

2025-2026 OSRC Research/Creativity Assistant Scholarship Winners



Abdoulaye Sedogo is a computer science and information security student at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, with hands-on experience in software engineering, cybersecurity, and blockchain research. He has worked as a Software Engineering Intern and as a Tech Fellow in cybersecurity at CodePath.org, where he mentored students on cyber threats and defense strategies. Abdoulaye is passionate about building secure, scalable systems and exploring the intersection of artificial intelligence and cybersecurity.

This second year in the OSRC program, Abdoulaye's research focuses on the role of artificial intelligence in enhancing cyber threat detection. His project explores how AI-driven models can identify anomalies, detect malicious activity in real time, and improve the accuracy of traditional security tools. By examining both the potential and challenges of AI in cybersecurity, this research aims to highlight innovative ways AI can strengthen defenses against evolving digital threats.



Ali Hassan is a sophomore at John Jay College, majoring in law and society. Interested in both business and law, Ali is working toward a future career as a corporate lawyer. In his free time, he enjoys playing sports and spending time with friends and family. This is Ali's first year in the OSRC program and his first experience participating in a mentored research project.

Under the mentorship of Dr. Ray Rosas, Ali's research project re-examines the term "Desi" and its suitability for describing South Asians and their diaspora. Although commonly used, the broadness of the term often overlooks the diverse cultures, religions, and histories within South Asia. Inspired by his English 101 class, where he studied the term Latinx and its impact on inclusivity and identity, Ali is expanding on this interest by analyzing media discourse and conducting qualitative interviews. His research contributes to larger conversations about cultural representation while strengthening his skills in preparation for law school.



Alia Burke is currently a junior at John Jay College, pursuing a bachelor's degree in sociology with a minor in economics. While she is still considering her exact career path, she plans to pursue a doctorate in sociology and work in sociological research. Currently, Alia's particular interests lie in gaining a better understanding of how consumer behavior might unintentionally contribute to unethical labor practices. She is curious to explore the deeper social and psychological forces that drive overconsumption and sustain a destructive global cycle of supply and demand.

Her current project explores the harmful effects of overconsumption on both American consumers and workers in the Dominican Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and China. By examining the relationship between certain demographic groups in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens and their purchasing habits—particularly regarding technology products like Apple phones—she aims to highlight how outsourcing and global labor practices contribute to exploitative conditions abroad. Many of these countries are known for human rights violations, especially in the mining of "conflict minerals" such as gold, tin, tungsten, and tantalum, which are often tied to dangerous labor conditions and the funding of armed groups.



Annie Xiang Li is an international student and sophomore in the Macaulay Honors College at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. She is pursuing a dual bachelor's/master's program in forensic science with a minor in fraud examination. She has been an active volunteer for the International Rescue Committee and a math and science tutor for incarcerated youth through the Petey Greene Program.

Under the mentorship of Dr. Rebecca Weiss, she is investigating the use of artificial intelligence to enhance culturally sensitive mental health assessments for Chinese-speaking populations. Her research compares the performance of ChatGPT-4 and DeepSeekAI in translating the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) into Chinese while maintaining linguistic and cultural accuracy. By evaluating the translations produced by different AI models against established human-translated versions of the Chinese BDI, her study aims to identify the method that produces the most psychometrically valid and culturally informed assessment.



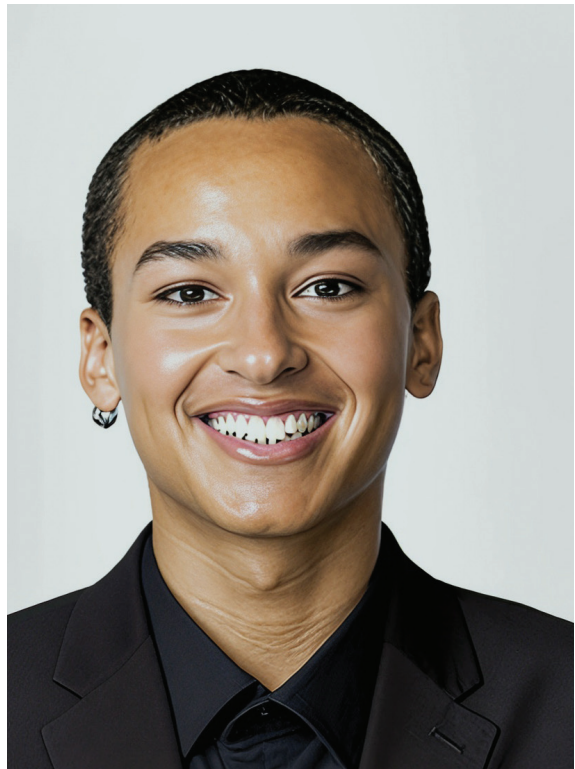
Boris Krakovskiy is currently a junior at John Jay College, majoring in toxicology. He is passionate about chemistry and biology and plans to attend graduate school after completing his undergraduate studies, with the goal of becoming a physician-scientist in a related field—most likely toxicology. During his freshman year, Boris presented a project at the 16th Annual First Year Student Showcase addressing the public health issue of counterfeit THC oil cartridge usage.

This is his second year conducting research within the OSRC program. Under the mentorship of Dr. Shu-Yuan Cheng, Boris's first-year research demonstrated that ellagic acid—a polyphenol antioxidant found in various fruits and nuts—attenuates the toxicity of mancozeb, a commonly used agricultural fungicide, in PC12 neuron cells. This year, he is investigating the mechanism behind this protective effect, focusing on cellular signaling pathways through Western blot analysis. A major emphasis of the experiment is the role of Nrf2, a transcription factor that regulates the expression of proteins with antioxidant functions. Boris hypothesizes that ellagic acid upregulates the Nrf2 pathway, which in turn reduces oxidative damage in PC12 cells exposed to mancozeb.



Christopher Rodriguez is a senior at John Jay College, majoring in emergency services administration with a concentration in emergency management and a minor in security management. Christopher became particularly interested in comparing public safety policies and codes following a recent class he took. He believes that understanding public safety issues everywhere is essential to forming stronger, tighter, more unified, and stable communities.

Christopher is currently researching the Jet Set Night Club ceiling collapse that occurred on April 8, 2025, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic—a tragic event that claimed hundreds of lives, including the governor of Monte Cristi. His research aims to uncover the root causes of the collapse, which he attributes to negligence and recklessness on the part of the nightclub's owners. Additionally, Christopher is evaluating the disaster response efforts by Dominican government agencies, assessing their effectiveness in both response and recovery, and exploring areas for improvement. Through this work, he hopes to deepen public understanding of the tragedy and inspire greater attention to safety and accountability in such critical situations.



Cordale Jimmison is a junior in the Macaulay Honors College at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, studying forensic psychology (BA) and cellular and molecular biology (BS). He is passionate about the intersection of mental health outcomes and carceral environments. Currently, he is an aspiring physician-scientist focusing on health equity within the criminal justice field.

As a past poster presenter at the American Psychology-Law Society and American Psychological Association conferences in San Juan, Puerto Rico; and Denver, Colorado, Cordale looks forward to expanding his research with Dr. Weiss in the OSRC scholarship program. Under the guidance of Dr. Rebecca Weiss, their project explores alternative scoring strategies for the Dot Counting Test, a performance validity measure that detects suspect effort, similar to the Test of Memory Malingering (TOMM). Using archival data, they will assess how effectively these strategies identify exaggerated cognitive difficulties.



Danielle Key is a senior at John Jay College, double majoring in criminology and sociology, with minors in community justice, psychology, gender studies, economics, and corrections, plus a certificate in dispute resolution. A researcher, writer, and Black feminist abolitionist, her work focuses on the intersections of race, gender, mental health, and the prison-industrial complex. Drawing from critical criminology, Africana studies, and critical psychology, Danielle centers the voices and lived experiences of marginalized communities—especially women of color—with a commitment to dismantling oppressive systems and building liberatory futures.

Her research examines whether exposure to content about women of color's experiences with the prison-industrial complex encourages abolitionist rather than reformist beliefs. Grounded in Black feminist thought, the study highlights how intersectionality reveals the systemic harms within the criminal legal system. By centering marginalized voices, the project challenges reformist narratives that frame injustice as accidental, aiming instead to expose structural roots of harm and shift perspectives toward abolition and transformative justice.



Elizabeth Ayedun is a sophomore majoring in law and society. An immigrant from Nigeria, she came to the United States with her brother in 2021. Elizabeth enjoys the vibrant student club environment at John Jay and is a member of the Intervarsity Christian Student Association. She likes listening to music and has been playing the saxophone for four years. After graduating from John Jay, Elizabeth looks forward to attending law school.

With mentorship from Professor Ray Rosas, Elizabeth plans to explore immigration and deportation. She chose this topic because it affects many CUNY students, including herself, who came to the United States seeking better opportunities. Her research focuses on recent policy changes under the current administration and their legal ramifications. To that end, she will examine several past and recent court cases to assess the detrimental outcomes for immigrant populations over time. Elizabeth is excited to work with her mentor, the OSRC team, and her peers.



Elli McCarthy is a second-year graduate student in the forensic psychology master's program at John Jay College. She completed her undergraduate studies at Florida Southern College, where she majored in criminology, minored in psychology and Spanish, and completed a concentration in British studies. During her first two semesters at John Jay, she earned an advanced certificate in victimology studies, renewed her CITI training certification for IRB approval, and joined the Forensic Assessment Research Lab under the mentorship of Dr. Rebecca Weiss. She also recently declared a dual track in her program, allowing her to pursue both a thesis and an externship. Elli is excited to be part of the OSRC team and looks forward to becoming more involved in research.

Under Dr. Weiss's mentorship, Elli is working on a thesis that examines the efficacy of alternative and abbreviated scoring strategies for the Test of Memory and Malingering (TOMM) and the Dot Counting Test (DCT) across three archival, de-identified samples. Specifically, her project compares shortened methods, including the TOMMe10, DCT-4, and DCT-10, to full-scale performance validity tests. In light of increasing pressure to streamline assessments, her research aims to evaluate whether abbreviated scoring systems can maintain accuracy and validity across both clinical and forensic samples.



Erin Watkins is a senior at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, majoring in forensic psychology with a minor in counseling. She is passionate about understanding the grooming behaviors of perpetrators of child sexual abuse, with a strong focus on how psychological research can inform prevention efforts and support survivors. At John Jay, Erin serves as a Lead Peer Success Coach, where she mentors first-year and transfer students, develops engaging academic workshops, and fosters student success through community-building and resource navigation. She has also contributed to faculty partnership initiatives and leadership development.

As a second-year OSRC scholar and under the continued mentorship of Dr. Elizabeth Jeglic, she is conducting research on unmasking grooming behaviors in cases of child sexual abuse, examining both male and female perpetrators. Erin's academic and research interests focus on memory, trauma, and abuse—particularly the impact of grooming behaviors and trauma on survivors. Her work aims to advance awareness, prevention, and trauma-informed support strategies in forensic and clinical contexts.



Genesis Diaz is a sophomore majoring in forensic science at John Jay College. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, visiting museums, shopping, trying new foods, taking walks in parks and around the city. Genesis is eager to gain experience in her field and is open to opportunities such as participating in programs like PRISM and OSRC, which she believes will help her grow both academically and professionally. She is particularly interested in hands-on work and exploring how scientists use different types of evidence, such as DNA and various forensic methods and tools, to solve crimes. In the future, Genesis hopes to work in a crime lab setting, contributing to research and the criminal justice system.

With mentorship from Professor Alexandra Nicolaides, Genesis is researching the application of forensic science in authenticating paintings. What began as a research assignment for an art class sparked her interest in how art and forensic science intersect to reveal more about artworks—such as the materials used or whether a painting is an original. As advances in technology make art replication easier, it becomes increasingly difficult to determine authenticity. Her research focuses on scientific methods and tools used in conservation labs to analyze paintings, highlighting parallels between authenticating art and establishing truth in criminal cases.



Julia Hurnyovitch is a sophomore in the Macaulay Honors College at John Jay College, double majoring in forensic psychology and deviance, crime, and culture. With a deep passion for forensic child counseling, she hopes that through her time at OSRC, she can develop research that will expand the understanding of how children and the approaches taken in their counseling are perceived, as well as the steps that can be taken to build upon that understanding.

Working alongside Dr. Deryn Strange as her mentor, her first year at OSRC will involve launching a project focused on suggestibility in child therapy practices. Specifically, she will evaluate the extent to which mock jurors can recognize child therapy practices as suggestive, with the goal of determining whether the intervention of a professional is necessary in court to educate jurors about this issue. By doing so, this research aims to add to the existing body of knowledge surrounding this area of the criminal justice system, ultimately helping to make jurors more adequately informed in relevant legal settings. Julia is beyond excited and incredibly eager to discover where her research through OSRC will take her.



Md Shafiqul Baten Sumon is an undergraduate student at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, majoring in computer science and information security. He previously earned an associate's degree in cybersecurity and networking from Bronx Community College, which provided him with a strong foundation in technology and security. Driven by a passion for problem solving and a deep curiosity about using technology to protect individuals and communities, Md Shafiqul aims to grow as a researcher in cybersecurity and artificial intelligence and to pursue a career focused on real-world solutions.

His research addresses the growing challenge of deepfakes and misinformation. Under the mentorship of Professor Fatma Najar, he investigates how to detect manipulated content by analyzing facial, vocal, and textual modalities. This project is meant to be an enriching learning experience, highlighting the importance of understanding the social impact of misinformation alongside technical skills. Although the research can be challenging at times, the guidance from his mentor and the support of the OSRC community have been and will continue to be invaluable.



Mya Lewis is a senior at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, majoring in philosophy with a minor in fraud examination, and expects to graduate in May 2026. With law enforcement and legal support experience in both New Zealand and New York, she is deeply committed to public service and social justice. Her academic focus lies at the intersection of law, education, and social equity, particularly how institutional policies impact marginalized communities. She plans to attend law school to continue advocating for transparency, accountability, and the protection of vulnerable populations.

As a second-year OSRC scholar, Mya's research explores the impact of educational censorship—specifically book bans and restrictions on minority-related content—on youth perceptions of marginalized groups. By comparing communities with varying levels of censorship, she examines how limitations on content shape young people's attitudes and contributes to broader conversations about fostering inclusive, equitable learning environments that strengthen democratic values.



Prabhjot Kaur is a sophomore at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, majoring in political science and minoring in criminology, focusing on ensuring that justice is meaningful and attainable for all, while protecting individual rights and addressing systemic inequities. Prabhjot aims to pursue a legal career, possibly in the field of immigration or criminal defense law within the United States.

Under the mentorship of Professor Vicky Tello, Prabhjot will research sound pollution and its effects on both people and non-human animals in New York City. Through this work, she aims to highlight the urgent need for policies and technological advancements to reduce environmental noise pollution and protect the well-being of all organisms in New York City.



Sophia Nobile is a Macaulay Honors College student at John Jay College, pursuing dual degrees in security management and police studies. Driven by a desire to grow, she embraces challenges and values learning. Under the mentorship of Dr. Robert McCrie, Sophia researches employment readiness and recidivism, focusing on how access to resources impacts individuals reentering society after incarceration. Her belief in justice reform beyond punishment and commitment to second chances guides her efforts to build safer, stronger communities.

Sophia will examine how employment preparation affects recidivism among individuals incarcerated for burglary in New York State. Using a survey developed by Dr. McCrie and Dr. Seungmug Lee (Texas A&M), she will collect and analyze data from correctional facilities to better understand incarcerated individuals' perspectives on job prospects post-release. For Sophia, this project reflects a long-standing interest in reentry and rehabilitation, and she hopes it contributes to more humane, effective support systems that help break the cycle of incarceration.