



For Immediate Release

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Hertz Foundation Awards Prestigious Fellowship to 12 Recipients

Awardees are top young minds in STEM, Fellowship covers graduate school and living expenses

Livermore, CA – The Fannie and John Hertz Foundation today announced 12 recipients of its prestigious Hertz Fellowship, awarded annually to support up to five years of graduate study in the applied physical, biological and engineering sciences. The Foundation, which encourages awardees to pursue science for the public good, was created by entrepreneur John Hertz to inspire and invest in the future of scientific exploration by providing resources and academic freedom to young minds.

“We are pleased to welcome another cohort of extremely talented and bright individuals into the Hertz Fellowship family,” says David J. Galas, PhD, Hertz Fellow and Chairman of the Fannie and John Hertz Foundation Board of Directors. “The awardees truly are the best of the best. We know they will utilize this fellowship not only to pursue their scientific passion, but also to pursue research and discoveries that help others and positively impact the world.”

Awardees represent many of the top public and private universities in the country and were chosen for their intellect, their ingenuity and their potential to bring meaningful improvement to society.

The 2015 Hertz Fellowship awardees are:

Katie Bodner – Katie is an undergraduate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She will pursue her PhD at Stanford University in bioengineering, synthetic and systems biology. Katie’s hometown is Hollywood, Florida.

Jordan Cotler – Jordan is an undergraduate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He will pursue his PhD at Stanford University in theoretical physics. Jordan’s hometown is Northbrook, Illinois.

Cole Graham – Cole is an undergraduate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He will pursue his PhD at Stanford University in mathematics, analysis and PDE theory. Cole’s hometown is Olympia, Washington.

Adam S. Jermyn – Adam is an undergraduate at the California Institute of Technology. He will pursue his PhD field of study in emergent phenomena in biophysics. Adam’s hometown is Longmeadow, Massachusetts.

Ben Mildenhall – Ben is an undergraduate at Stanford University. He will pursue his PhD at UC Berkeley in computer science and graphics. Ben’s hometown is Oak Park, Illinois.

Sabrina Gonzalez Pasterski – Sabrina is currently pursuing a PhD at Harvard University in high energy physics. Her hometown is Chicago, Illinois.

Maxim Rabinovich – Maxim is currently pursuing a PhD at UC Berkeley in computer science, machine learning/natural language processing. His hometown is St. Petersburg, Florida.

Ben Shababo – Ben is currently pursuing a PhD at UC Berkeley in systems and computational neuroscience. His hometown is Havertown, Pennsylvania.

Ravi Sheth – Ravi is an undergraduate at Rice University. His PhD field of study will be bioengineering and synthetic biology. Ravi’s hometown is Cincinnati, Ohio.

Alexander Siegenfeld – Alexander is an undergraduate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His PhD field of study will be physics, condensed matter theory. Alexander’s hometown is Westport, Connecticut.

Charles Tschirhart – Charles is an undergraduate at the California Institute of Technology. His PhD field of study will be physics, experimental condensed matter. Charles’s hometown is Naperville, Illinois.

Katherine Xue – Katherine is a graduate student at University of Washington (UW) studying biology and genome sciences. She will pursue her PhD at UW. Katherine’s hometown is Knoxville, Tennessee.

Each Fellowship consists of up to five years of financial, mentoring and community support. This includes a stipend and full tuition valued at more than \$250,000 and research freedom at a participating graduate institution in the United States. The rigorous selection process began with a comprehensive written application, including four references. From a pool of over 800 applicants, the Foundation selected 150 candidates of exceptional creativity for a first round of interviews. These interviews are conducted by some of the nation’s foremost leaders in the science and technology fields, many of which are Hertz Fellows. This formal technical interview, known as The Hertz Interview, tests applicants’ knowledge of broad scientific principles and is the hallmark of the Hertz Foundation program. 50 finalists were then selected to participate in a second in-depth interview.

“The selection process always is incredibly challenging because of the amount of worthy candidates,” Galas adds. “But these Fellows demonstrated special vision, dedication, and future ambitions that helped them rise to the top.”

Key to its mission, the Hertz Foundation gives Fellows the freedom to innovate in their doctoral studies. They are not bound by traditional research funding restrictions or the funded projects of any faculty member. Hertz Fellows pursue their own ideas with complete financial independence, under the guidance of some of the country’s finest professors and mentors.

Alumni of the Hertz Fellowship include two Nobel laureates, a Fields Medal recipient, and a National Science Medal recipient. Fellows have also gone on to found more than 200 companies, register over 3,000 patents, head major universities, teach in academia, lead in key positions at National Laboratories, and hold senior positions in the United States Military.

Since 1963, the Hertz Foundation has awarded \$200 million (present value) for the graduate education of 1169 Fellows in science and engineering fields. Those selected sign a pledge to give back to the country in time of great need. This pledge was established by John Hertz, who hoped that his legacy would foster the strength and security of his adopted nation.

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About the Hertz Foundation

For over half a century, the Hertz Foundation has found and supported the best and brightest graduate students in applied, physical, and biological sciences. These select leaders drive scientific discovery, fuel technical innovations across disciplines and industries, and make breakthroughs that positively impact our county – and the world. Hertz Fellows pursue a PhD in the STEM fields and follow their academic curiosity with greater financial independence. These students are chosen for their intellect, their ingenuity and their potential to make scientific advancements for the public good. They join the vibrant and supportive Hertz Fellows Community, which gathers the Fellows together at annual workshops and retreats and encourages them to inspire and learn from one another across disciplines and generations. For more information visit www.hertzfoundation.org and follow the Foundation on [Facebook](#).