News Release

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Winners of 2020 CGS/ProQuest® Distinguished Dissertation Awards Announced

Awards recognize outstanding research by graduates in the fields of Mathematics, Physical Sciences, & Engineering and Social Sciences

Washington, DC – The Council of Graduate Schools / ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Awards, the nation's most prestigious honors for doctoral dissertations, were presented to Akhil Rao and Caroline Trippel during the Council's award ceremony held as a post-meeting event of the virtual CGS 60th Annual Meeting. Dr. Rao received his PhD in economics from the University of Colorado Boulder in 2019; Dr. Trippel completed her PhD in computer science/computer architecture from Princeton University in 2019.

Bestowed annually since 1982, the awards recognize recent doctoral recipients who have already made unusually significant and original contributions to their fields. ProQuest, an international leader in educational technology and content – including dissertation archiving, discovery, and access – sponsors the awards and an independent committee from the Council of Graduate Schools selects the winners. Two awards are given each year, rotating among four general areas of scholarship. The winners receive a certificate of recognition, a $2,000 honorarium, and a travel stipend to attend the awards ceremony.

"Over the past 39 years, the Distinguished Dissertation Award winners have consistently demonstrated the significant impact young scholars have in their disciplines and the broader graduate education community," said CGS President Suzanne T. Ortega. "The 2020 honorees, Dr. Rao and Dr. Trippel, continue this tradition through their innovative research and noteworthy contributions to work in their respective fields. Their work embodies the value and impact of graduate education to the world and merits recognition."

"We are honored to sponsor and recognize these scholars, whose work in their fields will make contributions to future research in years to come," said Angela D'Agostino, VP of Dissertations at ProQuest. "We celebrate their immense achievements and offer well wishes for their future successes. In support of their aspirations, we are pleased to include their research with ProQuest where it can be referenced and expanded upon by other researchers around the world."

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Dr. Rao received the 2020 Award in Social Sciences for his dissertation, *The Economics of Orbit Use: Theory, Policy, and Measurement.* Rao's work investigates, "the nature of orbit-use externalities, classify existing policies, identify a category of optimal policies, consider the extent to which technological advances can mitigate orbital externalities, and calculate the time path of an optimal satellite tax and the gains from implementing it." Dr. Rao is currently an assistant professor of economics at Middlebury College.

The 2020 Award in Mathematics, Physical Sciences, & Engineering was presented to Dr. Trippel for her dissertation, *Concurrency and Security Verification in Heterogeneous Parallel Systems.* Trippel's work, "combines hardware systems architecture approaches with formal methods techniques to support the specification, analysis, and verification of implementation-aware event ordering scenarios. The specific goal here is enabling automatic synthesis of implementation-aware programs capable of violating correctness or security guarantees when such programs exist." Dr. Trippel is currently an assistant professor of computer science and electrical engineering at Stanford University.

This year several outstanding scholars received honorable mentions: Anna Grummon (nominated by the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill) and Christina Gauthier Hernández (nominated by Michigan State University) for the Award in Social Sciences; and Daniel Gilman (nominated by the University of California, Los Angeles) and Kaveh Matinkhoo (nominated by the University of British Columbia) for the Award in Mathematics, Physical Sciences, and Engineering.

More information about the CGS / ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award is available at www.proquest.com/go/scholars or at www.cgsnet.org.

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About the Council of Graduate Schools (www.cgsnet.org)
The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.

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