



CASEY MESKOVICH
President

Casey is majoring in chemical and biomolecular engineering, and is on the biomolecular engineering track. She founded DHD as a way to share her passion for science. Outside of DHD, Casey works in the Sirk Lab, conducting research on the gut microbiome. After graduation she hopes to attend medical school.



CAROLINA ORSO TONDO
Vice President

Carolina is a junior majoring in molecular and cellular biology. She is currently working at Nanjappa Lab exploring fungal infections in immunocompromised subjects and hopes to continue conducting research after graduation. She also enjoys crocheting and traveling.



MAYA KAFALI
Design Team Lead

As a molecular and cellular biology major on the pre-medical track, Maya has always had a passion dedicated to the concepts of human and cellular functions. For this reason, she has dedicated her studies towards learning the hows and whys in these every-growing concepts, which brought her to Double Helix Digest. Combined with her additional passion in graphic design, she has found a community that pleasantly focuses on all things science, which eventually led her to the design team lead role. In this position, Maya has been able to combine the arts and sciences into leading a group of people with the same passions and talents. She hopes to carry these passions with me past college and to continue these efforts in future publications for DHD.



ANDREW HAMILTON
Editor-In-Chief & General Editor

Andrew is a junior with a major in neuroscience and minors in Spanish and chemistry. One thing he enjoys about editing is that he gets to read so many interesting articles about science-related discoveries every day! Outside of the club, he pursues research regarding optimization with on-tissue chemical derivatization.



ALEXANDER WRIGHT
Treasurer

Alex is majoring in molecular and cellular biology and has a minor in chemistry. He works as an EMT on campus and is on the pre med track with hopes of going to medical school after graduation. He also is on the executive board for two other RSOs and enjoys being a part of those groups. Outside of class he enjoys movies and snowboarding.



BELEN RUBIO
Event Coordinator

Belen is a sophomore majoring in integrative biology with a minor in chemistry. She joined DHD to explore a wider range of research fields and to refine her skills in scientific writing. Beyond her involvement in DHD, Belen is an active member of Beta Psi Omega where she serves on different committees and mentors incoming new members. In the future, Belen hopes to become a physician assistant and remain engaged with emerging research throughout her career.



SOFIA ROSSETTI
Membership Director & Writer

Sofia is a senior double-majoring in molecular and cellular biology and psychology. She is a research assistant in the SCOPE Neuroscience lab investigating both the cognitive and emotional aspects of the brain. She is a pre-med and she will be going to Italy to start her medical journey. In her free time she loves playing tennis, reading and traveling.



MEGAN O'SULLIVAN
Assistant Editor-In-Chief & General Editor

Megan just finished her sophomore year majoring in the integrative biology honors program and minoring in both Chemistry and Statistics. She chose to work as an assistant editor-in-chief because of her extensive background in writing, and her favorite part of the position is having a hand in shaping so many interesting articles to help each author's voice come through their work. As an editor, she strives to bring clarity to articles to help make science more accessible to the public, increasing both interest and understanding in the processes that can shape our everyday lives. Outside of the DHD, Megan also is interested in exploring the connections between ecology and environmental health.



ANANYA SAMPATHKUMAR

Assistant Editor-In-Chief & General Editor

Ananya is a sophomore, majoring in neuroscience with minors in chemistry and public health. With a background in writing and a passion for science, Ananya enjoys editing and serving as Assistant Editor-in-Chief, where she explores diverse topics and helps communicate complex ideas clearly and concisely. Outside of Double Helix Digest, Ananya is a writer for Brain Matters, a member of Star Course, a volunteer at Carle Hospital, and works at the Office of Undergraduate Admissions as a tour guide. In her free time, Ananya likes to read books, make jewelry, watch movies, and hang out with her friends.



SHARON IGNATIUS NEWTON

Assistant Editor-In-Chief & General Editor

Sharon is a junior studying bioengineering with a minor in computer science. She joined Double Helix Digest as both an editor and an assistant editor-in-chief to strengthen her scientific communication skills, gain deeper experience in the editing process, and help writers translate their research into clear, engaging writing. Sharon particularly enjoys providing one-on-one feedback to refine technical writing and make complex topics accessible. Outside of DHD, she conducts research in Dr. Sirk's lab and works as a lab assistant for a Bioengineering course. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a PhD in bioengineering and become a research professor.



KAMARI HOWARD

General Editor

Kamari is a senior graduating with a degree in integrative biology. In the future, she plans on becoming a wildlife conservationist and doing research to help endangered species. She decided to join DHD to be a part of the scientific community on campus and loved being able to read/review article topics students were interested in!



RIYA SIVARAMAN

General Editor

Riya is an incoming sophomore at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign majoring in molecular and cellular biology with a minor in public health. She joined DHD to explore flexible research and gain experience in a field she's passionate about. As a pre-med student, Riya is interested in the origins of disease, cancer, and biopsychology. In addition to editing with DHD, she serves on the board of the American Medical Student Association on campus. She hopes to pursue a career in medicine in the future.



BRISA SUN
General Editor

Brisa is a sophomore at the University of Illinois majoring in biochemistry. She is currently involved in Dr. Shapiro's lab, focusing on the development of small molecule cancer therapeutics. As an editor, Brisa enjoys exploring a wide range of student work and collaborating with writers to strengthen their research and refine their ideas.



FRAN AUSTRIACO
General Editor

Fran is an editor for Double Helix Digest. They are a rising senior majoring in crop sciences, with a concentration in agroecology. Their research interest is in soil sciences and herbaria. Outside of academics, they enjoy drawing, designing, and cooking!



KASANDRA MEDRANO
General Editor

Kasandra is a sophomore studying molecular and cellular biology. She is currently on the pre-med track in hopes of specializing in surgery and possibly working with children! When she's not catching up on lecture videos, you can find her painting with watercolors or rewatching Gilmore Girls for the millionth time.



POORVA KASTURE
Writer

Poorva is a sophomore majoring in molecular and cellular biology. Poorva became involved with Double Helix Digest to learn more about the breadth of the field of biology and how different aspects can intertwine to come up with cohesive solutions, being especially interested in multidisciplinary research. In addition to writing for DHD, she is also involved in Beta Psi Omega, a professional fraternity for the biological sciences, and hopes to pursue a career in the medical field.



KYRA MILLER
Writer

Kyra is a freshman and from Glen Carbon, Illinois (near St. Louis, Missouri). She is studying integrative biology honors with minors in public health and chemistry in the hopes of attending medical school, a genetic counseling graduate program, or working in public health policy. Outside of academics, Kyra loves to read, listen to music, spend time in nature, bake, and go on late night sweet treat runs.



IPSITA MANDAL
Writer

Ipsita is a freshman majoring in molecular and cellular biology. She became involved with Double Helix Digest to have a space to explore her dual interest in psychology and genetics and also discover other potential interests. Outside of Double Helix Digest, Ipsita is also involved in research for Dr. Grosman's lab and volunteering as part of MEDLIFE.



DHRUV TOMAR
Writer

Dhruv is a sophomore majoring in integrative biology and computer science. He is interested in the applications of computational tools to shed new light in the field of biology, and plans to further pursue this interest in graduate school. Dhruv is currently working on research in the Van Doren Lab of Migration Biology and serves as the treasurer of the Illini Wildlife and Conservation Club. He became involved with the Double Helix Digest to help raise awareness of issues that threaten global bird populations.



CLAIRE SKOWRON
Writer

Claire is a sophomore at the University of Illinois studying chemistry and statistics. Some of her academic interests include health equity concerns, toxicology and time series analysis. She is involved in research labs across campus, all of which focus on different areas of public health such as disability accessibility, life history epidemiology and chronic pain management. On campus, she is also involved in MEDLIFE UIUC as the Director of Education and TEDxUIUC as the Director of Logistics. Outside of school, Claire enjoys playing viola, spending time outside and watching reality TV.



ROBERT KEMP
Writer

Robert is sophomore at the University of Illinois majoring in biochemistry. Robert joined Double Helix Digest because he is interested in learning about the biochemical mechanisms underlying human disease, pharmacology, and endocrinology. On campus, Robert studies enzymes in the biosynthetic pathway for a common chemotherapy agent in the Schuler lab. He is also the president of a social fraternity.



ESTHER CHANG
Writer

Esther is a sophomore majoring in biochemistry. She is interested in being a part of DHD because she wants to learn more about science and introduce more biology and chemistry-related content to the general public. She is also involved in research in Professor Silverman's lab. In the future, Esther hopes to pursue a PhD in chemistry.



MANASWINI MANNAM
Writer

Manaswini is a sophomore at the University of Illinois majoring in molecular and cellular biology. Manaswini joined Double Helix Digest to combine her passion for science and writing. Outside of being a writer for DHD, Manaswini is involved in nutrition research. In the future, Manaswini hopes to pursue a career in healthcare.



ANDY GRANADOS
Writer

Andy is a freshman bioengineering major at UIUC and a member of the Double Helix Digest club. Andy loves writing informatics pieces that bridge science and storytelling. On campus, he is immersed in soft-robotics research, where he helps build compliant actuator prototypes for K-12 education. This summer, Andy is assisting on a pressure-ulcer-relief wheelchair project, integrating sensor feedback and adaptive soft-actuator designs to improve user comfort. Down the road, Andy plans to pursue graduate studies in biomedical engineering and channel his skills into developing next-generation cancer-therapy devices.



BOLADE ABIOLA-FAGBA
Writer

Bolade is a freshman at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign under the Division of General Studies. In the future, she hopes to become a medical scientist. In her free time, Bolade enjoys reading and sleeping.



AKSHATA GAJULA
Design Team

Akshata is a sophomore at the University of Illinois, majoring in biochemistry. Akshata became involved in Double Helix Digest to learn more about medicine and contribute in a creative fashion. In addition to designing for DHD, Akshata is involved in various RSOs like Positive Pre-Meds and Global Medical Brigades. In the future Akshata hopes to go to medical school and become a doctor.



NALI PATEL
Design Team

Nali has just finished her freshman year as a molecular and cellular biology major at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.