LSU

Department of
Biological & Agricultural
Engineering

2025–2026 NEWSLETTER



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear BE and BAE Nation,

I hope that this newsletter finds each of you well and that you enjoy our latest update. I'm happy to be writing this column in the middle of the summer, which I find is my best time of the year to reflect.

As I think about my experiences over the past year and look back at the many achievements of students, alumni, faculty, and staff, I am struck by how vital roots and wings are to success. Roots provide critical support and grounding for people—much of a root system can be underground and may not be visible or "front and center," but is vital just the same. Wings inspire people to fly and to become the best version of themselves.

I feel confident in saying that the BAE philosophy is centered around providing supportive roots and powerful wings. I can certainly say that of my own experience within the department, and the same sentiment has been shared with me many times over the years by the aforementioned constituents.

I was reminded of this philosophy during the fall scholarship banquet while listening to the incredible "roots to wings" messages provided to our students by our banquet speakers, Rising Star Alumni Richard Nelson and Monique Magee Sanders, and Distinguished Alumna Lakiesha Claude Williams, who were also recognized with departmental alumni awards that night, along with Distinguished Alumnus Jason El Koubi, who was unable to join us in person.

I see this philosophy in action in the multiple national recognitions our students and faculty have earned, the innovations that have led several of our faculty members to be involved in startup companies, and almost all of our tenure-track faculty engaged in the patent process. I also see it in our incredible "pitch in" attitude, with so many people providing roots in a quiet, fundamental way. While many give such support, Donna Elisar, Tom McClure, Alena McDuff, and Angie Singleton are a major part of the root system that holds BAE together, and I am eternally grateful for their ongoing, collective efforts.

I encourage you to read on to learn more about what's going on in BAE. Our people-centered, supportive, curiosity-driven environment makes serving in BAE a joy. Feel free to drop in if you are around or to get in touch at mlima1@lsu.edu.

All my best,



Marybeth Lima

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Faculty Achievements

Faculty and adjunct faculty members in BAE perform outstanding work, with many earning well-deserved recognitions.



Dorin Boldor, received the 2026 Elites Arad Gala - "Caius Iacob" Award for Outstanding Accomplishments in Mathematics, Engineering, and Sciences from the City of Arad in Romania. Upon receiving the award, Dr. Boldor donated the monetary portion of the award to a robotics team from Arad, Romania (his hometown) to help them attend the FIRST Robotics World Championship in Houston, Texas, which took place April 29–May 3, 2026.

Meggan Franks received the prestigious George Julnes Endowed Social Betterment Conference Award from the American Evaluation Association for her paper titled, "A Comparative Study of Human and AI-Assisted Qualitative Analysis in a Longitudinal Evaluation of Youth Development."



Carol Friedland was named a Fellow of the Structural Engineering Institute (SEI) of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). SEI Fellows are selected for their professional distinction and significant impact on the built environment. The award is given to individuals or organizations that advance the field by increasing awareness and adoption of new procedures, methods, designs, or products. She was also awarded the John R. Sheaffer Award for Excellence in Floodproofing from the Association of State Floodplain Managers. This award acknowledges her contributions to the field of floodproofing through her research and service on national standards committees.



Kevin Hoffseth was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.



Sumit Libi was promoted from Instructor to Senior Instructor. He received the 2026 Longwell Award for Instructor Excellence from the LSU College of Engineering. This recognition honors faculty members who make significant contributions to the early years of a student's academic journey through outstanding instruction in entry-level engineering courses.



Marybeth Lima was named Fellow of the American Society for Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE). The Grade of Fellow is bestowed upon ASABE members of unusual professional distinction, with outstanding and extraordinary qualifications and experience in, or related to, the field of agricultural, food, or biological systems engineering. ASABE Fellows possess a minimum of 20 years of practice and ASABE membership; this is ASABE's highest honor.

Adilur Rahim was recognized in LSU's feature highlighting the most-cited papers authored by LSU faculty in the last five years. His paper "A deep learning-based traffic crash severity prediction framework" bridges methodological innovation and implementation, with broader impact for other researchers and relevant agencies.



Chandra Theegala was elected to the National Academy of Inventors as a Senior Member of the 2026 class. This award recognizes faculty, scientists, and administrators who have made significant contributions to patents, licensing, and commercialization, and whose technologies have brought or aim to bring real societal impact.



Nicholas Totaro was the recipient of the LSU Outstanding Service-Learning Faculty Award in 2025 for outstanding community engagement, experiential learning, and commitment to teaching service-learning courses and collaborating with community partners. He was also recognized with a Lillian Bridwell-Bowles Innovative C-I Teacher Award in 2026, awarded to faculty members who recognize, inspire, and continue to support innovation in communication-intensive course/assignment design, teaching, assessment/feedback practices, classroom management, and teaching productivity/efficiency/effectiveness.

BAE in the News!

Thanks to the College of Engineering Communications team, we have several feature stories about the department.

A funded project of Bruno Rego's was showcased in this story on the LSU website: Early Research Impacts: Catching Up with the Inaugural Collaboration in Action Teams

"LSU BAE professor receives CAP award for cardiovascular research with OLOL." February 3, 2025. LSU website article, LSU College of Engineering YouTube video (1:48)

"LSU Goldwater Scholar Spotlight: Gerard Lorio's Medical Research Motivated by Caring and Curiosity" LSU website article

"Protecting the Coast: LSU BAE Alumni Design ExoForm to Help Build Reefs" LSU College of Engineering Website article

"How LSU's Ricki Pierce is Changing the Game in Prosthetic Care" LSU website article

"LSU AgCenter Research Enables Better Flood Protection for Homes" LSU website article

"LSU-led Team Wins $7M E-RISE Award From the National Science Foundation" LSU website article

"LSU BAE Seniors Design Wearable Device to Detect Heat Exhaustion" LSU College of Engineering website article

"LSU BAE Chair Marybeth Lima Inducted As Fellow Into ASABE" LSU College of Engineering website article

"LSU Community Playground Project Completes 50th Build" LSU College of Engineering website article

Hobbs McAllister received a prestigious Clayton Fellowship to study for his Ph.D. under the direction of Kevin Hoffseth: "Two LSU Engineering Students Receive Clayton Assistantship Awards" LSU College of Engineering website article

"LSU Biological and Agricultural Engineering Honors Alumni and Students at Annual Scholarship Banquet" LSU BAE website article

"National Academy of Inventors Selects Theegala as Senior Member in Another Win for LSU" LSU College of Engineering website article

BE alumni Raedan Stephens (BSBE 2026) and Nick Demas (BSBE 2024) recently won first place and a $25,000 prize in the LSU E. J. Ourso College of Business Venture Challenge business pitch competition for their startup, Smartective | Voice-Driven Documentation Software for Compliance.

The company's leadership team also includes BAE alumni Nick Totaro (MS-BAE 2015), Scott Bergeron (BSBAE 1984), and Todd Monroe (BSBE 1996). The company is developing an AI-powered documentation assurance platform that helps organizations improve the completeness, accuracy, and compliance of field documentation in industries such as construction, manufacturing, transportation, environmental services, and industrial operations. Smartective website • LSU E. J. Ourso College of Business website article

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Research Feature

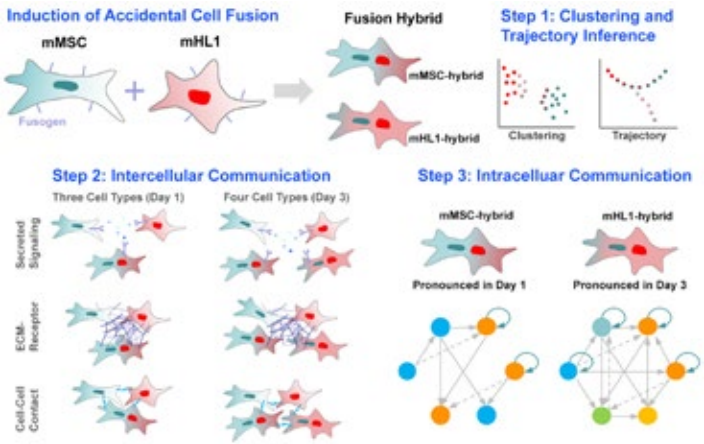
Wet Lab, Dry Lab: Decoding How Cells Change and Heal

by Dr. Philip Jung

A defining feature of the Jung Lab is the way it pairs hands-on bench experiments ("wet lab") with computational analysis ("dry lab"), using each to ask questions the other cannot answer alone. Two 2025 publications show that partnership in action.

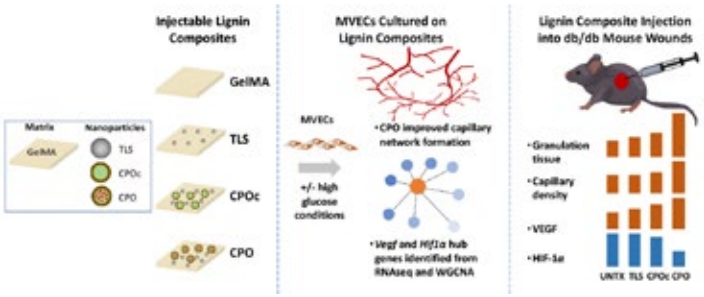
When two cells become one

In *npj Systems Biology and Applications*, the lab tackled a long-standing puzzle: what happens when two very different cells – a heart muscle cell and a stem cell – physically fuse into a single hybrid cell? Instead of generating novel samples, the team developed an integrated computational pipeline to re-analyze the laboratory's published single-cell data at significantly enhanced resolution. The result reframed fusion not as a simple blending of two cells, but as a dynamic, time-ordered reprogramming: on Day 1, the hybrids looked like the stem-cell parent, but by Day 3 their gene activity had shifted to resemble the heart-muscle parent. By reconstructing the cells' developmental trajectories, the molecular "conversations" between them, and the master switches controlling their genes, the study showed how fusion can spin off genuinely new cell identities with implications for tissue repair, development, and even cancer.



A smarter material for wounds that won't heal

A second 2025 paper in Acta Biomaterialia moved to the bench to address a pressing clinical problem: wounds that won't heal in people with diabetes. Here, the lab engineered a material from lignin, an abundant natural plant polymer, designed to do two jobs at once: release oxygen slowly and mop up the reactive molecules that stall healing. In diabetic mice and in lab-grown cells under high-sugar conditions, the material restored blood-vessel growth, nudged immune cells toward a pro-healing state, and closed wounds faster, all without adding any drug. RNA-sequencing and gene network analysis (the dry-lab counterpart) revealed exactly which healing pathways the material was switching back on.



Where the work is heading

These papers are foundations, not endpoints. Three active projects are now advancing the work, all led by graduate student Fateme Nazaryabrbekoh, whose biology background has expanded into tissue engineering and systems biology over the course of her doctoral training. First, building on the single-cell groundwork, the lab is applying spatial transcriptomics, which maps gene activity while preserving the precise location of each cell within a tissue, to chart the cellular crosstalk between fibroblasts and macrophages, and between skin and blood vessel cells, as diabetic wounds heal. Second, a parallel effort uses single-cell analysis to predict how human stem-cell-derived heart cells mature when grown alongside epicardial cells, work aimed at producing more functional tissue for cardiac repair. Third, the lab is engineering scaffolds with built-in antimicrobial properties to accelerate diabetic wound healing further, adding infection control to the oxygen-releasing and antioxidant capabilities already demonstrated. Together, these directions reflect a lab that treats data and experiments as two halves of the same scientific conversation, and a trainee who is learning to speak both languages fluently.

Selected 2025 Publications by BAE Faculty

Manchel A, Erdemir A, Mulugeta L, Ku JP, Rego BV, Horner M, Lytton WW, Myers JG, Vadigepalli R. "A rubric for assessing conformance to the Ten Rules for credible practice of modeling and simulation in healthcare." *PLoS One*. 2025 Jun 25;20(6):e0313711. https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0313711

Roy S, Alday D, Cai Q. "Advances in PLGA-Based Drug Delivery Systems for Glioblastoma Treatment." *Int J Nanomedicine*. 2025;20:16125-16147 https://doi.org/10.2147/IJN.S563730

Semmes, I., Lorio, G. K., Kewir, F. V., Belgodere, J. A., & Monroe, W. T. (2025). "Evaluation of titanium dioxide nanoparticle suspensions as a low-cost surface coating to improve optical profilometry of transparent 3D-printed microdevices." *ACS Applied Optical Materials, 3*(4), 871-880. https://pubs.acs.org/aaoma6/article/3/4/871/3760504/Evaluation-of-Titanium-Dioxide-Nanoparticle

Trif, Emilia, Carlos E. Astete, Sumit Libi, Emoke Pall, Septimiu Tripon, Cristina Coman, Diana Olah, Adrian Valentin Potârniche, Cristina M. Sabliov, and Constantin Cerbu. "Development and in vitro evaluation of a lignin-PLGA nanocarrier for florfenicol delivery." *Veterinary Research Communications 49*, no. 1 (2025): 11. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39556282/

Thingujam, D., Gouli, S., Cooray, S. P., Chandran, K. B., Givens, S. B., Gandhimeyyan, R. V., ... Hoffseth, K.F., & Mukhtar, M. S. (2025). "Climate-Resilient Crops: Integrating AI, Multi-Omics, and Advanced Phenotyping to Address Global Agricultural and Societal Challenges." *Plants, 14*(17), 2699. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40941864/

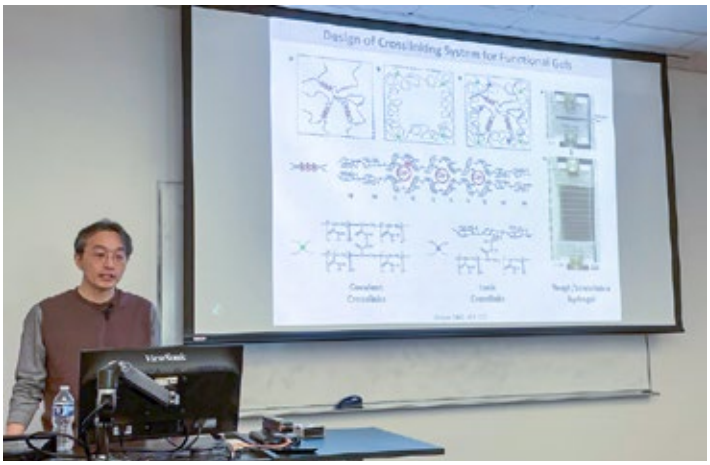
LaHouse Updates

The LaHouse Research & Education Center showcases research, training, and extension on sustainable, resilient, and healthy home-building practices for the Gulf region. For the latest LaHouse information, visit our website.

Guest Speaker Series

The guest speaker series is funded through donations by alums and friends of BAE. It is intended to enhance research collaborations and to share cutting-edge research information with the BAE students and faculty. In 2025, the following speakers shared their work with BAE:

Dr. Myungwoong Kim, Department of Chemistry, Inha University, presented a seminar entitled "Rational Design of Crosslinked Polymer Network Structures for Imparting Biological Activities."



Seminar Speaker, Dr. Myungwoong Kim, Department of Chemistry, Inha University

Dr. Mario Rivera, Professor, William A. Pryor Endowed Chair, Department of Chemistry, LSU, presented a seminar entitled "Manipulating Iron Storage and Mobilization in the Bacterial Cell, A New Strategy for Developing Antibiofilm Interventions."

Dr. Amy Xu, Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry, LSU, presented a seminar entitled "From Phase Separation to Vaccine Design: Small-Angle Scattering in Biomolecular Research."

Dr. Robert Herbert, Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, presented a seminar entitled "Vascular Electronic Systems from Implantable Sensors to Biomimetic Twins.

Dr. Young Min Lee, Assistant Professor, Department of Neurological Surgery, LSU Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA, presented a seminar entitled "Biological Engineering Enabling Modern Neurosurgery."

Dr. Luciano Ponce Mejia, Assistant Professor, Department of Neurological Surgery, LSU Health Science Center, New Orleans, LA, presented a seminar entitled "Cerebral Venous System as a Highway to Minimally Invasive Neuro Monitoring and Therapeutics."

STUDENT & ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

Scholarships and Awards



The BAE department has a long-term legacy of supporting students with departmental scholarships. We are eternally grateful to the donors who established and contributed to these scholarships and the contributions of many alumni and friends who have helped to fund the education of hundreds of BE students over the course of decades. This fall, we awarded scholarships to 21 students for a total of $16,100. The recipients are:

Scholarship Recipients

Harold T. Barr Memorial Scholarship:
Stephen Hatcher

Richard L. Bengtson Endowed Scholarship:
Grant Harris
Lucy Parker
Madeline Picard
Luis Felipe del Solar

William H. and Barbara A. Brown Scholarship:
Elijah Hunter
Velshunti Thompson
Laniyah Thurman
Briana Zamora

Albert P. Halluin Memorial Scholarship:
Marie Howe
Jonathan Vo

Mansel M. Mayeux Honorary Scholarship:
Donald Hookfin
Cameron Ashley

Wiley D. Poole Memorial Scholarship:
Emily Teague

Scott-Windham Scholarship:
Alexis Moore

Carl H. and Christine F. Thomas Family Scholarship:
Lauren Gentry
Brandon Martinez

Charles E. Severance Scholarship:
Kassidy Porche
Nestor Alvarez-Rodriguez

BESO Michael P. Mailander Scholarship
Raquel Velez

ASABE State Section Scholarship
Elizabeth Otuyelu

Rising Star Alumni Awards

These awards are given to graduates with outstanding professional achievements by age 40 and who are well-positioned to continue their successful careers.

Rising Star recipients recognized at the banquet include Richard Nelson and Monique Magee Sanders.

Richard Nelson (BSBE 2007) earned his law degree from LSU in 2010. After graduation, he joined the United States Foreign Service as a Security Engineering Officer and diplomat. He then worked in consulting before representing District 89 in the Louisiana House from 2020 to 2024. He was appointed Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Revenue in 2024, and as of January 1, is President of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.



L-R: Dr. Marybeth Lima, Mrs. Monique Magee Sanders, Mr. Richard Nelson and Dr. Lakiesha Claude Williams

Monique Sanders (BSBE 2007) worked as a project engineer at Syngenta in Louisiana before landing her dream job with Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine, where she has worked as a Project Manager and now serves as Senior Technical Safety Manager. Ms. Magee earned an MBA from Columbia Southern University and is the Founder and CEO of the Get Stemulated Foundation. She has dedicated her career to STEM advocacy and workforce development, particularly for historically underrepresented groups in STEM.

New Scholarship in BAE

Professor Emeritus Richard Bengtson is one of the driving forces behind the BAE scholarship program. Dr. Bengtson and his wife, Jean, created the Richard L. Bengtson Endowed Scholarship in 2005; close to 50 students have received it over the years. A couple of years ago, Dr. Bengtson stepped in to endow the BESO Mailander Scholarship, and now, he is in the process of fully endowing a new scholarship in honor of Cade Carter. Cade was a USDA employee whose professional office was in the Ag Metals Building; he was instrumental in starting the department's scholarship program in the early 1990s. This scholarship will be awarded for the first time in fall 2026. BAE is grateful to the Bengtsons for their generosity and long-term support of the unit and its people.

Distinguished Alumni Awards

These awards are given to graduates with outstanding, career-long achievements.

The two graduates recognized were Jason El Koubi and Lakiesha Claude Williams.

Jason El Koubi (BSBE 2000) earned a master's degree in public policy from the London School of Economics before returning to Louisiana to serve as Assistant Secretary of Louisiana Economic Development and as President and CEO of One Acadiana, a regional economic development organization in Lafayette. In 2017, Jason began working at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership; he now serves as its President and CEO.

Lakiesha Williams (BSBE 2000) earned her master's in BAE from LSU in 2003 and her Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering from Mississippi State University. She is currently a Professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Florida, where she specializes in traumatic brain injury, soft tissue mechanics, and biomechanics. Dr. Williams was named a Fellow of the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering in 2020 and a Fellow of the Biomedical Engineering Society in 2024.

Senior Honors Theses

Senior Honors Theses for 2025 included:

"Characterization of Flow Control Systems for Organ-on-a-Chip Applications" by Claire Bougere; advisor Dr. Todd Monroe

"Evaluating the Effects of Cannabinoids on Triple-Negative Breast Cancer using 2D and 3D Models" by Madison Lee; advisor Dr. Todd Monroe

"Optimization and quantification of conductive heat transfer in an aerated bath" by Victoria Sartin; advisor Dr. Bruno Rego

"Design and analysis of a beaker lift and muscle mounting device" by Ray Martin; advisor Dr. Bruno Rego

Senior Design

Senior Design Final Presentations were held on May 2, 2025. We had 11 groups, with 49 students enrolled. The Biological and Agricultural Engineering department acknowledges and expresses gratitude for the continued technical and financial support of all our project sponsors and donors, particularly Dr. Gloria Nye, through the John and Gloria Nye Capstone Senior Design Fund. Here are the titles of the projects along with group members, advisors, and sponsors:

Project Title: **Transnasal Endoscopic Surgical Site Evacuator**
Members: Dalton Arcement, Rebecca Dominguez, Alexander Goldberg, Donovan Musser, Michael Smith
Advisor: Dr. Philip Jung
Sponsor: Dr. Michael Dunham (LSU HSC)

Project Title: **Biometric Smart Personal Protection Equipment for Heat Exhaustion / Hydration / Cognition Monitoring and Alerting**
Members: Mallory Colletta, Lauren Madden, Thomas Rhymes, Charlotte Richardson, Margaret Sides
Advisor & Sponsor: Mr. Nick Totaro

Project Title: **Pressure Sensing Mouthguard for At-Home Stress Measurements to Alert Jaw Clenching**
Members: Caroline Badeaux, Carlie Dutile, Olivia Hupperich, Edwin Lowery, Gabriella Mikhail
Advisor & Sponsor: Dr. Chandra Theegala

Project Title: **Design of a Disposable Circumcision Clamp in Clinical Setting**
Members: Tiara Britten, Amerika Embers, JoAnne Huang, Camryn Tims, Marise Wilson
Advisors: Dr. Marybeth Lima and Dr. Carlos Astete
Sponsor: Dr. Christopher Roth (LSU HSC)

Project Title: **Design of an Advanced Cell-Free Protein Synthesis Reaction Chamber (version 2.0)**
Members: Fabio Carines, Kellie Dinh, Khoa Doan, Shea Lee, Mary Werther
Advisor & Sponsor: Dr. Yongchan Kwon

Project Title: **Stage-Top Incubator for Live-Cell Imaging**
Members: Daniel Alday, Matthew Hoag, Nolan Rountree, Anna Smith, Sobhan Syed
Advisor & Sponsor: Dr. Qi Cai

Project Title: **Bone Hydration Nation**
Members: Blake Brooks, Giselle Cole, Chelsey Craig, Atula Danivas, Paul Menasco
Advisor & Sponsor: Dr. Kevin Hoffseth

Project Title: **Self-Automated Unilateral Hip Spica**
Members: Robert Anguiano, Stephanie Blakely, Cameron Covington, Audrey Dickman, Micah Mekhitarian
Advisor & Sponsor: Mr. Nick Totaro

Project Title: **A Reusable Interconnect for Electrical Sensing in Organ-on-a-chip Devices***
Members: Claire Bougere, Julianne Heath, Emily LeBlanc, Madison Lee, Britney Nguyen
Advisor & Sponsor: Dr. Todd Monroe

Project Title: **HistoPro: A Benchtop Tissue Processor***
Members: Rayana Brooks, Caleb Delacruz, Mary Granier, Jacqueline Paulsen, Hunter Stewart
Advisor & Sponsor: Dr. Benjamin Dubansky

Project Title: **Electrical Stimulation Testing in Isolated Murine Muscle (ESTIMM)***
Members: Maximilien Caffery, Raymond Martin, Hobbs McAllister, Victoria Sartin, Catherine Whitehead
Advisor & Sponsor: Dr. Bruno Rego

Awards won by Senior Design Projects

Senior design teams submit their projects to LSU Discover Day, a university-wide undergraduate research conference. There are overall awards for STEM disciplines and college-level awards for research and design projects.

In 2025, three of the five group presentation awards in the College of Engineering were earned by our senior design teams.

These projects are starred with an asterisk.

Two individual presenters were also recognized in the top 5 in the college, including Marie Howe and Gerard Lorio.

Additionally, **Madison Lee, Julianne Heath, Emily LeBlanc, Claire Bougere, and Britney Nguyen** won first place in visual display at the University level.

B.S. graduates of 2025

B.S. graduates of 2025 include:

Daniel Alday
Robert Anguiano
Dalton Arcement[$ # %]
Caroline Badeaux[$ * %]
Stephanie Blakely
Blake Brooks
Claire Bougere[** $ * &]
Rayana Brooks
Tiara Britten[$ %]
Maximilien Caffery[$ & * %]
Fabio Carines
Giselle Cole
Mallory Colletta[#]
Cameron Covington
Chelsey Craig
Atula Danivas
Caleb Delacruz
Audrey Dickman
Ngoc-Thanh Kellie Dinh
Khoa Doan
Rebecca Dominguez
Carlie Dutile[&]
Amerika Embers[$ %]
William Emery
Alexander Goldberg[^]
Mary Grainer
Julianne Heath[&]
Matthew Hoag
JoAnne Huang[&]
Jacqueline Hubbard
Olivia Hupperich[** $ * %]
Emily LeBlanc[$ # %]
Madison Lee[** $ * & %]
Shea Lee[** $ * & %]
Edwin Lowery[#]
Lauren Madden
Raymond Martin[** *]
Hobbs McAllister[*]
Micah Mekhitarian
Paul Menasco, Jr.
Gabriella Mikhail[$ #]
Donovan Musser[*]
Britney Nguyen[$ & %]
Thomas Rhymes
Charlotte Richardson[*]
Nolan Roundtree
Victoria Sartin[$ & * %]
Margaret Sides[#]
Anna Smith
Michael Smith
Hunter Stewart
Sobhan Ali Syed[#]
Camryn Tims[$ %]
Mary Margaret Werther[** $ *]
Catherine Whitehead[** $ *]
Marise Wilson[$ %]

** = University Medalist
$ = Distinguished Communicator
& = Distinguished Undergraduate Researcher
% = Engaged Citizen
# = cum laude
^ = magna cum laude
* = summa cum laude



Biological Engineering graduates at departmental celebration in December 2025. From left, Dr. Claire Lanclos, Dr. Alexander Lee, Blake Brooks, Dr. Omar Mendez, Tiara Britten, Stephanie Blakely, and Lauren Madden.

Graduate Degrees

Master's degrees in BAE awarded in 2025

Fannyuy Kewir (advisor Cristina Sabliov)

Alexander Lee (advisor Kevin Hoffseth)

PhD degrees in BE awarded in 2025

Adejoke Adewumi (advisor Dorin Boldor)

Claire Lanclos (advisors Yongchan Kwon and Philip Jung)

Omar Mendez (advisor Cristina Sabliov)

Lane Yutzy (advisor Philip Jung)

Graduate Student Achievements

Daniel Alday (faculty advisory Qi Cai) received the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Doctoral Scholars Program fellowship (2025–2028)

Jithin T. Chacko (faculty advisor Debnath Maji) won the Best Presenter Award in the student presentation session at the 2025 Southeast Symposium on Contemporary Engineering Topics (SSCET), held at LSU—Baton Rouge.

Fannyuy Kewir (faculty advisor Cristina Sabliov) was announced as an Anchor QEA scholarship recipient.

Hobbs McAllister (faculty advisor Kevin Hoffseth) received a Clayton Fellowship from the LSU College of Engineering.

Rose Noggle (faculty advisor Carol Friedland) was awarded the LSU Pinkie Gordon Lane Graduate School Future Scholars Fellowship.

Salona Roy (faculty advisor Qi Cai) received two awards: the LSU Graduate Student Association Travel Award and the LSU Summer Opportunities Fellowship (Shell Oil Company supports the latter award).

BIOLOGICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT ORGANIZATION UPDATES AND ALUMNI NEWS

Our Mission

The Biological Engineering Student Organization (BESO) is a professional networking organization with a strong sense of community that aims to forge connections through catered meetings, workshops, and events between its members and the local community representing biological or agricultural engineering. LSU students of all classifications meet throughout the semester to listen to experienced guest speakers, discuss potential career paths, and learn ways to build the credibility and confidence to advance themselves professionally.

BESO Outreach Presentations took place during the week of 1/12/26-1/16/26. Executive members presented a short presentation on the events planned for the semester and ways to stay connected. We presented to both sections of 1252, 2350, 3340, 4352, and 4392.

The **1st General Body Meeting** of the semester took place on 1/22/26 with Raising Cane's, provided by the BAE Advisory Board, and presentations from Dr. Lima and Dr. Monroe.

Our **1st Give Back Night** of the Semester was held on 2/12/26 at the Chick-fil-A at the Arlington Creek Center.

The **2nd General Body Meeting** of the Semester took place on 2/24/26. The executive board provided Rouse's pulled pork with a side of mac and cheese. Thomas C. Stuckey III, M.D. (ophthalmology), Victoria Sartin (MS1 at LSUHS), and Madison Lee (MS1 at LSUHSC) presented to attendees.

Our **Game Night Socia**l was hosted in the BESO lounge on 3/2/26 with pizza, a fruit tray, a veggie tray, and drinks provided by the BESO Executive Board.

The **BESO Buddies Scheduling Night** took place in the BESO Lounge on 3/19/26. This event was catered to BESO buddy pairs, but open to all BESO members. Students shared scheduling advice over desserts provided by the BESO Executive Board.

The **3rd General Body Meeting** of the Semester took place on 3/25/26 with pizza provided by the BESO Executive Board. We had presentations from Kellie Dinh (VA Biomedical Engineer) and Drake Melancon (Sales representative, VWR).

Our **2nd Give Back Night** of the Semester took place at the Cane's locations on Highland Road and on Lee Drive on 3/30/26

BESO's **Annual Crawfish Boil** took place on 4/22/26 to celebrate BAE faculty/staff, BE students, and BESO members. The Pie Your Professor and Pie Your Exec fundraisers were held simultaneously to help cover the cost of the event.



Nick Totaro thoroughly covered in whipped cream pie.

The **Finals Study Night** took place on 4/27/26 in the BESO lounge with coffee, donuts, and hot chocolate provided by the BESO executive board.

Alumni News

BAE greatly appreciates the activities of its alumni in service of the BAE mission. Alumni serve as career mentors to first-year students; serve as speakers at BESO events; provide funding for scholarships, our speaker series, and consistent snacks for students in the student lounge (among other things); and, through membership on the Advisory Council, provide input and advice for our educational and research programs. If you would like to be more involved in any of these capacities, please contact Nick Totaro (ntotar1@lsu.edu) for more information.

BAE Advisory Council

Board Leadership

Past Chairperson - Anna Pereira

Chairperson - Joe Zerkus

Vice Chairperson – Bilal Ghosn

Treasurer - Bill Brown

Secretary (ex officio) - Nick Totaro

ASABE State Section News

The ASABE State Section awards a scholarship each year to a deserving BE student. The 2025 recipient was sophomore **Elizabeth Otuyelu**. Ms. Otuyelu traveled to the fall meeting of the ASABE State Section, held at the Dean Lee Research Station in Alexandria, LA, to accept the scholarship and brief the membership on her future career plans.



L-R: Mr. Loland Broussard, Elizabeth Otuyelu (2025 ASABE recipient), Dr. Stacia Davis Conger, Dr. Marybeth Lima