



**McCOLLOUGH  
INSTITUTE**  
*for PRE-MEDICAL SCHOLARS*

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA®**



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



**Dr. Ted Poston,**  
Director  
McCollough Institute for  
Pre-Medical Scholars  
The University of Alabama

This fall we welcomed our third class of McCollough Pre-Medical Scholars. Over the past two years the McCollough interdisciplinary pre-medical program has grown significantly. Our students are among the very best undergraduates, excelling in and out of the classroom. We are looking forward to a productive year. The McCollough Scholars will interact with leaders in the medical field from around the world. While the pandemic gave us plenty to be concerned with, it did open many doors for interacting with leaders around the world through our newfound comfort with video conferencing. Early this fall the McCollough Scholars were able to talk virtually with Dr. George Lundberg, former editor of JAMA. Later this semester, they will interact with Dr. Jeff Bishop, Tenet Endowed Chair in Bioethics at St. Louis University. We also look forward to the third year McCollough Scholars applying for medical schools at the end of this academic year. Roll Tide!

**Dr. Adrian Erasmus** is a philosopher of science specializing in philosophy of medicine. His research employs conceptual analysis, empirical findings, case studies, and the application of formal methods to help solve important problems in science and medicine. He grew up in South Africa, where he completed an undergraduate in psychology and a masters in philosophy at the University of Johannesburg. During this time, he developed a deep interest in issues facing scientific inference and evidence, clinical decision making, and medical prediction. His masters thesis focuses on the epistemology of scientific predictions and how the reliability of such predictions is assessed prior to knowing their outcomes. While completing his masters, he held teaching positions at the University of Johannesburg and the University of Pretoria, where he taught courses in philosophy of science and medicine to pre-medical scholars. He completed his PhD in History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Cambridge in 2021 under the supervision of Dr. Jacob Stegenga. In his dissertation, he examines several conceptual and methodological features of medical science that influence our ability to accurately predict the effectiveness of medical interventions.



**Adrian Erasmus**

Dr. Erasmus joined the University of Alabama in Fall 2021 as an assistant professor, where he teaches in the Philosophy & Medicine track in the Department of Philosophy. He is also an instructor for the Medical Foundations courses at the McCollough Institute for Pre-Medical Scholars. His current research explores the extended impacts of different biases in clinical research, the role of values in medical inference, and the intersection of epistemic and ethical concerns in medical artificial intelligence. He is also a senior research associate at the Institute for the Future of Knowledge at the University of Johannesburg, a cross-disciplinary research center devoted to what we know now and what we believe will happen in the future



**Dr. Holly Horan**

Dr. Holly Horan is a biocultural medical anthropologist and a birth and postpartum doula. She is bilingual in English and Spanish and identifies as both Puerto Rican and middle-American. Her educational career began at the University of Iowa, where she was trained in biological anthropology. During this time, she discovered her interests in health during pregnancy, birth outcomes, and the framework of developmental origins of health and disease. Dr. Horan went on to get a masters in anthropology at the University of Montana, Missoula where she learned about the public health and systems-level aspects of perinatal health and community-engaged work. Her masters thesis focused on colonization, environmental teratogen exposure and early pubertal development in young females in Puerto Rico. She was also a research assistant for the Montana Disability and Health Program (funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and a volunteer researcher for the Women's Voices for the Earth environmental non-profit in Missoula, Montana.

Dr. Horan decided to continue her educational pursuit after she met with Dr. Melissa Cheyney, a homebirth midwife and medical anthropologist at Oregon State University. She worked under Dr. Cheyney in the Reproductive Health Lab (now known as UPLIFT) during her PhD program in Applied Anthropology. During her doctoral program, Dr. Horan was trained as a birth and postpartum doula, serving over 30 families between 2012 and 2018. She also established community partnerships with midwives and physicians in Puerto Rico and with their support, went on to conduct National Science Foundation-funded dissertation research on maternal stress and timing of delivery. Dr. Horan ended her graduate career by serving as a program coordinator for a Medicaid-funded community doula program that provided culturally- and linguistically-matched doula support services to pregnant people in a three-county region in Oregon.

In the fall of 2019, Dr. Horan came to the University of Alabama as a tenure-track assistant professor where she continues to engage in basic science and community-based perinatal health research and service in Puerto Rico, Oregon, and Alabama. She is the lead qualitative researcher for the Community Doula Program in Oregon. In Alabama, Dr. Horan is the PI on two small scale projects, which include a community-engaged, maternal and infant health research needs assessment and the development of a data collection tool for community doulas. She is also the new president of the Board of Directors for the Birthwell Community Doula Program in Birmingham. Dr. Horan is committed to interdisciplinary collaboration and has close working relationships with researchers and faculty at the School of Social Work, the Alabama Life Research Institute, the University Medical Center, the Capstone College of Nursing, the College of Community Health Sciences, and the College of Human Environmental Sciences. In the Department of Anthropology, Dr. Horan is the co-owner of the Developmental Ecology Lab alongside Dr. Jason DeCaro and Dr. Courtney Helfrecht. Dr. Horan is currently a fellow at the Detroit Urban Institute's Community-Based Participatory Research Academy, UA's Emerging Community Engaged Scholars Program and is a faculty affiliate for the Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies program at UA.

Also in 2019, Dr. Horan was connected to the McCollough Institute for Pre-Medical Scholars. She shared her preliminary research and connected with students at the fall meet and greet that semester. Since this time, Dr. Horan has gone on to serve as a research mentor for 4 McCollough undergraduate students and has at least 2 more McCollough scholars who will be joining her robust research team in the spring of 2022. She is currently an instructor for the McCollough Foundations course (IDMD 101 and 102). Dr. Horan works with students from all disciplines, including anthropology, public health, Spanish, psychology, the natural sciences, and criminology. She believes in making research accessible to all students and is sincerely grateful for their energy and support.

## Emily Eichstaedt

My name is Emily Eichstaedt and I am a second year student in the McCollough Institute for Pre-Medical Scholars. This program has been one of the most influential parts of my undergraduate experience thus far.



One of my favorite parts of the program is the coursework. It has been challenging yet extremely enriching. In Medical Foundations I and II, Dr. Emerson pushed us to analyze the medical field from various different lenses and think critically about what we observed. This class provided us a space to discuss and debate our opinions on our various readings with our peers, which allowed us to consider others' perspectives and engage in respectful yet lively discourse. This class specifically allowed me to take control of my learning, discover new passions and solidified my desire to pursue a career in medicine.

The McCollough Institute of Pre-Medical Scholars has also given me a great community. I believe this is one of the many advantages of the program. I have loved having a community of scholars that is diverse in thought yet united in our love for medicine. It is so nice having familiar faces in classes and to have people to count on from the beginning of your undergraduate career. Additionally, I have greatly enjoyed how passionate and involved Dr. McCollough is about pre-medical education and value his guidance and advice as I continue my journey.

During my first year at the Capstone, I have been on the President's list for two consecutive semesters, was named a Marion Almon Scholar through my sorority, obtained Diversity, Equity and Inclusion certification through the SGA, been inducted into Phi Eta Sigma, Alpha Lambda Delta and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. This summer I worked as the head swim coach at my neighborhood pool and shadowed various physicians in my community. This upcoming semester I am very excited to be serving as an Honors College Ambassador, to be doing research in Dr. Ryan Earley's lab and to continue to serve on my sororities Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee. I am

very grateful that this wonderful program brought me to the amazing University of Alabama and has fostered my success. I am looking forward to my second year at the University of Alabama in the McCollough Institute and cannot wait to make the most of the opportunities this program offers!

## Miller McCarthy

My name is Miller McCarthy and I'm from Wetumpka, Alabama. I graduated from Alabama Christian Academy in Montgomery. I have two little brothers and a baby sister, and we're all adopted from



different places. I'm from South Korea, my older middle brother is from Guatemala, the other brother is from Texas, and baby sis is from right here in Alabama. My hobbies include weightlifting, playing sports, and playing video games, along with hanging out with friends. Along with playing football for 7 years, I was an All-State and All-Metro linebacker senior year, and won the Jimmy Hitchcock award for the greater Montgomery area.

I'm honored to have been selected as a participant in the McCollough program and I can't believe that I'm getting this opportunity that not everyone has access to. It's a humbling feeling and I couldn't be more grateful. I hope that being a part of this program will help catapult us all into a successful future. I'm very excited to move onto college and begin this next phase of life, and I'm also ready to meet everybody and get to know you all!



## Gianna Butler

Hi, my name is Gianna Butler, and I'm from Huntsville, Texas. I graduated from Richards High School as valedictorian of my class and was highly involved in the Mensa Honor Society. I have been a competitive dancer and a cheerleader, and love all things music. Some of my hobbies include baking, reading, watching Netflix, and traveling. I love the 90s, musical theatre, animals, and astronomy. I am also very involved in my church youth group and serve in the live stream production center on most Sundays.



I have always wanted to be a doctor. As a toddler I would carry around a doctor's kit in case someone needed help and I guess I never really outgrew my childhood dreams. Helping others is a big part of who I am and as soon as I found out about the McCollough program I knew that I wanted to be a part of it and it is one of the main reasons that I decided to attend The University of Alabama. I am excited about Convocation and getting to hear from professionals about their personal experience and the knowledge they gained from them. My future goals are to attend medical school and become a pediatric oncologist.

## Jonathan Folmar

I'm Jonathan Folmar. I am currently a sophomore at UA, and I am a member of the McCollough Pre-Medical Scholars Program. I have always known that I wanted to do something involving science and health, and when I was in high school, I had the opportunity to begin shadowing at my local hospital. This really opened my eyes to the beauty of medicine. Ultimately, I decided that my true passion was for mental health, so I am currently a psychology major with a minor in biology. When I did my campus tour at UA in the fall of my senior year, I heard about the McCollough Program, and it sounded like a wonderful opportunity. However, I truly did not know the impact it would have on my freshman year and my college experience thus far. When I joined the program, I was able to connect with all of the other members of my class. I did not realize at the time that these individuals would end up being some of my closest friends and my support system this past year. I think that the people that I was able to surround myself with is one of the most beneficial parts of being in the program.



Additionally, the resources that the program has provided me with has equipped me to be a successful student academically as well as professionally. As a freshman, we had to take two semesters of Interdisciplinary Medical Studies, and these classes focused on the importance of taking a holistic approach to health. Prior to taking these classes, I had a very misinformed, inaccurate view of what it truly means to be healthy. However, these classes really allowed me to broaden my view and understand the importance of holistic health. Another amazing aspect of the program is that we all lived in the same hall our freshman year. This allowed me to bond with my fellow McCollough-Scholars, and I was able to seek out help from other people in my classes and with anything honestly. I am extremely grateful that I have the opportunity to be a part of this program, and I hope in the future that this program continues to grow and positively impact others just like it has impacted me.