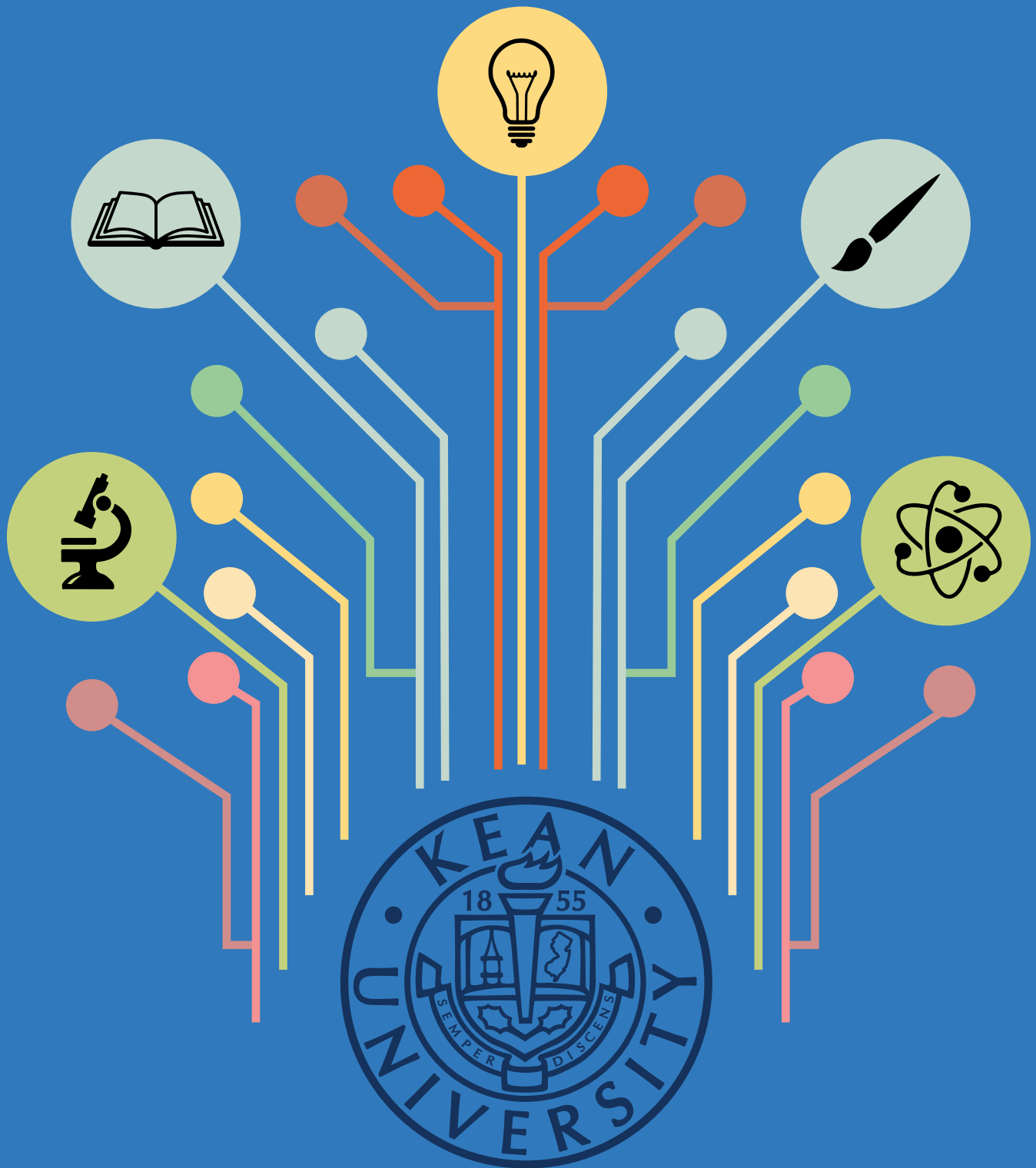


# CENTER FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH + FELLOWSHIPS



# Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships

The mission of the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (CURF) is to develop, support and celebrate faculty mentored student research with the overall aim of enhancing the undergraduate education experience and preparing students for careers in all areas. CURF provides centralized resources, programs, and support for undergraduate students to engage in faculty mentored research projects and provides services for highly motivated students interested in fellowships and post-baccalaureate study.

CURF has been operating under the umbrella of Office of Research and Sponsored Programs since fall 2017. CURF programs are designed to create a research pathway for students that builds involvement throughout their academic career. CURF's research network encourages scholarly engagements and collaborations and supports students as they navigate their undergraduate journey.

## Services:

- › CURF helps to develop partnerships between Kean faculty and students through the Freshman Research Initiative and the Research Recruits program
- › CURF advises undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing National Fellowships
- › CURF celebrates student-faculty research through University Research Days every April

The new home of the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships will be located on the third floor of the Learning Commons. CURF will invite guest speakers and host research and scholarly events. The center will also offer poster design workshops, oral presentation workshops, mentoring opportunities and a platform to collaborate and generate innovative research ideas. CURF will serve to make a difference in Kean University student experience.

“Research” isn’t limited to science. It includes writing, artistry, and design. Research is any inquiry or investigation that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline (from the Council on Undergraduate Research).

## CURF Operations Managed by:

Reenat Munshi, Assistant Director of ORSP

Email: [curf@kean.edu](mailto:curf@kean.edu)







## Freshman Research Initiative (FRI)

The Freshman Research Initiative (FRI) is 6-week research or creative experience working with a Kean faculty mentor. Participation in the FRI provides first-year students access to both faculty mentors and experienced student mentors and starts them on a pathway to future research opportunities. Students do not need prior research experience to enter the program.

The goal of FRI is to engage first-year students in a faculty-mentored project. These projects are introductory and limited in scope but they do include essential features of effective undergraduate research such as reading the literature, encouraging student design of an aspect of the project, and presenting results. FRI introduces freshmen to skills and techniques needed to conduct independent research or creative work.

FRI students will receive a monetary stipend for conducting research in a faculty mentored project for 6 weeks.

### Eligibility Requirements

- › A first-year freshman (completed less than 30 credits)
- › Minimum GPA of 3.0
- › Able to spend up to 4 hours per week on the project committed to participate in the program for 6 weeks (fall or spring)

## MEET OUR RESEARCH AMBASSADORS OF THE 2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

Research Ambassadors are experienced student researchers who encourage and support students to get involved in research and creative work. Many of our CURF research students join us back as Research Ambassadors to help mentor and guide new researchers.

The ambassadors lead activities including: talking to T2K classes, General Education classes, student organization groups and coordinating research symposiums and scholarly events. They are also responsible for conducting research tours of science labs, the CAVE, the Maker Space, architecture labs and K labs.

Faculty interested in having a Research Ambassador speak to their class may contact us at [curf@kean.edu](mailto:curf@kean.edu)

**Ijeoma Akpu**

M.S. Biotechnology  
[akpui@kean.edu](mailto:akpui@kean.edu)



**Kebira Belmaachi**

Psychology and Sociology,  
Class of 2020  
[belmaack@kean.edu](mailto:belmaack@kean.edu)



**Victor Bretones**

Honors History,  
Class of 2020  
[vbretone@kean.edu](mailto:vbretone@kean.edu)



**Jazmine Torres**

Public Administration,  
Class of 2020  
[torrjazzm@kean.edu](mailto:torrjazzm@kean.edu)



**Symone Galey**

Forensic Psychology,  
Class of 2021  
[galeys@kean.edu](mailto:galeys@kean.edu)







# Research Recruits Program

The Research Recruits program is a two-semester undergraduate research or creative experience with a Kean faculty member. This program provides an opportunity to learn about research at the discovery and inquiry level by joining a student-faculty research team. Interested sophomores and first-semester transfer students are especially encouraged to apply.

Research Recruits are matched with CURF Peer Advisers (PAs) who are upper-level undergraduate students with significant research experience. PAs serve as guides for the Research Recruits and liaisons with the faculty research mentors.

All majors are encouraged to apply!

Research Recruits will receive a monetary stipend for conducting research in a faculty mentored project for two semesters.

## Eligibility Requirements:

- › A Sophomore or a first semester transfer student
- › Minimum GPA of 3.0
- › Two semester commitment
- › Able to commit up to 8 to 10 hours of research work per week



**Maura De Palma**  
Environmental and Sustainability Science,  
Class of 2020  
depalmma@kean.edu

**Jeremy Gusset**  
Architecture,  
Class of 2020  
gussetj@kean.edu

**Syed Fahad Nadeem**  
Computer Science,  
Cyber Security Option  
Class of 2020  
nadeems@kean.edu

**Nicole Skalenko**  
Honors History,  
Class of 2020  
skalenkn@kean.edu

## MEET OUR RESEARCH PEER ADVISORS OF THE 2019–2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

Peer Advisors play a primary role in the Research Recruits Program and are the first point of contact for incoming student researchers. Peer advisors are upperclassmen with a proven academic record of accomplishment, significant research experience and strong leadership skills. Peer advisors provide the perspective of an experienced student researcher and assist new researchers to find a balance between academics and research work. They share strategies for academic success and provide information about on campus and off-campus educational opportunities. Peer advisors connect the students to campus resources and help them build a strong network.

# MEET THE RESEARCH RECRUITS

OF THE 2019 - 2020 ACADEMIC YEAR



**Alexis Worlds**  
Communication Studies, Class of 2023

**THE LEARNING COMMONS - MARKETING FOR AWARENESS TO IMPROVE SATISFACTION AND ACCESS**

**DR. PAUL CROFT**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**NICOLE SKALENKO**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Brianna Paredes**  
Criminal Justice, Class of 2023

**ONLINE HATE SPEECH AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT**

**DR. CONTANCE HASSET-WALKER**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**NICOLE SKALENKO**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Christopher Calvache**  
Biology, Class of 2023

**EVALUATING LUNCH BAGS TO DETERMINE FOOD SAFETY GUIDELINES**

**DR. KIM SPACCAROTELLA**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**MAURIZIA DE PALMA**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Gurmukh Bedi**  
Computer Science, Class of 2020

**VIRTUAL HELP DESK USING GOOGLE HOME AS A VIRTUAL RECEPTIONIST**

**DR. DAEHAN KWAK**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**SYED NADEEM**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Hugo Burgos**  
Architecture, Class of 2020

**MARTIAN CITY**

**CRAIG KONYK**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**JEREMY GUSSET**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Jia Lv**  
Finance, Class of 2021

**USING AI IN BUSINESS**

**DR. KAI WANG**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**JEREMY GUSSET**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Jose Rodriguez**  
Computer Science, Class of 2020

**A WEB-BASED DECISION TREE TO ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF CARE MANAGERS**

**DR. DAEHAN KWAK**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**SYED FAHAD NADEEM**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Kebira Belmaachi**  
Sociology, Class of 2023

**THE HUDSON YARDS, NEW YORK CITY URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND BIG DATA**

**DR. JULIA NEVAREZ**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**JEREMY GUSSET**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Omosalewa Akanmu**  
Business, Class of 2023

**RELATIONSHIP OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: FOCUSED ON HUMAN SERVICE NONPROFITS IN NEW JERSEY**

**DR. BOK JEONG**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**JEREMY GUSSET**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Suzie Yang**  
Marketing, Class of 2021

**UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ACCEPTANCE OF USING INSTANT MESSENGER CHATBOTS**

**DR. MIN-CHUNG HAN**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**NICOLE SKALENKO**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Symone Gelay**  
Forensic Psychology, Class of 2020

**THE EFFECT DIAGNOSTIC LABELING HAS ON JUVENILE OFFENDERS IN CRIMINAL CASES**

**DR. RICHARD CONTI**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**JEREMY GUSSET**  
PEER ADVISOR



MEET THE RESEARCH RECRUITS  
OF THE 2019 - 2020 ACADEMIC YEAR



**Justine Burnett**  
Environmental Science &  
Sustainability Science, Class of 2021

**LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION OF  
HETEROTROPHIC MICRO ALGAL OIL AT A COMMERCIAL SCALE**

**DR. DONGYAN MU**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**MAURIZIA DE PALMA**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Katelyn Bryant**  
Sustainability Science,  
Class of 2022



**Liam Allen**  
Computer Science, Class of 2020

**DETECTING BOUNDARIES OF PARKING LOTS AND DETECTING  
OCCUPIED SPACES WITHIN LOT USING DEEP LEARNING**

**DR. JENNY LI**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**SYED FAHAD NADEEM**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Anibely Torres**  
Computer Science, Class of 2021



**Ulysses Green**  
Supply Chain Management, Class of 2021

**BUSINESS STRATEGIES FOR A COMPETITIVE  
ADVANTAGE: AN INNOVATION CASE STUDY**

**DR. SUT SAKCHUTCHAWAN**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**MAURIZIA DE PALMA**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Victor Bretones**  
History, Class of 2020  
**WILLIAM LIVINGSTON, THE PRIVY COUNCIL,  
THE COUNCIL OF WAR AND SAFETY AND THE  
LOGISTICS OF WAR**

**DR. ELIZABETH HYDE**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**NICOLE SKALENKO**  
PEER ADVISOR



**Destiny Moore**  
Biology, Class of 2021  
**DROSOPHILA GENETICS: MAPPING  
OF MPS1 TRANSGENES**

**DR. ELIZABETH MANHEIM**  
RESEARCH FACULTY MENTOR

**MAURIZIA DE PALMA**  
PEER ADVISOR

Student Research Pathway  
Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships



**Research Projects Funded by:**

Office of the President

Office of the Provost and Vice President  
for Research and Faculty

Office of Financial Aid and Scholarship Services  
PSE&G

**Cover Design: Jessica Heider**  
**Brochure Design: Alysia Kane**

**CURF Contact Information:**

Phone • 908 - 737 - 3461

Instagram • @keancurf

Office • Townsend Hall #130

Website • [kean.edu/offices/center-undergraduate-research](http://kean.edu/offices/center-undergraduate-research)

