field for curious minds and that is why she enjoys it.