

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Welcome to the Spring 2025 edition of the Bill Anderson Fund's quarterly newsletter. I'm proud to offer a glimpse into the impactful work and inspiring achievements that have unfolded within the BAF community. Though the backdrop may be unusual with the world around us continuing to evolve in ways we could scarcely have imagined, the dedication and brilliance of our fellows, alumni, and partners shine brightly. I invite you to read on and discover the exciting highlights and accomplishments that define the spirit of the Bill Anderson Fund.

SPRING *newsletter*

JUNE 2025

Off to the Races

Registration for the 11th annual BAF [Disaster Dash 5K](#) is officially open! Each year, this event brings people together to raise critical funds for training the next generation of the hazards and disaster professionals. This year's race will be held in concurrence with the 50th [Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop](#) in Broomfield, Colorado. There is also a virtual registration offer for those who can't gather with us in person!

Whether you're a seasoned runner or a casual walker, the BAF Disaster Dash 5K welcomes participants of all ages and abilities. The event provides a fantastic opportunity to:

- Get active and enjoy the outdoors! The dash is a great opportunity to enjoy the sunshine after a week of indoor Workshop sessions.
- Support a worthy cause. Proceeds from the race benefit professional development programming and research awards for our doctoral student fellows.

- Connect with your community! The Disaster Dash brings together hazards and disaster researchers, practitioners, policymakers, students, and other professionals to build camaraderie and promote active thinking.

Ready to lace up? [Register today](#) and secure your spot!

You can also show your support by [sponsoring a participant or team](#). Every contribution makes a difference!

REGISTER HERE

Spring Workshop Recap

The 2025 Bill Anderson Fund Spring Workshop took place at the University of Washington's Seattle campus from April 3-5 in partnership with the Center for Disaster Resilient Communities, the Cascadia CoPes Hub, and the NHERI RAPID Facility. As the first BAF Fellows' Workshop at the University of Washington, this event made a significant impact by deepening connections between the BAF Fellows and the disaster research community in the Pacific Northwest region, familiarizing the participants with the RAPID facility, and fostering professional development through exposure to community-engaged applied research in Seattle's Duwamish River Valley. From deep discussions about research impact to field trips that showcased campus resources and collaborations, this event left Fellows feeling inspired, encouraged, and motivated to expand their connections with the UW community.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to Drs. Nicole Errett, Ann Bostrom, Joe Wartman, Jeffrey Berman, Jacqueline Zdebski for their thoughtful planning and support for this event, and especially to Matias Korfmacher, Anna Kirchhoff, and Mary Hannah Smith for their extensive behind-the-scenes coordination and execution. Click [here](#) to view the workshop program and the list of sponsors who helped to make this event possible.

Profiling IDEAAL Fellows

One current BAF Fellow, [Joseph Karanja](#), and one graduate alumna, [Dr. Tihara Richardson Sommers](#), have been featured in profiles for the public health disaster research program Investigations in Disasters and Emergencies: Advancing Applied Learning in Disaster Research Response (IDEAAL DR2). This program,

which will be launching its second cohort in August, aims to increase the knowledge and awareness of environmental and public health disaster research methods and skills among interdisciplinary, early-career researchers who are interested in conducting public health-focused hazards and disaster research. The program is being implemented by the Center for Disaster Resilient Communities at the University of Washington in partnership with the Bill Anderson Fund. In their profiles, Karanja and Richardson Sommers both discuss the journeys that led them to disaster research and their passion for doing meaningful work that informs on-the-ground efforts to reduce the harm that hazards cause to communities.



The BAF Fellows and Alumni received several awards, accolades, and recognitions in the past few months.

Here is a selection of highlights:

- BAF Fellow **Afeez Badmus** received the award for the best poster in the student poster competition at the 70th Annual Structural Engineering Conference at the University of Kansas. He was also selected to represent the University of Kansas at the state's Capitol Graduate Research Summit.
- The **FLUJOS** (Flood Justice Utilizing Satellite Observation) tool, which BAF Fellow **Lucas Belury** helped to co-produce, was recently launched to map 12 different inundation events in the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas. FLUJOS is a bilingual (English/Spanish) flood mapping tool that was created through participatory mapping with flood-vulnerable colonia residents in the Rio Grande Valley combined with machine learning applied today satellite imagery. The design of the tools was developed with 5 community-based organizations in the region.
- Two BAF Fellows—**Yvonne Appiah Dadson** and **Nyla Howell**—received the Empowering Community Resilience award from the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters. The award supported their
- P.E.O. International recently selected BAF Fellow **Jessica Nwafor** for its International Peace Scholarship Award. This prestigious fund provides scholarships to international women pursuing graduate degrees in the U.S. and Canada to foster global peace through education. Jessica also received the College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award from the University of Kentucky. This award recognizes excellence in undergraduate instruction by Teaching Assistants who were responsible for instruction in some or all of a course offered by the College of Arts & Sciences (A&S), A&S interdisciplinary programs or through other programs.
- BAF Fellow **Esther Oyedele** received the Outstanding Graduate Student Leader award at Virginia Tech's annual Student Organization Leadership Awards Night.
- The New Orleans Council on Aging recognized BAF Alumna **Dr. Tihara Richardson Sommers** with the 2025 Gaye Rowe-Fulton Award in recognition of her dedicated services in the field of aging.

attendance at the organization's annual conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

- BAF Fellow **Annika Doneghy** was recognized with the Excellence in Public Health Dual Degree award by the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. This award is bestowed upon a dual degree student who excels at building bridges between their degree programs and serves as a leader and a resource for fellow students while achieving high academic success. Annika also advanced to PhD Candidacy this semester!



GRADUATIONS

SPRING 2025

Congratulations to our Fellows!

The Doctor Is In

Several fellows successfully defended their dissertations this spring and are now transitioning into their careers. They will soon join 67 others as the newest members of the BAF Alumni Network. Please join us in congratulating these emerging professionals:



Jacquita Johnson

Texas A&M University
Public Health Sciences



Jean-Claude Ndongo

Florida Atlantic
University
Public Administration



Alexa Riobueno-Naylor

Boston College
Psychology

We are grateful to have much to celebrate, and we look forward to sharing more exciting developments at the end of the busy summer season. Your support makes a tremendous difference in our work and our collective impact. Thank you for continuing to be part of the Bill Anderson Fund community.

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Sincerely,



Nnenia Campbell, Ph.D.
Executive Director
The William Averette Anderson Fund



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The Bill Anderson Fund
hello@billandersonfund.org

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