

BIOLOGY/ALLIED HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

By Michelle (Merisanu) Jones, 2003 BA Biology Graduate



Michelle Jones enjoys Blue Lake Trail, San Juan Mountains, Colorado, with her husband, Jimmy, and their daughter, Anabella.

I started as a pre-med student at Southern in 1999, certain of my path—that I would one day save countless lives by performing open-heart surgeries. But sometimes, God has something else in mind. In April of this year, I will celebrate 20 years of working in a field that prevents the need for most open-heart surgeries in the first place. My younger self would be...confused.

Back in the early 2000s, Hickman Science Center was my second home. During a class experiment in the genetics lab, I discovered my own blood type. In Professor David Ekkens' Animal Physiology class, I performed my first (and only) surgery: a tracheostomy on a fluffy white bunny. In the Issues in Natural Science and Religion class, I learned to be unafraid to ask big philosophical questions.

Ironically, the class that influenced my life the most didn't meet in the science building. At the time, Ministry of Healing was a small elective course that would not only give me credit in science, but also would count toward a minor in religion. In that class, I watched videos of medical doctors working to prevent heart disease and diabetes from causing irreparable damage to the body. That small seed of knowledge would ultimately change the outcome of my career.

In 2004 I started working at Lifestyle Center of America, a residential medical program funded by the Ardmore Institute of Health in Oklahoma. The years I spent working there colored my lens on medicine in a way that nothing

Alumni Spotlight, cont. on page 2

Lifelines



Michelle Jones and her daughter, Anabella, at Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory in Crested Butte, Colorado.

else could. Following lifestyle changes grouped with medical care, I saw brittle diabetics come off most of their medications and find confidence in eating again. I witnessed wheelchair-bound people literally walk out the door after 21 days. I saw sick patients not just get better, but also thrive. The program even helped me personally reverse my polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), and 20 years later, this symptom of metabolic syndrome is still gone. To say that I was sold on lifestyle medicine is an understatement.

I married my “Okie” husband, Jimmy, in 2006. He found my passion for health so infectious that he moved out into the boonies with me and started adopting my habits, as well. On weekends we would bike, hike, or run in the tiny national recreation area near where we lived. Not long after our daughter, Anabella, was born, we added camping to our list of favorite adventures. Our other favorite pastime? Finding and creating delicious, healthy meals.

The Lifestyle Center of America shut its doors in 2008. Although it was improving the lives of a few wealthy individuals, it wasn’t having the impact the Ardmore Institute of Health board members had dreamed it would. Full Plate Living (FPL) took its place as an online

lifestyle medicine curriculum that reaches tens of thousands of people worldwide. I’ve had the privilege of being part of the team that wrote and created all of its new programs, and in 2020, the board decided to fund FPL as a free service to the public. Our programs have been used by numerous universities, churches, hospitals, and employers to train students, patients, and employees on using lifestyle changes to improve their health.

I still get to see hope reign supreme when our members get physician approval to reduce their medication, when they’re no longer considered diabetic or pre-diabetic, when they can walk farther than they thought possible, and when all of their bloodwork comes back normal. I am immensely blessed to work for an organization that is a trailblazer in the field of lifestyle medicine—one that is working hard to create a future where lifestyle medicine becomes an equitable and preferred method to prevent, treat, and reverse chronic disease. Ardmore Institute of Health provided the early investments necessary to start the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) and also provided the seed money for the American Board of Lifestyle Medicine. In addition to facilitating lifestyle medicine initiatives for the American Academy

of Family Physicians and the American Medical Association, this team helped ACLM to develop continuing medical education worth 5.5 credit hours for the therapeutic use of lifestyle medicine, a free program that is part of the White House Initiative on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. For the last five years, Ardmore Institute of Health has been the largest outside funder of the Adventist Health Study.

These days, I work from home in Georgia, so I periodically visit Southern. When I was a student, I remember stepping on benefactor bricks on my way to class and thinking that I could never leave that kind of impact. But God knew exactly what He was doing. He already had a place where my talents, skills, and personality were very much needed. When I didn’t understand the “why” in my passion for saving lives through surgery, He did. And He paved the path for me to be a part of something so much bigger than I ever imagined. If you’ve eaten at The Garden or taken the Culinary Medicine Lab class, you’ve participated in a program funded by Ardmore Institute of Health. I still can’t comprehend that I get to be a part of a movement that touches so many lives. But God knew. It all started at Southern.

DEPARTMENT HAPPENINGS

By Tim Trott, PhD

Among several exciting recent changes in our cadaver lab are the shiny, new stainless-steel dissecting tables and the sink with a shower faucet, which have replaced some outdated equipment. Also, we increased our usable floor space by removing some old cabinetry. The walls have been freshly painted, and new LED ceiling panels now provide bright and even lighting. In addition, we added an AV system to the space, including an 80-inch screen that handles projection from a portable wireless camera. This system allows professors to teach smaller anatomical structures live from the cadavers to the whole class. We are truly grateful for these significant upgrades.

During his well-deserved sabbatical this semester, Professor Keith Snyder is continuing work with Arthur Chadwick, PhD, of Southwestern Adventist University. They are generating the last of the data needed to start writing a paper on *Pectinodon* teeth. This summer, they will collect the final stratigraphy data needed to finish the Strandline paper. Professor Snyder will also photograph about 2,000 microfossils for publication with a third paper. While Snyder is taking his sabbatical, Professor Tim Trott has been serving as interim department chair.

Our faculty have been working hard with many of our students on a variety of



Use the QR code above to check out the podcast featuring Professor Aaron Corbit.

academic projects. Professor David Nelson's lab has produced new research that has been conditionally accepted for publication in *Citizen Science: Theory and Practice*. He is also giving a talk to the Chattanooga Area Pest Control Association for their annual meetings. On the podcast "Let's Talk Creation," Professor Aaron Corbit recently spoke about rattlesnakes, venom, snakebites, and how we might explain the origin of venomous creatures from a Biblical perspective.

In March, eight students attended the annual meeting of the Association of Southeastern Biologists in Chattanooga

with Professors Nelson, Thornton, and Trott, plus one department alumnus. Southern presented three oral presentations of original research conducted within the Biology Department.

After 28 years of service, Professor Ann Foster is retiring from the department. She has richly blessed our program and students for almost three decades and will be greatly missed. Her expertise and leadership in microbiology has enriched our campus community in many ways. We pray for God's richest blessing for her as she explores new "free" time.



Pectinodon tooth



Eight students attended the annual meeting of the Association of Southeastern Biologists, held this spring in Chattanooga.

REFLECTIONS ON ANN FOSTER

By Noemi Gonzalez, MS, and Josue Vega

After 28 years of teaching in the Biology/Allied Health Department at Southern Adventist University, Professor Ann Foster will be retiring at the end of the Winter 2024 semester.

Foster developed her love for nature and biology early in life. She recalls: “My dad brought a microscope home when I was a kid. We got to look at pond water. Also, Dad liked being out on the coast, so we went down to the Florida Keys and the Bahamas.”

Her fascination for biology was so strong that after she had finished her degree in biology from Southern, Foster proceeded to get her doctorate in microbiology at the University of North Texas in Denton, completing her post-doctoral work in the semiconductor industry with the chair of the chemistry department at North Texas. She later shifted into the electron microscopy field before transitioning into teaching at a community college in North Carolina, where she had to step down from her position due to her commitment to keeping the Sabbath. Finally, in June of 1996, she joined

the biology faculty at Southern Adventist University.

In her years on this campus, Professor Foster has taught Basic Microbiology, General Microbiology, Anatomy and Physiology I and II, and Parasitology, among others. She also worked with Southern Scholars on research topics in microbiology and fungi.

When students are asked what they enjoy most about Professor Foster’s teaching style, most mention her knack for using storytelling to explain difficult concepts and make microbiology come to life. Many of her peers consider her a strong mentor and friend.

As she looks to the future, Foster plans to spend her retirement doing two of her favorite things: gardening and hiking. She hopes that the legacy she leaves behind is one of preparedness. “I hope that my students have that foundation—whether they’re in nursing, allied health, or medical school—to do well in their next step,” she says. “To my students, keep a close connection with God. Introduce God into all aspects of your life. Understand that you are unique and



Professor Ann Foster has served 28 years at Southern.

important, and that you CAN do that path that is chosen for you.”

Thank you, Professor Foster, for dedicating many years of your life to serving Southern’s Biology/Allied Health Department. Your legacy is an integral part of what makes us strong and unique.

SOUTHERN BIOLOGY AROUND THE WORLD

By Ben Thornton, PhD

Thank you so much to all who have requested Southern Biology flags! We are nearing 100 uploads on Southern Biology Around the World. Our newest contributor was Johnathan Borne, one of our highly esteemed biology educators, making a difference each day with his students at Midland Adventist Academy in Kansas.

How can you be a part of Southern Biology Around the World?

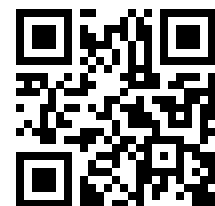
We would be very pleased if you

would partner with us in spreading Southern Biology. Simply contact us, and we will send you a Southern Biology flag to take with you on your next adventure, even if that adventure is just around the corner from where you live. Take a photo of yourself with the Southern Biology flag and send it to us with the date and location. We will post your adventure as we track where the Southern Biology flags are traveling.

You may use the URL or QR code

below to submit your photos to Southern Biology Around the World.

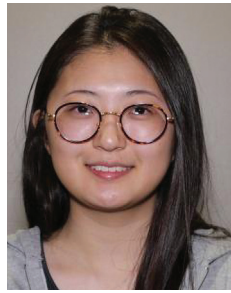
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Biology Graduates 2023-2024



Chaeun An
BS Biomedical



Sarah An
BS Biomedical



Sammie Armstrong
BS Biomedical



Natalie Berger
BS Biomedical



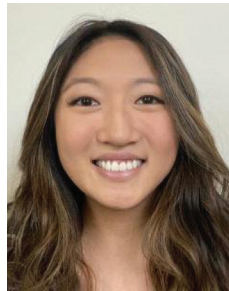
Dylan Blake
BS Biomedical



Sarah Borovic
BS Biomedical



Madison Chant
BS Psychology/AS Biology



Audrey Cho
BS Biomedical



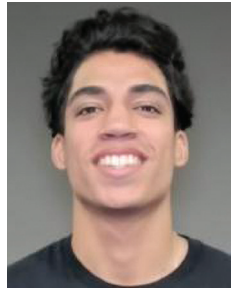
Joshua Cho
BS Biomedical



Woobin Cho
BS Biomedical



Connor Church
BS Biomedical



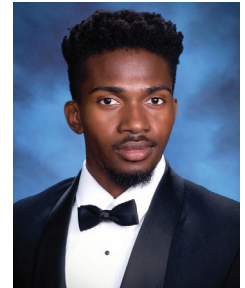
Jorge Cordero-Jimenez
BS Biomedical



Sophia Couto
BA Biology



Andrew Estrada
BS Biomedical



Michael Francis
BS Biomedical



Samantha Fwa
BS Biomedical



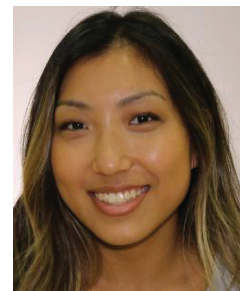
Isaac Hanson
BA Biology



Alexis Im
BS Research



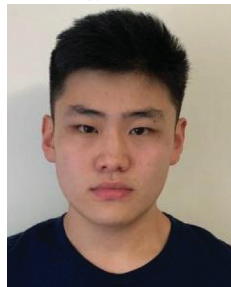
Lindsey Imuro
BS Biomedical



Yuna Joe
BS Biomedical



Jackson Kim
BA Biology



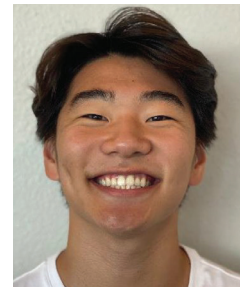
Justin Kim
BS Biomedical



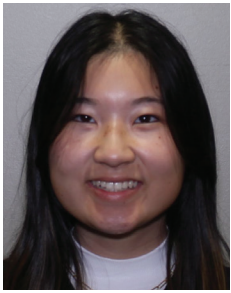
Marcus Kim
BS Biomedical



Olivia Kim
BS Biomedical



Randy Kim
BA Biology



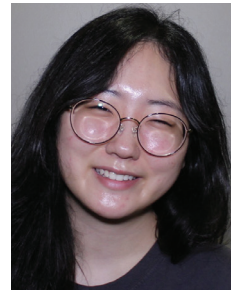
Katie Ko
BS Biomedical



Rachel Kowski
BS Research



David Lazcano
BS Biomedical



Jisoo Lee
BA Biology



Atzy Lopez-Avila
BS Biomedical



Natalie Luttrell
BS Biomedical



Mia Mandujano
BS Biomedical



Jonela McLean
BA Biology



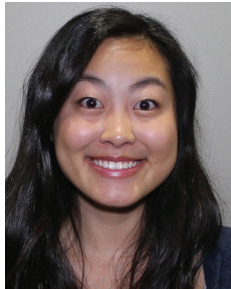
Serafina Park
BS Biomedical



Braden Peeke
BS Biomedical



Gabrielle Razzouk
BS Biomedical



Madeleine Ro
BS Biomedical



Austin Rotinsulu
BS Biomedical



Kristen Shields
BS Biomedical



Maxwell Shull
BS Biomedical



Heidi Supit
AS Biology



Colton Taylor
BS Biomedical



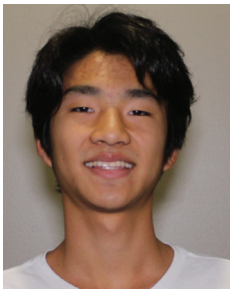
Emilie Updegrave
BA Psychology/AS Biology



Dylan Waters
BA Biology



Kris Yon
BS Biomedical



Russell Yoon
BA Biology



Jordan Zinke
BS Biomedical
BS Music

Allied Health Graduates 2023-2024



Lilyann Adams
AS Physical Therapy



Jaycee Alves
AS Physical Therapy



Arron Anugerah
BS Medical Lab Science



Joseph Bonilla
BS Medical Lab Science



Taylor Brossfield
BS Health Science
AS Physical Therapy



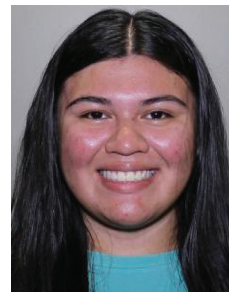
Loanette Chavez
BS Medical Lab Science



Kezia DeSpirito
AS Dental Hygiene



Paityn Foszcz
BS Health Science
AS Physical Therapy



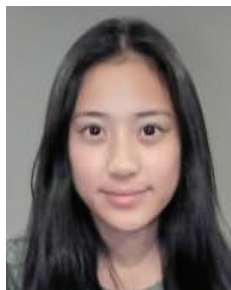
Helen Gordon
AS Dental Hygiene



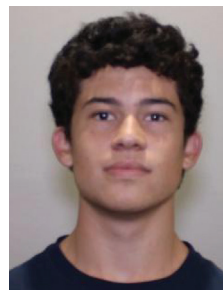
Melanie Hanson
AS Dental Hygiene



Ethan Hasibuan
BS Medical Lab Science



Luchae Jang
AS Dental Hygiene



Kobe Martinez
AS Physical Therapy



Erin Moore
BS Health Science
AS Physical Therapy



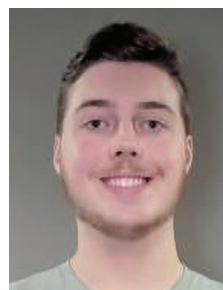
Cindy Mugiraneza
BS Medical Lab Science



Htet Myint
BS Medical Lab Science



Michael Scribner
BS Health Science
AS Nutrition & Dietetics



Kent Suddarth
AS Physical Therapy



Satoshi Yamashita
BS Medical Lab Science



Kamea Zarate
BS Psychology
AS Speech Pathology

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Randy Bishop, MSPT
Aaron Corbit, PhD
Paulo Dias, MD
Ann Foster, PhD
Noemi Gonzalez, MS, MT (ASCP)
David Nelsen, PhD
Keith Snyder, PhD
Abhishek Thavamani, PhD
Ben Thornton, PhD
Tim Trott, PhD

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Congratulations

2023-2024 Department Award Recipients

ALLIED HEALTH FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR
Oren Lowrie (Martell)

BIOLOGY NATURALIST OF THE YEAR
Kirstin Shields

RESEARCH ASSISTANT OF THE YEAR
Luke Singletary

ALLIED HEALTH SENIOR OF THE YEAR
Michael Scribner

BS BIOMEDICAL SENIOR OF THE YEAR
Gabrielle Razzouk

SERVICE OF THE YEAR
Elizabeth Baldwin

BA BIOLOGY SENIOR OF THE YEAR
Max Moon

GB STUDENT OF THE YEAR
Trevor Cain

SERVICE OF THE YEAR
Marissa Garlock

BIOLOGY LEADERSHIP OF THE YEAR
Max Shull

INTEGRATION OF FAITH OF THE YEAR
Jonela McLean

TEACHING ASSISTANT OF THE YEAR
Dalton Daniel Baldwin

BIOLOGY NATURALIST OF THE YEAR
Isaac Hanson

MLS SENIOR OF THE YEAR
Loanette Chavez