

2026 New Graduate Student Panel



Bhavana Tumakuru Mahesh

Program/Degree and (expected) Graduation Year(s): PhD, MS in Data Science and expected graduation would be May 2027.

Bhavana Tumakuru Mahesh is a Master student in Data Science Program at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee with experience in research, student wellness programming, and applied artificial intelligence. Currently serving as a Program Assistant for the Peer Health Education program at the Student Health and Wellness Centre. Selected as an NMDSI Spring 2026 Research Scholar, and currently working as a

Research Assistant under Professor Ayesha Siddika Nipu on optimizing Large Language Models for healthcare applications.

Pronouns: She/Her



Angela Marie Edwards Mish

Program/Degree and (expected) Graduation Year(s): Biological Sciences, Master's Thesis Program, Spring 2027 Graduation

During my time at UWM I have TA-ed a biology lab for non-majors, done research (two publications so far), and worked part-time at the UWM greenhouse on campus. My research interests are primarily how amphibians and reptiles use coloration to communicate. After grad school I am interested in scientific education, communication, and conservation and I have done a variety of outreach related extracurriculars.

Pronouns: They/them



Stephen Tochi Nkwocha

Program/Degree and (expected) Graduation Year(s): Ph.D. in Chemistry, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, expected Spring 2027.

Stephen Tochi Nkwocha is a Ph.D. candidate in Chemistry at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee whose research focuses on the spectroscopy and kinetics of metalloenzymes involved in the nitrogen cycle, with applications in environmental remediation and bioinorganic chemistry. Beyond the laboratory, he is passionate about science education, mentorship, family and student leadership, having served as President of the Nigerian Students Association and mentored numerous international and undergraduate students.

Stephen aspires to build a career that combines impactful scientific research, teaching, and outreach to inspire the next generation of scientists.

Pronouns: He/Him



Esther Oni

Program/Degree and (expected) Graduation Year(s): Master of Science in Nonprofit Management and Leadership 2026.

The Nonprofit sector has been the perfect opportunity for me to be part of a workforce driven by social impact and helping individuals. UWM's Nonprofit program helped me to hone existing skills and get connected with experts in the field! I enjoy meeting new people, trying new meals, finding amazing views, and watching East Asian dramas.

Pronouns: She/Her



Mari Sweetman

Program/Degree and (expected) Graduation Year(s): MA: English, Plan A: Literature and Cultural Theory, Expected Graduation Date Spring 2027.

Mari has a BS in Biology and a BA in English literature from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and has worked in wildlife rehabilitation, criminal data analysis and processing, and prairie restoration. An advocate for interdisciplinary studies and approaches, she's currently interested in studying food literatures, environmental literatures, queer/trans pedagogies, and weird/speculative fiction. In her free time, Mari loves to spend her time walking throughout Milwaukee on its many public trails and beaches, trying any affordable restaurant or bar, snuggling with her two cats, and making jewelry or puppets.

Pronouns: She/her/hers