FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

LLOYD COLLEGE OF HEALTH, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

# YEAR IN REVIEW

## 2025-2026




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# A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

**Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Lloyd College of Health, Science and Technology newsletter.** This publication marks an exciting new opportunity to celebrate the people, programs, accomplishments, and partnerships that define CHST and strengthen our impact across Fayetteville State University and beyond.

Our **faculty and staff** are among CHST's greatest strengths. Their expertise, creativity, scholarship, service, and steadfast commitment to student success provide the foundation upon which our college continues to grow. Across science, technology, mathematics, and nursing, they inspire learning, and provide the mentorship and support that enable our students to thrive.

Our **students** bring the mission of CHST to life. Through academic achievement, faculty-mentored research, participation in clubs and organizations, leadership, service, and hands-on learning, they reflect both the quality of our academic programs and the dedication of the faculty and staff who champion their success.

Our **alumni** are an integral part of the CHST community and legacy. As leaders, professionals, innovators, and community contributors, they carry the excellence of FSU into workplaces and communities throughout North Carolina and beyond. Their accomplishments strengthen the reputation of CHST and inspire the next generation of Broncos.

CHST is committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, experiential learning, and community engagement. Through high-quality academic programs, accomplished faculty, and an inclusive learning environment, we prepare graduates to become leaders, critical thinkers, skilled professionals, and innovators. Our vision is to be recognized as a leading regional and UNC System hub for workforce-aligned education in STEM and health sciences, interdisciplinary innovation, competitive research, and student achievement.

In future editions, we will proudly showcase the meaningful work taking place throughout CHST, amplify the contributions of our faculty and staff, and celebrate the achievements of our students and alumni. We will also begin to unveil the evolving vision for CHST and share how our strategic priorities align with and advance the mission and strategic plan of FSU.

Indeed, it is a privilege to serve as Dean of the Lloyd College of Health, Science and Technology. I am honored to advance the strong foundation already in place and inspired by the opportunities that lie ahead. **Together**, we will continue to elevate CHST, expand opportunities for our students, and strengthen our impact throughout southeastern North Carolina and beyond.

Thank you for joining us as we celebrate all that makes CHST exceptional.

Erin N. White

Erin White, Ph.D.
Dean, Lloyd College of Health, Science, and Technology

# THE COLLEGE PROFILE

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Lloyd College of Health, Science, and Technology is to provide high-quality educational programs and services through excellence in teaching, scholarship, and student-centered learning. We provide high-quality experiential learning led by qualified faculty, supported by strong community partnerships in a collaborative and inclusive environment. Our graduates are prepared to become leaders, critical thinkers, and skilled professionals who drive discovery, innovation, and real-world impact.

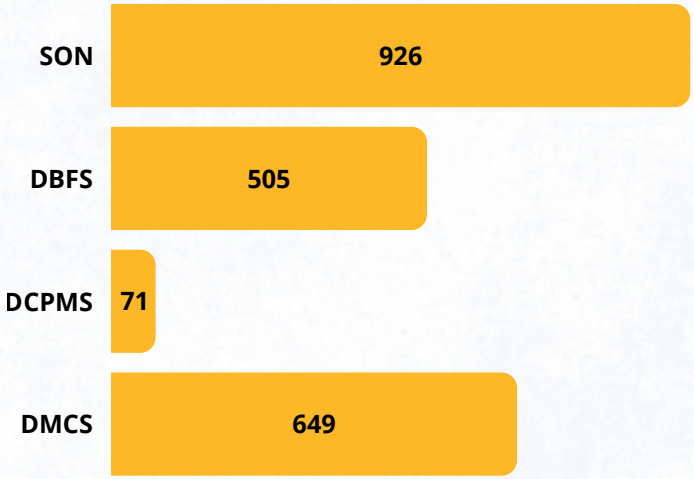
## Faculty & Staff

| Tenured Faculty | Tenure Track Faculty | Fixed Term Faculty | Adjunct Faculty | Staff |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 47 | 18 | 20 | 30 | 14 |

## Number of Academic Programs

| Academic Units | Degrees Offered | Minors Offered | Certificate Programs | Graduate Programs |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 9 | 14 | 11 | 1 |

## Student Enrollment By Academic Unit




## Faculty Research Funding

**11.3 Million**

# COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS

## Celebrating Excellence in Research and Creative Works at the 5th Annual Student Research Symposium

Fayetteville State University (FSU) proudly hosted its 5th Annual Student Research Symposium on Friday, April 10, 2026, under the theme "Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities." This year's symposium was held at the Rudolph Jones Student Center, bringing together students, faculty, staff, and alums for a day dedicated to knowledge-sharing, inspiration, and academic achievement.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education HBCU Master's Degree Phase II Grant, FSU's Honors Program, the **Lloyd College of Health, Science, and Technology**, the College of Education, and the UNC Systems Office, the symposium was organized by a dedicated Steering Committee led by **Dr. Justin Graham (Chair), Dr. Kimberly Smith-Burton (Co-Chair), Dr. Erin White (Co-Chair),** and **Dr. Reeshemah Johnson** (HBCU-MD2 Grant Logistics & Operations Coordinator).

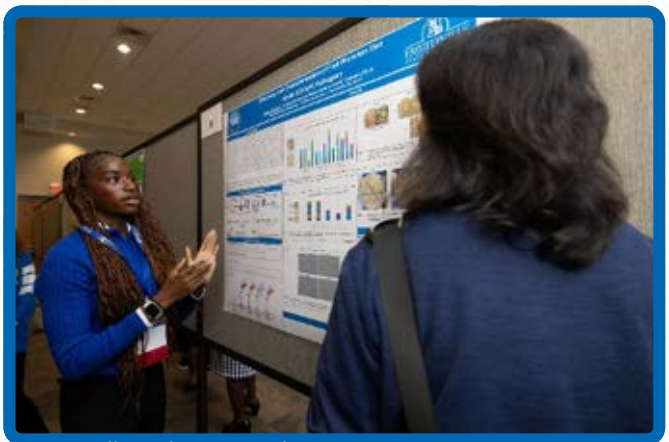

This year featured a logo contest among the students. The winner, **Ayana Wilson**, Forensic Science major, designed a logo representing the four colleges of Fayetteville State University, using symbols such as a brain, beaker, dollar sign, and apple to highlight each college's focus. The graphic depicted a light bulb which unified the colleges through flow of thought that drives research, curiosity, and innovation.

The event attracted nearly 300 participants, including 159 Fayetteville State University students, 43 faculty members, and a mix of other stakeholders including FSU staff, FSU alumni, public school teachers, and other community members. This broad representation highlights the symposium's role as a collaborative platform for academic exchange, mentorship, and community engagement. The symposium included 86 student presenters from various disciplines, such as STEM, Education, Business, the Arts, and Social Sciences. Attendees enjoyed oral presentations, engaging poster sessions, and invaluable networking opportunities, all emphasizing the vibrancy of FSU's research culture. Participants expressed their enthusiasm, noting that the event was "very successful and amazing" and that they enjoyed "the variety of presentations and the opportunity to engage with students and their research were highlights." Many commented that the symposium was "well-organized, and the overall atmosphere was welcoming and professional." Dr. Justin Graham, the symposium chair, remarked, "We aim to grow the event each year and work to ensure we provide students with an opportunity to present their research and also promote and support the research efforts of faculty as well. We take great pride in putting on an event that benefits all at FSU."

# COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS

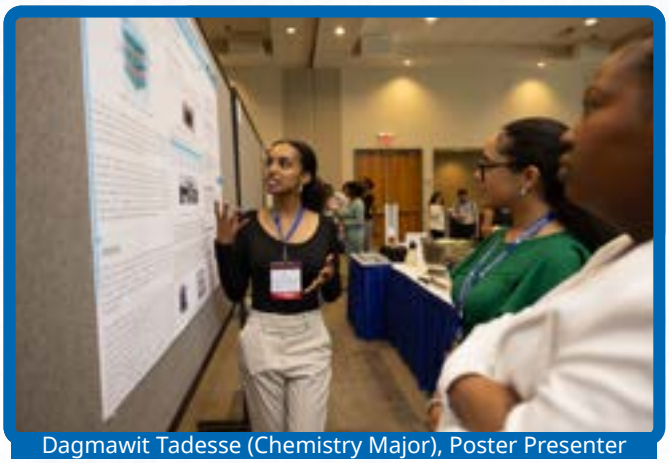
## Celebrating Excellence in Research and Creative Works at the 5th Annual Student Research Symposium

The 2026 Student Research Symposium included concurrent oral presentations, two poster sessions, a celebratory luncheon, and an awards ceremony. A Distinguished Alumni Panel featured graduates representing FSU's four colleges, including **CHST alumnus Jordan Matthews**, a research technician in the Department of Biological and Forensic Sciences. Keynote speaker Zach Oxendine shared his journey from the U.S. Air Force to a career as an AI and cloud specialist at Microsoft while highlighting his commitment to STEM education and workforce development.



Holley Johnson (Biology Major), Poster Presenter

**CHST students** earned several top symposium honors. **Karima Bahmane** received first place and a $300 award for her in-person oral presentation, while **Emily Sacquety** earned second place and $200. In the poster presentation category, **Dagmawit Tadesse** received first place and $300, **Jamyah Jones** earned second place and $200, and **Mia Smyre** received third place and $100. **Holley Johnson** was also recognized as the top CHST presenter and received a $500 award. All research mentors received an acrylic award recognizing their outstanding mentorship.



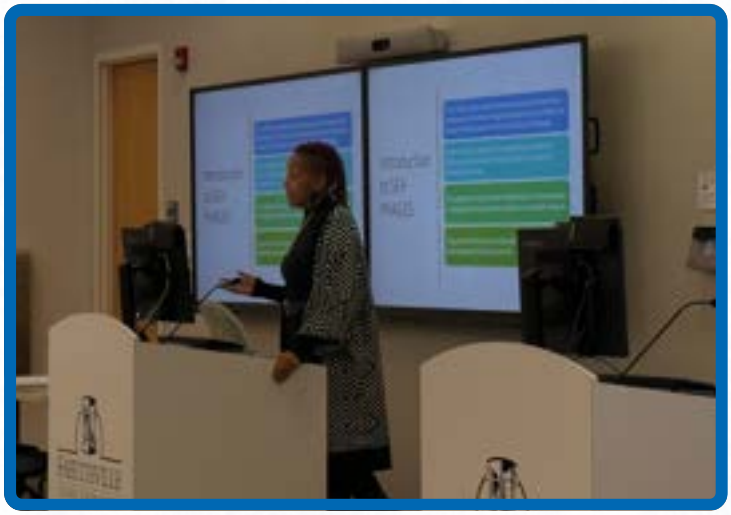
Dagmawit Tadesse (Chemistry Major), Poster Presenter

**CHST faculty members Dr. Sambit Bhattacharya** and **Dr. Keith Johnson** each received a $10,000 Faculty Research Grant Award to support faculty-mentored scholarship, student research participation, and hands-on learning experiences. These accomplishments highlight CHST's continued commitment to research excellence and preparing students for graduate study and professional careers.

Koree Mallett (Mathematics Major), Oral Presenter

# COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS

## Advancing Student Success Through Faculty-Led Workshops



Dr. Melanie Shorter presenting at the LCHST Mid-Year Meeting on January 6, 2026

During the LCHST Midyear Meeting on January 6, 2026, faculty and staff participated in a collaborative planning activity focused on shared college priorities. Participants formed groups and selected one of five Areas of Focus: College Structure; Culture and Collaboration; Research and Grants; Faculty Support; or Student Success, Retention, and Academic Readiness. Each group was charged with developing one actionable, college-wide activity or pilot initiative aligned with its selected area. The following section highlights the faculty-led workshops and activities developed through this collaborative process.

Two faculty and staff groups selected Student Success, Retention, and Academic Readiness as their area of focus and developed interactive workshops to support LCHST students. The first group, led by **Dr. Daniel Okunbor**, along with **Drs. Albert Chan, Perry Gillespie, Abdelmajid Kassem, and Dong Wang**, presented the Faculty-Led Academic Success (FLAS) Orientation Hour for Students on March 2, 2026. The workshop focused on effective study habits and academic success strategies.

A second group, led by **Dr. Melanie Shorter** along with **Drs. Gibson, Perry Gillespie, Shawn Conyers, and Anita Rosland**, hosted the TEA with MenTEE event on March 30, 2026. The session addressed email etiquette, recommendation letters, office hours, class attendance, and research participation. Both events were designed to reduce barriers between faculty and students and create opportunities for open discussion that supports student success.

# COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS

## Title III Award: Creating Opportunities to Reach Excellence (CORE) for Student Success

The **LCHST Creating Opportunities to Reach Excellence (CORE) Grant** is a Title III–funded initiative co-led by **Dr. Danielle Graham and Dr. Justin Graham**. The grant supports faculty and students through curriculum redesign, course-embedded undergraduate research, faculty–student collaboration, and student participation in research presentations, symposia, and scholarly communities. Here are some of the ***completed*** activities supported by this year's awardees:

Students visiting the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation on March 24, 2026

**Dr. Mabel Aworh – Environmental Microbiology**
Students in BIOL 330L completed an inquiry-based environmental microbiology project using soil and water samples from the local community. The activity strengthened laboratory, data analysis, teamwork, and scientific presentation skills while connecting microbiology to environmental and public health applications.

**Dr. Shahidullah Kaiser – Hybrid Edge Computing**
Students explored technologies through the development of a hybrid edge computing system using containers, unikernels, ARM-based devices, and Internet of Things technologies. The project provided hands-on experience in system deployment, data analysis, and research.

**Dr. Kofi Afrifah – North Carolina SBI Crime Laboratory Visit**
Students visited the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation Crime Laboratory to observe forensic laboratory operations and connect course concepts with professional practice. The experience increased their understanding of forensic careers, evidence processing, laboratory standards, ethics, and quality assurance.

**Dr. Zhenlu Cui – Data Science and Applied Calculus Curriculum**
Dr. Cui participated in the 2026 Faculty Development Summer Institute and developed eight instructional modules that integrate data science, computation, and real-world datasets into calculus. The redesigned materials promote active learning and strengthen students' modeling, visualization, and quantitative reasoning skills.

**Dr. Wu Jing – Customized Mathematics Instructional Materials**
Funding supported the creation of original graphs, diagrams, assessments, and application-based problems for MATH 340. These customized materials enhanced visualization, encouraged independent problem-solving, and improved the overall quality and academic integrity of instruction.

# COLLEGE HIGHLIGHTS

## Title III Award: Creating Opportunities to Reach Excellence (CORE) for Student Success

**Dr. John Yuan – Genetics Course-Based Research**
BIOL 310L was redesigned to include authentic research on human and plant genetics, including DNA extraction, PCR, genotyping, and statistical analysis. Students generated original data while building laboratory, critical-thinking, quantitative, and scientific communication skills.

**Dr. Kofi Afrifah – Forensic DNA Analysis**
Students gained hands-on experience analyzing DNA from rootless human hair and cigarette butts. These projects strengthened their skills in evidence handling, contamination prevention, DNA extraction, PCR, quantification, data interpretation, teamwork, and forensic research.

Students presenting their genetics research at the 122nd Annual Meeting of North Carolina Academy of Science on April 24, 2026 at Elon University

**Dr. Chandra Adhikari – Physics and Astronomy Teaching Institute**
Dr. Adhikari attended an immersive faculty workshop focused on effective teaching, compassionate assessment, student support, and managing challenging classroom situations in physics and astronomy. The experiencel strengthened instructional practices, student learning, and departmental teaching capacity.

**Dr. Sangeetha Balabhadra – Materials Characterization Training**
Students in MATS 311 received hands-on training in scanning electron microscopy, elemental analysis, sample preparation, and scientific data interpretation. The experience strengthened career-ready technical skills and contributed to student success in securing graduate study, employment, and internship opportunities.

**Dr. Xianping Wang – AI-Powered Capstone Projects**
Students in CSC 482 used artificial intelligence tools to design, build, and deploy cybersecurity applications on Google Cloud. All 12 students successfully completed the course while gaining experience in AI-assisted development, programming, cloud infrastructure, collaboration, documentation, and project management.

**Dr. Tomilowo Abijo – Biotechnology Research**
Students in BTCH 230 investigated how OPRM1 expression influences cellular and biochemical responses to plant-derived compounds and nutrients. The inquiry-based project helped students develop testable hypotheses, understand the research process, and gain advanced biotechnology skills.

# DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

## School of Nursing


**The School of Nursing** experienced a year of significant achievements during the 2025–2026 academic year. Led by Dr. Christy Swinson, the School continues to prepare highly qualified nursing professionals through its diverse academic offerings, which include the traditional prelicensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program, Accelerated Prelicensure BSN program, RN-to-BSN program, and Master of Science in Patient Safety and Quality program. In preparation for future program expansion and to address the growing healthcare workforce needs across North Carolina, the School of Nursing received approval from the North Carolina Board of Nursing to increase enrollment capacity from 200 to 300 students annually. This important milestone positions the program to educate and graduate a greater number of nursing professionals while maintaining its commitment to academic excellence and student success.

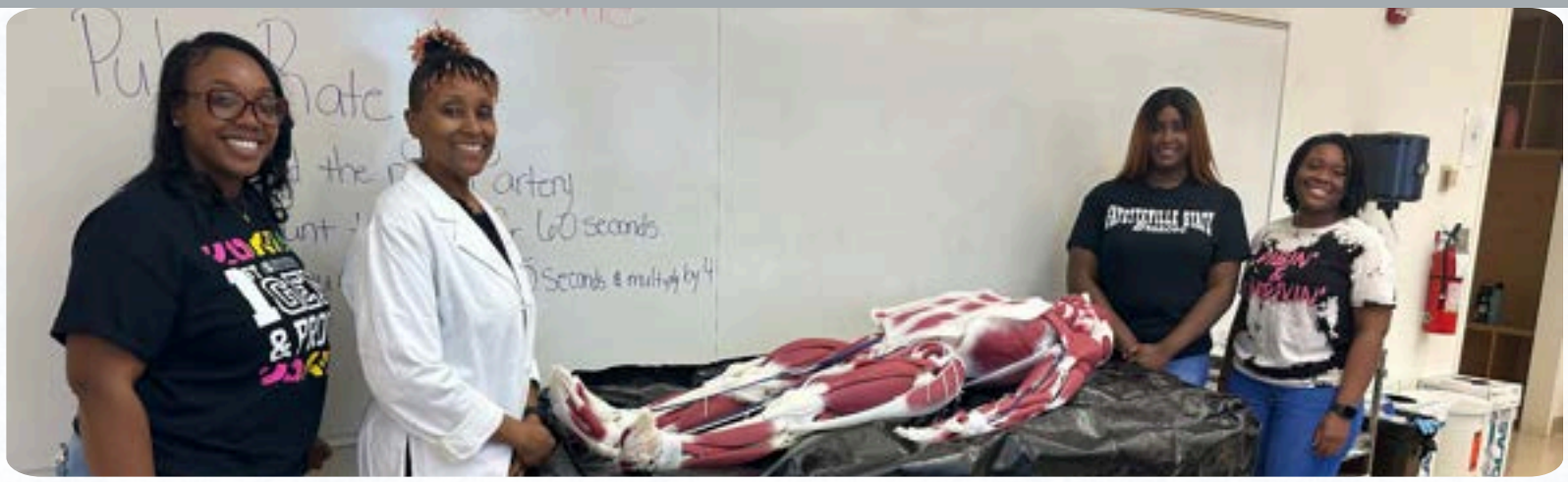
Among the School's most notable accomplishments was the graduation of its second cohort of Accelerated Prelicensure BSN students in Spring 2026, demonstrating the continued success of this pathway for individuals seeking an expedited route into the nursing profession. The School of Nursing also reached a record level of graduate student achievement during the 2025–2026 academic year, conferring degrees upon 17 graduate students, the highest number of graduate program completers to date.

Student outcomes remain exceptional, as evidenced by a 100% NCLEX pass rate for the December 2025 cohort. This accomplishment reflects the strength of the curriculum, faculty expertise, and comprehensive student support systems. Looking toward the future, the School of Nursing is actively developing additional graduate-level opportunities, including Doctor of Nursing Practice and Family Nurse Practitioner pathways, further expanding access to advanced nursing education and preparing graduates to meet evolving healthcare demands.

The School of Nursing continues to serve as a leader in professional development and community engagement through its Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) training program, which provides specialized education to registered nurses across North Carolina. During Fall 2025, the School of Nursing successfully completed its first off-site SANE training in Asheville, North Carolina. The successful delivery of this off-site training highlighted the SANE program's growing capacity to serve and support healthcare professionals throughout the state. Through strong academic programs, outstanding licensure outcomes, innovative program development, and meaningful service initiatives, the School of Nursing remains committed to advancing nursing education, improving healthcare quality and patient safety, and supporting the health and well-being of communities across North Carolina.

# DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Department of Biological and Forensic Sciences



**The Department of Biological and Forensic Sciences** continued its strong trajectory of growth and excellence during the 2025–2026 academic year, reaching a historic enrollment of more than 500 students, the highest in department history.

The Forensic Science Program continued to grow during the 2025–2026 academic year, with increasing student interest and enrollment. Fayetteville State University is the only university in North Carolina—and the only HBCU in the state—with a FEPAC-accredited forensic science program. Students gained hands-on professional experience through internships with forensic laboratories, law enforcement agencies, and research organizations, strengthening their preparation for employment and graduate study.

The department expanded its research enterprise by submitting six external grant proposals and sustaining approximately $4.26 million in active research funding, further strengthening its national competitiveness and research capacity.

Through Title III support, the department completed significant enhancements to two flagship instructional and research facilities: the Research, Education, and Environmental Facility (REEF) and the Insect Research Laboratory. These facilities provide innovative, technology-rich environments that support experiential learning, undergraduate research, and workforce development.

Student engagement in research continued to flourish, with 81 undergraduate students participating in faculty-mentored research and 32 students presenting their scholarly work at regional and national scientific conferences, reflecting the department's commitment to high-impact educational practices. Faculty members maintained an outstanding record of scholarly productivity by publishing numerous peer-reviewed manuscripts and advancing externally funded research in environmental genomics, aquaponics, environmental DNA, forensic science, molecular biology, sustainable aquatic sciences, and agricultural biotechnology.

The department also strengthened its partnerships with governmental agencies, industry, and academic institutions while expanding community outreach through STEM education, environmental stewardship, and research engagement. These accomplishments demonstrate the department's commitment to student-centered excellence, innovative teaching, impactful research, and community service, while positioning the Lloyd College of Health, Science, and Technology for continued growth, expanded graduate education, and increased regional and national recognition.

# DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Department of Chemistry, Physics, and Material Science

**The Department of Chemistry, Physics, and Materials Science** at Fayetteville State University continues to demonstrate progress in research, student success, and academic program development. Faculty efforts reflect a commitment to advancing knowledge, strengthening partnerships, and preparing students for success in STEM fields.

Dr. Zhiping Luo established a multi-institutional HBCU collaboration in semiconductor research and education, expanding opportunities for undergraduate internships and research training. In collaboration with Dr. Bhoj Gautam and Dr. Shubo Han, he secured the $1.47 million NC-READS grant, supporting interdisciplinary research in advanced sensing technologies and providing research training for more than 27 students.
The department advanced its instructional capacity through funding secured by Dr. Luo and Dr. Kabbes to acquire modern manufacturing equipment for the new B.S. program in Materials Science and Manufacturing, enhancing hands-on learning and workforce preparation.

Faculty scholarship remains strong, with publications in Journal of Materials Chemistry A and ACS Catalysis. Dr. Luo's election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry reflects national and international recognition of the department's research excellence. Dr. Bhoj Gautam's research gained visibility through a cover feature in Advanced Electronic Materials.

Through faculty mentorship, students have presented research at national conferences, earned competitive awards, co-authored publications, and secured placements in graduate programs and industry.

The NSF-funded S8 Program, led by Dr. Cevdet Akbay, Principal Investigator, is a central component of student development. This six-year, $2.5 million S-STEM initiative, conducted with Fayetteville Technical Community College, integrates scholarships with support designed to improve retention, academic success, and career readiness. The Summer Bridge component strengthens skills in mathematics and computational thinking while introducing learning strategies, laboratory practices, and professional development. Scholars also benefit from mentoring, research exposure, and experiential learning opportunities.

The department's commitment to undergraduate education is further evidenced by its successful five-year reaffirmation of accreditation by the American Chemical Society in August 2025. The process culminated in a formal peer review by the ACS Committee on Professional Training, confirming that the department meets nationally recognized standards for high-quality chemical education.

In summary, the department continues to advance through research growth, innovative programming, and a sustained commitment to student achievement.

# DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

**The Henry Eldridge Department of Mathematics and Computer Science** offers five undergraduate programs that lead to Bachelor of Science (BS) degrees: Computer Science, Computer Science with Geospatial Data Analytics Concentration, Cyber Security, Mathematics, and Mathematics with a Teaching Licensure Concentration. Starting in Fall 2026, a Concentration in Artificial Intelligence will be added to the Computer Science program. The cyber security program can be completed fully online; the computer science and mathematics programs have online degree completion options. The Department also offers minors in computer science, cybersecurity, data science, disruptive technologies, geospatial data analytics, and mathematics, and a graduate certificate in data science. The Computer Science program is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET. FSU is one of only ten institutions in North Carolina with this accreditation.

In Fall 2025, the Department had a record enrollment of 687 students, compared with 563 students in Fall 2024 and 415 students in Fall 2023. In 2025-2026, the Department welcomed three new assistant professors, Drs. Anudeep Kumar Aurora, Shahidullah Kaiser, and Xianping Wang, and now has 30 full-time faculty members, 28 of whom have doctoral degrees.

The majority of faculty are engaged in research in computer science, artificial intelligence, mathematics, applied mathematics, data science, and statistics. Much of the research involving students is organized through the Intelligent Systems Laboratory.

In 2025-2026, more than 40 students worked on research projects under Professor Sambit Bhattacharya, who supported students with grant-funded stipends from NASA, NC Innovation, Title III, NC DOT, DoW, etc. Fourteen students are participating in internships at NASA, NSA, NAVWAR, Wells Fargo, DoW, NCDIT, Cape Fear Valley Health, Live Oak Bank, and RoviSys in Summer 2026.

In Fall 2025, the department opened its new Computer Networking and Cybersecurity Lab, coordinated by Professor Bing Wu, it features upgraded instructional space and modern equipment for cybersecurity, networking, and IoT courses.

In Spring 2026, for a second year in a row, group of students in the computer science capstone course, CSC 490, participated in a semester-long FICO Educational Analytics Challenge. Twelve seniors led by the instructor of the course, Professor Mingxian Jin, participated in the challenge which focused on usage of AI and analytics to fight against payment transaction fraud and presented their work to FICO employees, classmates, and faculty. Students participating in the challenge were given opportunity to participate in summer internships at FICO.

# FACULTY & STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

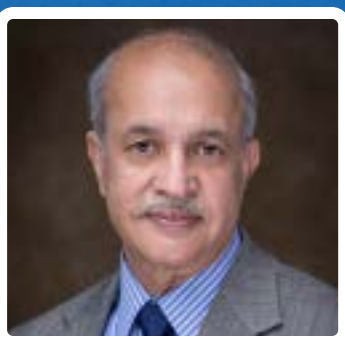
**Dr. Bhoj Gautam** received the Faculty Research Mentor Award, published eight peer-reviewed articles, contributed to a journal cover feature and four scholarly abstracts, and delivered research presentations at major national conferences. Dr. Gautam also managed several active grants totaling millions of dollars, including projects in MXene research, semiconductor education, and student success. Under his mentorship, students presented at regional and national conferences, earned research awards, secured competitive internships, and advanced to graduate programs.

**Dr. Mabel Aworh** received three honors, including the DBFS Academician of the Year Award and two recognitions from the American Society for Microbiology. She authored or co-authored 14 publications focused on antimicrobial resistance, One Health, bacteriophages, and infectious disease and secured an NC Collaboratory Early Career Investigator Seed Grant. Under her mentorship, five students presented research at university, state, and regional conferences, with two students contributing to peer-reviewed publications and several receiving departmental awards.

**Dr. Sambit Bhattacharya** demonstrated national leadership and significant research productivity. He published nine scholarly works, delivered two international presentations, and led six active grants totaling more than $4.3 million in artificial intelligence, environmental monitoring, aerospace, cybersecurity, and data analytics. Through the Intelligent Systems Laboratory, he mentored more than 35 students, several of whom secured competitive internships with NASA, NSA, the Department of Defense, and Wells Fargo or presented research at national conferences. His work also strengthened FSU's partnership with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and expanded student pathways into advanced study and technology careers.

**Dr. Misty Stone** demonstrated strong scholarly and instructional leadership during the 2025–2026 academic year through three scholarly publications and three professional presentations. Her work advanced innovative teaching practices and strategies to support nurse well-being, clinical preparation, and student success.

**Dr. Willietta Gibson** was appointed Assistant Chair of the Department of Biological and Forensic Sciences, served as a STRIVE Faculty Visiting Scholar at the University of Virginia Comprehensive Cancer Center, and participated in the university's Scholarship of Teaching and Learning cohort. Dr. Gibson also co-authored a publication on using machine learning to identify at-risk biology students and served as Co-PI on a $393,000 NSF grant to integrate genetic and computational research experiences into biology courses. Her mentorship and engagement supported student research presentations, the Tea with MentEES program, and a biology graduate's acceptance into a doctoral program in Integrated Biosciences.



**Dr. Khalid Lodhi** demonstrated strong leadership in forensic science education, research, and professional service. He contributed two scholarly publications, delivered a professional presentation, and served as a moderator, judge, and abstract reviewer for national and international forensic science conferences. Dr. Lodhi also advanced immersive forensic education through two funded projects and a partnership with the Fayetteville Police Department to develop virtual and augmented reality crime scene training activities. Under his mentorship, students completed internships, conducted collaborative research, presented at professional conferences, entered graduate forensic science programs, and secured employment in the field.

# IMPACT BEYOND THE CLASSROOM


Pictured (left to right): Dr. Monique Wallace, Dr. Angela Stewart, and Ms. Dionne Hall

**Dr. Angela Stewart and Dr. Monique Wallace** hosted an episode of Your Health in 15 Minutes through Bronco Television. Their conversation with **Ms. Dionne Hall** highlighted mental health resources and practical strategies that support student well-being and academic success. The episode also emphasized the importance of seeking help early, reducing stigma, and connecting students with campus services that promote both personal wellness and persistence. Through this platform, Drs. Stewart and Wallace expanded health education across campus community.

**Dr. Abdelmajid Kassem** demonstrated exceptional scholarly productivity by contributing to 23 journal articles and publishing three books and eBooks focused on bioinformatics, genomics, machine learning, and crop genetics. He also delivered oral presentations at the Plant and Animal Genome Conference and mentored students whose research was presented at university, state, and national conferences.

**Dr. Nicoleta Bila** served as an external reviewer for a doctoral thesis on Lie symmetries in continuum mechanics at Brno University of Technology in the Czech Republic. Her service contributed expert review to the university's doctoral education and research process.

**Mrs. Angel Osman** was appointed as the NACADA North Carolina Liaison for Region 3, serving the remainder of the 2025–2027 term. In this leadership role, she will collaborate with the regional steering committee and fulfill special responsibilities at the Spring 2027 regional conference. With more than 15 years of experience in higher education, Mrs. Osman currently advises more than 375 Biology and Forensic Science students and supports their academic progress, retention, and degree planning. She has also received several honors for her work, including the NACADA Region 3 Excellence in Advising–New Advisor Award and Fayetteville State University's Michael Rich Advisor of the Year Award.

**Dr. Shubo Han** contributed to four peer-reviewed publications focused on materials science, biosensors, and energy technologies. He also serves as principal investigator on federally and state-funded projects examining environmental contaminants in the Cape Fear River Basin.

**Dr. Shahidullah Kaiser** presented his edge-computing research at the IEEE International Conference on Communications in Glasgow, Scotland. He also served as a conference session chair and reviewer for the IEEE Global Communications Conference.

Mrs. Angel Osman (pictured middle) at the NACADA Region 3 Conference in Greenville SC.

# EXCELLENCE IN GRANTSMANSHIP

**Dr. Tomilowo Abijo, Dr. Willietta Gibson, and Dr. Jiazheng Yuan** received **$393,000** from the National Science Foundation for Developing Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences to Enhance Student Capacity in Biological Research Through Genetic and Computational Biology, also known as the GECoB Initiative.

**Dr. Mabel Aworh** received **$22,496** from the North Carolina Collaboratory for From Sewage to Solution: Isolation and Characterization of Novel Bacteriophages for Biocontrol of Multidrug-Resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*.

**Dr. Sambit Bhattacharya** received **$1,197,584** from NASA for WISE-AIR: Wildfire and Integrated Systems for Environmental AI Research. He received **$750,000** from NCInnovation for KINESYS+ATLAS: AI and Synthetic Data for Critical Applications and **$185,000** from the Laboratory for Analytic Sciences at NC State University for Empowering Intelligence Analysts with AI: The Video Intelligence Chat Assistant.

**Dr. Justin Graham, Dr. Danielle Graham, Dr. Erin White, and Dr. Perry Gillespie** received **$1,999,980** from the National Science Foundation for Supporting Undergraduate Success in Biology, Forensic Science, Mathematics, Computer Science, and Cybersecurity through Scholarships and Mentoring, also known as the MS3 Program.

**Dr. Shirley Chao r**eceived **$207,000** through Department of Education (Title III) for the Insect Exploration Lab and **$1,100,000** from NCInnovation for Hemp-Derived Organic Biopesticides.

**Dr. Shubo Han** received **$99,898** from the North Carolina Collaboratory for Atmospheric Deposition and Transformations of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances. He also received **$345,631** from the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology in 2026 for Protecting North Carolina: Detecting PFAS and Pesticides in the Cape Fear River Basin.

**Dr. Sherry Leviner and Dr. Kimberly Vogt** received **$1,499,928** from Health Resources and Service Administration for the Advance Nursing Education – Sexual Assault nurse Examiner's Program.

**Dr. Zhiping Luo, Dr. Bhoj Gautam, and Dr. Shubo Han** received **$1,466,845** from the UNC System Research Opportunities Initiative for the Nano Consortium for Collaborative Research and Education to Advance Defense and Security through Sensing.

**Dr. Christy Swinson** received **$55,765** from North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services for NC DPH Data Moderization Workforce Needs and **$528,987** from Department of Education (Title III) for Strengthening the University through Simulation Laboratory.

**Dr. Trung Tran, Dr. Khalid Lodhi, and Dr. Miriam DeLone** received **$14,400** from North Carolina Collaboratory for Developing and Integrating Augmented Reality for Enhancing the Forensic Science Learning Experience.

**Dr. John Yuan** received **$207,000** through Department of Education (Title III) for The REEF: Innovation in Aquaponics and Environmental Science Education.

# HONORS AND AWARDS

## 2025-2026 Awardees

The **LCHST Honors and Awards** recognize faculty and staff whose excellence, innovation, leadership, collaboration, mentorship, scholarship, and service have made a meaningful impact on students, colleagues, and the broader community. These awards celebrate individuals who advance the college's mission and foster a culture of achievement, care, belonging, and opportunity.

**Excellence and Innovation in Teaching**

**Dr. Chandra Adhikari**
**Assistant Professor**
**DCPMS**

**Research and Grantsmanship Excellence**

**Dr. Bhoj Gautam**
**Professor**
**DCPMS**

**Early Career Faculty Achievement**

**Dr. Mabel Aworh**
**Assistant Professor**
**DBFS**

**Faculty Mentorship and Student Impact**

**Dr. James Raynor**
**Professor**
**DBFS**

**Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

**Dr. Justin Graham**
**Associate Professor**
**DBFS**

**Community, Professional Service, & Applied Practice**

**Dr. Stephanie Hodges**
**Professor**
**SON**

**Junior Staff Excellence**

**Dr. Sangeetha Balabhadra**
**Research Associate**
**DCPMS**

**Senior Staff Excellence**

**Ms. Chellese Smith-Mebane**
**Executive Assistant**
**LCHST**

# CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES

**The Lloyd College of Health, Science, and Technology** proudly celebrated **416 graduates** during the 2025–2026 academic year. To honor this milestone, the college hosted a college-wide Graduate Celebration on May 7, 2026, followed by the School of Nursing Pinning Ceremony and Graduate Commencement on May 8, and Undergraduate Commencement on May 9.

The School of Nursing also celebrated outstanding licensure outcomes, achieving a 100.00% first-time NCLEX-RN pass rate in Fall 2025 and a 92.59% pass rate in Spring 2026. Overall, 44 of 46 first-time candidates passed, resulting in a 95.65% year-to-date pass rate.

We are incredibly proud of all of our graduates and celebrate their hard work, perseverance, and accomplishments as they begin the next chapter of their academic and professional journeys.

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Dr. Larissa S. Stewart (pictured left)**, a 2017 graduate with a B.S. in Chemistry, earned her M.D. from Howard University College of Medicine in May 2026. She received The Nwaneri Award for perseverance in academic success and will return to Fayetteville for residency with the U.S. Army at Fort Bragg, where she will serve as a Captain in the Medical Corps.

**Dr. Sean LaFountaine Parker (pictured right)**, a 2009 graduate with a B.S. in Biology (Pre-Med), earned his M.D. from Howard University College of Medicine in May 2026. His journey included studying filmmaking and working in the field before ultimately pursuing his goal of becoming a physician.

**Dr. Arshay Grant,** a 2019 graduate with a B.S. in Biology, Dr. Grant earned her Ph.D. in Biology from the Georgia Institute of Technology, where she studied protein structure and function using cryo-electron microscopy. During her doctoral training, she received several honors, contributed to six publications, and mentored nearly a dozen students. Dr. Grant credits programs such as FSU-RISE and the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program with helping prepare her for graduate study and is now exploring career opportunities both within and beyond the research laboratory**.**

**Dr. Marquel E. Hagans,** a 2022 graduate with a B.S. in Biology, Dr. Hagans earned his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from Howard University College of Dentistry in May 2026. Prior to attending FSU, he served four years in the U.S. military, which helped finance his undergraduate education. Dr. Hagans also learned to speak Spanish fluently during dental school to better serve Spanish-speaking patients and strengthen communication with the diverse communities he serves. He plans to complete a one-year residency to gain additional surgical experience and further prepare for his professional dental career.

# SPECIAL RECOGNITION

## Honoring the Legacy of Dr. Clarence E. Lloyd Jr.

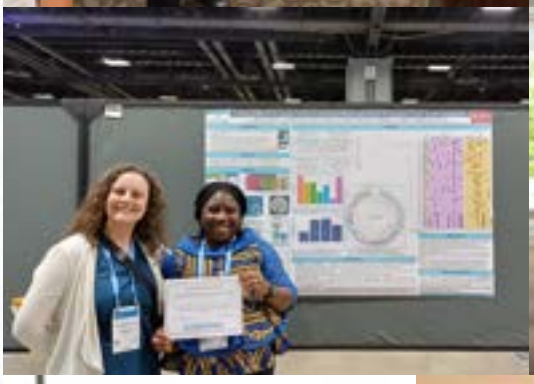

**The Lloyd College of Health, Science, and Technology** proudly carries the name of **Dr. Clarence E. Lloyd Jr.**, a 1965 Fayetteville State University graduate, trailblazing physician, and one of the university's most dedicated supporters.

After earning his degree in Biology with a minor in Chemistry, Dr. Lloyd continued his education at North Carolina Central University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, ultimately becoming one of North Carolina's first Black radiologists. He also served 20 years in the U.S. Army Reserves, including service during Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom, and retired at the rank of Colonel.

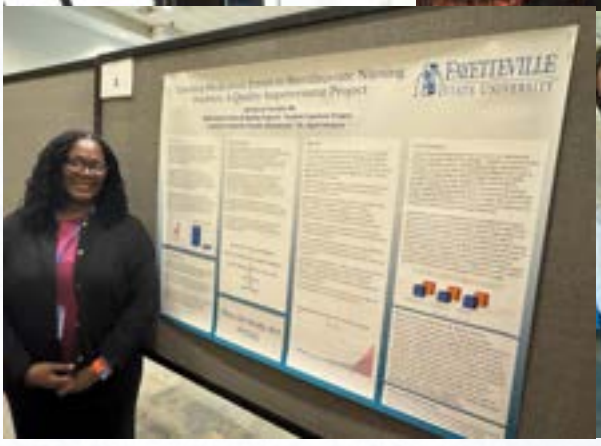
Dr. Lloyd's legacy is equally defined by his commitment to giving back. His contributions to Fayetteville State University have exceeded $1,000,000, including support for student scholarships, faculty and staff development, a speaker series, and an endowed fund. His generosity reflects a lifelong belief in creating opportunities for others and strengthening the institution that helped launch his own journey. Through his philanthropy, service, and unwavering Bronco pride, Dr. Lloyd continues to make a lasting impact on generations of students, faculty, and staff and serves as a powerful example of leadership, gratitude, and giving by example.

# SNAPSHOTS OF SUCCESS






# LLOYD COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

## Dean's Office Leadership

Dean
Dr. Erin White

Interim Associate Dean
Dr. Danielle Graham

## Dean's Office Administrative Support

Executive Assistant
Chellese Smith-Mebane

Administrative Support
Robyn Huereca

## School of Nursing

Associate Dean
Dr. Christy Swinson

Assistant Dean
VACANT

## Department of Biological and Forensic Sciences

Interim Chair
Dr. John Yuan

Assistant Chair
Dr. Willietta Gibson

## Department of Chemistry, Physics, and Material Science

Chair
Dr. Daniel Autrey

Assistant Chair
Dr. Darren Pearson

## Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

Interim Chair
Dr. Albert Chan

Assistant Chair
Dr. Perry Gillespie

FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

LLOYD COLLEGE OF HEALTH, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY