

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Sharon Barrett

Program/Level: M.A. Political Science - Thesis

Home Town: Midland, Texas

Prior Education: M.Ed, Sul Ross State University, 2015 M.A. Liberal Arts, Sul Ross State University, 2015 B.A. American Studies, with departmental honors, Hillsdale College, 2012 B.A. Music, Hillsdale College, 2012

Professional Certifications & Organizations: National College Reading and Learning Association Level I certification, 2014

Fun Facts - Hobbies/Interests (things to know about me): I'm fascinated with the lost skills of our ancestors, like preserving homegrown food and foraging for wild medicines. I love culturing raw milk kefir and fermented salsa! I'm also a women's herbalist and a spiritual director

Short Bio: I'm a storyteller. Growing up, I dreamed of writing books and plays. I sang competitively in high school and was selected for TMEA All-State Choir three years in a row. I went to Hillsdale College planning to become a choir teacher. My love for politics and history, though, led me to add a major in American studies—even though it meant staying a fifth year in brutal Michigan winter! Returning to Texas after Hillsdale, I relocated to Alpine to be near family. I couldn't resist taking one or two graduate history classes at Sul Ross. With the help of amazing faculty who invested in me, I obtained a Graduate Fellowship and went on to complete the M.A. in Liberal Arts. In the process I discovered my talent for telling stories through ethnography. My capstone project explored the interplay between history and memory in the formation of religious faith, weaving my original songs and poetry into a dialogue with ancient and modern authors as well as real-life ethnographic research participants. While in Alpine, I also discovered my calling to serve women across borders as a midwife. I worked in Midland ISD schools for a few years, then returned to Sul Ross to pursue the M.A. in political science, combining ethnographic writing with political analysis to examine how midwives fight legislative and structural barriers to midwifery. For my thesis, I plan to interview international midwives about their political advocacy, interweaving their stories with the story of women's wisdom carried by el rebozo (the ancestral garment used by Mexican parteras to assist women in childbirth). I'm excited to begin midwifery training in 2024.

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Hailey Barton

Program/Level: Masters of Range & Wildlife Management

Home Town: Emmett Idaho

Prior Education: Bachelor's of Animal Science – Equine Science & Zoology Dual Major – University of Wyoming

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

- > The Wildlife Society
- > Mule Deer Foundation
- > Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- > Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me): Last year, as a last hurrah before continuing my education, I went on a 21-day float trip of the Grand Canyon and also hiked 800 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail. This year, I'm planning on attempting to run my first marathon, which will be from Alpine to my study site at Elephant Mountain WMA.

Short Bio:

Hailey was born and raised in southern Idaho, riding horses, camping, hiking, and playing in the fields and foothills around her home. She earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Wyoming, with a double major in zoology & equine science. After graduation, Hailey worked as a wildlife technician for many research and management agencies, and studied a multitude of species such as chipmunks, raccoons, mule deer, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, Brook stickleback, golden eagles, elk, mountain lions, Mexican gray wolves, moose, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn. In her off time, Hailey can be found hunting, fly fishing, backpacking, hiking with her dog, Zip, or scheming up another adventure.

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Nicole Dickan
Program/Level: M.S. in Range
& Wildlife Management /
Graduate Research Assistant at
Borderlands Research Institute
Home Town: Katonah, New
York

Prior Education: B.S. in Animal Behavior, Ecology, and Conservation, Canisius College NY

B.A. in Psychology, Canisius College NY

Academic Achievements:

Wes and Victoria Bannister Scholarship Recipient (2023) - Borderlands Research Institute

Summa Cum Laude, Canisius College

Excellence in Research Award (2020), Canisius College

Canisius Science Scholars member and grant recipient (2017-2020)

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

Member of the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA)

Member of the Wildlife Society (TWS)

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

I enjoy rock climbing, backpacking, hiking, traveling, riding motorcycles, swimming, and birding. I also like trying new restaurants, especially Japanese restaurants since sushi is my absolute favorite food.

Short Bio: I was born and raised in NY where I fell in love with outdoor activities and exploring nature. I learned early on that I wanted a career focused on animals in some capacity. Before I discovered wildlife as a career option, I worked at a kennel, interned at the local SPCA, and at the Buffalo Zoo working with polar bears. I went to Canisius College in Buffalo NY to study Animal Behavior, Ecology, and Conservation where I initially focused my studies on animal cognition. After completing a field course and conducting research in Belize, I developed a passion for wildlife biology and fieldwork in general. After graduating, I went on to work as a wildlife technician in South Dakota, Oklahoma, and Idaho studying bobcats, black bears, grizzlies, bighorn sheep, and various nongame species. While I enjoyed working with all these species, I felt a particular connection to the bears. I gained a deep appreciation and respect for both the species and the work that goes into managing their populations. This led me to my current master's position at Sul Ross where I am studying the behavior and ecology of black bears in the Trans-Pecos.

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Kiahna S. García
Program/Level: Master of English
Home Town: Del Rio, TX

Prior Education: B.A., English, Sul Ross State University, 2020

University of Texas at San Antonio, 2017-2018

Associate of Arts, Southwest Texas Junior College, 2017

Academic Achievements: SRSU, Sigma Tau Delta Spring Poetry Contest, 1st place for the poem “Voices of Lineage,” 2022

“Chat with a Stranger,” published in The Sage, 2022

“The Mexican-Imposter,” published in The Sage, 2021

Outstanding English Graduate Student, Spring 2021

Dean’s List, Sul Ross State University, Fall 2018, Fall 2019

SWTJC, Creative Arts Contest Award, 1st place for the story “A Chat with A Stranger,” 2019

International Good Neighbor Council Scholarship, 2019

Middle Rio Grande College, Student Service Fee Scholarship, 2019

Middle Rio Grande College, Student Deposit Scholarship, 2019

The Bank & Trust Scholarship, 2019

President’s List, University of Texas at San Antonio, Spring 2018

President’s Honor Roll and Dean’s Honor Roll, Southwest Texas Junior College, Spring 2017

SWTJC, Halloween Short Story Contest Award, 1st place for the story “Rose Creek,” 2017

Professional Certifications & Organizations: Graduate Student Council, Fall 2022

Sigma Tau Delta, 2020

National Honors Society of Leadership and Success, 2017

National Honors Society, 2014

Phi Theta Kappa, 2014

Fun Facts - Hobbies/Interests (things to know about me): An interesting fact about me is that I once grew a tooth on the roof of my mouth. I was entertained by my body’s decision to grow a tooth in a location that was not my gums, but my poor mother was petrified as my oral surgeon told her his clinic gets 12 cases like mine every year.

My hobbies/ interests include gardening, reading, baking, traveling, playing video games, and learning Spanish and Japanese! I am learning Spanish to perfect my speaking and writing abilities and I am learning Japanese as I would like to read Japanese literature in Japanese.

Short Bio: I am 1st generation American from my mother’s side and 4th generation American from my father’s side. My love for reading and writing began when I was little as my mother, who wanted to make sure that we would not struggle with English as she did when moved here from Mexico, would take my sisters and me to the library every day. I would eagerly read the books at the library and check out the ones I did not finish so that I could read them at home. Since then, my love for literature grew (my love for writing soon followed after). By the time I graduated high school at 16, I knew that I wanted to major in English so that I can teach the wondrous world of English literature to others. Eight years later, that desire has not gone away as I am still happily shoving books in my face. The only thing that has changed is that I grew to love literature from other countries as well. Which is why my master’s thesis does not focus on English literature, but on Japanese literature—specifically manga. In the future, my ultimate goal is to obtain my Ph.D. in English and teach English and/or Mexican literature at a university outside of the United States.

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Caleb Hughes

Program/Level: M. S. in Range and Wildlife Management

Home Town: Grandview, Texas

Prior Education:

- Associate of Arts, McLennan Community College
- Bachelor of Science, Sul Ross State University

Academic Achievements:

- Title V PPOHA Fellowship, Summer and Fall 2022
- John B. Poindexter Endowed Fellowship in Quail Research
- Magna Cum Laude, Bachelor of Science, Sul Ross State University
- Outstanding Underclassman Student in Natural Resource Management, 2020

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

- Member of The Wildlife Society
- 2020-21 Wildlife Vice President of the Sul Ross Range and Wildlife Club
- Member of the Mule Deer Foundation
- Member of the Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
- Youth Protection Certification, Boy Scouts of America
- S-130 Firefighter Training Online Certification, National Wildfire Coordinating Group
- S-190 Wildland Fire Behavior Online Certification, National Wildlife Coordinating Group CIO – American Train Dispatchers Association

Interesting Facts: I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking and doing field work for range and wildlife research. I am blessed to partake in Christian ministry as the Campus Minister at the Alpine Church of Christ. I also enjoy railfanning, taxidermy, playing guitar, and spending time with my lovely fiancé, Cali.

Short Bio: I was born in Fort Worth, Texas and raised in the small outlying town of Grandview. Being raised in a rural environment, activities such as hunting and fishing developed a strong love for wildlife and wild places. This upbringing cultivated my interest in making a career out of studying and conserving natural resources. I transferred to Sul Ross from McLennan Community College and earned my Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management, during which I received ample exposure to both the field itself and stunning landscape of the Big Bend region. Knowledge gained through the classroom, projects, volunteer work and networking continually stoked my passion for wildlife and prompted me to continue my education. I was fortunate to remain at Sul Ross and begin my Master's degree working for Borderlands Research Institute studying habitat selection, movement and survival of scaled quail.

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Melissa Zapata Montoya

Program/Level: College of Literature, Arts, and Social Sciences.
Graduate English Student

Fellowship Mentor: Ian Peddie

Hometown: Fort Stockton, Texas

Prior Education: AA in General Studies, BA in English with a minor in Mexican American Studies

Academic Achievements:

- 2022 Graduate Fellow
- 2nd place in 2022 Sigma Tau Delta Poetry Contest for “Sangre Que Hierve”
- “The Call of the Tlapitzalli” published in 2022 Edition of The Sage
- “Sangre Que Hierve” published in 2022 Edition of The Sage
- Research Panelist in 2022 SRSU Research Symposium “ ‘The Third Space’: How Sul Ross State University’s Writing Center can Accommodate the International and English Language Learner Students”

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

- 2021- current: Fort Stockton BarrioFest Committee
- A committee researching and highlighting Mexican roots in the different Barrios of Fort Stockton, Texas
- 2020-2022 Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society (SGA representative, co-social media coordinator)
- 2021-2022 Student Representative for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee at SRSU
- 2021-2022 Graduate Assistantship at SRSU
- 2021-2022 English Writing Tutor for SRSU Writing Center
- 2020-2021 RGC English Club
- 2019-2020 Sigma Kappa Delta English Honor Society at Midland College

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests: I love to sing specifically Mariachi and traditional Chorale music. I love writing poetry and short stories. I have four kids who are my best creation yet! My hobbies include reading Chicano Literature and researching the History of Mexican Americans.

Outside of school, I am currently studying the indigenous language of Nahuatl.

Short Bio: I am a mother to four beautiful children who drive me crazy and melt my heart every single day. They are a huge part of my drive to complete my higher education. I am also a first generation American who is extremely grateful for my parents’ and grandparents’ sacrifices in providing everything they didn’t have growing up. I hope to complete my educational journey so that I may become an educator at the community college level as I believe those institutions open up a world of opportunities for lower income families to complete their post-secondary education. I also hope to become a Chicana writer and travel all over the world with my husband and children. I am currently researching theory and literature from the voices of the borderlands in the Southwestern United States.

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Ycela Ortiz

Program/Level: Grad Student for Masters of English

Home Town: Uvalde, Texas

Prior Education: - Bachelors of English, Sul Ross State University

- Associates of Arts, General Studies, Southwest Texas Junior College

Academic Achievements:

- Dean's List Fall 2022, undergraduate

- Dean's List Spring 2022, undergraduate

Professional Certifications & Organizations: N/A

Interesting Facts – Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

- I have one cat

- I enjoy listening to music

- I am a survivor of attempted suicide

- I am an only child- I am the first, and only, in my family to pursue any sort of college degree

Short Bio: - My name is Ycela Ortiz, I am 24 years old. I am a first-generation college graduate student and I have absolutely no idea what I want to do with my life. I am taking it step by step and I am enjoying it every little bit. I grew up in the mix of my grandparents and single mother, and I seem to have a tender spot in my heart for writing. I am enjoying life, one day at a time

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Maya Ressler

Program/Level: Natural Resource Management /Master's

Fellowship Mentor: Ryan Luna

Hometown: Grapevine, Texas

Prior Education: Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology,

Academic Achievements:

(*Awards*) Outstanding Graduate Student in Wildlife Management Award – Sul Ross State University, 2022

(*Presentations*) Purple Martin Day, Texas Tech's Llano River Field Station, Junction, Texas. M.A. Ressler,

J. French, F. Hernandez, R. Luna. Current Research on Montezuma quail: Correlation Among

Demographic Rates and The Influence of Catastrophic Weather Events on Montezuma quail in the Trans-

Pecos of Texas // Montezuma quail Habitat Preference as an Indicator for Feral Hog Disturbance and

Presence. (July 2022). Open Day, Davis Mountains Preserve, The Nature Conservancy. M.A. Ressler.

Educational Program: "What's That Sound" & Current Research on Montezuma quail. (June 2022). SRSU

Undergraduate and Graduate Research Symposium, Alpine, Texas. M.A. Ressler, J. French, F. Hernandez,

R. Luna. Correlation Among Demographic Rates and The Influence of Catastrophic Weather Events on

Montezuma quail in the Trans-Pecos of Texas. (April 2022). The Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Meeting, Marble Falls, Texas. M.A. Ressler, J. French, F. Hernandez, R. Luna. Correlation Among

Demographic Rates and The Influence of Catastrophic Weather Events on Montezuma quail in the Trans-

Pecos of Texas. (February 2022).

Professional Certifications & Organizations: Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society at Sul Ross

State University Texas Bighorn Society The Wildlife Society The Southwestern Chapter of The Wildlife

Society Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me): I love backpacking and traveling. I'm currently learning about film photography and working on my birding skills!

Short Bio: I grew up immersed in the outdoors. Through my time spent hiking, camping, and traveling, I built an incredible respect for conservation and wildlife. I was drawn to the West Texas high deserts after I backpacked the Chisos Mountains at 16 years old. After that, I was hooked on the conservation of the natural world. I attended Texas State University to study wildlife biology. During the summer of my junior year, I was given the opportunity to work as a summer intern at Davis Mountains State Park. After completing my B.S. in Wildlife Biology in 2020, I moved to Alpine and am now pursuing my master's degree at Sul Ross State University studying Montezuma Quail in the Davis Mountains.

Title V PPOHA Summer 2023 Fellows



Name: Elle Sutherland

Program/Level: M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management

Home Town: Moscow Idaho

Prior Education: B.S. in Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho

Academic Achievements: Suma cum laude, Bachelor of Science Xi Sigma Pi National Honors Society Member Desert Bighorn Council Memorial Research Grant recipient Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute scholarship recipient

Professional Certifications & Organizations: The Wildlife Society: University of Idaho Student Chapter The American Fisheries Society: Palouse Unit, University of Idaho Student Chapter The Wild Sheep Foundation Swiftwater Rescue Training Certification Wilderness First Aid and CPRNAUI Open Water Scuba Diver a Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Safe Capture Chemical Immobilization Training Certification (San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Academy)

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me): I love hunting, fishing, trail running and just about anything outdoors. I also enjoy baking and playing with my dog.

Short Bio: I grew up in northern Idaho where my experiences hunting, fishing and backpacking in the outdoors ignited my love of natural resources and led me to pursue a degree in Wildlife Management from the University of Idaho. While an undergraduate I worked as a technician on forestry, fisheries, range and wildlife projects. Following graduation, I began seasonal work on a bighorn sheep project and was hooked by the charismatic species, leading me to spend the next two years as a bighorn research technician in Montana and Wyoming. I also spent some time working as a veterinary technician and studying nursing before I decide to continue on for my masters in wildlife. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue pursuing my passion for wildlife management as a graduate student at Sul Ross and the Borderlands Research Institute.