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**MCDB Honors Degree Recipients**

Amaneet Kaur Brar, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Zoe Donaldson

Thesis: *Scoring Behaviors by Training a Machine Learning Model for Complex Behavioral Analysis.*

Xavier Thomas Cisneros, magna cum laude Advisor: Dr. Christopher Lowry

Thesis: *Effects of M. vaccae NCTC 11659 on Cell Activation and Rates of Phagocytosis in Naïve and LPS-challenged Microglia.*

Kevin K Ember, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Michael Stowell

Thesis: *Structural Analysis of OSK1 Binding to Nicotinic Acetylcholine Receptors Using Cryogenic Electron Microscopy*.

Adriana Samanta Espinoza, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Pei-San Tsai

Thesis: *Small Molecule Treatment of Testicular Function in Aged FGF Signaling-Deficient Mice.*

Morgane Malena Herlory, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Maciej Walczak

Thesis: *Post-Translation Modifications Control Tau Structures through Site and Size Specificity.*

Savannah Rose Huyvaert, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Kelly Doran

Thesis: *Elucidating Streptococcus agalactiae and Staphylococcus aureus Polymicrobial Interactions in Diabetic Wound Infections*.

Ethan James, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Natalie Vergara

Thesis: *Human Retinal Organoids Derived from iPSCs Recapitulate Hallmarks of Familial Alzheimer’s Disease*.

Abigail Dawoon Jeong, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Edward Chuong

Thesis: *The Hidden Enhancer: LTR18 and its Effect on Ovarian Cancer*.

Shay Jewels Juarez, cum laude Advisor: Dr. Lee Niswander

Thesis: *Integrin β1 Role and Function in Neural Tube Closure in TMEM132a Mutant Mice*.

Jackson Raymond Kominsky, summa cum laude \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_Advisor: Dr. Thomas Cech

Thesis: *Towards Visualizing the Process of ‘Kleptocytosis’: Varroa destructor Stealing Vitellogenin Protein from Apis mellifera.*

Danny Morrison, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Nausica Arnoult

Thesis: *Heterochromatin and its Effects on Telomeric MiDAS in U2OS*.

Lauren Celeste Phillips, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Shelley Copley

Thesis: *The Contingency of Metabolic Pathway Evolution on Pre-existing Enzymes*.

Ian David Rutherford, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Christopher Lowry

Thesis: *Time course analysis of the effects of M. vaccae NCTC 11659 on proinflammatory and anti-inflammatory cytokine mRNA expression in naïve and lipopolysaccharide-challenged BV-2 microglial cells*.

Kate Ann Schinkel, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Aaron Whiteley

Thesis: *Development and optimization of biosensors to detect signaling molecules in bacterial immune defenses*.

Melia H Scholl, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Steve Schmidt

Thesis: *Biodiversity and Metabolic Pathways in Antarctic Cryoconite Bacteria*.

Sophie Marie Whitehead, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Nausica Arnoult

Thesis: *The Function of PARP and DNA Repair Genes on DNA Repair*.

Thea Zlatkov, summa cum laude Advisor: Dr. Bradley Olwin

Thesis: *The Fibrotic Tissue Environment in Aged Mice Limits Muscle Regeneration by Muscle Stem Cells*.

**colorado.edu/mcdb**

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Description automatically generated with low confidenceMolecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology**



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**Spring Recognition Ceremony**

**Noon Thursday May 8, 2025**

CU Recreation Center

Upper Gymnasium

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Description automatically generated with low confidenceCeremony Program Commencement 2025**

**Processional** Please Remain Seated

**Welcome** Dr. Lee Niswander

Chair, MCD-Biology

**Commencement Speaker** Drs. Kenneth S Krauter & Michael Klymkowsky

Professors of MCD-Biology

**Student Speaker** Adriana Samanta Espinosa, B.A.

**Doctoral & Masters Candidates presented by** Dr. Gia Voeltz

Professor, MCD-Biology

**MCDB Advanced Degree Recipients**

Paul Gendler Advisor: Dr. Sara Sawyer

Thesis: Investigating Viral Spillover: How Dengue and HIV Adapt to New Hosts

Emma Worden-Sapper Advisor: Dr. Sara Sawyer

Thesis: *Emerging orthoflaviviruses and influenza A virus genome dynamics*.

Ryan Sayegh \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ Advisor: Dr. Aaron Whitely

Thesis: Defense against predatory bacteria

Galen Squiers Advisor: Dr. Jingshi Shen

Thesis: *Leveraging genome-wide CRISPR screening to identify the non-canonical function of COMMD3 in endosomal trafficking*.

**Honors Degree Recipients presented by** Dr. Christy Fillman

Teaching Professor of Distinction, MCD-Biology

**Undergraduates presented by** Dr. Lee Niswander & Dr. Jenny Knight

Chair, MCD-Biology & Professor, MCD-Biology

**Closing Remarks** Dr. Lee Niswander

Chair, MCD-Biology

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Description automatically generated with low confidenceCandidates for Bachelor’s in Molecular, Cellular & Developmental Biology**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Bethel Kassa Abay  William Jeffrey Abrams  Mirabelle P. Adams ○  Grace Stockwell Addison  Danya Al Nazal ◊\*₼  Sarah Yousef Alqallaf  Katie Jane Ashton  Abigail Kristeen Awad \*○□  Titus Joshua Bard  Jay Alexander Bentley \*◊₼  Chailyn Berggreen \*□  Luke David Biggerstaff  Emily Hannah Hadley Bivrell  Lauren Micah Bloomfield  Astrid Ann Borsholm  Eeshan Borthakur ● ◊  Jessica Nicole Bowman ◊  Thomas Boyle \*  Amaneet Kaur Brar \*○□  Ivan Breton  Aimee Tien Bui  Aimi Shizuko Bull \*□○  Carlos Alberto Caceres ◊  Lauren Elizabeth Campbell  Mia Lian Chaw ◊●  Natalie Alexis Chen\*□◊  Christina Cheng \*□○  Sydney Marie Ciechanowicz ●◊○  Xavier Thomas Cisneros ◊□  Sarah Frances Crawford □\*  Daniel Michael DeBattista  Jeremiah Diaz ●  Sierra Katherine Dooley ◊  Taylor Nicole Downs ●  John Robert Dwyer \*◊  Kevin K Ember ◊●  Ariel Lucas Eraso\*  Adriana Samanta Espinoza ~₼○  Lia Brewster Farrell \*□◊  Claire I Faulkner  Peyton Diane Ferguson ●  Adam Jacob Field \*₼  Chloee Janae Foucher \*○₼  Keira Franz  Logan Lynn Gaspard  Jonathan William Gerwien ●  Ambree Corrine Gilbert  Madeleine Rose Gonshak ●  Charlotte Marie Gunn  Gabrielle Clio Gustafson  Lauren Elizabeth Halterman  Justin Dominic Hein ◊\*○ ₼  Abigail Elizabeth Helbig ○  Ana Luiza Henneberg Ribeiro | Morgane Malena Herlory □\*  Barbara Elizabeth Hilton ○  Clay Aldridge Hittle ○  Bill Hoang  Caleb Isaac Hodges ◊●  Allison Joyce Hoffman ○₼\*  Jessyca Danielle Hogue  Chloe Danielle Hollard ○●  Sara Grace Hughes ○  Cameron Michelle Hunter  Ayan J Husein ○  Savannah Rose Huyvaert \*□○  Abby Christine Inman ○◊□\*  Noemi Marta Ira \*□  Ethan James ₼◊  Abigail Dawoon Jeong\*₼○◊  Juliana Rosemarie Johnson  Emily Littlefield Johnston  Shaylie Jewels Juarez ●  Zaynah Khan ●  Lily Jean Klein-Padilla  Jackson Raymond Kominsky ○₼~  Willa S Kopp-Devol \*□  Melody S. Koskella  Manford Samuel Krout◊  Sophie Monica Kvaratskhelia ~◊  Emily Jean Landingham ○◊  Madeline Mae Langan ○◊  Emma Violet Lawless ◊□\*  Charleton Sarkis LeMieux ~₼  Eyosias B Lemma ◊  Misha Noel Lewis ○●  Angelina Isabella Lovato ◊  Ryan Lowell  Hanna Lee Ludwick ●  Graycee Kae Maldonado  Annie Mei Yue McCall Manassee\*□  Yohana Alito Markos ◊\*  Isabella Mercedes Martinez  Mia R. Maslowski \*□  Aiden David Mathes  Avery Jordan Matthews  Yana Maria Medvedeva ◊\*□  Chiara Olivia Miller ◊ ₼\*  Andrew J Mokarry  Narges Moradi ○  Daniel Morrison \*₼  Julia Anne Munro ◊  Sara Ali Musani  Jenny Anhthy Nguyen\*₼○◊  Charles John Offerdahl\*□  Teagan Osoba ●  ReAnna Owens ○●  Abigail Tyler Petursson | Lauren Celeste Phillips \*□○◊  Ellie May Pramenko ○₼\*  Logan Michael Pritchard \*○◊₼  True Rappold ◊  Elle Louisa Rau ○□\*  Jack Canyon Respet ○□  Josiane Robinson ○  Talbott Skye Robinson  Sidney Rome  Kaitlyn Marie Rose  Sadie Michelle Ruckel ○  Ian David Rutherford ₼\*  Julia Anna Rydel □  Maria Vladimirovna Safronova ●  Lily Elizabeth Salle ●  Ryan Sayegh ~₼  Harrison Michael Schachter  Katarina Ann Schinkel ~₼  Melia Scholl □\*  Ryan Hideki Schubert\*₼○  Hannah Marie Scott  Aurora Keshavarz Selvas  Rhea Bincy Skariah ◊  Madeleine Frances Stone\*  Kyra Morgan Swafford  Lauryn Evelyn Tharp □  Evan Thoresen □\*  Emma Elizabeth Topping ○  Will Griffin Vanni  Jacqueline Vargas  Viravee Vashisht\*□  Javiera Paz Vasquez Andrade  Lauren Elizabeth Voit  Aneesh Amit Waikar  Chase Davis Walker  Jade Brianne Wells  Sophie Marie Whitehead ○₼~  Richard Joel Williams \*□  Evan Andrew Wood ₼◊\*  Wyatt Henley Young \*◊□  Analise Zelem  **A black screen with yellow lines  Description automatically generated with low confidence**Thea Zlatkov □\*◊  **Key**  ○ Additional Minor(s)  ◊ Additional Major(s)  ● Cum Laude  □ Magna Cum Laude  ₼ Summa Cum Laude  \* High Distinction (3.75-4.0)  **A black screen with yellow lines  Description automatically generated with low confidence**~ Chancellor’s Recognition (4.0+) |

**Refreshments are located at the entrance of the ceremony location.**