



R.E.A.L. Program

(Resumed Education for Adult Learning)

R.E.A.L. NEWSLETTER FALL 2019



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LETTER FROM THE DEANS:

Welcome to our inaugural REAL newsletter! The REAL program is for students 24 years or older who transfer to Tufts to pursue a bachelor’s degree. Some REAL students are veterans, parents, or married, and all bring a range of life experiences to the classroom. We are excited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the REAL program in 2020. To learn more about the REAL program, visit: go.tufts.edu/REAL.

Carmen Lowe & Kendra Barber

ALUMNI PROFILE:

Jheanelle and Jheneal Atkinson, A19 Biology

Why did you decide to apply to the REAL program and why did you decide to join it (especially if it meant relocating)?

After working with doctors at ScribeAmerica, we knew that our true passion was in providing patient care and felt it was time to return to school. Tufts’ R.E.A.L. program allowed us to have a true college experience and to receive a full degree.

What do you feel you gained from the REAL program?

Through the support of our program deans and other REAL students, we gained leadership experience at the helm of the RSO. Not to mention, we have made life- long friends

and have gotten to know many people who are now a part of what we consider our Boston family!

What were some of the more challenging aspects of the REAL program and your time at Tufts? What advice would you have for incoming students?

One of the more challenging aspects of our time at Tufts was acclimating to the demands of our coursework and learning when to ask for help. It’s also important to strike a balance between academic and social commitments. Enjoy Boston and Medford! And find a way to give back.

What role did professors and staff play in making your academic and personal experience at Tufts successful and meaningful?

We would not have succeeded had it not been for Dean Herbert, Dean Lowe, Dean



Jheanelle and Jheneal at graduation.

Barber, and Dean Mack. Dr. Phil Starks, our advisor, was also a major source of support. We found a home in the Spanish department, where every one of our professors treated us like family. Dr. Bernheim’s (Biology) classes reaffirmed our passion for medicine. Dean Baffi-Dugan was candid and encouraging during our quest to apply to

medical school. Also, we can't forget Ms. Reilly in financial aid, who made financing our education possible.

What are you up to now and what plans do you have for the future?

We are both currently working as Implementation Managers for ScribeAmerica, training medical scribes who want leadership and clinical experience before medical school. We are also applying to medical school this year and hope to pursue Obstetrics/Gynecology and working to narrow the maternal health disparity,

2019 GRADUATES

- Amanda Aguiar, BS Biology
- Jheanelle Atkinson, BS Biology
- Jheneal Atkinson, BS Biology
- Nicholas Belmore, BA English (*summa cum laude*)
- Kenneth Brown, BS Electrical Engineering
- Daniela Chavez Hernandez, BA Child Study & Human Development
- Rachel Fridman, BA Political Science
- Lauren Holderman, BA Philosophy (*cum laude*)
- Ayda Lulseged, BA Political Science
- Javier Rincon, BS Biomedical Engineering
- Edward Robinson, BS Biology
- Julio Salazar Porras, BS Mechanical Engineering
- Hanna Solomon, BA Clinical Psychology
- Philmon Tesfu, BA Economics
- Matthew Turner, BS Computer Science (*summa cum laude*)

FACULTY PROFILE

Phil Starks, Associate Professor of Biology

What has made your experiences with REAL students, both in and out of the classroom, unique? Have there been any unique challenges or successes?



Professor Starks with his wife

Many REAL students face significant challenges integrating into our community. My REAL advisees have been war veterans, community college graduates, and first generation students – three ‘boxes’ that I also check, so I feel I understand some of their challenges.

What advice would you give to incoming REAL students based on your previous experience working with REAL students?

I reinforce to my REAL advisees that this may be a challenging transition, but that mechanisms are in place to help overcome those challenges. After recognizing that help is available, and identifying how to obtain it, the biggest hinderance remaining is often related to a hesitation to seek out those services. I want all our students to understand that Tufts is invested in their experience.

What would you want other faculty to know about REAL students?

I'd want them to know that our REAL students are awesome – and if they have advised any, then they already know that.

STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Jheanelle & Jheneal Atkinson, received the 2019 REAL Prize Scholarship awarded annually to a REAL senior who has demonstrated perseverance and generosity in helping REAL students achieve their academic goals.

Nicholas Belmore, inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. Fulbright recipient. Admitted into the English PhD program at Harvard.

Kenneth Brown, admitted to the Tufts MS in Electrical Engineering program. Summer 2019 work on radar systems at Raytheon. Won an award for his team's senior design project, Musical Instrument Accessibility.

Daniela Chavez Hernandez, admitted to Tufts Occupational Therapy Entry-Level Doctoral Program.

Blyss Cleveland, inducted into Phi Beta Kappa.

Kai Kharpertian, Tufts Summer Scholar. Tufts Goldwater nominee. Completing his senior honors thesis.

Nathan Hollinsaid, received the 2019 Priscilla N. Dunne Prize awarded annually to an undergraduate psychology major for academic and research excellence. Research assistant at the Harvard University Laboratory for Youth Mental Health. Completing his senior honors thesis.

Lauren Holderman, admitted to Tufts MA in Philosophy program.

Ayda Lulseged, admitted to the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy MA in Law & Diplomacy program.

Edward Robinson, admitted to the Post-Baccalaureate Research Program (PREP) at Tufts School of Medicine.

Hanna Solomon, received the 2019 Theresa McDermott Carzo Award given annually to a junior or senior REAL student who demonstrates a love of learning and the determination to complete their degree despite obstacles.