



NOBLE FELLOWS NEWS

May 2025



Noble Fellows Gather to Reconnect, Celebrate 2025 Fellows and Welcome New Fellows

Twenty four Noble Fellows and their guests gathered on April 25 for the annual meeting of the Noble Fellowship. After a reception in the Gambrell Center's Vannoy Lobby, attendees gathered for dinner on the stage of the Kathryn Greenhoot Recital Hall. Dr. Siu Challons-Lipton kicked off the program with welcome remarks before dinner. Following the meal, Student Fellows Luke Haefner and Kellie Williams shared overviews of their projects, followed by Faculty Fellows Dr. Jennifer Piazza-Pick and Dr. John Bennett.

Luke and Kellie were then presented with their Noble Fellows graduation cords. Ginger Marr then introduced the 2025-26 Fellows: Omari Emmanuel, Daphne Mendoza-Tristan, Dr. Justin Smith, and Dr. Greg Berka (who shared a virtual greeting). Founding Fellow Tamara Burrell capped off the evening with closing remarks, reflecting on the journey of the Fellowship. Founding Fellow and benefactor Dr. Jerry Greenhoot also shared comments and expressed gratitude to the group for their commitment to the mission of the program.

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Highlights of Project Presentations

Luke Haefner presented "There Is More to Me", which is the culmination of his work with Freedom Fighting Missionaries. His composition, performed by the Bechtler Ensemble, aims to open a wider dialogue about mass incarceration and how it affects those in our immediate communities.

Kel Williams provided an overview of her project, which explored a narrow genre of music within the African-American church experience. Her research of the "Note" or "Hymn" choir music helped explain its historical relevance, importance, and symbolism within the larger genre of Black Sacred music.

Dr. Jennifer Piazza-Pick shared that her project included recording a second album that showcases women composers in classical music with her soprano and clarinet duo, Whistling Hens, a chamber music ensemble that also includes clarinetist Natalie Groom. [Listen](#)

Dr. John Bennett shared progress on his project, which focused on the influence of lived experience on the work of award-winning professional chefs. This builds on his previous research conducted in the context of scholar-practitioners in the field of organization development.



Congratulations!

Luke Haefner and Kellie Williams Earn Degrees on May 3

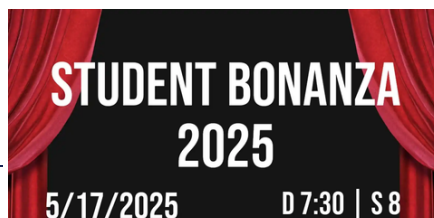
Congratulations to Kellie “Kel” Williams and Luke Haefner, who received their undergraduate degrees at Queens’ 166th Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, May 3.

After heading to Buenos Aires, Argentina for a Spanish language immersion program, Kel will be finishing up a second B.A. through UNC-Charlotte (African Studies) in 2026 before applying to graduate programs. She’ll also continue working as a staff member in the Everett Library.

Luke will be moving to Roanoke, Virginia, and opening Songhorse Music, which offers lessons in piano, guitar, and composition as well as piano tuning and repair.

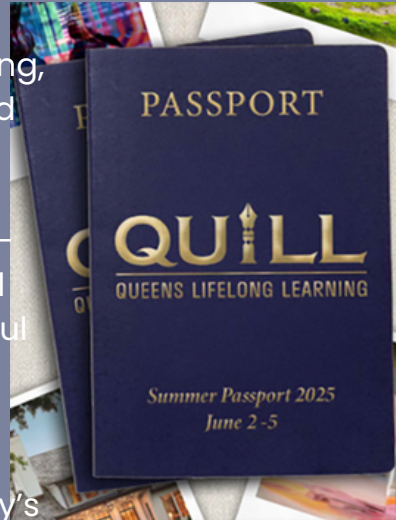
Dr. Kira McEntire to Perform with Bloom Movement Artistry on May 17th

Faculty Fellow Kira McEntire will be performing on May 17 with Bloom Movement Artistry in their 4th annual Student Bonanza.



QUIll Summer Lifelong Learning Offers Great Opportunities for ALL

This summer, join fellow lifelong learners in the very first QUIll Summer Passport Program at Queens. Designed for intellectually curious adults, this enriching program pairs engaging, interactive sessions led by Queens professors (including Faculty Fellow Dr. Siu Challons-Lipton) and other local experts with meaningful cultural experiences each afternoon.



Rooted in the university’s mission to cultivate critical thinking, and global perspectives, the Passport Program offers a welcoming, inspiring environment to learn, connect, and grow. Whether you’re diving into a new subject or reconnecting with a longtime interest, this is your passport to a summer of thoughtful exploration and lasting connection. [LEARN MORE about QUIll](#)

Consider Serving on the Noble Fellowship Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Noble Fellowship will have its quarterly meeting in June, and one item on the agenda will be to discuss the next election of Executive Committee members for the coming year. If you would like to be added to the slate of candidates or would like to nominate another Fellow for this role, please let Ginger Marr know as soon as possible. The Executive Committee meets virtually, once per quarter, typically for one hour or less. Once finalized, the slate will be presented to the full membership for a vote later this summer.

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