

# The Crisis-Forged Class of 2026: Leading with Truth and Innovation

DOI: TBA

Received: 18 May 2025

Accepted: 18 May 2025

Published online: 28 May 2025

Open access

Avery Dinh <sup>1</sup>, Eugene Kang <sup>1</sup>

As the Class of 2026 graduates, they enter a world shaped by crisis, yet equipped with unique perspectives and a drive for truth. This piece highlights the potential of this generation, underscored by Dr. Fauci's call for leadership rooted in facts. From university researchers tackling microplastics and mental health to high school students contributing to the scientific landscape, young scholars are demonstrating their power to not just observe, but actively change the world. This journal, Gesri, aims to amplify these vital voices and foster deeper engagement within the broader research community.

As the march toward summer picks up speed, high schools and universities across the nation continue to send off waves of starry-eyed graduates. As the Class of 2026 walks across the stage, diplomas in hand, the potential for meaningful change has never been greater. Why? This is the generation trained not just in classrooms, but in crisis. These are the scholars emerging from a global pandemic, political division, and a growing wave of misinformation.

At the University of San Francisco commencement, Dr. Anthony Fauci told the graduating class, "You are the generation that can bring us together... you have the right stuff to make it happen." His message is understood loud and clear: we need young leaders who pursue truth, not trends. Equipped with a wealth of resources, opportunities, and knowledgeable mentors, student researchers around the world, regardless of age, have the power not just to observe the world, but to change it.

Across the country, college researchers are doing just that. At Florida Atlantic University, graduate students are quantifying microplastics on South Florida's beaches, contributing to our understanding of environmental contamination. Researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham have developed an AI tool to assist counselors in identifying college students at heightened risk of anxiety and depression, aiming to intervene before conditions intensify. And for the first time in scientific history, doctors at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and the University of Pennsylvania have used a gene editing therapy custom designed to repair a baby's unique genetic mutation, offering life-saving treatment for a rare and deadly disorder.

While much of the research that captures public attention originates from the nation's most prestigious universities, the potential for meaningful discovery is by no means confined to college campuses. Across the country, high school students,

<sup>1</sup> Harrison High School, Kennesaw, Georgia, United States of America

\*corresponding author: editors@gesri.org

## Staff Contribution

---

driven by curiosity, are already contributing to the research landscape in impactful ways.

With the release of our inaugural volume, this journal is proud to highlight the work of student researchers with the goal of amplifying their voices, showcasing their contributions, and inspiring broader participation in the pursuit of knowledge. At Gesri, we believe student research is more than a headline or a résumé entry, it is a growing movement grounded in inquiry, rigor, and the relentless search for truth. Our mission is to serve as a bridge between students and the wider research community, encouraging deeper engagement and meaningful dialogue.

From the Gesri team to you:

Your questions, your data, and your discoveries matter. So keep asking questions. Keep seeking truth. You have the right tools. Now, use them.

- 1.Hoge, M. contact: B. (n.d.). Study: AI tool can help counselors predict which college students are at risk of anxiety and depression disorders. UAB News. Retrieved May 19, 2025, from <https://www.uab.edu/news/research-innovation/study-ai-tool-can-help-counselors-predict-which-college-students-are-at-risk-of-anxiety-and-depression-disorders>
- 2.Marine microplastic pollution: How science faculty, students are studying this permeating problem. (n.d.). Florida Atlantic University. Retrieved May 19, 2025, from <https://www.fau.edu/science/news/marine-microplastic-pollution/>
- 3.Musunuru, K., Grandinette, S. A., Wang, X., Hudson, T. R., Briseno, K., Berry, A. M., Hacker, J. L., Hsu, A., Silverstein, R. A., Hille, L. T., Ogul, A. N., Robinson-Garvin, N. A., Small, J. C., McCague, S., Burke, S. M., Wright, C. M., Bick, S., Indurthi, V., Sharma, S., ... Ahrens-Nicklas, R. C. (2025). Patient-Specific in vivo gene editing to treat a rare genetic disease. *New England Journal of Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmoa2504747>