



## BECKMAN SCHOLARS PROGRAM 25TH ANNIVERSARY PRESS KIT

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# #BSPTURNS25

## Celebrating 25 Years of Beckman Scholars

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# PRESS RELEASE

## BECKMAN FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF BECKMAN SCHOLARS

The Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation is pleased to announce the 25th anniversary of its Beckman Scholars Program, an institutional award program that has, since its inception, supplied greater than \$36 million in funding support for mentored undergraduate research at more than 140 higher education institutions across the country. Through December 2023, the Foundation will mark the milestone with a special campaign involving Scholar spotlights, new social media series, and exciting additions to its online content, searchable under the hashtag *BSPTurns25*.

“Twenty-five years ago, the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation made a commitment to supporting a unique research opportunity for undergraduate students – providing a stipend for student researchers to spend 15 months working on a research project in collaboration with a mentor,” said Dr. Anne Hultgren, Beckman Foundation Executive Director. “The goal? For undergraduates to truly experience the research process, with the time needed to conceive of and complete a complex research project to prepare them to excel in the next stage of their scientific training. Scholars not only answer their research questions, but also learn about their passions and the many ways they can pursue their interest in science. The result? Over 1,500 Beckman Scholars have completed original research projects as part of the program, with alumni going on to impact academia, medicine, and industry.”

### Scholar Spotlights

Coinciding with the milestone campaign is the debut of the Beckman Friday Feature, a magazine-style piece focused on program awardees and their research that will be shared on the third Friday of each month. Question-and-answer blog conversations with Beckman Scholars will highlight the impact of the program on their academic and professional endeavors, and throwback photos, videos, and new slideshows and headers will include over 700 awardees. A rotating “hero” image on the BSP page of the Foundation’s website will display images of Scholars in the lab with callout captions detailing their research and institution.

- more -

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Arnold and Mabel  
**BECKMAN**  
FOUNDATION



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### **New Social Media Series**

On [Instagram](#) and [X](#) (formerly Twitter), followers will have an opportunity to get to know their fellow Beckman awardees in a fun and creative way through the Foundation's "A Day in the Life" series and "Science Careers" series, respectively. The former features images supplied by current Beckman Scholars that intermingle personal and academic aspects of their lives, while the latter explores the professional journeys and accomplishments of past Beckman Scholars.

### **Exciting Additions to Online Content**

In addition to a dedicated [campaign information page](#) on the Foundation's website, other online content kicks off in the month of October, including messages from the program's Executive Committee, a by-the-numbers program infographic, advice on selecting a research focus, and a five-part video interview with the Program Administrator.

Shared Dr. Hultgren, "As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Beckman Scholars Program, please join us in taking a deeper look at this program, its impact, and the personal stories of diverse Scholars that got their start in the research lab through this amazing program!"

### **About the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation**

Located in Irvine, California, the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation supports researchers and nonprofit research institutions in making the next generation of breakthroughs in chemistry and the life sciences. Founded in 1977 by 20th century scientific instrumentation pioneer Dr. Arnold O. Beckman and Mrs. Mabel Beckman, the Foundation supports United States institutions and young scientists whose creative, high-risk, and interdisciplinary research will lead to innovations and new tools and methods for scientific discovery. For more information, visit [beckman-foundation.org](http://beckman-foundation.org).

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## **About the Foundation**

The Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation was established in September 1977 by Dr. Arnold O. Beckman and Mrs. Mabel Beckman to give back to the scientific community. At that time, the Beckmans intended to disburse the full amount of the endowment within their lifetimes. Their passion for supporting science began with five mega-gifts during 1978-1989 to establish and construct the Beckman Research Institutes and Centers at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; City of Hope; California Institute of Technology; Stanford University; and University of California, Irvine.

The Beckmans also provided a major grant to the National Academy of Sciences to construct and operate the Beckman Center at the National Academies as a West Coast facility to host meetings and events focused on scientific topics and advancements in medicine.

Following the establishment of these Research Institutes, it became clear to the Beckmans that despite their careful philanthropic efforts, the value of the Foundation was continuing to grow and could provide support to the scientific community long after their lifetimes. In 1990, Dr. Beckman made the decision to change the Foundation to be in perpetuity, and the mission was updated by Dr. Beckman to reflect his wishes to support young researchers with funding for innovative and high-risk research projects.

Today, the Foundation continues according to the vision laid out by Dr. and Mrs. Beckman:

- Supporting Young Scientists: Through annual grant programs focused on the most promising young scientists
- Community Support Activities: By promoting science education and excellence in the local community
- Streamlined Operations: Ensuring that we don't "spend money to give money away"



### **About the Beckman Scholars Program**

The Beckman Scholars Program (BSP) provides 15-month mentored research experiences for exceptional undergraduate students in chemistry, biological sciences, or interdisciplinary combinations thereof. It is an institutional award that spans three years; each awardee institution receives support for six Scholar-Mentor pairs, two named in each year of the award. These pairs receive \$26,000 in funding, \$21,000 per student and \$5,000 per faculty mentor.

The application process is limited-submission by invitation only. Service academies and government laboratories, such as NIH or federally funded national laboratories, are not eligible institutions. Each year, the Beckman Foundation reviews information about institutions across the country and identifies colleges and universities to receive BSP application invitations.

Invited institutions demonstrate a significant commitment to undergraduate research. They also show the capability to compete successfully on a national level for scientific research funds in peer-reviewed government and private foundation supported programs over previous years. Their faculties and their research facilities are judged to be of the quality necessary to support the caliber of undergraduate research program sought for Beckman Scholars.

The Beckman Foundation issues BSP application invitations to hundreds of institutions each year. Invitations are emailed to a group of contacts at each institution and include an overview of the grant opportunity with a link to the application portal, along with important dates and submission details. Each institution registers an account to prepare an application for consideration. Eligible applications undergo a rigorous two-tiered review process to arrive at awardee selection. All aspects of the Scholar experience are evaluated in the review to ensure the awardee selection process is fair, equitable, and inclusive. Non-advancing applications receive helpful feedback.

Institutions selected for BSP awards each receive an award letter outlining the terms and conditions of the award, which must be signed and returned. An official announcement is made shortly after, and awardee institutions then begin their recruitment and selection processes. A timeline of these and other program activities, and FAQ, are provided on the BSP information webpage.



### **Selected Scholar Highlights**

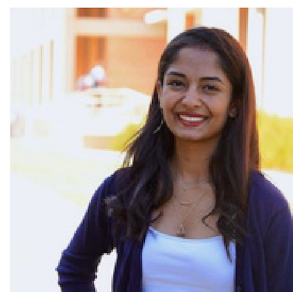
1998 BSP Leana Wen, MD, MSc, is a practicing physician, author of two books, Washington Post columnist, CNN medical analyst, and a public health professor at George Washington University. Previously, she served as Health Commissioner for the City of Baltimore and President of Planned Parenthood.



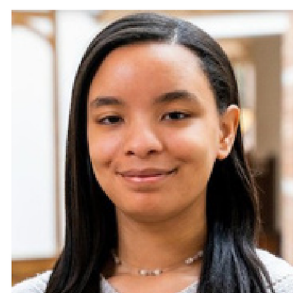
1998 BSP Damion Shelton, PhD, is the co-founder and CEO of Agility Robotics, which builds multi-purpose humanoid robots made to navigate and work in the same space as people. The company recently announced plans to open its 70,000-sq.-ft. robot factory, RoboFab, a world's first.



2017 BSP Niba Audrey Nirmal, MSc, is host of the PBS series *Hungry Planet*, which looks at the scientists and communities working to sustain the world's food supply amid the climate crisis, encouraging viewers to consider how food makes it to the table and why their individual choices matter.



2022 BSP Camryn Carter, BS, was Cell Press' Rising Black Scientist Awardee and first author of "Atomistic Insights into the Binding of SARS-COV-2 Spike Receptor Binding Domain with the Human ACE2 Receptor: The Importance of Residue 493," published in the *Journal of Molecular Graphics and Modelling*; now attending MIT's PhD program in Theoretical Chemistry.



Read more Beckman Scholar highlights:  
[www.beckman-foundation.org/latest-news](http://www.beckman-foundation.org/latest-news)

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