

Princeton University

Office of Communications
22 Chambers St.
Princeton, New Jersey 08542
Telephone 609-258-3601; Fax 609-258-1301

For immediate release: February 21, 2004
Media contact: Eric Quiñones, (609) 258-5748,
quinones@princeton.edu

Princeton gives highest awards to top undergraduate, graduate students

William Ristenpart of the Ceramic Materials Laboratory is recognized for his innovative research in electric-field induced colloidal crystallization.

PRINCETON, N.J. -- Princeton University recognized the winners of the highest honors it awards to students at Alumni Day ceremonies Saturday, Feb. 21.

Seniors Katherine Linder and Steven Porter received the University's Moses Taylor Pyne Honor Prize, and graduate students Eric Brown, Min Hu, William Ristenpart and Jennifer Waldron were honored as co-winners of the Porter Ogden Jacobus Fellowship.

The Pyne Honor Prize, the highest general distinction conferred on an undergraduate, is awarded to the senior who has most clearly manifested excellent scholarship, strength of character and effective leadership. The Jacobus Fellowship, which supports the final year of graduate study, is awarded to students whose work has displayed the highest scholarly excellence.

Pyne Prizes

Linder is concentrating in the history department and will earn a certificate in contemporary European politics and society. In the fall, she will study modern European history at Cambridge University. Eventually, she hopes to earn a Ph.D. and to pursue a career in teaching, diplomatic service or university administration.

Linder's professors describe her as unfailingly engaged, poised and attentive, with a remarkable ability to synthesize complex primary source materials. Awarded the Lawrence Stone Research Fellowship by the history department, she traveled to England last summer to conduct research for her senior thesis. Her project focuses on travel from England to France in the mid-19th century, when the established mode of tourism -- the aristocratic, grand tour of the continent -- was giving way to more democratized forms, accessible to a new, middle-class market.

Linder spent the summer of 2002 in Paris, where she was an intern to Ambassador Howard Leach. She won both the Ambassador Jack Irwin Award and the Pamela Harriman Foreign Service Award. She also has served as an intern for the Business Council for the United Nations, where she helped implement a lung cancer prevention program for developing nations that links the United Nations to key U.S. cancer centers.

At Princeton, Linder has served as an officer in the Princeton Model Congress and as UNICEF chair of the Model United Nations. She also is the chair of Orange Key, the student group that provides tours for



The Pyne Honor Prize was given to seniors Katherine Linder (front row) and Steven Porter (back row, second from left), while the Jacobus Fellowship was given to graduate students (back row from left) Eric Brown, William Ristenpart (third from left), Min Hu (far right) and Jennifer Waldron (not pictured) at the Feb. 21 Alumni Day luncheon.

photo: Denise Applewhite

visitors to campus. A graduate of St. Francis High School, she is the daughter of Mark and Mary Linder of Sacramento, Calif.

At the awards ceremony, Princeton President Shirley M. Tilghman paid tribute to Linder "for the gusto with which you unhesitatingly tackle daunting academic challenges; for the mark you will leave on Princeton after you receive your diploma; and for the embodiment of Woodrow Wilson's ideal -- 'Princeton in the Nation's Service.'"

Porter is an anthropology major, specializing in the study of medical anthropology. He is recognized by his department for his exceptional intellectual acumen and academic performance and for his critical engagement with health issues in the developing world. After graduation, he hopes to work with a nongovernmental organization or nonprofit specializing in reproductive health and HIV/AIDS epidemiology. Eventually, he plans to attend medical school and possibly to pursue a joint degree in public health or medical anthropology.

Porter was awarded the Shapiro Prize for Academic Excellence in fall 2002 and received major funding from the George Shultz '42 Fund, the Office of the Dean of the College and the Woodrow Wilson School to pursue summer thesis research. In the spring of his sophomore year, Porter studied at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. He returned there last summer to work on his thesis, which explores the ways in which traditional medicine is being integrated into the national health policy of South Africa, specifically with respect to the control of HIV/AIDS.

The vice president of Princeton's Student Health Advisory Board, Porter serves as a liaison between the University Health Services staff and the student body. He is a member of the Student Global AIDS Campaign, a national alliance of student activists who work to raise AIDS awareness and promote AIDS advocacy, and he spent the summer of 2002 as a volunteer for the campaign's Cambridge, Mass., chapter.

Porter is a member of the Tigertones, an a cappella group, and Bodyhype, Princeton's jazz/hip-hop/modern dance company. A graduate of Deerfield Academy, he is the son of Steven, a member of Princeton's class of 1973, and Melinda Porter of Albany, N.Y.

During the ceremony, Tilghman thanked Porter "for your blend of intellectual curiosity and sophisticated analytical abilities; for your commitment to healing and to social science; and for your extremely energetic engagement in work that touches the lives of others."

Jacobus Fellowships

Brown is a doctoral student in the Program in Applied and Computational Mathematics. He earned his bachelor's degree in engineering physics from the University of California-Berkeley. His broad interests in mathematics, biology and chemistry have led to his study of mathematical neuroscience. His dissertation focuses on mathematical models for the mechanisms of cognitive control. "Eric is fascinated by the question of how neurons collectively generate behavior," said Brown's co-adviser Philip Holmes, professor in the Program in Applied and Computational Mathematics and in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. "He has the mathematical range and depth and the collaborative skills needed to answer it. I am privileged to work with him."

Brown has excelled at working collaboratively with faculty members, postdoctoral researchers and other students from the Program in Applied and Computational Mathematics and the Center for the Study of Brain, Mind and Behavior. Jonathan Cohen, professor of psychology, director of the center and Brown's co-adviser on the project, said, "The results provide the first direct theoretical connection between longstanding mathematical theories regarding human behavioral performance and more recent neural network models and neuropsychological data regarding the brain mechanisms that give rise to performance."

Hu is pursuing a doctoral degree in chemistry. She earned her bachelor's degree in chemistry from Fudan University in China. She has a strong interest in the interdisciplinary field between chemistry and biology. Her dissertation research, which is centered on fighting cancer, deals with p53, the most important tumor suppressor known.

Yigong Shi, professor of molecular biology and Hu's dissertation adviser, noted that two of her papers already have been published in leading biological research journals. "There is no question that her research will have a fundamental impact on other researchers in her area of study," said Andrew Bocarsly, professor and director of graduate studies in the chemistry department.

Ristenpart is working on a doctoral degree in chemical engineering. He earned his bachelor's degree in the same field from the University of California-Davis. His research has concentrated on a branch of fluid mechanics where the flow is generated by an applied electrical field. In his dissertation, he seeks to establish "electric-field induced colloidal crystallization," a fast and inexpensive procedure that could improve the fabrication of nanoscale devices.

"Bill is highly motivated to do the very best scientifically," said Ilhan Aksay, professor of chemical engineering, who is his adviser along with Dudley Saville, the Stephen C. MacAleer '63 Professor of Engineering and Applied Science. "His attitude is always positive, and the more he is challenged the greater he strives to be more rigorous." Aksay also praised Ristenpart's efforts to mentor undergraduate students.

Waldron is completing a doctoral degree in English. She earned a bachelor's degree in comparative literature from Oberlin College, then taught English literature at a high school in New York City. After receiving a master's degree in English literature from New York University, she enrolled at Princeton to study early modern literature. Her dissertation re-examines the cultural impact of the English public theater in light of Protestant Reformation debates over the sacramental and symbolic powers of the human body.

The project is an outgrowth of an article she published in *Critical Matrix: The Princeton Journal of Women, Gender and Culture*, which she also co-edited for two years. In addition, she organized the Princeton Renaissance Colloquium for two years and has held fellowships from the University Center for Human Values and the Center for the Study of Religion. "Jennifer's combination of remarkable poise, professionalism, originality, enthusiasm and ability is unmatched in my experience," said Oliver Arnold, associate professor of English, who is her dissertation adviser along with colleagues Leonard Barkan and Nigel Smith. "She is, put simply and briefly, absolutely outstanding in every sense," Smith said.

[University home](#) | [Princeton Web pages A-Z](#) | [Search](#)
[Previous caption pages](#) | [Communications Office](#) | [Web page feedback](#)

© 2004 The Trustees of Princeton University