

Providing Hands-On Experience in Public Policy

The 2026 Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering & Science Policy Fellowship

A PROGRAM OF THE VIRGINIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, AND MEDICINE

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Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine

The Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine is a nonprofit organization consisting of members of the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine who reside or work in Virginia as well as Virginians who are leaders in these fields. Through its nonpartisan network of experts, the Virginia Academy provides rigorous analytical, technical, and scientific support to inform policy on issues critical to the Commonwealth.

The Virginia Academy also promotes research, fosters interchange among individuals and organizations, and recognizes and honors Virginians who have made major contributions to science, engineering, and medicine.

Thank You

The Virginia Academy would like to thank our 2026 university sponsors—George Mason University, Hampton University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, Radford University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia State University, Virginia Tech, University of Virginia, and William & Mary.

We would also like to thank our generous funders—Huntington Ingalls Industries and The MITRE Corporation—for helping us provide a diverse and talented group of science, engineering, and healthcare graduate students with the opportunity to serve in policymaking positions at Virginia institutions.

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from the
Program Coordinator



The Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science (COVES) Policy Fellowship continues to grow in both size and impact. Now in its seventh year, the fellowship has become a valuable resource for Virginia host offices seeking talented graduate students to contribute their scientific and technical expertise to meaningful policy projects. In 2026, five new host offices participated in the program, while many returning offices welcomed fellows for a second, third, and even seventh time. Their continued engagement reflects both the high caliber of COVES fellows and the value they bring to the Commonwealth.

The fellowship has become a valuable resource for Virginia host offices seeking talented graduate students to contribute their scientific and technical expertise to meaningful policy projects.

This year's cohort included 19 graduate students representing 10 Virginia universities. We were especially excited to welcome our first fellow from Radford University, further expanding the fellowship's reach across Virginia's academic community. Throughout the summer, fellows supported a wide range of policy initiatives, from conducting research and data analysis to developing recommendations and engaging with stakeholders. Their contributions made a meaningful impact on their host offices while providing valuable firsthand experience at the intersection of science and public policy.

This year also marked an important milestone when COVES reached 100 fellows since its inception in 2020, reflecting the growth of a statewide network of scientists, engineers, and healthcare professionals with firsthand experience in the policymaking process. The fellowship prepares participants to pursue careers in public policy, academia, industry, and beyond with a deeper understanding of how science and policy intersect.

As I reflect on my first year as program coordinator, I am proud of this year's fellows and grateful to the host offices, partner universities, sponsors, mentors, and others who make the program possible. As COVES enters its eighth year in 2027, I look forward to building on this strong foundation and continuing to expand opportunities for graduate students to bring their expertise into the policymaking process.

With gratitude,

Carreen de Cárdenas
COVES Policy Fellowship Program Coordinator

vasem.org/strengthening-policymaking

COVES Policy Fellowship Program



Making a Vital Connection

"Fellows come in without the institutional assumptions the rest of us carry, so they ask good, basic questions that sharpen our own thinking. They're also genuinely rigorous."

—JODI KUHN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
JOINT COMMISSION ON TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE

The challenges leaders face today—in such areas as health, climate, and technology—are unprecedented in their scope, complexity, and urgency. All too often, however, decision-makers lack access to the accurate and impartial scientific and technical information needed to act decisively and wisely. The obstacle: a critical shortage of scientists, healthcare professionals, and engineers with the necessary training to be effective policy advisors.

In 2020, the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine created the COVES Policy Fellowship program to help bridge that gap. Although many graduate students in STEM fields are eager to take a more active role in policymaking, the opportunities to gain the skills and experience to make meaningful contributions are limited. Thanks to the fellowship, they can now have that opportunity.

The COVES Policy Fellowship program enables young researchers to spend 12 weeks during the summer months serving as science, healthcare, and technology advisors in legislative offices and executive agencies as well as with prominent Virginia companies and nonprofits.



The Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science Policy Fellowship program aims to strengthen the scientific and technical capacity of state government, private industry, and nonprofit organizations in the Commonwealth by encouraging and equipping young scientists and engineers to be effective advisors for public policy.

A Compelling Opportunity

The fellowship program has been carefully designed to ensure that both fellows and host offices gain maximum benefit from the experience. It is modeled after successful programs developed by such organizations as the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine and the American Association for the Advancement of Science:

- **The fellowship begins** with a two-day science policy boot camp and orientation, where fellows learn the fundamentals of science policy, science communication, and policymaking in Virginia.
- **During their 12-week** placements, fellows work on projects that address real-world challenges facing their host organizations, applying scientific and technical expertise to inform decision-making.
- **Fellows participate in** professional development, networking opportunities, and field trips throughout the summer, engaging with leaders and organizations across government, industry, nonprofits, and academia while gaining firsthand exposure to science and technology issues affecting the Commonwealth.
- **As part of** the VASEM community, fellows are invited to attend briefings, meetings, and the annual VASEM Summit, expanding their understanding of policy issues and building connections across sectors.
- **Fellows conclude the** program by presenting their work at the annual COVES Forum, showcasing the impact of their projects and reflecting on their fellowship experience.

Sponsors and Hosts

George Mason University, Hampton University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, Radford University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia State University, Virginia Tech, University of Virginia, and William & Mary supported our 2026 cohort. The program receives additional support from Huntington Ingalls and The MITRE Corporation.

Host offices have been so impressed by the caliber of our fellows that they have continued working with many of them after they completed the 12-week program, and several host offices have extended full-time offers. In collaboration with their host offices, fellows have published blog posts, science policy documents, and reports highlighting challenges facing the Commonwealth.



COVES Hosts

The COVES Policy Fellowship program has already improved the capacity of institutions throughout Virginia to make policy. Fellows have served at the following organizations:

"Because we are a small, legislative office, we don't have the capacity for in-depth analysis. Each year, our COVES fellows provide sound policy recommendations based on high-quality research and significant stakeholder engagement."

—TRACY EPPARD, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF SENATOR CREIGH DEEDS

Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services*

Dept. of Conservation and Recreation

Dept. of Education

Dept. of Environmental Quality*

Dept. of Forestry

Dept. of Health*

Dept. of Planning and Budget*

Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation*

Dept. of Social Services*

Dept. of Transportation

Dept. of Wildlife Resources

Dominion Energy

Joint Commission on Health Care

Joint Commission on Technology and Science*

Office of the Secretary of Education

Office of the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources

Office of Delegate Bonita Anthony*

Office of Delegate Mark Downey*

Office of Delegate Sally Hudson

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Office of Senator Creigh Deeds*

Office of Senator Jennifer McClellan

Port of Virginia

Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

Virginia Behavioral Health Commission

Virginia Bio*

Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

Virginia Center for Health Innovation*

Virginia Energy

Virginia Forestry Association

Virginia Health Catalyst*

Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority*

Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

**2026 Host Office*

2026 COVES Policy Fellows



"This fellowship helped me see how science, community, and policy combine to protect Virginia's coastline and deepened my belief in the importance of making that science accessible to the people it affects most."

Suleiman Abdulsalam

Host Office: Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Home Institution: Suleiman is a doctoral candidate in planning, governance, and globalization, part of the urban environmental design and planning track at Virginia Tech.

Summer Responsibilities: Suleiman collected and documented standardized living shoreline monitoring data across Norfolk, Hampton, and Virginia Beach using GIS tools. He visited restoration sites, engaged with coastal practitioners and residents, and explored policy implications for property owners. He also developed science communication materials and supported coastal restoration activities with community partners.



"This fellowship showed me that science can do so much more when we make sure it goes beyond academia and reaches the hands of policymakers."

Hanne Borstlap

Host Office: Office of Lieutenant Governor Ghazala Hashmi

Home Institution: Hanne is a doctoral candidate in environmental sciences at the University of Virginia.

Summer Responsibilities: Hanne conducted environmental research to help inform legislation for the 2027 General Assembly session. Her work focused on strategies to proactively address failing septic systems and protect Virginia's waterways, as well as policy solutions to mitigate the impacts of saltwater intrusion on agricultural lands.



"This experience highlighted the mutual benefits of collaboration between scientists and policymakers in developing data-driven policies that are practical to implement and maximize public benefit."

Janna Brown

Host Office: Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Home Institution: Janna is a doctoral candidate in civil engineering at the University of Virginia.

Summer Responsibilities: Janna developed a framework to help DRPT identify transit stops across Virginia that would benefit most from safety improvements. She compiled and analyzed data for more than 17,000 transit stops and collaborated with stakeholders, including the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment.



"This fellowship expanded my understanding of how policy decisions shape the oral health challenges I am studying."

Maria Colón

Host Office: Virginia Health Catalyst

Home Institution: Maria is a doctoral candidate in oral health research with a concentration in immunology at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Summer Responsibilities: Maria authored an issue brief examining Virginia's new $2,000 annual cap on Medicaid adult dental benefits, including cost-shifting effects and approaches used by other states. She conducted in-depth interviews, attended the National Council of State Legislatures Legislative Summit, and participated in science policy and mentorship activities with fellows and students.



"The experience highlighted the importance of keeping patients, providers, and communities at the center of healthcare policy."

Payton Davenport

Host Office: Office of Delegate Mark Downey

Home Institution: Payton is a doctoral candidate in health psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Summer Responsibilities: Payton supported healthcare policy initiatives focused on the corporate practice of medicine and maternal healthcare workforce retention in rural Virginia. She reviewed research and legislation, identified policy gaps, and developed recommendations to inform potential legislative actions and strengthen healthcare workforce policy and service delivery.



"This fellowship connected me with incredible people working at the intersection of healthcare and policy, reminding me how much our communities and workplaces matter."

Paige Dickerhoof

Host Office: Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority

Home Institution: Paige is a master's student in industrial and organizational psychology at Radford University.

Summer Responsibilities: Paige conducted a community analysis of two Southwest Virginia regions to assess their health workforce development ecosystems. She identified key stakeholders, legislators, and local officials and developed strategies to support rural resident retention. She also prepared a brief examining state childcare subsidies for healthcare workers.



"I most valued the opportunity to contribute to the responsible management of Virginia's water resources, especially as demand increases and droughts become more frequent."

Lindsey Dillard

Host Office: Department of Environmental Quality

Home Institution: Lindsey is a master's student at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science at William & Mary.

Summer Responsibilities: Lindsey compiled and analyzed data on more than 400 surface water intakes to strengthen Virginia's water-supply modeling and inform ecological protection. She also supported town hall meetings related to revisions to environmental justice permitting guidance, with a focus on fair treatment and meaningful public involvement.



Leila Hesami

"This fellowship showed me that real progress in life sciences happens where research, policy, and technology meet."

Host Office: Virginia Bio

Home Institution: Leila is a doctoral candidate in materials science and engineering at Norfolk State University.

Summer Responsibilities: Leila surveyed life science funding initiatives across states and conducted a comparative analysis of funding sources, priorities, and program structures. Her research identified opportunities for Virginia to strengthen support for life sciences and clinical research and enhance the Commonwealth's long-term competitiveness in the life sciences industry.



Timothy Ho

"My fellowship experience has challenged me to adapt and explore various new perspectives while helping me build my confidence in my scientific and communication skills."

Host Office: Office of Senator Creigh Deeds

Home Institution: Tim is a doctoral candidate in biomedical engineering at the University of Virginia.

Summer Responsibilities: Tim developed a policy memo examining the integration of artificial intelligence and large language models into healthcare. He researched regulatory approaches, potential applications, and safety considerations and connected with state agencies, nonprofits, and hospitals to identify opportunities for responsible technology implementation.



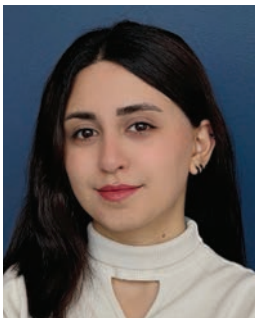
Blakely Lockhart

"This fellowship demonstrated the importance of community engagement in both research and government for developing meaningful and sustainable policy."

Host Office: Office of Senator Creigh Deeds

Home Institution: Blakely is a doctoral candidate in the translational biology, medicine, and health program at Virginia Tech.

Summer Responsibilities: Blakely developed policy memos addressing maternal mental health, postpartum care continuity, juvenile psychiatric care, and healthcare workforce development. She conducted state and national landscape assessments to identify gaps in the distribution and implementation of healthcare resources and developed recommendations to strengthen preventive care and community health.



Faezeh Mahdavi

"Behind every credentialing requirement is a career trajectory, a reminder that policy details are never just paperwork."

Host Office: Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

Home Institution: Faezeh is a doctoral candidate in health services research at Old Dominion University.

Summer Responsibilities: Faezeh researched evidence-based recovery metrics and career pathways for Virginia's peer recovery workforce. She developed a framework for measuring recovery-oriented outcomes, evaluated validated instruments for a statewide needs assessment, and compared credentialing pathways across states. Her work identified an opportunity for Virginia to connect peer experience with clinical career advancement.



Ruth Mtuwa

"Communities speak through their data. Our responsibility as scientists is to uncover what it is telling us so policy can respond with purpose, precision, and equity."

Host Office: Department of Health

Home Institution: Ruth is a doctoral candidate in biomedical engineering at Virginia Tech.

Summer Responsibilities: Ruth developed a data-driven framework using statewide hospitalization data to estimate the risk of transient ischemic attack progressing to stroke in Virginia. Her work integrated epidemiology, predictive modeling, and geographic analysis to identify disparities and generate evidence that can inform equitable public health policy and stroke prevention strategies.



Erica Shafer

"Working on rural health policy showed me how research can help make the unique challenges facing rural communities visible and turn those insights into meaningful change."

Host Office: Virginia Center for Health Innovation

Home Institution: Erica is a doctoral candidate in cognitive neuroscience at Virginia Tech.

Summer Responsibilities: Erica supported health policy research and evaluation efforts focused on rural health in Virginia. She proposed evaluation measures for the Rural Health Transformation Program's integrated care for dual-eligible beneficiaries and researched the current landscape of Food Is Medicine initiatives in Virginia.



Pankaj Niroula

"Contributing research in my host office showed me how much work goes into bringing a bill to life and how much more goes into making sure it survives to enactment."

Host Office: Office of Delegate Bonita Anthony

Home Institution: Pankaj is a doctoral candidate in computer science at William & Mary.

Summer Responsibilities: Pankaj analyzed state enforcement approaches for emerging technologies, comparing AI governance obligations enacted by leading states. He examined changes resulting from a state policy rollback and federal litigation, assessed emerging technology harms affecting Virginia consumers, and mapped existing statutes that could support outcome-based enforcement frameworks for future legislation.



Xiaorong Shan

"Environmental challenges rarely occur in isolation. This fellowship showed me why evaluating cumulative burdens and being transparent about how they are measured is essential for understanding their effects on communities."

Host Office: Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Home Institution: Xiaorong is a doctoral candidate in civil and environmental engineering at George Mason University.

Summer Responsibilities: Xiaorong developed a U.S. Census block group-level framework for assessing cumulative environmental impacts across Virginia. She integrated air quality, waste facility, and demographic data and established reproducible methods for data processing, quality assurance, and geographic analysis. Her work produced standardized datasets, maps, and documentation to support DEQ's environmental justice efforts.



"The COVES fellowship gave me the opportunity to apply technology and data-driven solutions to real-world challenges and create tools that can have a meaningful impact on the lives of Virginians."

Hunter Smith

Host Office: Department of Social Services (DSS)

Home Institution: Hunter is a master's student in computer science at Virginia State University.

Summer Responsibilities: Hunter developed data-driven tools and dashboards to support DSS workers and the Virginians they serve. He transformed complex data into accessible insights and decision-support tools designed to improve efficiency, inform decision-making, and strengthen service delivery while exploring applications involving software development and emerging technologies.



"This experience gave me a greater appreciation for the relationship between science and policy and for communicating scientific knowledge in ways that can meaningfully inform decisions."

Alejandro Velasco

Host Office: Joint Commission on Technology and Science (JCOTS)

Home Institution: Alejandro is a doctoral candidate in computer science at William & Mary.

Summer Responsibilities: Alejandro authored a bill study report on the App Store Accountability Act (SB 237) and a brief on the Digital Choice Act (SB 85). He presented findings and policy recommendations to the full commission, which adopted them as design principles, and helped organize the 2026 JCOTS Technology Policy Symposium at William & Mary.



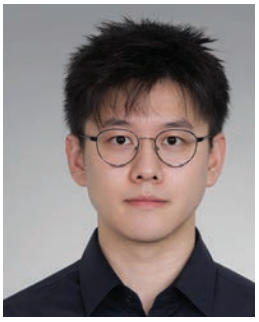
"This fellowship provided a front-row seat to the policy process, showing me that architectural knowledge and rigorous research can directly inform equitable, real-world housing solutions."

Sierra Williams

Host Office: Department of Planning and Budget (DPB)

Home Institution: Sierra is a master's student in architecture at Hampton University.

Summer Responsibilities: Sierra evaluated state policies related to affordable housing, focusing on financing manufactured homes, and drafted policy recommendations for the DPB director to address financing barriers. She also worked with DPB and the Department of General Services on administrative improvements and applied her architectural expertise to capital outlay projects and forms.



"Through COVES, I learned how scientific and technical expertise can translate into practical policy, built my confidence, and became a more thoughtful and well-rounded researcher."

Yingjie Zhang

Host Office: Virginia Bio

Home Institution: Yingjie is a doctoral candidate in bioinformatics and computational biology at George Mason University.

Summer Responsibilities: Yingjie examined how Virginia can support responsible AI adoption in clinical trials through governance, infrastructure, workforce readiness, and cross-sector coordination. He also compared state R&D and life sciences tax credits, conducted stakeholder interviews and policy research, and supported efforts to establish a Virginia Bio student chapter at George Mason University.



COVES Alumna

Jem Baldisimo-Sepulveda

Jem Baldisimo-Sepulveda is always looking for opportunities to explore new career possibilities and refine her choices. The COVES Policy Fellowship Program was an important step in cementing her interest in working at the intersection of science and public policy.

Baldisimo-Sepulveda was initially captivated by marine science when she saw *Finding Nemo* as a college sophomore in the Philippines, but after earning a bachelor's degree in environmental sciences, she found herself attracted to the connection between the sea and the communities of people who draw their livelihood from it. She volunteered for Coral Cay Conservation, a nonprofit dedicated to community-based resource management, moved to Australia to complete a master's degree in environmental management, and took a position with the Haribon Foundation, perhaps the foremost conservation organization in the Philippines. At Haribon, she helped create the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and then participated in a three-year assessment of coral reef environments and fisheries livelihoods in communities across the Philippines that included extensive interviews with local fishers.

In the course of this project, she learned that the Philippines was the top supplier of reef fishes to the global aquarium trade. When she moved to the United States as a Fulbright Scholar to pursue a doctorate in ecological sciences at Old Dominion University, she used vulnerability scoring and genetic analysis to assess the health of these fish stocks.

> "I saw firsthand how the agency worked and how decisions were made. This was invaluable."

"My experience with Haribon and work I did on policy after I arrived in Virginia helped clarify my conviction that I wanted to use my expertise to help shape public policy," Baldisimo-Sepulveda said. "When I found out that there was a program like the COVES Policy Fellowship that would give me insight into how policy was made and that the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) was one of the host offices, I jumped at the opportunity."

While helping the VMRC streamline data collection on fish stocks, Baldisimo-Sepulveda attended monthly agency-wide meetings. "I saw firsthand how the agency worked and how decisions were made," she said. "This was invaluable."

Baldisimo-Sepulveda also believes that her COVES experience contributed to her successful application for a year-long Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship, where she was assigned to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coral Reef Conservation Program and supported the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force.

"The bottom line is that I like being able to translate complex scientific information into forms that are useful for those shaping science policy," she said. "My COVES experience was an important step in my being able to achieve that goal."

COVES Alumna

Nichole Leach



When Nichole Leach heard about the COVES Policy Fellowship, she was intrigued. "I wasn't sure what I would do when I graduated, but I thought that every scientist should have some background in public policy," she said. A master's student studying coral reef adaptation and resilience at Old Dominion University, Leach was matched with the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR).

The experience was eye opening. "I was worried because I thought 12 weeks didn't seem like a long time, but the fellowship organizers and the host offices make every second count," she said.

At DWR, Leach worked closely with Becky Gwynn, the department's executive deputy director, on resilience initiatives. She was responsible for interviewing more than 30 staff members across the department's many divisions to inventory its resilience efforts and catalog the challenges staff face in meeting their objectives. In addition, she drafted a climate resilience and adaptation framework, which the department can use to coordinate its work.

Leach also attended the annual Resilient Virginia Conference, where for the first time she saw scientists doing something other than basic research. "They were talking about how their research affected local communities or the state as a whole," she said. "It was a revelation."

Inspired by her COVES experience, Leach secured a Katherine S. McCarter Graduate Student Policy Award from the Ecological Society of America, which gave her a two-day glimpse into policymaking on the federal level.

"The COVES Policy Fellowship changed my ideas about my career," she said. "I thought I wanted to earn my doctorate and become a researcher at a university. I am now focused on using my background to help state or local agencies better plan and coordinate their environmental efforts."

COVES Alumna

Linda Miranda



When Linda Miranda applied for a COVES Policy Fellowship, the master's student at Hampton University was at an impasse. The NIH grant funding her research on early onset prostate cancer among African Americans had been cancelled, and she was not sure about her next step. Her work as a COVES fellow with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation introduced her to the excitement of field research and sent her academic career in a new direction.

Under the mentorship of Kati Grigsby, the foundation's Hampton Roads restoration coordinator, she helped build a living shoreline along Pine Cone Harbour on the Hampton River. Using natural materials like oyster shells and coconut fiber, the foundation and its partners are creating a natural buffer and filtration system that will be more resilient in the face of storms and sea level rise than traditional hardened structures like seawalls and jetties. Miranda also produced a report for the Virginia Marine Resources Commission on the use of loose oyster shells for shoreline protection.

"Before my COVES fellowship, I had never done any field work," Miranda said. "I was exhausted at the end of each day, but it was so meaningful to me that I could actually see the difference I was making—and it made me think I would like to do more field work."

Rather than take a comprehensive exam to meet her master's requirements, Miranda opted to study the use of basalt-fiber oyster shell bags for shoreline restoration as a sustainable alternative to plastic mesh bags, even though it meant delaying her graduation date. Encouraged by her advisors, Grigsby and Deidre Gibson, chair of Hampton's Department of Marine and Environmental Science, she secured a Virginia Sea Grant Fellowship to complete the project and has set her sights on earning a doctorate. "COVES changed the trajectory of my career and my life," Miranda said.

COVES Alumni



The goal of the COVES program is to acquaint graduate students in healthcare, science, and technology with the process of policymaking and to enable them to explore career options in these areas. In many cases, the COVES experience has confirmed their existing interest or encouraged them to shift career goals. Of our first six cohorts, more than a third are now pursuing careers in policy. They include the following individuals:

Ryan Chaban (2020) Director of Fusion Prize Development at XPRIZE

Sarah Shultz (2020) Associate health policy analyst at Virginia's Joint Commission on Health Care

Sandra Yankah Addo (2020) Postdoctoral research associate at Duke-Margolis Institute for Health Policy

Janey Dike (2021) Psychologist at New York Family Court Mental Health Services

Chelsea Gray (2021) Maritime policy analyst at Balsa Research; former Knauss Fellow at National Sea Grant College Program

Tara Illgner (2021) Policy lead at Global CCS Institute; former Yale Environmental Fellow

Nikita Lad (2021) Environmental administrator at Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Margaret Nagai-Singer (2021) Senior research associate at Food Security Leadership Council; former Science & Technology Policy Fellow at American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

Erin Robartes (2021) Research scientist at Virginia Transportation Research Council; former Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellow at the National Academies

Homa Jalaeian Taghadomi (2021) Civil engineer for City of Virginia Beach

Frankie Edwards (2022) Research associate at Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

Alissa Ganser (2022) Former president of Virginia Scientist-Community Interface

Allison Lepp (2022) Policy analyst at CPower Energy; former Knauss Fellow at Global Ocean Monitoring

Kyle Mason (2022) Health Services and Health Policy Postdoctoral Fellow at Yale University

Yezi Yang (2022) Former AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow

Shelita Augustus (2023) Science analyst at National Science Foundation

Duc Tran (2023) Researcher at U.S. Department of Agriculture

Jemelyn Baldisimo-Sepulveda (2024) Former Knauss Fellow at Coral Reef Conservation Program; former Virginia Sea Grant Graduate Fellow

Kiara Brown (2024) Former Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellow

Zach Dawson (2024) President of Science Policy Initiative at UVA

Carreen de Cardenas (2024) COVES Policy Fellowship program coordinator

Synphane Gibbs-Shelton (2024) Patent examiner at U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Luke Goodman (2024) ORISE Fellow at U.S. Department of Energy

Gates Palissery (2024) Hellman and Simons Fellow in Science and Technology Policy at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Kenn Dela Cruz (2025) Harvard Data Strategy Fellow at A+ Education Partnership

Julia Davis (2025) Virginia Sea Grant Graduate Fellow

Annie Hinson (2025) Co-founder of SciClin

Nichole Leach (2025) Graduate student policy awardee through Ecological Society of America

Linda Miranda (2025) Virginia Sea Grant Graduate Fellow

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SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, AND MEDICINE

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THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA ENGINEERING & SCIENCE POLICY FELLOWSHIP
A PROGRAM OF THE VIRGINIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, AND MEDICINE