Ariana Abbrescia  
Sara Allen  
Allison Baroni  
Chloe Benson  
Jackson Boomer  
Megan Brockmeier  
Nicholas Browne  
Lilian Bui  
Robert Bulka  
Megan Burke  
Gabriel Calvo  
Samantha DeCarlo  
Zachary Destefano  
Erin Fabian  
Ryan Gallagher  
Taylor Hinch  
Martina Jaatinen  
Emily Khozouri  
Corey Kuipers  
Audrey Lawrence  
Jessica McGloin  
Melissa McGloin  
Kathryn Miller  
McKenzie Mix  
Finn Murphy  
Jennifer Natoli  
Nellie O’Leary  
Christian Ostrowski  
Kyung Seo Park  
Patrick Peterson  
Matthew Planchon  
Hollis Popp  
Allison Porzio  
Kayleigh Purcell  
Kaylan Purisima  
Aislinn Quinn  
Emily Renner  
Katya Sajovec  
Danielle Scudder  
Julia Shelley  
Emma Shultz  
Natalie Snyder  
Cecilia Spesia  
Jackson Sweeney  
Jacqueline Thoet  
Bernard Zitzewitz

Anne Quinn Welsh Director:  
Anna Bonta Moreland, Ph.D
Associate Director:  
Madeline Reynolds
Assistant Director:  
Kimberly Hidore

Program Coordinator:  
Jaime Haughton
Program Assistant:  
Christine Ciocco
Graduate Assistants:  
Kathrine Curry  
Franki Rudnesky
Song Learning and Patterns in a Chickadee Hybrid Zone

Ariana Abbrescia

Major: Biology
Tutor: Dr. Robert Curry

Ariana Abbrescia is a senior Honors biology major with a minor in Spanish from Dover, Delaware. She has worked in Dr. Robert Curry’s lab since her freshman year, assisting in field and lab research of the chickadee populations in Pennsylvania. Her project will assess the relationship between male genotype and song patterns in Black-capped chickadees, Carolina chickadees, and their hybrids, using over a decade of data to discover patterns in the genetic and acoustic landscape at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. After graduating she plans to pursue a career involving conservation ecology and/or agroecology, hoping to apply her biology education and passion for environmental and social justice to change both the landscapes and minds around her. Ariana will be presenting her final work this Spring for the Biology Department.

Winds of Change: Economic Diversification in the GCC

Sara Allen

Major: Arab and Islamic Studies/Political Science
Tutor: Dr. Catherine Warrick
Reader: Dr. Samer Abboud

Sara Allen is a senior Arab and Islamic Studies and Political Science major minoring in Economics and Arabic from Southern New Jersey. She has known that she wanted to study the Middle East since she was seven years old when she visited the King Tut exhibit in Philadelphia. Ever since then, she has looked forward to researching and learning more about the Middle East, culminating in her thesis paper about economic diversification in the GCC. She is also an avid equestrian, runner, and triathlete. Next fall, she will be attending Cornell Law School with plans on working in Middle Eastern Energy Law in the future.
Sex Strikes and Nude Protests: How Hegemonic Interpretations of the Cis-Gender Female Body Obscure Women’s Leadership in Nonviolent Movements

Allison Baroni

Major: Peace and Justice
Tutor: Dr. Samer Abboud

Allison Baroni is a junior from San Jose, California. She is a Peace and Justice major with Public Administration and Spanish minors. She has previously done research with Dr. Adriano Duque of the Romance Languages and Literature department. For her thesis, she is studying how the cis-gender female body is conceptualized and contextualized in sex strikes and nude protests. Her project places emphasis on how hegemonic Western analyses of these strikes and protests undermines and trivializes the work of the women leading them, while simultaneously obscuring the more efficacious ways women have led movements for nonviolent resistance.

The (Dis)Invention of Black Womanhood: A Rhetorical Analysis of Intersectional Oppression in the Cosmetics Industry

Chloe Benson

Major: Communication/Peace and Justice Studies
Tutor: Dr. Billie Murray
Reader: Dr. Terry Nance

Chloe Benson is a Senior Presidential Scholar, majoring in Peace and Justice Studies and Communication. Chloe is originally from North Charleston, SC! In her free time, she enjoys long bike rides and weekend pickleball games with her family. On campus, she is heavily involved in diversity & inclusion efforts, particularly through her work with the student-led social media campaign, Get Woke Nova. In addition, Chloe sits on the CLAS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee as one of three undergraduate student representatives and is a founding member of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion’s Student Advisory Board. In the future, Chloe aspires to work in corporate diversity & inclusion, influencing systemic change. As a professional anti-racism advocate, Chloe has focused her thesis direction on the reproduction of racialized and gendered discourses within the cosmetics industry.
Cracking the Casino: How to Turn Gambling into Investing and Make the Casino Work for You

Major: Mathematics & Statistics
Tutor: Dr. Elise Pasles

Jack Boomer is a Mathematics and Statistics major and a Business and Economics minor born and raised in Ogden, Utah. In his thesis, he will be researching the mathematics behind the game of casino Blackjack and card counting, aiming to find a strategy that minimizes the variance that accompanies the game. He will also be analyzing other ways to beat the casino at their own game and show how someone can turn gambling into investing.

The Pressure to Be Productive and its Effects on Individuals and Corporations

Major: Economics
Tutor: Dr. Mary Hirschfeld
Reader: Dr. Eugene McCarraher

Megan is an Economics major and Humanities and Spanish double minor from River Edge, New Jersey. Interning with Sir Kensington’s, a certified B Corporation (balancing purpose and profit), and studying abroad in the laid back culture of Sydney, Australia has informed her desire to find a bridge between efficient business and a fulfilling human life. Through her courses in both Humanities and Economics, she has frequently confronted the tension between the various advantages and shortcomings of the capitalist system. She has also become increasingly aware of the constant pressure that many people, especially college students, face to be constantly “productive” or “efficient” with their time. Through her thesis, she is exploring the connection between a corporate desire for efficiency and the human desire for efficiency and the corresponding costs to both corporations and individuals. Upon graduation, she will be working full time as part of the Unilever Future Leaders Program (UFLP) in the Marketing Department.
Shedding the Spotlight on the Economics of the Film Industry

Major: Economics
Tutor: Dr. Mary Kelly
Reader: Dr. Scott Dressler

Nick is an Economics major from North Caldwell, New Jersey. He has a passion for the entertainment industry through the lens of both multimedia and business. He plans to pursue this industry in California after graduating. In his thesis, Nick will be creating an economic model that can be used to predict whether or not a film will be successful before release in the box office. To accomplish this, he will be testing many qualitative and quantitative variables to create an econometric regression model. He hopes that this will be able to be applicable for the future release of films. This topic is bolstered by a love for all things film and a curriculum driven by economics.

Functional Comparison of Tup Transcriptional Repressors in Candida glabrata and Saccharomyces cerevisiae

Major: Biology
Tutor: Dr. Dennis Wykoff
Reader: Dr. Troy Shirangi

Lily is a senior Biology and Peace and Justice major from Lumberton, NJ. While at Villanova, she has led Back on My Feet, Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week committee, and the Care Chronicles. In her free time, she enjoys outdoor adventures, cooking, baking, and reading. Interested in small but mighty organisms, Lily is studying a transcriptional repressor in Candida glabrata, a pathogenic yeast species, for her Honors Senior Thesis. After graduation, Lily plans to attend medical school and unite her passions for science and social justice as a pediatrician for economically disadvantaged families. Lilian will be presenting her final work this Spring for the Biology Department.
"The Thrasymachus Effect": The Development of Epistemological Relativism and Its Impact on Literature and Politics, 1921-2021

Major: Humanities  
Tutor: Dr. Helena Tomko  
Reader: Dr. Mark Shiffman

Rob is a Political Science and Humanities double major from Bayonne, New Jersey. Throughout his time at Villanova, Rob has been concerned with the erosion of the idea of truth in society and political discourse, and his thesis project comes from many sleepless nights working through the implications of the “post-truth” landscape we’re living in today. He’s also quit social media, which has been nice. After graduation, Rob intends to go to law school, where he will focus on constitutional law and civil rights law in preparation for a career in public service.

Diners, Drive-ins, and Dissecting the American Foodscape

Major: Sociology  
Tutor: Dr. Rory Kramer  
Reader: Dr. Allyson Levin

Megan is a Sociology major and Communication minor from Holliston, Massachusetts. Over the past 4 years of her Villanova career, she has engaged in several different opportunities to further the conversation around mental health on campus through a Panel on Mental Health as well as a Mental Health Task Force. She has also had the privilege of being on the Special Olympics Planning Committee for three years in which she conducted media and publicity, health promotion, and entertainment efforts for the largest student-run Special Olympics event in the world. Having gained so much from the Honors community, Megan takes pride in her role as teaching assistant for the Freshman Honors class, Shaping a College Life, in which she shares her insight on social, academic, and emotional life with new Honors students. In her thesis, she will explore how the cultural dominance of white masculinity has permeated into defining the social facet of “taste” through an analysis of Guy Fieri’s “Diners, Drive-ins, and Dives.” After graduation, Megan will be working at Prudential Financial.
Divine Erotics: Whether God Loves UsErotically

**Major:** Humanities and Philosophy  
**Tutor:** Dr. Paul Camacho  
**Reader:** Dr. Kevin Hughes

Gabe is a senior from Albuquerque, New Mexico, studying philosophy and theology in the Humanities and Philosophy departments. His academic interests include metaphysics and philosophy of religion, and his favorite philosopher is St. Augustine. Outside the classroom, his interests include baseball, hiking, and agriculture, and he loves to read Lewis and Tolkien. Gabe hopes to continue on to graduate school at Oriel College, Oxford to study theology before returning to New Mexico.

Can You Hear the People Sing? An Examination of Music Therapy Prison Programming

**Major:** Criminology/Mathematics  
**Tutor:** Dr. Kelly Welch  
**Reader:** Father David Cregan

Samantha is a Mathematics and Criminology double-major from Dobbs Ferry, NY. Music has always played an instrumental role in her life, offering her a means to connect with herself and others. In the future, Samantha hopes to combine her passion for music and for social justice by bringing music to those who are marginalized, particularly the prison population. Her thesis focuses on such a convergence, that of music therapy and criminology, studying the effectiveness of music therapy programming in the prison setting and offering recommendations to formulate programs that best serve the needs of inmates. Her thesis directly aligns with her post-graduate plans of pursuing a Master of Arts in Music Therapy, where she will complete her clinical hours for the program at a local prison.
**R1CS without RISC, Building A More Efficient zkSNARK Compiler**

**Major:** Computer Science  
**Tutor:** Dr. Tom Way  
**Reader:** Mr. Michael Dixon

Zachary DeStefano is a senior at Villanova University studying Computer Science and Mathematics and a member of the Villanove Men's Rowing team. His research interests include recreational mathematics and cryptography (particularly as it relates to verifiable computation). He began cryptography research on zkSNARKs at Los Alamos National Laboratory in the Advanced Research in Cyber Systems Group last summer as a student intern in the Cyber Security Research Summer school, and this summer he continued this research with the Lab remotely with a focus on distributed and verifiable machine learning. This year at Villanova, he is using his experience creating zkSNARK related applications to design a new programming language that compiles to R1CS and develop a compiler for this language to enable the more efficient development of zkSNARKs.

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**From Despair to Hope: How Can Beauty Emerge Amidst Rage and Love?**

**Major:** Humanities  
**Tutor:** Dr. Michael Tomko  
**Reader:** Dr. Christopher Barnett

Erin is a Humanities and English double major and Business minor from Thousand Oaks, California. In her years at Villanova, she has been involved in many activities, including the Women's Club Volleyball team, the Blue Key Society, and Special Olympics Committee. She has also been an active member of the Honors program and has worked as an Office Assistant to the program for three years. In her thesis, she is combining her lifelong loves of music and academics to perform an analysis of Green Day's critically acclaimed album, American Idiot. She plans to use the authorship of Soren Kierkegaard to garner a deeper understanding of anxiety, despair, and whether the possibility of hope can exist within the realm of the album, and the greater cultural moment it encapsulates.
**Statistically Determining the Relationship Between Teenage Mental Health & Social Media**

**Major:** Mathematics  
**Tutor:** Dr. Charles Ashley

Ryan Gallagher is a Mathematics major in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences from Chadds Ford, PA. His thesis takes a quantitative and statistical approach to studying the relationship between teenage mental health and social media usage. A member of Villanova’s NROTC Program, he will commission as an Officer in the United States Navy upon graduation and report to Naval Air Station Pensacola to begin training to become a Naval Aviator.

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**Transitional Justice: The Key to Transforming Race Relations in the United States**

**Major:** Political Science, Peace and Justice  
**Tutor:** Dr. Cera Murtagh  
**Reader:** Dr. Eugene McCarraher

Taylor Hinch is a Senior Presidential Scholar, double majoring in Political Science and Peace and Justice and double minoring in Humanities and Irish Studies. She is originally from Birmingham, Alabama, and loves to visit local art museums when she is home. Taylor is interested in how to build sustainable communities through dialogue. She commits her time to the Honors Program as a Peer Mentor, Ambassador, and Teaching Assistant for the Shaping a College Life initiative and to the Sophomore Service-Learning Community as a Facilitator. Previously, Taylor completed research on the efficacy of consociational democracy on improving community relations in Northern Ireland. Her Senior Thesis examines racial justice in the United States and proposes that two transitional justice mechanisms, truth commission and reparations, could be critical to securing racial justice. Taylor is a 2021 Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Fellow. She will join the U.S. Department of State as a Foreign Service Officer in 2023 and implement positive and sustainable peace in “post-conflict” and transitioning states. After graduation, Taylor will pursue a master’s program in International Affairs with a focus on Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding. Taylor was also selected as a Semi-Finalist for the 2021-22 Fulbright U.S. Student Program (Finland - Study Grant).
The Relationship Between Birth Experiences and Maternal Mental Health

**Major:** Psychology  
**Tutor:** Dr. Rebecca Brand  
**Reader:** Dr. Anna Moreland

Martina is a Psychology major with minors in Counseling and Communication from Mahwah, New Jersey. Martina hopes to go straight to doctoral study after graduation and pursue a Doctorate of Psychology (Psy.D.) in Child, Family, and Couples Psychology. She hopes to one day work in a school or private practice with these populations. She has seen firsthand the communities where these resources are not available, or where the stigma is alive and well against seeking help for mental health and wellbeing. As such, she hopes to become one of those resources and help others in their journey to achieving their psychological wellness, particularly in youth and adolescents. Her thesis focuses on how empowering or disempowering birth experiences may affect maternal self-efficacy postpartum depression. PPD is an overwhelmingly important field to understand, especially as its prevalence grows each year. She hopes her thesis can help highlight the importance and validity of mental health, especially in new mothers who so often face the stigma against mental health in their role of motherhood.

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Practical and Ethical Challenges of Using Advance Research Directives in an Era of Growing Biotechnology

**Major:** Biology  
**Tutor:** Dr. Peter Koch

Emily is a Biology major with a Peace and Justice minor and a concentration in Medical Humanities from Long Island, New York. She plans on applying to an MD/PhD program in the upcoming cycle to work in Neuroscience research. Her thesis allows her to combine her Biology Major and Medical Humanities concentration to explore how novel biotechnology is changing the landscape of clinical research for Alzheimer’s patients. Emily will explore how new innovations have opened the door to the possible use of advance research directives and ethical concerns surrounding the principles of autonomy, self-determination and informed consent that come along with this newfound potential for greater access to clinical research.
Neu Nationalismus: Examining German Nationalism and Nationalist Parties since Reunification

**Major:** Political Science & Humanities  
**Tutor:** Dr. Lowell Gustafson  
**Reader:** Mr. Lance Kenney

Corey Kuipers is a Political Science and Humanities major with a Communication minor originally from Grand Rapids, MI. On campus, he is the Vice President of Villanova Television, a Student Fellow at the Matthew J. Ryan Center and a Supervisor with Intramurals. He studied abroad at the University of Cambridge in the Politics, Philosophy and Economics program, where he focused on political economy and European politics. German culture and politics has been an area of interest for Corey for years, making it natural that his Honors Thesis focuses on German nationalism in the context of his training at Villanova and Cambridge. His thesis will explore the theoretical framework for nationalism as reimagined in recent decades, Germany’s complicated history with national identity and the role European integration and nationalism in other European countries have played in shaping the recent mild success of nationalism in Germany, specifically through the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party.

Quantifying the Role of Membrane-Order Disruption in the Pro-Inflammatory Autoimmune Response Associated with Inflammatory Bowel Disease

**Major:** Biochemistry  
**Tutor:** Dr. Anil Bamezai

Audrey Lawrence is a senior Biochemistry major and Ethics minor in the Honors Medical Humanities cohort. She is from Ellicott City, Maryland and is the Vice President of Villanova’s chapter of the Alpha Epsilon Delta Honor Society, and President of the Villanova Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Audrey works with Dr. Bamezai in studying autoimmune conditions. Her primary research interest is understanding and improving symptoms of Inflammatory Bowel Disease with consistent interruption of the pro-inflammatory T cell response. She currently works at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia in the Genetics department and will be applying to MD/PhD programs in the upcoming cycle. She plans to work in pediatric immunology in the future. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her cats.
**Bloody Hands: The Costs of “Enhanced Interrogations” on the Global War on Terror**

**Major:** Political Science  
**Tutor:** Dr. Jennifer Dixon

Jessica McGloin is a Political Science Major and a Business Minor from Scotch Plains, New Jersey. In her thesis, Jessica is researching how counterterrorism practices have impacted the U.S.’s ability to execute its objectives of the “Global War on Terror.” Specifically, she is analyzing the implications of the U.S.’s practice of torture over the past two decades and evaluating whether the U.S. use of torture has damaged its global reputation, relationship with allies, and if these practices saved lives. Jessica’s thesis topic stems from her interests in politics, law, and statecraft and relates to her passions for human rights and international affairs. After graduation, Jessica is excited to move forward with her startup business, Top Shelf Designs, LLC that she founded with her siblings, who are also seniors at Villanova. She plans to attend law school starting in the 2022-2023 academic year, where she will study constitutional law.

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**Turn that Frown Upside Down: How Positive Psychology Shapes Political Participation and Policy Opinion**

**Major:** Political Science  
**Tutor:** Dr. Camille D. Burge  
**Reader:** Dr. Anna B. Moreland

Melissa McGloin is a Political Science major with a double concentration in Global Business and PPE (politics, philosophy & Economics) and Honors Business minor from Scotch Plains, New Jersey. In her thesis, Melissa examines the intersection of happiness and politics, particularly how life satisfaction and positive affect, together, impact voter turnout and partisan policy preferences within the United States. Her interest in positive psychology first took root during Honors class discussions about the good life and resurfaced during quarantine when negative emotions were at an all-time high across the world, especially within the American political system. Melissa plans to attend graduate school abroad studying international relations and global political economy for the 2022-2023 academic year. In the interim, she is looking forward to further developing her entrepreneurial business, Top Shelf Designs, LLC and hopes to pursue an advanced certification in positive psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, where she will build upon the foundation of her thesis. Melissa is very fortunate to have had the opportunity to bridge the two fields of positive psychology and political psychology in her Honors senior thesis and is confident that with a little hard work and “PERMA,” happiness and the good life are attainable – even for American politics.
The Legal and Political Repercussions of Argentina’s Dirty War

Major: Political Science
Tutor: Dr. Lowell Gustafson

Kate is a Political Science and Spanish double major from Bristol, Rhode Island. She is a member of Villanova’s Sailing Team and currently serves as secretary of the team. After graduation Kate plans on attending law school and hopes to someday work in international and human rights law. Her interests in politics, Spanish, and the law pushed her towards investigating the political disappearances that occurred throughout Argentina’s military dictatorship from 1976-1983 and the legal and political fallout.

Par for the Course: How Advertising in the Golf Industry Relates to Media Representations of Women in Golf

Major: Communication
Tutor: Dr. Ashley Pattwell
Reader: Dr. Amy Way

McKenzie is a Communication major with a specialization in Public Relations and Advertising from Yardley, Pennsylvania. Growing up as a woman playing golf, she saw first hand the gender disparities in the sport. Her desire to see herself reflected in the media and advertising surrounding golf inspired her to pursue a project centered around women in golf industry advertising. She hopes to draw conclusions about the connections between the media representation of women in golf and the advertising strategies used to target women in the industry. She will explore the broader representations of women in sports and narrow her focus to examine what these general trends may say about the golf industry. At the end of her project she would like to be able to make suggestions about how golf industry advertising strategies can target women more naturally and work to break down stereotypes of sports women created by the media.
More Than Money: Gender gap dynamics of the highly educated

Finn Murphy

Major: Economics  
Tutor: Dr. Cheryl Carleton  
Reader: Dr. Christopher Kilby

Finn is an Economics major with Communication and Spanish Language & Literature minors originally from Olathe, Kansas. In her thesis, Finn will be comparing wage and non-wage labor market outcomes for men and women with postgraduate degrees. She believes that using a cohort of postgraduate degree holders controls for competitiveness and motivation. In this process she will be analyzing differences in fringe benefits, job satisfaction, and career growth opportunities to see how the gender gap extends beyond pay.

Virtual Reality Training for High Risk Professions

Jennifer Natoli

Major: Communications & Economics  
Tutor: Dr. Allyson Levin  
Reader: Dr. Hezekiah Lewis

Jen Natoli is from Scotch Plains, NJ. She’s pursuing Economics, Communications with a specialization in Media Production and Honors degrees. She recently interned at Kirna Zabete, where she learned about the nuances of a quickly growing company in the fashion industry, as well as ID-PR, the largest independent public relations company. She considers herself a very creative person, and finds most of her interests lie in digital, brands, and creative fields, however she is always open to exploring new paths. She has a passion for promoting equal and open education for underprivileged children both locally and around the world, volunteering with several organizations throughout the years to raise awareness. In her free time, she enjoys painting and art, her favorite artist being Keith Haring, running, and traveling. She spent a past summer in London, which was an eye-opening experience filled with great culture and new foods!
Adhesive Performance of Tokay Geckos (Gekko gecko) as a Function of Temperature

Major: Biology
Tutor: Dr. Alyssa Stark

Nellie O’Leary is a biology major and Honors minor with a pre-vet concentration from Havertown, PA. She has been working in veterinary offices and with a variety of animal species since she was a sophomore in high school, and she anticipates applying to veterinary school in spring of 2021. During her gap year, she plans on using the research experience she gained studying gecko adhesive systems to pursue a position in food animal research or a similar field. In her free time, she enjoys playing tennis, hiking with her dog, and baking.

The Analysis of a potential direct biochemical interaction between Brd2a and Brd2b in zebrafish

Major: Biochemistry
Tutor: Dr. Angela DiBenedetto

Christian Ostrowski is a Biochemistry major with a minor in Business from Kennett Square, PA. He has been working in Dr. DiBenedetto’s lab in a facility maintenance capacity since his freshman year and has been working in a research capacity since his sophomore year. He studies protein-protein interactions between zebrafish bromodomains both experimentally and computationally. He has also worked with confocal imagery and measurement of specific vasculature in knockdown and wildtype embryos. Outside of the lab, he works with the Ed Snider Youth Hockey Foundation as a volunteer on-ice coach and is also a volunteer EMT with the Radnor Fire Company. In his free time, Christian enjoys boating and fishing with his family.
The Korean American Female Narrative: What Does the Untold Narrative Reveal About the Immigrant Experience?

Major: English  
Tutor: Dr. Yumi Lee  
Reader: Dr. Jean Lutes

Ashley is an English major with minors in Business, Writing & Rhetoric, and Communication from North Wales, Pennsylvania. Born in South Korea and immigrating to America at the age of five, she used books not only to learn the English language but also to understand the new country and her identity within it. Spending numerous classes reading texts written by predominantly white writers, she always wondered about Asian writers in the literary world and what they were writing about. In her thesis, she plans to study the writings of Asian American women on the topic of immigration and citizenship, focusing specifically on memoirs written by Korean American women. Since the Korean American immigrant experience has been largely omitted from the broader genre of Asian American literature, she hopes to discover why Korean Americans have been left in the shadows and what their narratives teach us about being Korean American. Ashley hopes that her thesis will encourage others to explore the writings of Asian Americans, as their stories carry the weight of more than just their singular narrative. Upon graduation, Ashley will be working at KPMG. She also has future plans of attending law school with hopes of becoming an immigration lawyer.

The Decline and Fall of Traditional IPOs: How Direct Listings, SPACs, and Dutch Auctions May Take Over the Primary Stock Market

Major: Economics  
Tutor: Mr. Craig French

Patrick Peterson is an economics major from St. Paul, Minnesota with minors in Honors, Business, and Spanish. Coming from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Patrick has not only been interested in his economics courses but also the business world. His thesis combines his interests in economics, business, and the stock market by focusing on the strategies companies use to go public and how they may succeed or fail. Patrick hopes that the skills and insights he gains from completing this project will benefit his career in business down the road.
Sex, Gender, Race, and Insurance: A Comparative analysis of STI testing rates in an urban clinic pre and post COVID-19

**Major:** Biology
**Tutor:** Dr. Carol Weingarten

Matt is a Biology major with minors in Spanish Language and Literature, Global Health, and a concentration in Medical Humanities from Stonington, Connecticut. He is a part of the Villanova New Student Orientation Program, NOVAdance, and the Blue Key Society and enjoys volunteering with other members of the Villanova community. Matt plans on attending medical school after a gap year, where he aims to focus on public health within a global setting. His experience working in a public health-oriented clinic and COVID-19 testing center motivates his thesis where he aims to bring attention to disparities between demographics disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

More Than ABC's and 1,2,3,'s: The Potential for Universal Pre-Kindergarten in the United States

**Major:** Political Science
**Tutor:** Ms. Marsha Tonkovich
**Reader:** Dr. Madora Soutter

Hollis is a Political Science major and Business minor from La Grange, Illinois. She has a never-ending love for Villanova, and calls the University home, as well as certain clubs and organizations on campus, including Alpha Phi Omega, Chi Omega, Special Olympics, Student Advancement, and the Honors Program. After her freshman and sophomore years in college, she additionally fulfilled her childhood dream of being a camp counselor at her childhood summer camp in Dubuque, Iowa. Combining her love for children with her interest and fascination with United States social policy, seemed only natural when discussing ideas for her thesis. Hollis is beyond excited for her Honors Thesis topic to be on policy regarding pre-kindergarten within the United States. Particularly, she is curious if an implementation of universal pre-kindergarten within the United States could potentially create a more equitable, just society that would provide a foundation for all children to pursue and grow on equal footing.
The College-to-Career Trajectory: How do post-graduate expectations affect the aspirations of undergraduate seniors at Villanova?

Major: Communication
Tutor: Dr. Allyson Levin
Reader: Dr. Mark Wilson

Ally is a Communication and Political Science double-major from Staten Island, New York. As a college senior, the question of “So, what are you doing after graduation?” has become more daunting than exciting for her, and she thinks much of this anxiety stems from her everyday intake of information and expectations. Her thesis focuses on the college-to-career pathway and how our consumption of media, mentorship, and education has set a rigid definition of success within the post-graduate world. She is personally unsure of what her life after Villanova will look like, and she thinks this lack of certainty should lead to a joyful exploration of her interests rather than a pressing expectation to make an announcement on LinkedIn. She hopes that her research will serve as a springboard for normalizing endeavors that don’t revolve around these professional expectations, and her thesis can play a role in extinguishing the shame that comes along with the pursuit of non-traditional (or even unknown) paths.

"Somebody Has Got to be Crazy About That Kid"

Major: Psychology
Tutor: Dr. Helen Lafferty
Reader: Dr. Christa Bialka

Kayleigh is from Winnetka, IL, a suburb outside of Chicago. She is a Psychology major with a Spanish and an Education minor. Since Kayleigh was in third grade, she has dreamt of being a teacher and helping America’s future generations realize their fullest potentials. In her thesis, she explores ways that teachers can cultivate supporting and loving environments in their classrooms to make sure that every student is given the chance to fulfill their most craziest hopes and dreams. After graduation, Kayleigh will be attending the University of Notre Dame to participate in their Alliance for Education (ACE) Program, eventually graduating with a Master’s of Education and heading out into the real world to fulfill her own hope and dream of being a teacher.
Examining Violence Against Indigenous Women in the United States through a Settler Colonialist Framework

Major: Peace and Justice/ French and Francophone Studies
Tutor: Dr. Brianna Remster
Reader: Dr. Kathryn Getek-Soltis

Kaylan Purisima is a Peace and Justice & French and Francophone Studies double major from Lodi, NJ. She is the Co-President of Amnesty International + No Lost Generation on campus, a club dedicated to advocating for human rights, but with a specific focus on migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. She is also a Lorenzini Ambassador for the McNulty Institute for Women’s Leadership, and loves stopping by the Institute (in pre-CCOVID times) to grab some tea and snacks. She spends a lot of time in St. Mary’s doing plays as part of Villanova Student Theatre, too. In her free time, she spends time with her roommates, reads books on Kindle, watches the New York Knicks lose, and talks to her family over the phone (she is one of five!). For her thesis, she is studying violence against indigenous women in order to shed light on the effects of colonialism and assimilationist policies that have caused immense harm in our Native communities.

Representations of human trafficking in television crime dramas

Major: Communication
Tutor: Dr. Billie Murray

Aislinn is a Political Science and Communication double-major from Meriden, CT. Over the past thirty years, discourses on human trafficking in the United States have grown exponentially in the criminal justice system, in Congress, and in popular culture. As most people in the United States will never experience human trafficking or personally know someone who has, these representations inform the way that the general public understands human trafficking. Aislinn’s thesis focuses on the way that popular television crime dramas, like Criminal Minds, employ rhetorical tropes to construct meaning structures that reinforce or push back against dominant, hegemonic understandings of what human trafficking looks like.
"Fighting Like Cats and Dogs:” Gender and Anthropomorphism in Children’s Media

Major: Communication  
Tutor: Dr. Sheryl Bowen  
Reader: Dr. Narda Quigley

Emily Renner

Emily is a Communication major and Honors Business minor from Westchester, NY. Her academic and professional interests include marketing, advertising, public relations and many other aspects of the Communication field. In her free time, Emily spends hours finding and creating new recipes, a skill she picked up during her time abroad in Sydney, Australia. You might also find her with a book in one hand and a pencil in the other, as she loves to read and write with dreams of one day becoming a best-selling author. Creativity has fueled Emily’s ambitions from a young age, and she aims to approach all academic, professional and personal endeavors with a creative mindset. As the Honors thesis assignment drew closer, Emily knew that she wanted to develop a thesis that would be obscure in the best way possible. Thankfully, a seemingly casual conversation with her roommate and her brother over the summer lit a creative spark within Emily, providing the foundation for her thesis topic. In her thesis, Emily plans to explore the notorious competition between cats and dogs, exposing the ways in which this socially constructed phenomenon plays an implicit role in our understanding of gender.

The Archaeology of Pandemics

Major: Comprehensive Science/ Global Intersdisciplinary Studies  
Tutor: Dr. Samer Abboud  
Reader: Dr. Eliza Gettel

Katya Sajovec

Katya is a Comprehensive Science and Global Interdisciplinary Studies double-major with a concentration in Cultural Studies from New Fairfield, Connecticut. The topic of her thesis reflects her passions for human health as well as history. Exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, contemporary health issues as well as future actions by health officials and policy makers remain uncertain; the historical analysis of anthropological and archaeological data can influence positive health outcomes in a post-pandemic world. Katya views the current situation as an opportunity to analyze an epidemiological issue through an archaeological lens, combining her two interests. She hopes that this paper will highlight the importance of analyzing the past to assist in mitigating the current and future issues faced by human beings, particularly within the health field. This research propels her into the archaeological field which she hopes to pursue in graduate studies.
Can Women Have it All?: The influence of childcare and leave policies on women’s participation in the workforce as highlighted by the Coronavirus Pandemic

Danielle Scudder

Major: Sociology
Tutor: Dr. Melissa Hodges

Dani is a Sociology Major with Business and History Minors from Plainfield, Illinois. On campus, she is involved in NovaDance, STRIVE, and Outdoors Club. After graduation, Dani plans to attend Law School with the ultimate goal of working in public policy. With this in mind, she has focused her thesis on the effect of childcare and leave policies on women’s participation in the workforce.

"Walking the Talk": A Guiding Framework for Brand Activism

Julia Shelley

Major: Communication
Tutor: Dr. William Cowen

Julia is a Communication Major with Political Science and Public Service & Administration Minors from Whitewater, WI. Her experiences throughout college in the non-profit and international development spaces have driven home the capacity of organizations to foster change and has made her curious as to how the private sector can contribute to making a positive social impact. Her interests in civic engagement and communication have culminated in this project, which focuses on the ways that companies create positive social impact through both messaging and action, and how they might best communicate their social impact work to relevant stakeholders.
Racial Disparities in Healthcare: The Role of Implicit Bias and the Ethical Obligation to Address it

**Emma Shultz**

**Major:** Biology  
**Tutor:** Dr. Guy Aiken  
**Reader:** Sarah Vaughan Brakman

Emma is an Honors Biology major from Rochester, New York with a minor in Peace & Justice and a concentration in Medical Humanities. She hopes to become a physician assistant and would love to work in pediatrics in the future. Emma’s thesis combines her interests in medicine and social justice by focusing on the important issue of racial disparities in healthcare in the United States, specifically those caused by systemic flaws and implicit bias. Emma hopes that through this project she will gain insight that will one day make her a better health care provider.

Let’s Go There: Influencer Marketing in the Travel and Tourism Industry and its Effects on Consumer Behavior

**Natalie Snyder**

**Major:** Communication  
**Tutor:** Dr. Ashley Pattwell

Natalie Snyder is an Honors Communication major, specializing in Public Relations, with minors in business, marketing, and Spanish. Natalie is originally from Arvada, Colorado. On-campus, you can find Natalie leading the cheering team on the sidelines, or managing a consulting group with the Villanova Marketing Group. As she looks toward her future endeavors in both public relations and marketing, the role of social media in her career has become undeniable. The ever-changing landscape of social media and its implications for integrated marketing communications have set the groundwork for a constantly evolving practice. In her research, Natalie plans to look at the emerging field of influencer marketing in the travel and tourism industry to determine the impact of influencer-based messaging on consumer’s awareness of advertising and intention to visit a destination. Through these insights, Natalie aims to understand the unique approach of influencer marketing in the travel industry and its effects on shaping consumer behavior.
10S-dioxygenase in Nostoc punctiforme: Amino Acids Relevant for Catalysis

**Major:** Biochemistry  
**Tutor:** Dr. Barry Selinsky  
**Reader:** Dr. Janessa Wehr

Cecilia is a Joliet, Illinois native studying Biochemistry with a Spanish minor. She is captain of the Women's Rowing team, an avid cook, and an aspiring pharmaceutical scientist. For her thesis research, Cecilia is building off past work she has done in the Selinsky Lab studying prostaglandin H2 synthase (PGHS), a protein involved in the mammalian pain response. Specifically, Cecilia’s project involves an evolutionary relative of PGHS in the bacterium Nostoc punctiforme. In mammals, PGHS is responsible for carrying out two reactions, while in Nostoc, it is only responsible for one. In past research, Cecilia identified several amino acids of interest in Nostoc that deviate from its mammalian successor and created a variety of Nostoc mutants. This year, Cecilia is analyzing the effects of these mutations on the catalytic activity of Nostoc PGHS protein.

The Never-ending Civilization Project: Chinese Central Government Intervention in Borderland Communities

**Major:** Political Science, GIS-Asian Studies  
**Tutor:** Dr. Deborah Seligsohn  
**Reader:** Dr. Samer Abboud

Jackson is a Political Science and Asian Studies double major from the Twin Cities in Minnesota. On campus, he is involved in the Blue Key Tour Guide Society, 89.1 WXVU Villanova Student Radio, the Political Science Student Advisory Committee, and as a Resident Assistant with first year students. Beyond these involvements, Jackson can be found thrift shopping, talking incessantly about his love for Minnesota, and being a little too competitive on the sand volleyball courts. Having spent the autumn of 2019 studying abroad at Peking University in Beijing, it only felt natural for him to further his interests in modern Chinese politics through his Honors Thesis. Combining his two majors, he will be analyzing how development and border proximity impact interethnic inequalities between Han Chinese and the 55 minority groups in the PRC.
How effective were COVID-19 lockdown policies? Mobility changes after reopening industries in four states

Jacqueline Thoet is a senior honors student from Long Island, New York, majoring in Economics and minoring in French and Psychology. Her thesis focuses on the effectiveness of COVID-19 lockdown policies in four states: New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Maryland; and how the demographics of the area affected people's mobility following policy changes by industry. After college, she will be working as a public sector consultant for Crowe in New York City and hopes to be able to use what she’s learned from her thesis in her career postgrad.

The Shale Trap: The Argentine Hydrocarbon Industry after the 2000s Boom and into the Future

Bernard Zitzewitz is an Economics, Political Science, and Humanities major from Grayslake, IL. He hopes to attend graduate school for economics and pursue a career in the economic policy field. He studied abroad in Cambridge, UK, where he studied international political economy and development economics. With much of his family living in Argentina, he has gained a deeper interest in how governments implement their development strategies while pursuing improvements in their citizens' standard of living. His thesis focuses on the role of the oil and natural gas industries in Argentina in the past decades as the state has navigated fluctuations in global commodities markets. He hopes to find the varying levels of success in the areas where the state interacts with these industries, including labor and indigenous rights, foreign investment, and electricity access for domestic consumers. This research could provide a better idea of what direction these industries may take in Latin America after the COVID-19 pandemic and shed light on various challenges the state faces when it works with such divergent interests as those involved in hydrocarbons production.