

# 2011-2012 Luce Scholars

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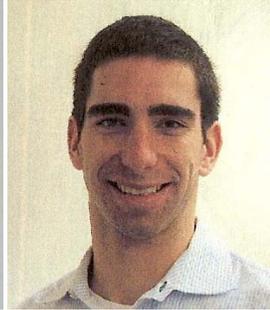
Adriana S. Akers



J. Christopher Beam



Michael C. Grundler



Michael J. Kearney



Daisy Larios

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Christopher P.D. Magoon



Kanika Metre



Michael A. Mian



Perla E. Parra De Anda

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Rosalyn E. Plotzker



Héctor Salazar Salame



Mackenzie E. Smith



Christopher J. Stanfill

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Nazneen F. Uddin



Zimuzor C. Ugochukwu



Abbie L. VanSickle



Craig M. Western



Bessie M. Young

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## 2011-2012 LUCE SCHOLARS

Name	Age	Nominating Institution	Field
Adriana S. Akers	23	Barnard College	Urban Planning and Sustainability
J. Christopher Beam	26	Columbia University	Journalism
Michael C. Gründler	22	Cornell University	Community Ecology; Conservation Biology
Michael J. Kearney	24	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Energy and Innovation
Daisy Larios	25	Occidental College	Libraries; Archives
Christopher P.D. Magoon	22	Yale University	Education
Kanika Metre	22	George Washington University	International Development
Michael A. Mian	22	University of North Carolina	Environmental Law and Conflict Resolution; Entrepreneurship
Perla E. Parra De Anda	28	Cornell University	International Law and Development
Rosalyn E. Plotzker	28	University of Pennsylvania	Medicine
Héctor Salazar Salame	28	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Public Policy
Mackenzie E. Smith	26	Carnegie Mellon University	Creative writing; Literary Publishing
Christopher J. Stanfill	25	University of Texas	Pediatric Prosthetic Rehabilitation
Nazneen F. Uddin	24	University of Michigan	Medicine
Zimuzor C. Ugochukwu	22	Williams College	Social Entrepreneurship
Abbie L. VanSickle	28	University of California, Berkeley	Human Rights and Public- Interest Law
Craig M. Western	22	University of Southern California	Mechanical Engineering & Business
Bessie M. Young	22	Amherst College	Gerontology

### **Adriana Akers**

Adriana Akers discovered her passion for city planning at age 16, when she first read the writings of the great urban theorist Jane Jacobs. She majored in Urban Studies at Barnard College and spent a semester with the International Honors Program: Cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which allowed her to study urban planning and live with host families in Argentina, India, and China. This experience formed the foundation of her senior thesis about the informal and formal waste management sectors in Buenos Aires. Outside of her academic program, she worked as a Barnard College Writing Fellow and a Senior Editor at *Consilience: The Journal of Sustainable Development* at Columbia University. She graduated *summa cum laude* in 2009, with departmental honors, thesis distinction, and induction into Phi Beta Kappa. Following graduation, Adriana was named a 2009-2010 New York City Urban Fellow. As a Fellow, she worked closely with the NYC Deputy Commissioner of Energy Management and helped organize programs to reach the goals of *PlaNYC 2030*, New York City's long-term sustainability plan. She also spearheaded the development of an incentives program to encourage energy conservation in municipal operations and took lead roles in the City's small buildings retrofit program and the initiative to benchmark the energy use of over 3,500 buildings. When the Urban Fellowship drew to a close, she was hired on as a Sustainability Analyst. Outside of work, Adriana enjoys cooking and eating as well as she can, taking photographs, learning to play the guitar, and exploring the diverse and fascinating neighborhoods of large cities.

### **Christopher Beam**

Christopher Beam is a reporter for Slate Magazine in Washington, D.C., where he has covered politics since 2006. In 2008, he was Slate's presidential campaign blogger. Since then he has covered health care reform, financial regulatory reform, and the 2010 mid-term elections. He contributes regularly to the "Explainer" column, and writes the bi-weekly feature "Barack Obama's Facebook Feed." In 2010, he traveled to Kandahar, Afghanistan, to write a series about American military police and the Afghan National Police. Most recently, he has begun covering crime for Slate. His writing has also appeared in *New York* magazine, *The New Republic*, and *The New York Times Book Review*. He graduated from Columbia University in 2006 and grew up in Newton, Mass.

### **Michael Gründler**

Michael Gründler grew up with two brothers, a sister, and, at various times, a Siamese cat, a black cat, a blue cat, two dachshunds, a golden retriever, several crabs, a salamander, and many colorful fish. His summers were spent in northern Michigan on the Leelanau Peninsula, where he discovered passions for fly fishing, running barefoot, and searching out small, overlooked things in the woods and wetlands. While at school in southern Michigan, he cleaned horse stalls in a local barn and took long walks with his dog. He studied ecology and evolution in the College of Arts and Sciences at Cornell University, where he also worked as an undergraduate research assistant studying the population genetic consequences of ecological specialization in frogs. He graduated with highest honors. Since leaving Cornell, he has worked as a field biologist and manual laborer. He still takes long walks in the woods, but finds it harder to keep running barefoot.

### **Michael Kearney**

Michael Kearney is a second-year Master's student in the Technology and Policy Program within MIT's Engineering Systems Division, where he was awarded the Hess Oil Energy Fellowship from the MIT Energy Initiative. As a fellow, Michael has focused his research on the challenges and opportunities of vehicle electrification. His current thesis work concerns the System Dynamics and

firm-level economics that drive electric vehicle market penetration. However, he also has broader interests in the energy field; his coursework at MIT has focused on the economic, financial and public policy components at play in the energy space. Some of these topics include energy policies for a sustainable future, global energy innovation, microeconomics, finance, climate science, and power sector regulation. As an undergraduate at Williams College, Michael double-majored in Mathematics and Political Science (International Relations). His coursework in the Political Science department focused on American Foreign Policy and International Development. Moving forward in his professional life, Michael hopes to unite his experience in the energy space with his background in international relations to address resource distribution, manufacturing growth, climate change and their cumulative effects on war and peace.

### **Daisy Larios**

Daisy Larios grew up in Inglewood, California as the child of Mexican immigrant parents. Despite her parents' lack of formal education, their frequent trips to the public library during her childhood not only instilled in her a love for books and learning, but also a lifelong passion for libraries themselves, which she has turned into a promising career. She currently works as the Career & Information Services Library Assistant for Drexel University's Hagerty Library, where she also co-founded the LibVid Awards blog with her colleagues. She will complete her Master's in Library and Information Science (MLIS) degree in June 2011 from Drexel's iSchool. Daisy was selected as a 2009 Spectrum Scholar by the American Library Association, and is currently organizing an upcoming fundraiser for the Spectrum Scholarship program. Daisy came to libraries by way of the Mellon Library Recruitment Program, a grant-funded program that awarded her an undergraduate internship experience, a Post-baccalaureate Fellow position at Swarthmore College, and a Graduate School Scholarship. Her Bachelor of Arts in History from Occidental College impressed upon her the importance of documenting, preserving, and providing access to the vast wealth of recorded human knowledge and experiences, especially those of underrepresented voices. Her experience in the Getty Multicultural Internship Program after her sophomore year of college also provided an initial entryway into the world of museums, libraries, and archives. During college, Daisy spent a semester abroad in Cape Town, South Africa, where she fell in love with South African music and dance. Apart from her work in libraries, Daisy enjoys photography, dance, DJing, and exploring her family's genealogy.

### **Christopher Magoon**

Christopher Magoon was born and raised in North Canton, Ohio. Going through Ohio's public school system, he came to believe in the decisive power of education. Studying at Yale University during the past four years, Christopher began to learn more about educational systems and their challenges. He has interacted with schools in various capacities: directing a summer school for middle school students, working for an educational think tank, tutoring English as a Second Language, and exploring the political side of education by working on various campaigns. Through these experiences and others, he has seen the challenges and opportunities that education reform presents, and hopes to make a career improving the system that will play a key role in determining the success of the next generation. While he has focused mostly on education, Christopher enjoys many other activities. Last year, he founded the Yale Historical Review, a semesterly magazine that publishes outstanding undergraduate historical essays. He played various sports at Yale and recently ran the Providence marathon. He also enjoys playing mandolin with his bluegrass band.

### **Kanika Metre**

Kanika grew up in San Francisco, CA and currently lives in Washington, DC where she is pursuing a Master in Public Administration degree at the George Washington University, concentrating in International Development Management. She graduated *summa cum laude* with a BA in International Affairs and Women's Studies from the George Washington University in May 2009. Kanika's experiences abroad have included studying at the London School of Economics, learning Spanish in Spain, researching grassroots development with NGOs in India, traveling and doing volunteer work in Peru, and taking documentary filmmaking classes in Cuba. She has also spent time traveling through Brazil, Kenya and Morocco. Now focusing primarily on microfinance, Kanika has conducted research on women's savings groups in India, interned at microfinance organization ACCION International and is currently publishing a paper for the George Washington University's journal *Policy Perspectives* on how cross-sector collaboration in mobile banking can best be used to expand access to financial services among the unbanked poor. Kanika also has experience researching and working in the areas of housing, infrastructure, gender equity and human and labor rights. In addition to ACCION International, Kanika has worked for the DC Department of Transportation, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Latino Economic Development Corporation, International Relief & Development and the United Nations Development Programme. Kanika hopes to use her experience in Asia to become a better advocate for culturally appropriate and effective tools for empowering the poor both abroad and in the United States. Additionally, while in Asia, Kanika looks forward to exploring her passions for the outdoors and filmmaking in a new geographical context, as well as sharing her love for her favorite sport – ultimate Frisbee.

### **Mike Mian**

Mike will graduate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) in May 2011 with a B.A. in Environmental Justice & Conflict Resolution (self-designed) and Political Science and a minor in Entrepreneurship. His professional interests center on the environment, most recently focused on climate change. Mike was an NGO Delegate to the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen with the Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions at Duke University. As a Fellow with the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress, he conducted research on the role of the executive branch of the American government in forming domestic and international climate change policy. Mike also independently researched the relationship between various private and public actors in the development of an international carbon market; his research included a short stay at the Center for International Forest Research in Bogor, Indonesia. He is currently teaching a university course which he developed titled "Environmental Conflict Resolution and Environmental Justice." Mike is very interested in the field of environmental communication, especially as it relates to the use of film and photography in educational models. He has been a contracted correspondent and photographer for a National Geographic subsidiary and has interned with an entrepreneurial broadcast network. At UNC, Mike is a Morehead-Cain Scholar and was also named a 2010 Udall Scholar for his environmental work. He is interested in pursuing work that relates to carbon market development, payment for ecosystem services models, conservation, and anti-poaching efforts. Mike is an avid outdoor adventurer and enjoys sports, cooking, gardening, poetry, singing, and meeting new people. He also enjoys traveling and has visited or worked in several nations.

### **Perla E. Parra De Anda**

Perla De Anda is currently a Fellow at the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs and will receive a Masters in Public Administration degree this May from Cornell University, with a concentration in

International Development . Perla is the president of Cornell Women in Public Policy, the Senior Managing Editor for The Cornell Policy Review, and chair of the Latino Graduate Student Coalition. In 2004, Perla received a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley, where she focused on development and education, minored in Italian studies, and earned a professional certificate with honors in business administration. Throughout her life, Perla has been committed to public service and community development issues, both domestically and abroad. She has primarily focused her academic and professional energies on economic development, education and migration policies. Perla is particularly interested in the interdisciplinary study and application of public policy and law as it pertains to economic growth and development and human welfare. As an undergraduate, Perla complemented her studies working as a Program Manager at an after school program for middle school students in Oakland, California. She has also lived and studied in Italy, Spain, Mexico and Cuba, and has professional experience in the public, not-for-profit, and private sectors. More recently, she worked as a consultant helping small businesses in South Africa develop growth strategies to enhance their competitiveness and foster economic development within their communities. Perla speaks English, Spanish, and Italian fluently and studies Portuguese and Arabic. She plans to pursue a JD in the fall of 2012.

### **Rosalyn Plotzker**

Rosalyn Plotzker was born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware. She is passionate about health care, media, and creative writing. During college Rosalyn collaborated with Philadelphia's syringe exchange program to conduct her senior thesis on women injection drug users. Under the guidance of Dr. David Metzger, she presented her findings at international AIDS conferences in Bangkok and Rio De Janeiro. After graduation, Rosalyn worked as a research assistant for an HIV vaccine study and a microbicide gel clinical trial. The position afforded her the opportunity to work with sex workers – a group she hopes to serve as a physician. Around this time, video production piqued her interest. In addition to a public service announcement about a citywide HIV-testing day campaign she co-founded, Rosalyn produced and directed a documentary entitled "Positive Soliloquies" about two Philadelphia HIV activists. In 2007, Rosalyn moved to New Orleans to serve as full time resource coordinator for a women's shelter. Following this, she moved to New York to work as a health educator and HIV tester for shelters throughout the city. The summer before medical school, Rosalyn was selected by American Jewish World Service to volunteer with Kisumu Medical Education Trust (KMET) in Kenya. During her stay, she co-wrote a protocol for their nascent home-based care program. She also created a ten-minute informational video for KMET and kept a poetry blog about her daily life in Kisumu. Rosalyn continues to involve herself in various projects, both at her medical school and in New York City. She is a writer for Medscape's blog "The Differential." At school, she is co-writing a paper on medical pluralism among HIV positive women in Zimbabwe. In her free time, Rosalyn enjoys exploring New York on foot and playing piano. She is considering a career in women's health, psychiatry, or primary care.

### **Héctor Salazar Salame**

Héctor Salazar Salame is currently a graduate student in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). His studies focus on international industrial relations, labor rights, corporate social responsibility, and community responses to conditions of urban violence. During his time at MIT, he has advised the municipal government of Cartagena, Colombia on how to mitigate the negative effects of relocating informal vendors from its central market and collaborated with Mexican non-profit organizations to strengthen their effectiveness in assuring worker protections in adherence with labor rights. Héctor is also serving

as a research consultant for a recently launched bi-country comparative research project regarding the relationship between urban violence and crime prevention strategies for “at-risk” youth. Prior to attending MIT, Héctor worked as Senior Advisor to the Executive Director at the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO), a division within the Mayor’s Office. At CEO, he contributed to the design, management and evaluation of innovative poverty reduction programs. These included the first large-scale conditional cash transfer program in the United States, modeled after similar programs from over 20 developing countries, and a life-skills and employment program serving formerly incarcerated youth in underprivileged neighborhoods. Before joining CEO, Héctor served as a Senior Program Assistant for NDI, an organization implementing election observation and political party strengthening programs in developing countries. Specifically, he assisted in the management of programs implemented in Nicaragua and Peru. Héctor completed his undergraduate studies at James Madison University and is a member of the American Evaluation Association and the American Planning Association. Originally from Mexico, he is fluent in Spanish and English.

### **Mackenzie Evan Smith**

Mackenzie Evan Smith studies Creative Writing at Carnegie Mellon University. She is the recipient of a Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship in Morocco, a Phi Theta Kappa National Honors Society Scholarship, and a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship from Carnegie Mellon University. She has been an editorial assistant at *Creative Nonfiction* and Carnegie Mellon University Press. She has also worked as a reading tutor for elementary students, a writing tutor for international students, and an Arabic teaching assistant. Her writing has appeared or is forthcoming in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *TriQuarterly* and *Her Campus*; she was selected as a finalist for the 2009 Alexander Patterson Cappon Prize for Fiction from *New Letters*. Prior to attending college, Mackenzie worked at a Girl Scouting center in Switzerland and aboard a tall ship as a Boson’s Mate in the Caribbean and Mediterranean seas. In 2006, she solo hiked the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine; this experience formed the basis of her creative writing fellowship project, “The Appalachian Trail: Understanding Its Impact and Meaning in Pennsylvania Communities through Creative Nonfiction.” This fellowship and her experience traveling in North Africa and the Middle East contributed to her senior honors thesis, a travel essay collection entitled “The Naked Note Taker” ([thenakednotetaker.wordpress.com](http://thenakednotetaker.wordpress.com)). She is currently completing the collection and plans to graduate in May 2011.

### **Christopher J. Stanfill**

C.J. Stanfill is passionate about prosthetics and pediatric rehabilitation. He was raised in Arizona, but moved to Texas in 2003 when he was recruited to join the men’s NCAA golf team at the University of North Texas. While at North Texas, C.J. worked in association with Scottish Rite Children’s Hospital in Dallas to teach children with disabilities how to play golf. It was there that his passion for helping children with disabilities, especially those who rely on prosthetics, began. He graduated *cum laude* in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology. C.J. entered the Master’s program in Movement Science at the University of Texas at Austin in 2008 and joined its doctoral program in 2009. His research focused on the differences in sensory integration during balance between typically developing children and those with autism. He has also been involved in research focused on adaptive running methods for children. He currently serves as a mentor and tutor in the University Athletic Department, where he works to ensure that students have the skills and resources to achieve academic success. He is also the voting assembly member for the Department of Kinesiology and Health Education on the Graduate Student Assembly and the student

representative on the Graduate Student Dean Advisory Committee, where he advocates for graduate students on a number of issues. In 2009, C.J. interned at the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, where he furthered his research with children. C.J. will continue his research on prosthetics and the rehabilitation process for children who rely on these devices. He has a passion for golf, world travel, friends and family.

### **Nazneen Uddin**

Nazneen Uddin is from Detroit, Michigan and is currently a third year medical student at the University of Michigan Medical School. She received a full-tuition Distinguished Student Leadership scholarship at the University of Michigan-Dearborn (UM-D), where she studied pre-medicine and earned her Bachelor's in history. During college, Nazneen wrote for her campus paper and worked as an orientation leader and tutor in the math and writing labs. She was also founder and president of Change for Change at UM-D, a philanthropic organization which collected over \$3,000 in change for the 2005 Southeast Asia earthquake victims. For her activism and community service, she was named a Michigan Service Scholar. In April 2007, she was selected as the commencement speaker and recognized by the Chancellor as the valedictorian of her graduating class. Before starting at the University of Michigan Medical School in 2008, Nazneen studied Arabic at the University of Jordan as a recipient of the US Department of State Critical Language Scholarship and also in Cairo, Egypt. At the end of her first year of medical school, she was awarded several grants, which she used during the summer of 2009 to visit hospitals and clinics throughout Egypt. She learned about the health care system and conducted a research project comparing attitudes of women in urban and rural Egypt regarding breast cancer. She presented her findings at the International Breast and Cervical Cancer Symposium in the Middle East and Africa, held in Cairo in 2010. She currently plans to go into primary care, aiming to work with underserved populations in Detroit and focus on cross cultural health care disparities. She also hopes to continue promoting global health equity through international relief work and translational research.

### **Zim Ugochukwu**

Zim Ugochukwu is a student organizer, community cultivator and lifelong learner. She will graduate from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a B.A. in Biology and double minors in Sociology and Political Science in May 2011. A first generation Nigerian American, she spent half of her formative years in Rochester, Minnesota, and the other half in Durham, NC. She is the recipient of UNCG's Martin Luther King, Jr. Service Award, the National Society of Leadership and Success Service to Students Award, Glamour Magazine's Twenty Amazing Young Women Award, and is the youngest recipient of The Business Journal's Top 40 under Forty Award 2011. As an undergraduate researcher, Zim contributed significantly to the research of Dr. Dennis LaJeunesse by discovering a link between a gene found in fruit flies and genes found in a rare genetic birth disorder, Treacher Collins syndrome. She is the Vice President of Activism with helloCHANGE, the largest national youth-run anti-tobacco project, serving thousands of young people and giving them the tools to effectively take a stand against Big Tobacco. She is also the founder of The Ignite Greensboro Project, a project based on mobilizing students from local colleges and universities in Greensboro to engage in their community through ongoing social action and comprehensive programs, providing a medium for college students to become effective catalysts for change and competent representatives of progress in our society. As a recent contributor to Just BE Cause, a how-to guide on social entrepreneurship and GenY, Zim is working to inspire and guide Millennials seeking to break into the realm of social responsibility and entrepreneurship. She is also currently co-developing the world's first museum celebrating the accomplishments of youth. The museum aims

to create a space inspiring young people to redefine the status quo. Her work inside the lab and within communities has motivated her to pursue a career in social entrepreneurship as a realistic way to fuse science and society.

### **Abbie VanSickle**

Abbie VanSickle is a third-year law student at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law. At law school, she investigated death penalty cases in the southern United States in the Berkeley Death Penalty Clinic and represented refugees through the California Asylum Representation Clinic. She also worked as a law clerk for the San Francisco Public Defender's Office and for National Public Radio, where she reported a story on raw milk. She is currently researching refugee, migration, and housing law as a law clerk with the Legal Resources Centre in Cape Town, South Africa. Prior to law school, she worked as a journalist for four years at the *St. Petersburg Times* in Florida, where she covered crime, courts, and breaking news. She is a 2004 graduate of Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. She grew up in a rural farming community in Indiana. After her Luce year, she will be working as a public defender with The Defender Association in Seattle.

### **Craig Western**

Raised in Atlanta, Georgia, Craig Western is currently a senior at the University of Southern California. Craig was one of 141 students across the United States to be honored as a 2007 Presidential Scholar before beginning his engineering degree in Los Angeles. A student of business and Chinese, he hopes to pursue graduate studies and ultimately integrate his interests by advancing international collaboration and pursuing leadership in the tech sector - particularly within aerospace and defense. Craig has worked on two major NASA projects through a position with the Jet Propulsion Laboratory: he was responsible for designing and constructing a robotic platform to support a 1200-pound lunar lander model for the MoonRise mission to the lunar surface, and he also developed and built an electrical connector to dock together the wiring systems of two lunar rovers. As a member of USC's Teamcore research group, Craig contributed to the development of software designed to optimize placement of security forces; the software is currently operating at the Los Angeles International Airport. Craig also held a marketing internship in Taipei for the electronics manufacturer Tatung. In school, Craig volunteers as Project Manager for a 20-person engineering team working to bring fresh water to a small village in Honduras; he has led two groups to the site. He is currently involved with the i-Podium Program, an effort to promote technical innovation among USC and top schools in Beijing and Taiwan. In his free time, Craig enjoys running, hiking, wakeboarding, traveling, and exploring the neighborhoods of LA.

### **Bessie Young**

Bessie Young is a recent graduate of Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts. While there, she majored in psychology, art, and an interdisciplinary major she designed on contemporary aging issues. As an artist, Bessie uses photography to investigate and document the experience of aging for individuals across varying contexts and cultures. She is currently conducting photographic and psychological research on the role of the living environment (e.g. nursing home, assisted living, or independent living) in psychosocial well being in later life. During the past two summers, Bessie has also travelled to Turkey to volunteer and photograph nursing homes in Istanbul.