

Amaya Johnson

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EDUCATION

University of Maryland, College Park

Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy

January 2024 - May 2026

Bowie State University

Bachelor of Science in Psychology [Transferred]

August 2018 - December 2019

RESEARCH PROJECTS

“Observing the Superposition of Staying: The Observable Realities of Women in Physics” [Working Title] | Author: Amaya Johnson, Research Mentor: Dr. Chandra Turpen, Principal Investigator: Ms. Stephanie Williams, Graduate Student Researcher: Khusbu Dalal

“*The Superposition of Staying: How the Language of Women in Physics Embodies Dualities*” (2025) | Author: Amaya Johnson, Research Mentor: Dr. Chandra Turpen, Principal Investigator: Ms. Stephanie Williams

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate Research | University of Maryland, College Park

Undergraduate Researcher | Ms. Stephanie M. Williams “Talking About Staying”
Dissertation Research

September 2025 - Present

- Conduct independent and collaborative research to support dissertation development through qualitative and theoretical analysis
- Recruit, schedule, and interview participants while ensuring ethical compliance and data integrity
- Lead semi-structured interviews to capture nuanced participant perspectives
- Analyze interview data and scholarly texts to identify and synthesize key themes, concepts, and definitions for integration into the dissertation framework

Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program | University of Maryland, College Park

Ronald E. McNair Scholar | Vice-President of McNair Student Advisory Board

January 2025 - Present

- Serve as a Ronald E. McNair Scholar in a federally funded program that supports first-generation and underrepresented students committed to pursuing PhD degrees
- Engage in original, inquiry-based research under faculty mentorship, integrating philosophical inquiry with themes from physics education, cognitive science, identity, and consciousness studies
- Build a foundation to explore the intersection of law, ethics, and sovereignty in a PhD/JD dual degree program
- Design and present oral and poster presentations for academic conferences
- Engage during professional development workshops focused on graduate admissions, GRE preparation, financial advancement, and interdisciplinary research training
- Serve as a peer liaison and ambassador for prospective McNair scholars at UMD by advocating for underrepresented students, offering mentorship, fostering academic belonging, and actively recommending the program to peers interested in pursuing a PhD

Undergraduate Research | University of Maryland, College Park

Undergraduate Research Assistant | Dr. Ronald L. Mower

January 2025 - Present

- Contribute to qualitative research examining social injustice, embodiment, and cultural narratives within sport and physical culture
- Assist with data review, thematic analysis, and synthesis of scholarly literature at the intersection of ethics, identity, and social critique
- Support research that interrogates how structures of power shape individual experience and community expression, bridging philosophical perspectives with analysis of identity, culture, and systems of power

McNair Summer Research Institute (SRI) | University of Maryland, College Park

Undergraduate Researcher

Summer 2025

- Developed an independent, faculty-mentored research project, “Superposition of Staying...” examining how the language of women in physics reveals more about their identities and the academic culture they’re navigating
- Explored consciousness, perception, and language through a philosophical and physics-education-informed lens
- Worked with a research team from the Physics department studying how women in physics can build hope and persistence to stay in the field
- Engaged with philosophical frameworks, including narrative identity, intuitive epistemology, and metaphors from quantum mechanics (e.g., superposition)
- Trained through a rigorous research training sequence, including UNIV339: McNair Research Methods and Writing, guest lectures, and graduate school preparation classes
- Connected with interdisciplinary scholars across STEM, humanities, and social sciences to situate my work
- Tracked graduate programs and faculty that are aligned with my research interests

Undergraduate Research | University of Maryland, College Park

Undergraduate Research Assistant | Dr. Jae Kun Shim Neuromechanics Research Core

February 2025 - May 2025

- Supported biomechanical and physiological testing and analysis of human movement in a 7,000+ sq. ft. laboratory equipped with advanced instrumentation, including 11 Kistler force platforms, 23 Vicon motion capture cameras, electromyography (EMG) sensors, movement speed and electromagnetic sensors, a Biodex dynamometer, metabolic units, and miniature 6-D force/torque sensors
- Contributed to ongoing research on (1) biomechanics and motor control of the hand and fingers, and (2) biomechanics and physiology of amputee running
- Assisted with experimental setup, motion analysis, and data processing while collaborating with graduate students and faculty across kinesiology, bioengineering, and neuroscience disciplines

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

University of Maryland, College Park

- Vice-President - McNair Student Advisory Board (F25-S26)
- President/Co-founder - UMD Student Parent Club (F25-S26)
- Communications Officer - Society of Physics Students (F24-S25)
- Member/Advocate - Undergraduate Student Parent Advisory Council (F24-S25)

Bowie State University

- Center for Financial Advancement Scholar - Center for Financial Advancement Program

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Pod and Pride | Lanham, MD

Founder/CEO

December 2025 - Present

- Develop the brand identity, operations, and strategies for a hybrid wellness initiative serving families seeking holistic fitness and cultivation experiences
- Conduct interdisciplinary research integrating cognitive science, neuroscience, philosophy, and kinesiology to inform the business approach and framework
- Oversee all aspects of early-stage development, including market research and program development
- Engage regularly with [student] parent networks to evaluate barriers and assess community needs
- Develop inclusive & scalable models aimed at closing gaps in support for parents, children, and families

True Moon Yoga | Annapolis, MD

Sculpt Teacher

November 2023 - September 2025

- Promote trauma-informed, identity-affirming movement practices
- Lead inclusive, high-intensity yoga classes to cultivate strength and awareness

Amaya Johnson

- Contribute to studio operations, including but not limited to outreach, room preparation, and community outreach

RTR Pilates | *Potomac, MD*

Pilates Instructor Trainee

May 2024 - July 2024

- Practiced delivering safe and effective group Pilates classes in line with RTR Pilates standards
- Built rapport with clients and trainers of diverse backgrounds and skill levels
- Trained on company operations, including class setup and marketing initiatives

LICENSES & CERTIFICATIONS

- Social and Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher
- Biomedical Research - Basic/Refresher
- Biomedical Responsible Conduct of Research
- NAIC Life & Accident & Health or Sickness Insurance Producer
- True Moon HIIT Fusion Training
- Rights Informed Birth Advocate
- Commissioned Notary Public – State of Maryland
- Google Project Management Professional Certification

AWARDS AND HONORS

University of Maryland, College Park

Judith Hager Endowed Memorial Scholarship (2025-2026 Award)

Angelo Bardasis Scholar - Scholarship recipient (Spring 25)

Ronald E. McNair Scholar

TEAM-UP Together Scholar (Fall 24)

The National Society of Success and Leadership

Tau Sigma National Honor Society

Bowie State University

Dean's List Fall 2019

Center for Financial Advancement Scholar

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

- National Society of Black Physicists
- American Physical Society
- Society of Physics Students