

Author and Artist Biographies



William Bittner is a freshman at the University of Mississippi, where he studies Arabic and public policy leadership. He currently serves as Lead Peer Educator for Rallying Against Sexual Assault and as President of the John Quincy Adams Society, while his creative interests emphasize new interpretations of American popular history. His work has been published in *Parallax*, *Crashtest*, *Paper Crane*, and others, and has been recognized by the Alabama Writers' Forum and the Southern Literary Arts Festival.



Karam Burjas is a junior honors student at Temple University majoring in global studies with a concentration in global security. He is also minoring in Arabic and political science. His academic and professional interests include human rights, international law, migration policy, and West Asian North African studies. He has spent a semester abroad in Amman, Jordan, where he studied international relations and Arabic through the School for International Training. Presently, he serves as a Congressional Affairs Intern at the Arab Center Washington DC. At Temple, he is affiliated with the Pi Sigma Alpha and Phi Beta Kappa honor societies and contributes as an editor to *MUNDI*, the global studies undergraduate journal.



Cliff Butler is a sophomore in the University Honors Program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, pursuing a BA in English with a concentration in literature and a minor in linguistics, with a particular interest in Shakespeare. He proudly serves on the editorial team for *Sanctuary: The Literary Arts Journal* of the Southern Regional Honors Council. Cliff is also the Vice President of the Ballroom Dance Society at UAB and is a regionally competitive and social dancer in various categories and styles. After he completes his undergraduate education, Cliff plans on continuing his studies to the doctorate level.



McKenzie Cox is a sophomore Stamps Scholar at the University of Mississippi, majoring in public policy leadership and integrated marketing communications. She is a member of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College and the Trent Lott Leadership Institute. Cox has a strong interest in exploring how policy affects local communities and individuals through research. On campus, she is a student news anchor, Concert Singers performer, tour guide, study abroad ambassador, and member of Kappa Delta Sorority. Cox aspires to pursue a career in law and policy analysis.

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Chantelle Flores (she/her) is a dual-degree honors student at the University of Maine, where she studies English and art history. She works as a Writing Center consultant and embedded tutor outside of class, and she has work published or forthcoming in *We Gen Z* (The Telling Room), *Barzakh*, and *The Basilisk Tree*. She recently presented on multimodal tutoring strategies at the 2024 MCELA conference with her Writing Center peers. In her free time, she enjoys singing with the University of Maine Singers, engaging with the visual arts, and spending time with friends and family.



Krista Hamel is a recent graduate from Boise State University Honors College, earning her BFA in illustration. As a student, she contributed multiple artworks to several exhibitions centered around environmentalist focused themes. These selected works bring awareness to our human impact on the environment and how our concern for issues ebb and flow with its media coverage. Other themes her work explores are mental health, gun violence, and the elevation of minority voices. Krista plans to build greater awareness and change in our world through a career in children's book illustration and/or children's film concept development centered on these themes.



Andy Jones is a recent graduate of Texas Tech University with a B.A. in technical communication. While at Texas Tech, she participated in the honors book club and earned an undergraduate writing certificate. If you ever happen across her, you're likely to hear ramblings about understanding the liminality of speculative fiction and explorations of queer identity through creative expression. Her plans for the future include attending graduate school to pursue a degree in creative writing, reading every Star Wars book that has ever been published, and writing as much poetry as she can.



Lily Karg graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth with degrees in biochemistry, environmental science, and biology. While in Duluth, Lily was an active volunteer with the Recreational Sports and Outdoor Program on campus and the local Cyclists of Gitchee Gumees Shores trail maintenance crew. Her deep passion for the outdoors also motivated her undergraduate research experience, which focused on using paleoecology and analytical chemistry to study harmful algal blooms and pollen deposition in Lake Superior. This June, she will present both her honors thesis and her graduate student mentor's thesis work at the Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography conference. Following one last summer in the Large Lakes Observatory lab and enjoying the North Shore, she will pursue a PhD in biological science at Michigan Technological University.

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Benjamin Longren is a sophomore honors student at the University of Georgia, where he is a double major in economics and international business and minoring in Arabic and law. As well as being active in the honors program, he is part of the UGA Rugby Club, MathCounts tutoring, Economics Society, and the Leonard Leadership Scholars Program. In addition, Benjamin volunteers at MediationSavannah, where he is a registered mediator. After graduation, Benjamin plans to go to law school or pursue the Fulbright Scholarship (or anything else that is interesting).



Kathryn O'Donnell graduated cum laude with biology departmental honors and University Honors designation from the University of Minnesota Duluth in 2024, with a BA in biology and a minor in history. She was a student leader in Chi Alpha Campus Ministries throughout her undergraduate career, and served in various officer positions within the UMD choral program. Kathryn also interned as a healthcare assistant at Lake Beauty Bible Camp and worked as a steward of historical information at Glensheen Mansion. She focuses her research and academic interests on past and present infectious disease threats, studying the impact disease has on the course of history and how those lessons can, and should, shape medical procedures and practices today. She is currently applying to medical school, while reading book after book about infectious disease in her free time.



Allison Peschek is in her senior year as an honors student at the University of Montana. In preparation to graduate in the Fall of 2024, she is studying to earn a double degree, one in wildlife biology, and the other in art. In pursuing her passions as an undergraduate, she has gained affiliation with the Emlen Lab, Matrix Press, *Scribendi*, and *The Oval*. Originally from Renton, Washington, Allison's inspiration is fueled by her perception of the world around her. Through that appreciation and interest, she hopes to blend her fields of study to encourage greater connection between everything in life.



Elizabeth Taylor is a third-year honors student at the University of Georgia, double majoring in political science and international affairs, with minors in law and sustainability. Along with being active in the honors program, Elizabeth has served as a student ambassador for the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Georgia, presented research at the university's annual undergraduate colloquium, and competed in mock trial. Elizabeth is also involved in Gamma Phi Beta Sorority and the Order of Omega Society. After graduation, she plans to attend law school and pursue a career in environmental politics.

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Kelly Wang is a freshman at Northeastern University, where she is a member of the John Martinson Honors Program. Majoring in mathematics and business administration with a minor in linguistics, Kelly intends on pursuing a career in finance. On campus, she is involved in Alpha Kappa Psi, Student Value Fund, and undergraduate research (Boston's Chinatown). In her free time, Kelly enjoys watching documentaries and reading historical fiction.



Johanna Ziegler is a junior honors student earning her B.A. in English-creative writing at the University of South Dakota. Her creative work has been published in *The Albion Review*, *Northern Eclecta*, *Hey! Young Writer*, and *Oakwood*. Her award-winning short films have been screened at the South Dakota Film Festival and the Valkyrie International Film Festival, with her latest short film releasing this year through MJ Canyon Productions. This spring, she also debuted as a theatre director/playwright in collaboration with the USD Department of Theatre. She plans to earn advanced degrees in creative writing and continue publishing fiction and releasing films.