

(ms)²

(MS)² eNews - Winter 2024.

My first year as director has come to an end, and the past 12 months have been quite a journey. As I pause in this moment to reflect, I am overwhelmed by the myriad of emotions that come with starting a new job, relocating 2,000+ miles, the joy and stress of a 1st summer, and the many new relationships that have been forged. While I could attempt to capture all that I am reflecting on, I will instead focus on some highlights, regrets and hopes, and will also invite you to take stock over your last 12 months.



In any organization, those that have been there the longest stand to offer some of the best perspectives of the past, present, and possible future directions to head towards. For (MS)², and myself, this person was Carolyn Zimmer. As Carolyn/Mrs. Zimmer approaches her tenth year in service to (MS)², her experience in working with Dianne Domenech-Burgos, detail-orientation, and contingency planning were a great source of support as I continue to grow into my role.

While I spent the first 5 months thinking about (MS)² on paper, the real magic occurred on the 27th of June when the scholars arrived. It was exciting for me to meet and work with so many bright and talented Black, Indigenous, and Latina/e/o/x students from across the country. They taught me many different things throughout the course of the summer but something that stands out to me the most is their strength and resilience. To leave home at 14 or 15, commit to three consecutive summers, and be so goal-oriented eases some concerns I have for the future.

One regret from my first summer is that I spent more time understanding the operational/administrative aspects of the program than I did the day-to-day instructional aspects. As a result, I aim to spend more time observing classroom instruction and developing relationships with the scholars in summer 2024.

Cheers,

Eliot B. Sykes, PhD, LICSW (he/him)

Director of (MS)²

Program Updates

(MS)² Class of 2026 Recruitment

We are in the middle of our admissions cycle. This year the application deadline was moved from December 31 to January 15 to accommodate school schedules. Now that the application window has closed, we have begun application reading. In any given year, 8-10 Phillips Academy faculty and staff support (MS)² by serving as readers. Finalist notifications will be sent out on Saturday, February 8. Soon after, finalist interviews will commence. This spring, Dr. Sykes will travel to Atlanta, Baltimore/D.C., Memphis, Louisville, Cleveland, and Arizona-New Mexico.

Program Review

Looking ahead to Summer 2024, (MS)² will be engaged in a program review. This formal process will involve (MS)² alums and stakeholders. The program review will assess the following aspects of the program:

- Curriculum & Instruction
- Student Experience (I.e., activities and special programs)
- Program Schedule
- Mission, Vision, and Purpose

The program review will be an exciting process that will aid in (MS)² meeting the needs of scholars today and well into the future. The overall goal will be to learn more about areas of strength, areas of improvement, and potential gaps. We look forward to reporting out in the Fall 2024 eNewsletter. Stay tuned!



Scholar Spotlight

On September 18, 2023, the ‘Weaving Llaktas’ mural was unveiled in the Williamsburg neighborhood at the corner of Wythe Ave and North 10th Street. The mural was created by Afro- Kañari creative **Keyra Juliana Espinoza Arroyo (MS)² ‘19** and Kichwa Otavalo artist Adina Farinango. Keyra shared, “This piece was created with the intention to show Indigenous sisterhood, holding each other, our presence and existence as a symbol of light and resistance navigating our two worlds both in territory and in the diaspora. For both of us, our hair is important and carries memories of past and present. We molded native plants and elements/ sacred beings, such as mountains (Andes) and the ocean (Pacific coast), into our hair as symbols of memories tied with our existence and that nurture us anywhere we are. The mulls or spondylus (sacred shell in cultures in Ecuador, it has been exchanged since ancestral times in Abya Yala as a symbol of abundance and reciprocity between peoples) as earrings tie the theme back to our unity and the solidarity between our communities all the way from the Pacific coast to the Andes. Lastly, we added the NYC skyline in the background to symbolize our all in 2 worlds as Kichwas in the diaspora. While we grew up in NYC, we are still walking with the memories and unity from our home.

Description of other projects: "2023 was a year of many other exciting projects. From my very first mural in the middle of NYC to having my very first cover shoot and having my photography work as the cover for LDL Magazine, additionally with being featured in it, continuing advocacy work and representation on my college campus, organizing the 2nd annual Native American Art Market Celebration on campus, and graduating a semester early this past December from the University of Miami with a

B.A. Ecosystem Science and Policy and double minors in International Studies and Native American and Global Indigenous Studies."

(MS)² Influence: "As a proud (MS)² alum, I can certainly say that (MS)² has been a powerful influence in all the projects and opportunities. (MS)² reminds me of just how capable and worthy I am to unapologetically take up space as an Afro-Indigenous woman and as a daughter of immigrants. (MS)² provided me with not only the tools to pave my own path but also the reassurance that there is a community there to support me and who reminds me of my background because it is what gives me strength to continue pushing forward."



Get Involved

Alumni Posters

A couple of years ago, Phillips Academy math instructor Lionel Amanfu, who has worked in the (MS)² summer program for nearly 15 years in a variety of roles - calculus teacher, house counselor, dean, and assistant director, suggested the program create (MS)² alumni posters that current scholars will see as they move throughout campus (e.g., outside Kemper where morning meetings are held, Morse math classrooms, the Gelb office, etc.). We are reviving this project and would like to feature as many alums as possible. If you would like to be featured in a poster, please email ms2@andover.edu. You will be asked to provide a high-resolution photo and complete a brief survey.

Welcome Events

On Saturday, May 4, Dr. Sykes will host a virtual (MS)² Welcome Event for our newly admitted incoming scholars. We'd also like to offer an opportunity for our new and current scholars to connect in person with alumni in their respective areas. If you are willing to host an informal gathering this May or June, please let us know!



Support (MS)²

Keep an eye out this March for **PA Giving Day** - when your gift to (MS)² may be potentially matched! It costs approximately \$8,000 to support one (MS)² scholar each summer - or almost \$25,000 per graduate. Every gift - of any size - will be put to immediate use to strengthen our program and inspire and educate a new generation of talented STEM scholars!



Support (MS)²



Phillips Academy
180 Main St
Andover, MA 01810

Customize your Phillips Academy communication preferences or change your subscription status.

© 2024 | Web version