

# THE ORBITER

UNH MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

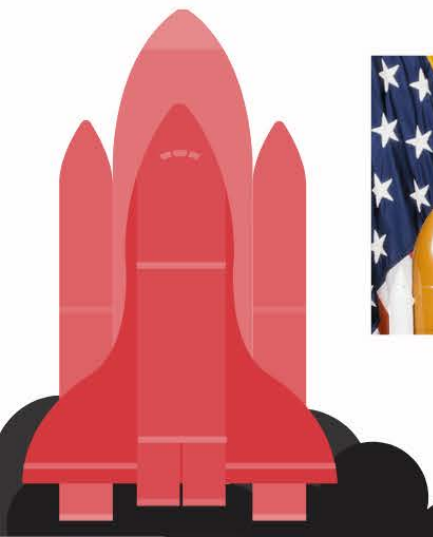


## 2022 Summer Cohort

Congratulations to the summer 2022 McNair Cohort on completing their research and presenting at the University of New Hampshire annual Ronald E. McNair Scholars Symposium & the Undergraduate Research Conference.

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# SHOUT OUT TO OUR MENTORS

**Thank you for all the work you do with our scholars, and for all  
your time and support!**

Semra Aytur  
Rachel Burdin  
Stephen Ciccone  
Ronald Croce  
Teresa Cohn  
Kurk Dorsey  
Sherine Elsawa  
Jeffrey Frenkiewich

Thomas Gruen  
Les Fitzpatrick  
Amy Michael  
Tarkington Newman  
Alyssa O'Brien  
Chanda Prescod-Weinstein  
Wayne Smith

**And welcome aboard to our 2023 mentors! We look forward  
to working with you this summer!**

April Bailey  
Joan Beasley  
Jack Biggs  
Feixia Chu  
Michele Dillon  
Ngozi Enelamah

Jennifer Griffith  
Trish Kelshaw  
Elizabeth Moschella-Smith  
Robin Sheriff  
Jeannie Sowers  
Karen Van Gundy



## UNH MCNAIR ALUM SPOTLIGHT



**Loretta Carle Brady**, a 1998 alum of the McNair Scholars Program, has been very active since her summer at UNH. After earning her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Psychology, she went on to earn her PhD in Clinical Psychology from the Fordham University in 2006.

She is currently a Professor of Psychology at St. Anselm's College in Manchester, NH, where she also serves as Director of the Community Resilience & Social Equity Lab.

She is also the creator of Bad Ass & Bold, which champions "life lived fully," a transformational approach to planning with your loves, dreams, and realities in mind.

She has earned a plethora of awards and accolades, which include a Fulbright Fellowship to conduct research in Cyprus in August 2014, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Social Justice Award from St. A's in January 2017, and the Excellence in Service Award from the NAACP in October 2019.

She was published in the Journal of Adult Development in January 2010 with her article *Giving Back and Growing in Service: Investigating Spirituality, Religiosity, and Generativity in Young Adults*.

Loretta recently served as keynote speaker (pictured to the left) for the annual New England Educational Opportunity Association in April 2023 with an inspiring speech about finding your guiding stars when you are feeling adrift.

Loretta Brady has proven to be a strong advocate for community change with her expertise in inclusion, diversity, and change management for higher education, healthcare, legal, tech, and non-profits. With this wealth of knowledge, she has created helpful tools that help students and professionals balance their needs in order to thrive while in the pursuit of their dreams. Loretta is one of many TRIO success stories that prove TRIO works!





# THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 SUMMER INSTRUCTORS



**Dr. Catherine Moran** is a Principal Lecturer in Sociology at the University of New Hampshire. Dr. Moran teaches the two-credit introduction to McNair Research course we offer during the summer for our McNair research scholars. She prepares our summer scholars for local and national symposiums and conferences. We can't thank her enough for her continued support of the McNair Scholars Program.

**Rachel Roy**, is a fourth year PhD candidate in Composition and Rhetoric. Her research interests include disability studies and writing center studies, and she is interested in making writing spaces accessible for all. Rachel served as our writing instructor for our summer writing course helping the students develop their proposals and research papers. We are looking forward to having her back again for our 2023 McNair summer research program.





**The McNair Scholars Program wishes to acknowledge the McNair Advisory Committee for their service and continued support of our program and scholars:**

- CARMELA AMATO-WIERDA
- PER BERGLUND
- PAULA DINARDO
- ELIZABETH FOWLER
- STEPHANIE HARVEY
- MICHELLE LEICHTMAN
- JAMES MALLEY
- CHRIS REARDON
- CYNDI ROLL
- RACHEL ROY



## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Summer Research Fellowship Program**

Hosted by: UNH McNair  
Begins June 4, 2023

### **Weekly Research Seminars**

June 8-July 20, 2023

### **McNair & SSS Undergraduate Research Conference**

Hosted by: SAEOPP in Atlanta  
June 22-25, 2023

### **McNair Research Symposium**

Hosted by: UNH McNair  
July 26, 2023

### **2023 McNair Conference**

Hosted by: UCLA  
July 31-August 2, 2023

# Recent Publications



Graduating senior, Tori Schofield has co-authored a research article entitled *Engaging Undergraduate Students in Forensic Anthropology Research During Times of Restricted Lab Access: The Efficacy and Importance of Student-Led Surveys* that appears in UC Irvine's Teaching & Learning Anthropology Journal. Also graduating this spring, Samantha DiNatale has been published in the Spring 2023 UNH Inquiry for her summer 2021 research project *The Battle Against "Ecology Nuts:" An Examination of Olympic Oil Refinery Proponents*.

Tori's study explores "one potential option for engaged forensic anthropology research: the creation of skeletal research surveys that students can design & disseminate to law enforcement to better understand the nature of forensic casework in their own states."

Samantha's research dives deep into a case study of a Durham, NH oil refinery that never came to be, exploring both sides of the argument for a project that would have completely changed the face of NH's popular seacoast area.

We love to see the work our scholars have been doing both in the program and after they have graduated. The research they do makes ripples that have a positive impact on our communities and we are so proud of them! You can find Samantha's complete article in the Spring 2023 UNH Inquiry and Tori's can be found by visiting:  
<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/68c1n4tx>

# Notable Achievements

*from our Alumni*



2019 graduate, Anna Haber, currently enrolled as a fourth year PhD candidate in the VanBuren Lab at Michigan State University, Department of Horticulture, received the 2022-2023 NSF NRT IMPACTS Fellowship for \$34,000. Anna's dissertation research focuses on understanding the responses of grasses to abiotic stressors including drought, cold, salt, and desiccation, among others. She uses a computational genomics approach to understand plant gene expression under stress.

2021 graduate, Tan Dao, currently enrolled as a second year PhD student at Harvard University, Department of Physics received the 2023 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. His experimental research focuses on the synthesis and characterization of quantum materials.



*Congrats!*

# McNair Current Statistics

Since the UNH McNair Program began in 1991, it has served over 400 students. Of those, 188 alumni have gone on to receive a master's degree and 43 have earned a PhD. 14 alumni have gone on to earn other professional doctorates and 40 alumni are currently in a graduate program.



# CONGRATULATIONS 2023 GRADUATING MCNAIR SENIORS!



## Taylor Cassiani, Linguistics/Italian Studies

Mentor: Dr. Rachel Burdin, Department of English

### Research

I looked at the language contact between the vocalic systems of Hausa and Ekhwa (two African languages). The goal was to see if Ekhwa speakers can produce the durational distinctions when speaking Hausa. We found that although they do produce some of the long and short vowels correctly, it is still not as distinct of a difference as native Hausa speakers.

### Activities

I am now a part of Phi Beta Kappa, Gamma Kappa Alpha, and of course the McNair Scholars Program on campus.

### Highlights

My favorite part of the program was all of the trips we made as a group and bonding together. I am so glad to have met everyone here.

### Awards & Accomplishments

Not including this semester, I have made it on the Dean's List with Highest Honors every semester so far! I have also been accepted into the 20th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences being held in Prague in August.

### Future Plans

I have committed to attending the University of Colorado at Boulder to pursue my Master's in Linguistics!



## Lydia Collyns, Anthropology

Mentor: Dr. Les Fitzpatrick, Department of Anthropology

### Research

My research focused on stable isotope analysis of human remains from two archaeological sites in Spain and Croatia. Through stable isotope analysis of nitrogen, carbon, and oxygen diet, mobility, and societal stratification can be analyzed. This allows anthropologists to be able to have a better understanding of how people lived, what they consumed, and where they travelled in their lifetimes.

### Awards & Activities

During my time at UNH, I made Dean's List last semester and received the Donovan Scholarship two years in a row.

### Highlights

Being a part of the McNair Scholars Program allowed me to develop crucial presentation skills that will be useful beyond academics. I thoroughly enjoyed all of my time in the Anthropology lab, getting to know my cohort, and of course, traveling.

### Accomplishments

I am proud of learning hands-on skills in the lab, learning how to use technology to create presentations that leave a lasting impact. As well as now closing the chapter on my part of this research project so that it can be passed onto others.

### Future Plans

I plan to head into the work force after graduation.



## **Samantha DiNatale, Environmental Conservation & Sustainability/History**

Mentor: Dr. Kurk Dorsey, Department of History

### **Research**

Samantha completed two research projects with McNair. Her most recent examined the water quality concerns of the Nez Perce Tribe, looking into how different conceptions of space & time between colonists and Indigenous groups have led to issues with water governance, using ArcGIS mapping software and qualitative coding.

### **Activities**

I was involved in Sigma Alpha, the professional agricultural society, where I acted as Community Service Chairwoman, Scholarship Chairwoman, Agriculture in the Community Chairwoman, and the Social Media Chairwoman, and was nominated for an FSL award. I served as Secretary for Xi Sigma Pi, the Natural Resources & Environment Department for the 2022-2023 academic year. I served on the History Department's Undergrad Committee for 2 years; Resident Assistant in Christensen Hall for the 2022-2023 academic year; among other positions around campus. I also spent a summer in Washington D.C. with the Washington Center Program interning at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

### **Highlights**

I went on a plane for the first time through the McNair Scholars Program! My highlights include traveling to Florida, Maryland, and California to present my projects to broad & diverse audiences, while also meeting McNair scholars from across the country, expanding my network, and becoming more well-traveled.

### **Awards & Accomplishments**

I've made the Dean's List since fall 2019. I was a member of the Xi Sigma Pi National Forestry Honors Society, Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society, earned the Class of 1974 scholarship, Ruth E. Farrington Scholarship, Yale Scholarship Fund, First Place in the 33rd Annual Phi Beta Kappa Discovery Essay Competition, and am honored to have my research from summer 2021 published in the Spring 2023 edition of the UNH Inquiry!

### **Future Plans**

I will be attending the University of Maryland, Baltimore County to work with Dr. Dena Aufseeser in the Geography and Environmental Systems MS program, fully funded through the Interdisciplinary Consortium for Applied Research in the Environment (ICARE), which seeks to broaden community participation in environmental science and social justice.



## Tu Anh Duong, History

Mentors: Dr. Jeffrey Frenkiewich & Dr. Kurk Dorsey, Departments of Education & History

### Research

Tu Anh's research focused on secondary education social studies, which included gathering data from different states (CA, HI, NH, SD, and TX) and examining how these states address race and racism when discussing the Civil War through their teaching standards and textbooks.

### Awards & Activities

Tu Anh has been a member of a handful of cultural student orgs, most notably, the United Asian Coalition and Vietnamese Student Association from freshman year onward. "During my sophomore year, I was on the executive board for UAC. Since last year, I have been on the board for the History club as Student Outreach. During sophomore and junior years, I was a "classic" mentor for the CONNECT Program." Tu Anh also impressively made Dean's List in Spring 2020 and 2022, as well as Fall 2022.

### Highlights

Tu Anh feels very fortunate to have been able to work with Professors Kurk Dorsey and Jeffrey Frenkiewich on his project, as well as other valuable resources such as Professor Louise Buckley from the UNH Library. He also mentions his summer cohort, "I would not have asked for a better group to spend summer together." Being able to attend conferences surrounded by scholarly peers was another highlight for Tu Anh.

### Accomplishments

"It was incredible timing, a blessing, to do this work when it was pivotal in the education spectrum and the general public. It still is now. This was my first time doing "serious" research, and while I was nervous, the given resources reassured me good work was there, and it was possible. I was not certain of the direction of my work or even the proposed legislation around this matter would go. It is still being argued and "tested." Meanwhile, the research paper is still being refined and tuned for its eventual publication."

### Future Plans

Tu Anh will be attending UNH in the Master's in Secondary Education program.



## Sabrina Kadariya, Health Management & Policy

Mentor: Dr. Semra Aytur, Department of HMP

### Research

I am doing research on Environmental Justice in Manchester, NH. We are connecting with the community in Manchester that statistically has the poorest health outcomes (particularly a cluster of streets in the same area) and asking about their lived experiences while living in those neighborhoods. The goal of this project is to eventually pass on this information to the city of Manchester, so that they can work on prioritizing projects in this area based off of actual resident feedback. Also, to build a sense of trust within this community with community stakeholders. We built a Syndemic Model (synergistic epidemic) to display that these poor health outcomes are not a coincidence. We do this by integrating the social determinants of health in our model, as well.

### Activities

I was the CHHS Diversity Ambassador for two years and served as a UNH tour guide for two years.

### Highlights

I loved my time with McNair because of the community it brought me. I did not do summer research, and was nervous about not making McNair friends, but instead, I made so many at community events! I am thankful to everyone who stayed in touch with me, even after the events. For my research project, I loved engaging with the community and seeing what they were capable of doing to bring everyone together. I have met so many amazing people through my research that have truly impacted the lives of the Manchester community for the better.

### Awards & Accomplishments

I am proud of being one of three recipients of the Theo-Steelman Public Service Fellowship for my research in Manchester. I am also proud of making the Dean's List three semesters in a row!

### Future Plans

I am planning to obtain my Master's in Public Health at UNH!



## Patricia Louis, Nursing

Mentor: Dr. Alyssa O'Brien, Department of Nursing

### Research

Under the mentorship of Dr. Alyssa O'Brien, I interview participants to explore mothers' experiences and family stress during COVID-19. Some participants found that lockdown was beneficial in increasing time spent with family, but in general, it was found that stressors were associated with parenting responsibilities, finances, familial and partner relationships, lack of resources, time demands, daycare for children, and career trajectories.

### Activities

My extracurricular activities included Athletes Intersarsity, UNH Rowing 2019-2022, ACE Mentor for first year nursing students.

### Highlights

There are many highlights of working on my research. One was working with Dr. O'Brien and presenting at the Eastern Nursing Research Society at the 2022 conference in Rhode Island. I was exposed to a lot of good work in the healthcare field, and that was a motivation for me to keep up with the ongoing research. It also felt rewarding to hear people's experiences and give back to my community. Highlights from the McNair program include meeting some of my best friends, and having a shared memory that we still and will continue to bring up for the rest of our lives. I could not have had this experience without McNair! Shoutout to Selina, Tammy, Kate, and Dr. Moran. Thank you all!

### Awards & Accomplishments

I received the Great Nurse Scholarship from UNH Nursing in the fall of 2022 and I'm graduating with university honors distinction.

### Future Plans

I committed to the Nursing Residency Program at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital on the Medical Surgical Unit. I hope this experience will give me time to help determine where my calling lies for grad school soon.



## Blaise O'Mara, Electrical Engineering

Mentors: Dr. Ronald Croce & Dr. Wayne Smith, Departments of Kinesiology & Electrical Engineering

### Research

The purpose of my research was to classify a person's Spanish language proficiency based on their electroencephalogram (EEG) brain activity. This provides information on how language skill can be determined solely on a physiological standard, which may prove useful for both language instructors and students.

### Activities

Throughout my years at UNH, I have been a member of the Hamel Scholars Program, Honors Program, Catholic Student Organization serving as President, Outdoor Adventures serving as Program Assistant, UNH Rock Climbing Club, was a tutor for the ECE Department. One of the things I am most proud of is founding the Annual Share the Cross Fundraiser, which raises \$ for Catholic seminarian education, women's crisis centers, and food pantries. To raise funds, myself and others hike a 45 lbs. cross up one mountain in the White Mountain range. Over the course of 3 years, over \$20,000 has been raised.

### Highlights

Highlights from my research include: working closely with my supportive, funny, and energetic mentors, Dr. Ronald Croce and Dr. Smith, working with my close friend and colleague, Skyler Baumer, interacting with UNH Spanish language students, and finally getting some data results.

Highlights from the McNair Program include: eating sushi with Chris, swimming in the Pacific Ocean for the first time, having Stephanie's chaotic and Karla's stern energy as peer mentors, the Portsmouth Art Walks, exploring Griffith Observatory with my cohort, and having Selina as a superstar director.

### Awards & Accomplishments

Receiving \$2,455 in funding for my research, making the Dean's List every semester, winning the renewable \$10,000 Lockheed Martin STEM Scholarship, Volunteer of the Year 2021 (awarded by the Knights of Columbus Council of New Hampshire).

### Future Plans

This summer, I will be working for DEKA, a research and development company in Manchester, as an electrical engineer intern. I have recently been accepted and will be attending UNH to earn my Master of Science in Electrical Engineering.



## **Tori Schofield, Psychology/Justice Studies**

Mentor: Dr. Amy Michael, Department of Anthropology

### **Research**

I worked on a quantitative research project under the guidance of Dr. Michael. A comprehensive study using Qualtrics was sent out to 150 law enforcement agencies throughout New Hampshire, acquiring their agencies' knowledge and protocols used when cases involve skeletal remains.

### **Awards**

I was a recipient the 2022 Donovan Scholarship.

### **Highlights**

I enjoyed spending time with my fellow scholars during the summer and doing the various fun activities provided by the McNair Program. I also loved meeting McNair scholars from across the country.

### **Accomplishments**

I am published as the third author of the research article "Engaging Undergraduate Students in Forensic Anthropology Research During Times of Restricted Access: The Efficacy and Importance of Student-Led Surveys," which is published in the *Teaching & Learning Anthropology Journal*.

### **Future Plans**

I am currently still exploring different academic opportunities and applying to graduate schools.





## Joslyn Villavicencio, Business Administration & Management

Mentor: Dr. Thomas Gruen, Department of Marketing

### Research

The focus of my research is to further understand the relationship between academic dishonesty and business ethics, by conducting a study based around 3 research questions. Those engaged in business ethics education will find this study useful as it sheds light on student awareness and attitudes on multiple aspects of academic and business dishonesty. The ultimate goal is to provide evidence that helps shape ethics education that possibly impacts both the academic and business environment.

### Activities

I was involved in MOSAICO, CONNECT, TRIO, and the Beauregard Center.

### Highlights

One of my most memorable experiences was during the summer of 2021 when I participated in the McNair Summer Research Training Program. It was an amazing opportunity where I had the chance to connect with an incredible group of individuals and really bonded with many of them. Being part of such a supportive and collaborative team was truly rewarding. Spending time with my cohort was a beautiful moment that made me feel supported and loved.

### Accomplishments & Awards

I received the 2022 Parents Council Award. And one of my biggest accomplishments was publishing my first research paper. Additionally, being a part of the McNair Scholars Program was an achievement in my life and set me on a path that I never expected and helped me gain more confidence in my writing abilities and who I am as a person.

### Future Plans

My current plan is to pursue a PhD in Business Management, specializing in Marketing. I have been accepted into the PhD Business program at CUNY, and I am also waiting to hear back from another PhD program. Once I receive a decision from the other program, I will make a final decision on which PhD program to pursue.



## Marcella Wondal, Social Work

Mentor: Dr. Tarkington Newman, Department of Social Work

### Research

My research was about exploring the life skill development and transfer of youth experiencing homelessness in NH. I conducted one-on-one interviews with three youth using a strengths-based approach, where youth reflected on the meaningful skills they've learned despite their unique challenges. The goals were to understand what skills youth are learning, how they are learning those skills, and where they are transferring these skills into different areas of their life.

### Activities

I served as Peer Advocate for SHARPP, was a Phi Alpha Honor Society member, United Asian Coalition member, Sport Social Work Research Lab member, was an intern at Waypoint in Rochester, NH.

### Highlights

The summer of McNair was the best summer of my life - getting to know people in my cohort, exploring new cities with them, networking with other scholars across the country, challenging myself in ways I never have before and growing so much as a person from it. As far as research, I've learned a lot from my mentors about taking a social justice approach when it comes to research and centering youths' voices to share their unique lived experiences.

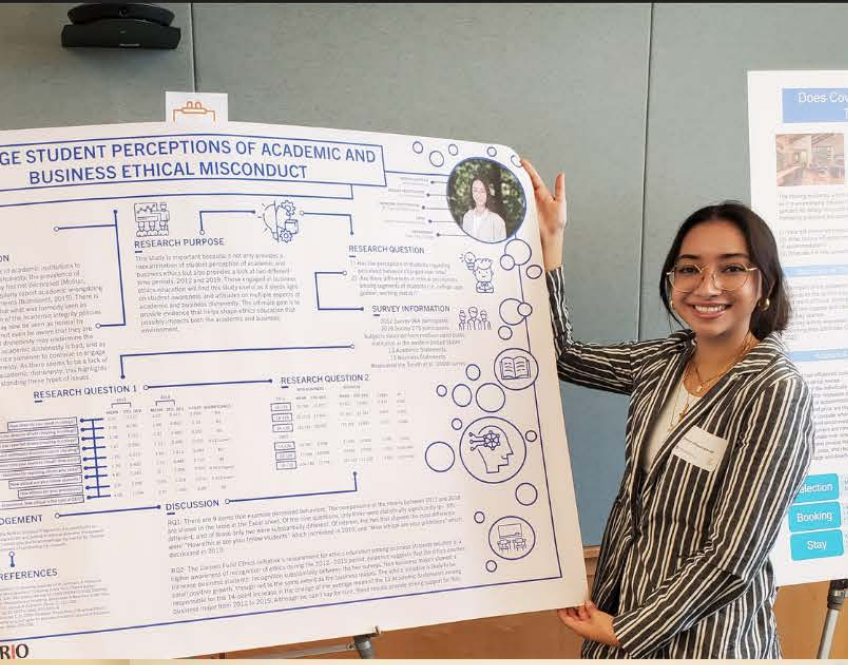
### Awards & Accomplishments

I received the National Association of Social Work Bachelor of Social Work Student of the Year in 2022. I am proud of connecting with vulnerable youth and seeing how empowered they were to share their stories with me. I received the URC Award of Excellence for presenting this research at the 2023 URC.

### Future Plans

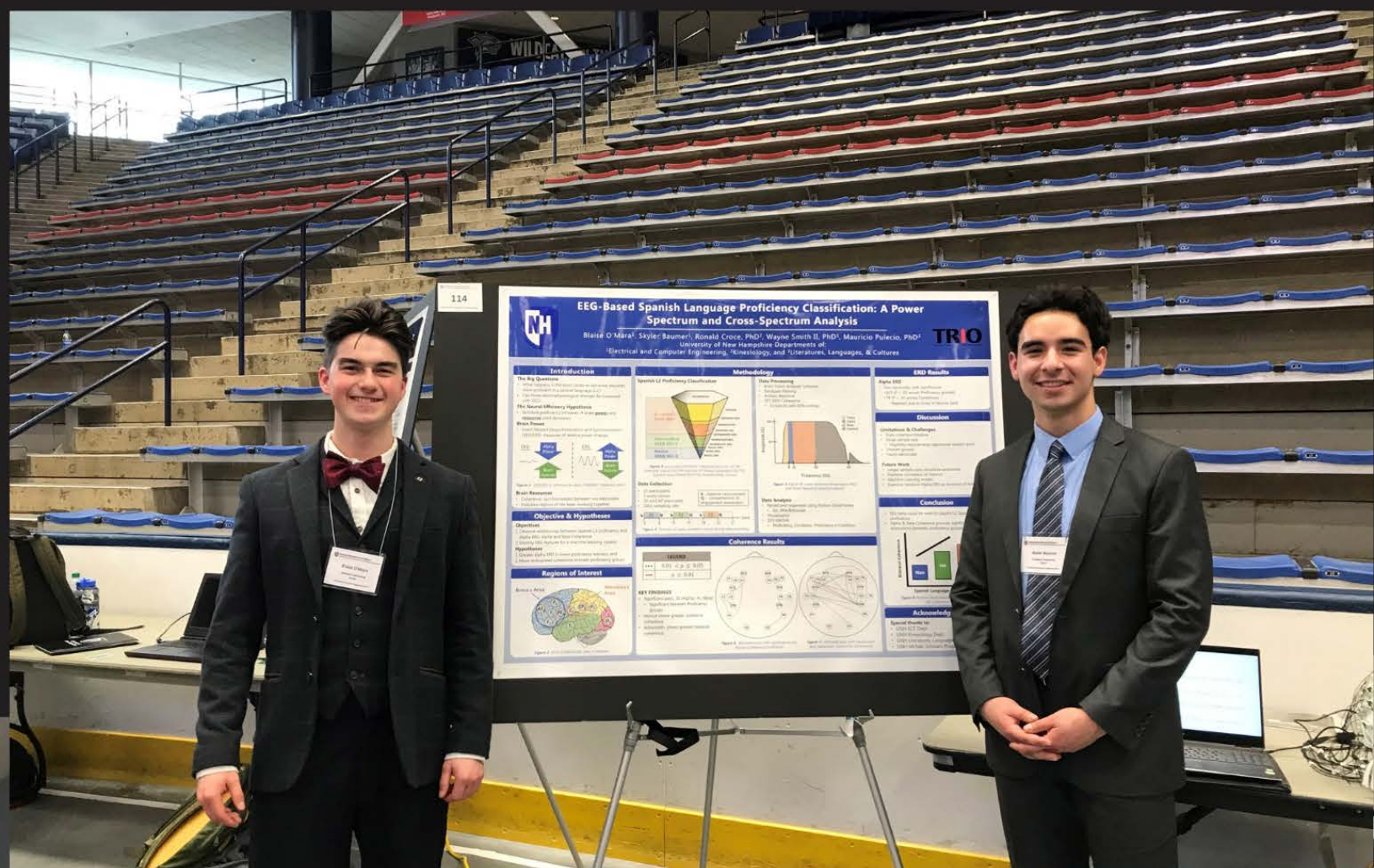
I am applying for social work jobs for the summer that I can continue into the fall when I'll begin the UNH Advanced Standing Master's of Social Work online program where I'll be a graduate assistant for Dr. Sherri Simmons-Horton, working on her research about dual status youth. I also plan on enjoying the summer with the amazing friends I've met at UNH.

# McNAIR SCHOLARS PRESENTED AT THE UNH UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE. APRIL 2023

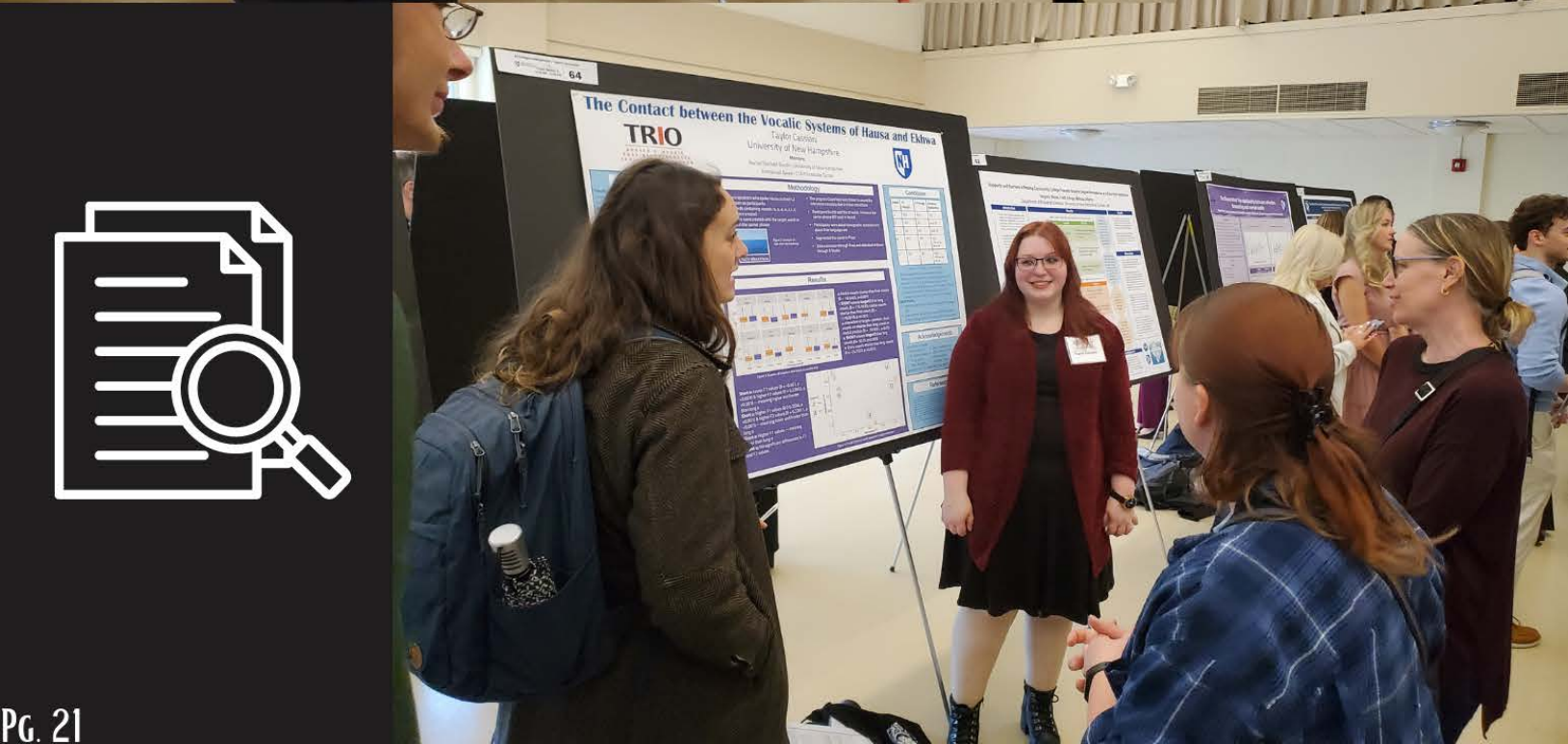


Top to bottom, left to right: Joslyn Villavicencio, Marcella Wondal, Patricia Louis, Sabrina Kadariya, Blaise O'Mara, Samantha DiNatale, Tu Anh Duong, Lydia Collins, and Taylor Cassiani

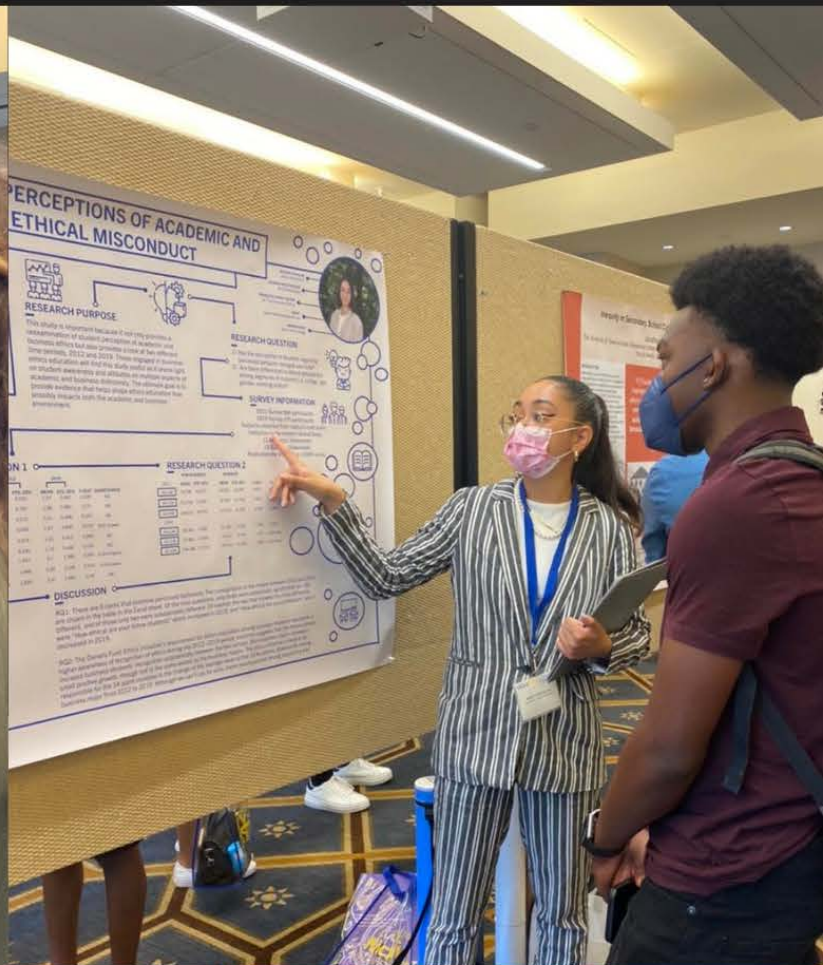
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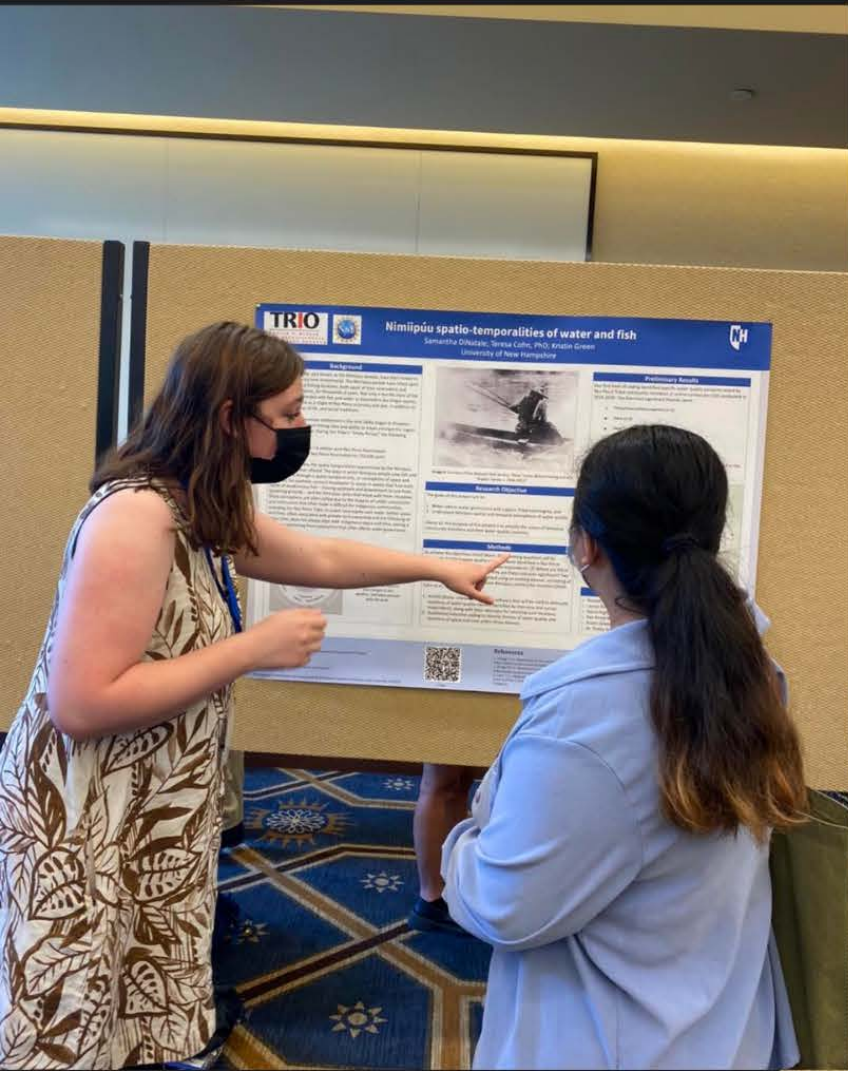
# McNAIR SCHOLARS PRESENTED AT THE UNH UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE, APRIL 2023



# THE 2022 SUMMER COHORT TRAVELED TO UCLA TO PRESENT AT THE MCNAIR SCHOLARS CONFERENCE. JULY 2022



# THE 2022 SUMMER COHORT TRAVELED TO UCLA TO PRESENT AT THE MCNAIR SCHOLARS CONFERENCE. JULY 2022



Top to bottom, left to right: Blaise O'Mara, Joslyn Villavicencio, Marcella Wondal, Chris Clark, Samantha DiNatale, and Taylor Cassiani



# McNAIR SCHOLARS VISIT CALIFORNIA



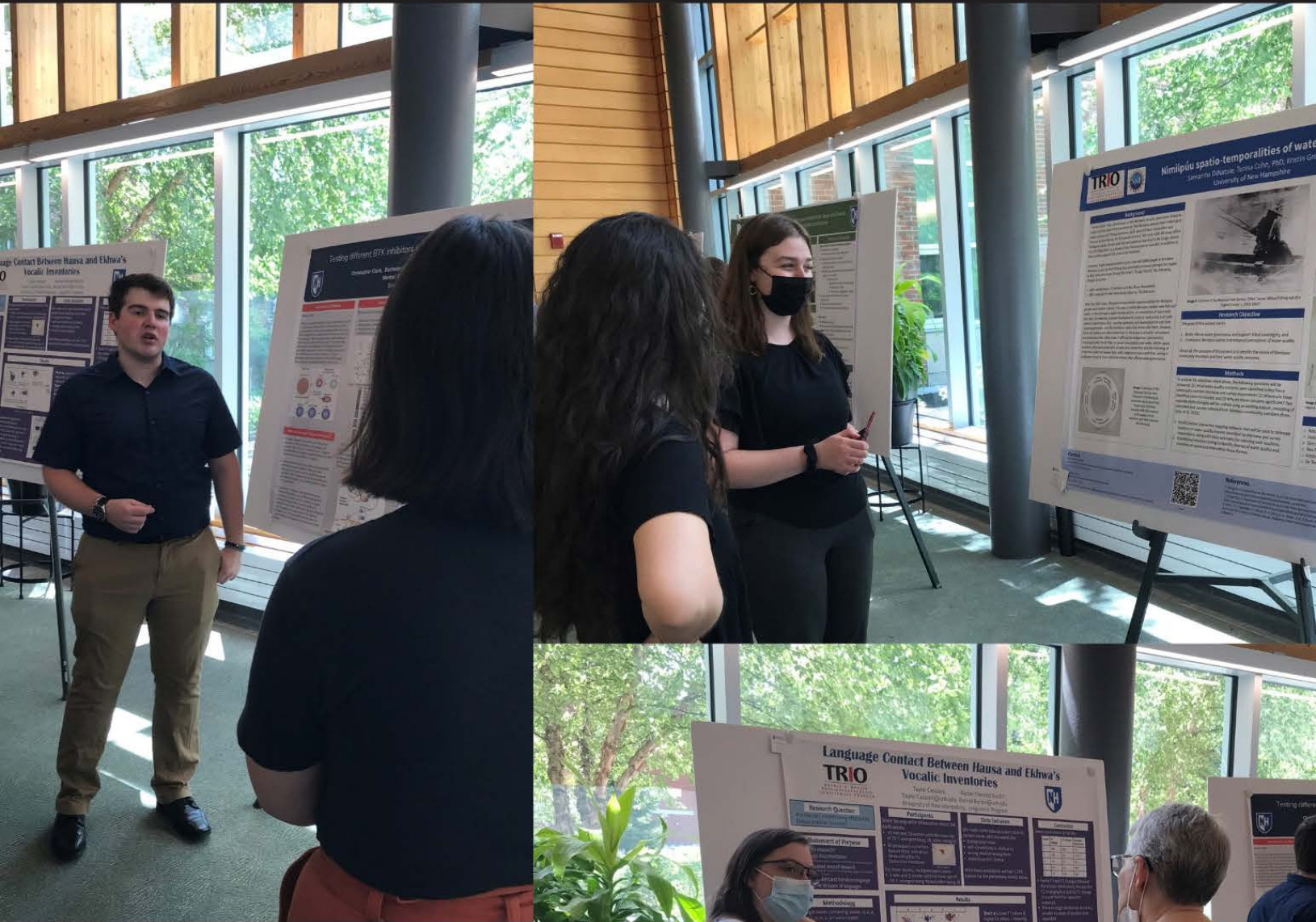
**Top:** Blaise & Chris at Cal Tech  
**Right:** Samantha, Marcella, and Taylor at the University of Southern California  
**Left:** 2022 Cohort enjoying a cultural night out at the Grammy Museum in LA



# SUMMER RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM AT UNH. JULY 2022



# SUMMER RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM AT UNH. JULY 2022



**Presenters from top to bottom, left to right:**

Lydia Collyns

Blaise O'Mara

Joslyn Villavicencio

Marcella Wondal

Chris Clark

Samantha DiNatale

Taylor Cassiani

# Social/Cultural Events

## 2022-2023



Black Heritage Trail, Portsmouth



PG. 27 Group photo at the Browne Center

Gunstock Mountain Ski Trip

# Social/Cultural Events

## 2022-2023



Vent Splatter Room, Portsmouth



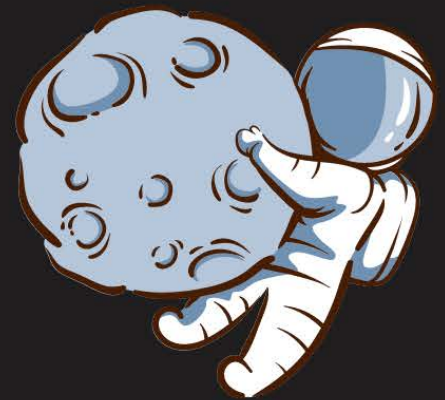
Team building at the Browne Center

# Social/Cultural Events

## 2022-2023



Art Around Town, Downtown Portsmouth



Gunstock Mountain Ski Trip

# Farewell to Selina!



Selina has been working at UNH since 2011 in various roles, and has poured herself into helping students and McNair scholars with their academic and career aspirations. She has also been very involved with DEI efforts across the university and has been an immense advocate for students of color and those from underrepresented backgrounds. She has been such a great friend and colleague to many during her time at UNH, as well as an amazing mentor to many current students and alumni. She consistently offers help to others while bringing a lighthearted and caring spirit to any space that she occupies (and tons of laughter!). After this, she will be moving on to spend more time with her daughters and serve in the community.

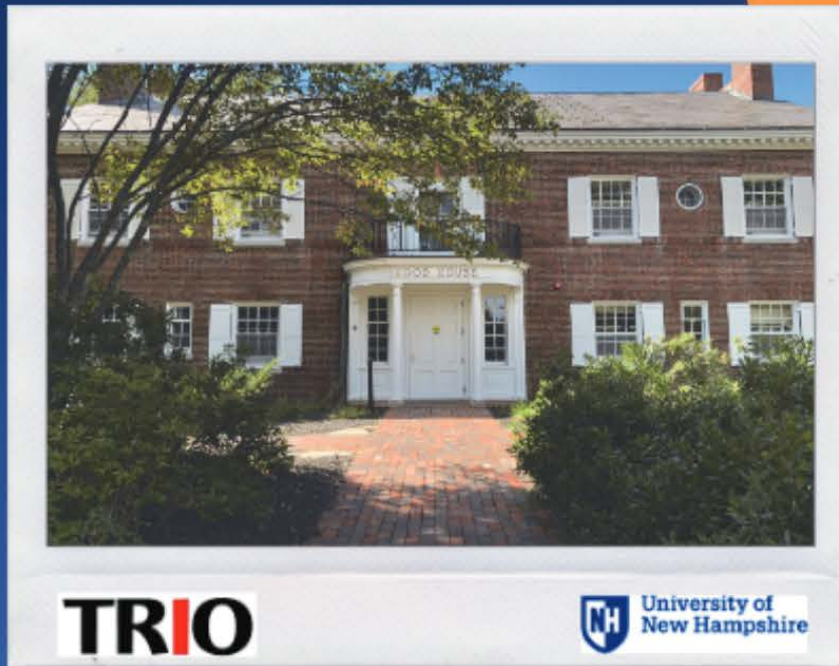
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