



2021-2022

# NEXT STEPS

As we mark the completion of another academic year with Caltech's 128th annual commencement ceremony this June, the Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences celebrates the dedication and outstanding scholarship of our departing graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and postdoctoral instructors. With gratitude for their perseverance during unpredictable times, we wish them all the best in their next ventures!

## JIAN CAO

*Research Fellow,  
Trinity College Dublin*

As a postdoctoral scholar working with Mike Alvarez, Cao built quantitative methods to audit and monitor the integrity of American elections. His work also sought to develop tools that could detect the spread of misinformation on social media platforms. Cao's collaborations with election officials helped to produce research that was used to improve the conduct and administration of the 2020 federal elections, which were uniquely challenging in the context of a global pandemic. Cao is now a research fellow at Trinity College Dublin in Ireland.



## SABA DEVDARIANI

*Postdoctoral Researcher  
at the Harris School of  
Public Policy, University  
of Chicago*

Devdariani earned a doctoral degree in social science, studying applied theory in political science, bureaucracy, American politics, and formal theory with Alex Hirsch as his advisor. For his thesis, Devdariani analyzed agency problems in political science, including what types of policy decisions voters pay attention to and why. He is now a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy.



## JULIA MICHIKO HORI

*Faculty of English,  
University of Cambridge*

Hori was Caltech's Fletcher Jones Foundation Postdoctoral Instructor in Contemporary Literature. She focuses much of her research on empire and slavery and how those institutions manifest in the present. In one class she taught at the Institute, "Literary Constructions of Motherhood," Hori challenged her students by presenting different ways to think through narratives of mothering and motherhood as shaped by a wide range of social, political, historical, and material contexts. She is now a member of the English faculty at the University of Cambridge.



## MARIO GEORG HUBERT

*Assistant Professor,  
American University in Cairo*

Hubert is the Howard E. and Susanne C. Jessen Postdoctoral Instructor in Philosophy of Physics. He is primarily interested in the ontology of physics, or the classification and explanation of entities, as well as the epistemology of physics, where he explores what it means to understand the physical world. Hubert's co-authored paper, "When Fields Are Not Degrees of Freedom," received an honorable mention for the 2021 Popper Prize, awarded annually by the British Society for the Philosophy of Science. This summer he will join the faculty at the American University in Cairo.



## JAEJOONG KIM

*Residency in  
Psychiatry, University  
of Minnesota*

Kim has worked as a Postdoctoral Scholar Research Associate in Affective Neuroscience in the laboratory of Dean Mobbs. With other members of the group, Kim explored the neurobiological systems that coordinate fear and anxiety in humans. His project examined the neural basis of escape and attack by using machine learning to investigate the neural circuits involved in switching between survival states. This summer he will begin a residency in psychiatry at the University of Minnesota.

## JONATHAN KOCH

*Assistant Professor,  
Pepperdine University*



Koch is the Caltech-Huntington Humanities Collaborations Postdoctoral Instructor and the Anne Rothenberg Postdoctoral Instructor in English at Caltech. His research and teaching interests include early modern literature, the history of religion, and print culture, among other fields. Koch has a manuscript in progress for a book called *With a Forbearing Spirit: The Poetics of Religious Toleration in Revolutionary England*, which asks what toleration meant and how it felt in the settings and literature of seventeenth-century England. This summer he joins the faculty at Pepperdine University.

## YIMENG LI

*Postdoctoral Scholar,  
Florida State University*



Li studied political science as a graduate student in social science under Mike Alvarez. Li's research focuses on political methodology, and, in particular, on media, elections and election administration, and political behavior and public opinion. His dissertation investigated survey methods and their applications to measuring political behavior and attitudes. Li received the Roger and Marjorie Davisson Graduate Fellowship during the 2018-19 academic year and was a Repetto-Figueroa Family Graduate Fellow during the 2019-20 academic year. After graduation he will join Florida State University as a postdoctoral scholar.

## ANNE SULLIVAN

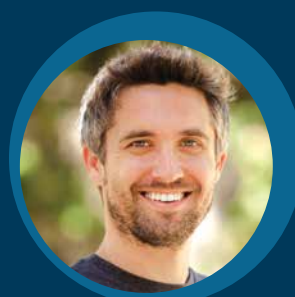
*Coordinator of Teaching Assistant  
Development Program, University  
of California, Riverside*



Sullivan was Caltech's Weisman Postdoctoral Instructor in Visual Culture from July 2019 to June 2021 and the Anne Rothenberg Postdoctoral Instructor in Visual Culture from July 2021 through June of this year. She was the recipient of a 2020 HSS Brass Division Award, which recognizes teaching and mentoring that enhance learning among Caltech students. Sullivan's research interests include media history, Victorian literature, volcanoes, and astrophotography. She will spend the summer on a residential research fellowship at the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, before joining the University of California, Riverside, as the coordinator of its teaching assistant development program.

## TOMISLAV ZBOZINEK

*Assistant Project Scientist,  
UCLA*



Zbozinek's research focuses on improving treatments for anxiety as well as furthering our understanding of the basic mechanisms of learning and memory.

As a Postdoctoral Scholar Research Associate in Affective Neuroscience in the Mobbs Lab, Zbozinek studied the neural basis of switching between survival states and how these states are modulated by the social environment. Zbozinek will move to UCLA this summer, where he will be an assistant project scientist in the department of psychiatry and behavioral sciences.



## SHIYU ZHANG

*Associate Consultant,  
McKinsey & Company*

As a graduate student in social science, Zhang was advised by HSS Division Chair Jean-Laurent Rosenthal. Her thesis consisted of two essays that explored the effectiveness of policy interventions curbing the opioid crisis and one essay that studied the value of network ties in the Chinese bureaucracy. Zhang was the recipient of the Roger and Marjorie Davisson Graduate Fellowship during the 2020-21 academic year. After earning her doctoral degree in 2021, Zhang joined McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm, as an associate consultant.

## CLASS OF 2022

Among the seniors expected to graduate in June, 12 percent (26 out of 225) are completing an option (major) or minor in the humanities or social sciences. One student chose business, economics, and management (BEM) as their first and only option. Nineteen students selected one of our tracks for their second option (double major): 14 in BEM; three in economics; and two in history. Six students completed a humanities minor: four in English, one in history, and one in philosophy.

Among this impressive group of graduates, their next steps include:

- joining Google, Meta (Facebook), and Palantir as software engineers;
- pursuing a PhD in computer science at Stanford;
- deciding between a software engineering position or pursuing a startup;
- entering the options-market space as a quantitative trading analyst; and
- joining Pasadena-based Heliogen, a renewable energy company, as a mechanical engineer.