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Hello from your [Lehigh Materials Science and Engineering \(MSE\) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) Committee](#)! We share newsletters throughout the academic year to highlight DEI-related events, resources, and activities in our department, Lehigh community, and beyond.

To close out the Spring 2024 semester, we are delighted to highlight two of our MSE graduate students Anthony Tsekrekas and Junyan Zhang. The MSE DEI Committee recognizes students, not only for their academic success, but also for their contributions to education and outreach in our department and local community.

**Anthony Tsekrekas** has participated in many outreach programs for MSE and Lehigh. He has volunteered doing exciting glass-based demonstrations for SEI, MAT Camp, CHOICES and ENGR 005 in 2023. He has also been the MSE Graduate Student Representative on the Graduate Student Senate during AY2022-2023 and currently serves as the Graduate Student Representative for the MSE department.

**Junyan Zhang** participated as the Student Coordinator for the 2022 and 2023 MAT Camps. He also volunteered as a Student Technical Assistant for Lehigh's Microscopy School. For MAT Camp, he helped organize the event and prepare and showcase demos about materials science and engineering. He used his expertise with SEM and FIB during the microscopy school to highlight our state-of-the-art microscopy facilities.



*"I have found that I naturally gravitate towards them [demo presenter] as I really enjoy the role of teaching others in fun ways, and there is no better way to do this than by breaking glass!"*

- Anthony Tsekrekas



*"It's at this time I understood that maybe just my little effort may have changed another's whole life, to have students interested and would like to learn more later on."*

- Junyan Zhang

During our department picnic hosted by the Student Materials Society this week, two of our former MSE DEI committee members Jonny Valenzuela and Itzel Esparza were awarded DEI Champion Awards! These awards, which include \$200, are given to one graduate student and one undergraduate student who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to and/or advanced DEI practices within our MSE department. Please join us in congratulating Jonny and Itzel and thanking them for their efforts and positive impact.



*Jonathan Valenzuela (left) and Itzel Esparza (right) posing with MSE Department Chair Prof. Ricardo Castro upon receiving their MSE DEI Champion Awards!*

We are still seeking nomination(s) for our next MSE DEI Committee representatives for all positions:

- undergraduate student
- graduate student
- faculty
- staff

The representative will serve on the committee for at least three consecutive semesters. All representatives are expected to participate in monthly committee meetings and actively contribute to advancing our goals to make our department a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment. The nomination/self-nomination should include a brief paragraph (½ page maximum) indicating why the nominee/you would like to participate and will contribute positively to our mission. Please submit to [mse-dei-committee-list@lehigh.edu](mailto:mse-dei-committee-list@lehigh.edu) by May 31, 2024 at 5 pm ET! If you are submitting a nomination on behalf of someone else, please confirm the nominee is interested in the position. No previous experience is required! Prior committee members are also welcome as long as they have not served within the last year.

Sincerely,

The MSE DEI Committee

Lesley Chow (Faculty), pronouns: she, her, hers

Casey Dolan (Undergraduate Student), pronouns: she, her, hers

Joel Garcia Jr. (Graduate Student), pronouns: he, him, his

Laura Moyer (Staff), pronouns: she, her, hers

Siddha Pimputkar (Faculty), pronouns: he, him, his

Tenzin Sherpa (Graduate Student), pronouns: she, her, hers

Nicholas Strandwitz (Faculty), pronouns: he, him, his



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