Message from the Director

TO THE 2020 GRADUATES

Congratulations on your big day! I encourage you to celebrate your accomplishment and hope this graduation marks just the beginning of a lifelong journey of curiosity, discovery, leadership and service. Yes, you have earned your degree, but this is merely the stepping-stone for what is yet to come. Whatever your next endeavor may be, we know that you will succeed. What makes us so sure? Four years ago, you came to Virginia Tech fearless and determined to major in an emerging new scientific discipline. Possibly not fully grasping the field of Neuroscience and its scope, you have since learned about the inner workings of the brain; the brain-mind connection; you have learned to rely on data to make evidence-based decisions; you understand how human emotion is regulated by defined neurochemicals; you learned the volatility of memories, and became conversant in mechanisms of neurological illnesses. You learned how genes and the environment collaborate to shape human traits and personality. Most importantly, you have become a critical thinker and a person who is eager to impart on the world the power of knowledge.

I leave you with one challenge and it is not a simple one: “Make a difference in the world.” Always ask for evidence and the data that supports decisions we make individually or in society. I know you will succeed. I thank you for choosing Neuroscience as your degree and share pride in your future accomplishments.

Good luck and congratulations.

Dr. Harald Sontheimer
I.D. Wilson Chair and Professor
Executive Director
School of Neuroscience

Lauren Haacke

Lauren is an Experimental Neuroscience major. She is the co-founder and President of the student organization Synapse, serves on the founding executive committee for Nu Rho Psi, has been an undergraduate researcher for the Sontheimer laboratory, and is a research ambassador the College of Science. Lauren was selected as Virginia Tech’s Undergraduate Student of the Year. She was also selected as a Fulbright Scholar. This fall she will be studying brain injury and regenerative medicine in Heidelberg, Germany.
Sidharth Madhavan

Sid is a Clinical Neuroscience major. He was an undergraduate researcher in laboratories of Dr. Matt Buczynski (Neuroscience) and Dr. Bin Xu (Biochemistry). Sid has presented his research at 9 different venues, is the recipient of several prestigious scholarships and fellowships, serves as the founding Vice President of Nu Rho Psi, and is among the first Ambassadors for the School of Neuroscience. This fall, Sid will begin graduate school at the University of Southern California – Buck Institute PhD program in the Biology of Aging. He was also recently awarded the USC Provost’s Fellowship for showing outstanding promise in a career in academic research.

Awards and Special Recognitions

MIA GENUARIO

SCHOOL OF NEUROSCIENCE
OUTSTANDING SENIOR AWARD

The Outstanding Senior Award recognizes a student with outstanding performance in academics, extracurricular activities, leadership, and contributions to the university and/or community.
LAUREN HAACKE
VIRGINIA TECH UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT OF THE YEAR

The Undergraduate Student of the Year recognizes a graduating senior who has achieved overall excellence during their undergraduate career at Virginia Tech. This recognition is awarded to a student who has exceptional and balanced achievement in academics, leadership, and service.

RISHI DEVULAPALLI
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE OUTSTANDING SENIOR RESEARCH AWARD

The Outstanding Senior Research Award recognizes a student with demonstrated excellence in undergraduate research.
FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Becoming a School of Neuroscience Ambassador, attending Chi Alpha Winter Formals, and graduating from behind a laptop screen. I truly thank God for these lifelong memories, crazy friends, and loving family!"

OLUDAMILOLA ADESHINA
Gainesville, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"New Cadet Week, where I was so tired and deranged that when someone said "spoon", I laughed so much other cadets thought I was crying.

YEA IN AHN
Annandale, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"The life-long friendships gained and the knowledge that I am now equipped with has strengthened me during my college years."

MALIKAH IMOGENE AJOSE
Virginia Beach, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
"Erik, get some sleep!" - All my friends

ERIK AKBAR
Chesterfield, VA
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE
MEGAN NICOLE ANSLEY  
Alexandria, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
"Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition." - Steve Jobs

MEGHAN BABINGTON  
Sterling, VA  
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:  
"Bike rides through the duck pond, doing homework in the horticulture garden, and hammocking all around campus"
Our Seniors

KATIE MARIE BARNES
Roncoverte, WV
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Home football games in October"

ROBERT GATES BASS III
Midlothian, VA
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"My favorite memory at VT was conelius."

KOURTNEY A BAUMFALK
Richmond, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Winning the homecoming game against UNC."

BEN BATMAN
Monroe, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Working as a personal trainer for Virginia Tech Recreational Sports."

School of Neuroscience | College of Science | Virginia Tech
JENNIFER LEIGH BEAUCHAMP
West Chester, PA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“My favorite memory is attending ring dance in the spring of 2019.”

NORALEE BEECROFT
Woodbridge, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Jumping for the first time in Lane Stadium on a sunny September day in 2016.”

SARA BELAY
Washington, DC
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.” - Maya Angelou

MATTHEW DAVID BERGSTRESSER
Charlottesville, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“No matter the risks we take, we always consider the end to be too soon, even though in life, more than anything else, quality should be more important than quantity.” - Alex Honnold
RIYANKA BHAVSAR  
Aldie, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:  
"People may not remember what you said, but they’ll remember how you made them feel."

HANNAH ELIZABETH BIRD  
Chesapeake, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:  
"What lies behind us, and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us."
Ralph Waldo Emerson

KATELYN SUE BOLT  
Front Royal, VA  
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:  
“My favorite memories come from Dr. Phillips class and the discussions that really made us think about our brains and society.”

AMANDA LEE BLATTEL  
Virginia Beach, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:  
“I know of a place where you never get harmed, a magic place with magical charms; Indoors, Indoors, InDoorssssss” - Spongebob Squarepants
FAVORITE MEMORY:
"I think the school of neuroscience taught me the most important lesson; that I could be the best neurosurgeon in the country or I could take vitals all day in our nearby hospital and as long as I made someone's worst days a little bit easier, my work would matter all the same."

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"One of my favorite things at Virginia Tech was walking around with friends on a cloudy fall day and seeing how pretty the campus is when all the leaves have changed."

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Getting to celebrate "Wearing the Tradition" with my best friends since freshman year. It was a way to celebrate and reflect on all of our growth through the years and spend time with our fellow 2020 classmates."

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Jumping to enter sandman with friends in Lane Stadium, it is an amazing, unreal feeling changed."

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"Jumping to enter sandman with friends in Lane Stadium, it is an amazing, unreal feeling changed."
FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Studying abroad in Lugano, Switzerland."

CHELSEA BUHLER
New York, NY
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
"It’s never too late to be who you might have been." -George Eliot

abby brown
Annapolis, MD
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

SOFIA DANIELA CADENA CORO
Tyson’s Corner, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Military Ball and Ring Dance were two of my favorite memories here at Virginia Tech. Meeting the wonderful friends, I now get to call family."

SARA HOPE CARBAUGH
Bluefield, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." -Aristotle

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." -Aristotle
Our Seniors

KATHERINE CARNIVALE
McMurray, PA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“The 6 OT football game during my last football season. I couldn’t have asked for a better end to my last football season.”

MEGHAN ELIZABETH CASEY
Laurel Springs, NJ
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“One of my favorite memories is definitely when both of my best friends/roomies switched into Neuro! Nothing has bonded us quite like late nights cramming for Dr. Cline’s exams. Couldn’t have done it without you guys.”

CAMERON ELISE CASHWELL
Virginia Beach, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Junior year football season where my friends and I hit the road and made it to every home and away football game starting with the Florida State game in Tallahassee.”

GABRIEL M. COLEMAN
Mobile, AL
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Favorite memories are jumping to Enter Sandman.”

KATHERINE CARNIVALE
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GABRIEL M. COLEMAN
Mobile, AL
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Favorite memories are jumping to Enter Sandman.”
MIKAYLA ANN COLT  
Chesterfield, VA  
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:  
“One of the best was the opportunity to study abroad in Switzerland with the School of Neuroscience.”

CAROLYN MIKAELA COX  
Abingdon, VA  
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:  
“Meeting my best friend Michael during the Summer Bridge program has to be my favorite memory. It opened the door to four years of fun and chaos.”

ELLE CORNMAN  
Midlothian, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:  
“One of the best was the opportunity to study abroad in Switzerland with the School of Neuroscience.”

KATHRYN CREIGHTON  
Charlottesville, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:  
“Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”
Our Seniors

FRANCESCA CZESAK
Wappingers Falls, NY

Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience

Favorite Quote:
“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”
- Anne Frank

CAROLINE DANA DE JAGER
Williamsburg, VA

Clinical Neuroscience

Favorite Quote:
“It’s not what happens to you, but how you react that matters.”

LAKE DEANE
Richmond, VA

Clinical Neuroscience

Favorite Quote:
“Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of the hard work you already did.”
- Newt Gingrich

HAYDEN DAVIDSON
Chesapeake, VA

Clinical Neuroscience

Memory Book | May 16 | Class of 2020
KRISTINA N. EAST  
Memphis, TN
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Virginia Tech gave me amazing friends that I will cherish forever.”

MARIANA ESCALANTE  
Ashburn, VA
COMPUTATIONAL AND SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Jumping to Enter Sandman for the first time in Cassel, high fiving our players after the game, and sharing this excitement with friends from Alpha Phi Omega made waiting to be a senior for this experience definitely worth it.”

RISHI KASHYAP DEVULAPALLI  
Ashburn, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“The Neuroscience Study Abroad program.”

NISTHA DUBE  
Fairfax, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“No one is you and that’s your superpower; that’s what makes you unique, that’s what it is about you that will make a difference in the world.”
- Jay Shetty
CAITLYN FINN
Chesapeake, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“You can’t go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending.”
- C.S. Lewis

SERENA LYNN FLEMING
Ashburn, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“My favorite memory at Virginia Tech was when I celebrated my 21st birthday in Lane Stadium and got a picture with the Hokie Bird.”

ROBBY FECONDA
Leesburg, VA
COMPUTATIONAL AND SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“When I realized that Virginia Tech is not just a school, but a place where you make your best friends for life.”

CAITLIN STEPHANIE FANNING
Bland, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Life is about accepting the challenges along the way, choosing to keep moving forward, and savoring the journey.”

Our Seniors
Elisabeth Ann George
Sterling, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

Favorite Memory:
“A surprise party for my twentieth birthday, because it encapsulates how I have been richly blessed by the community of friends I found here at VT.”

Alexandra Marie Gauthier
Woodbridge, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

Favorite Quote:
“If you fail this week, that’s okay. You can’t succeed all the time because then life will get boring.” - Dr. Ian Kimbrough

Mia Christine Genuario
Alexandria, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

Favorite Quote:
“Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory”

Tezeta Geatenet Gesesse
Springfield, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
Our Seniors

JARRED MICHAEL GREEN
Chesapeake, VA
Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Gamma Phi Beta bid day freshman year."

DANIELA VICTORIA GIL
Woodbridge, VA
Experimental Neuroscience

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"While the end of my time in college might have fizzled out, the beginning was more than I could have hoped for, and I’ll cherish those memories for the rest of my life."

LAUREN GUTTMAN
Sterling VA
Clinical Neuroscience

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Gemma Phi Beta bid day freshman year."

EMMA ROSE GNATOWSKI
Potomac Falls, VA
Experimental Neuroscience

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Jumping to Enter Sandman at the Clemson game, traveling abroad with the School of Neuroscience, and singing on stage at The Lyric Theater with my a cappella group, Sensations."
**KATIE HOGGE**  
Clifton, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
"Being surrounded by the beauty of Switzerland and an incredible group of people who share my passion for neuroscience and beyond was an opportunity I never expected to have and one I will forever be grateful for."

**EMILY HUDSON HURST**  
Rocky Mount, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE QUOTE:  
"Be the change that you wish to see in the world" - Gandhi

**LAUREN KAY HAACKE**  
Lorton, VA  
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
"One of my favorite memories from my time at Virginia Tech is getting a $2 in one of Dr. Cline’s Intro to Neuro classes for getting an answer to a question correct."

**RACHEL A HEID**  
Richmond, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
"One of my favorite memories from my time at Virginia Tech is getting a $2 in one of Dr. Cline’s Intro to Neuro classes for getting an answer to a question correct."
Our Seniors

BRIANNA JANocha
Middletown, DE
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Camping out in whiteboard forts with my friends in Newman library during finals week every semester.”

SEOK MIN KIM
Vienna, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Humility is a daily decision, and a lifetime commitment.”

NATALIE JONES
Annandale, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

DILLON JENKINS
Emporia, VA
COMPUTATIONAL AND SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE

DANA ELIGIA JOHNSON
Bronx, NY
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
ABIGAIL C KIRKPATRICK
Robbinsville, NJ
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “My favorite Virginia Tech Memory was being with all of my closest friends at Ring Dance.”

EVELYN ANN KOON
Potomac Falls, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “Jumping to Enter Sandman at football games.”

LIISA KRIPOWICZ
Manassas, VA
COMPUTATIONAL AND SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “Jumping to Enter Sandman in Lane Stadium to enjoying a sunny afternoon on a corona on Roanoke Street, the one thing that has made my time at Virginia Tech unforgettable was the friends by my side.”

JORDAN LANDRY
Chesapeake, VA
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE: “It is paradoxical, yet true, to say, that the more we know, the more ignorant we become in the absolute sense, for it is only through enlightenment that we become conscious of our limitations.” — Nikola Tesla
BHAVYA LANKIPALLI
Cary, NC
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending.”
- C.S. Lewis

ALEXIS ELAINE GELACIO LAPID
Virginia Beach, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Reaching my full (action) potential”

IAN LEVINE
Orlando, FL
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “My favorite memory at Virginia Tech was when I performed stand-up comedy for the first time at the VTU student stand-up show.”

MADISON LEE
Falls Church, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “My favorite moments here at Tech definitely revolved around volunteering at the Blacksburg farmer’s market on Saturdays and seeing the different performances at the Moss Arts Center while working there.”
KAYLEY MANARCHUCK
Burke, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Everyone is a walking story. Billions of perspectives, dreams to be chased, hearts to be opened, passions to be discovered and moments to be created. Seeking to see the splendor in each second and appreciating the art in every angle, the world explodes in living color.”

ELIZABETH MAQUERA
Springfield, VA
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“The first week of my freshman year, I decided to play club water polo. Joining water polo has been one of the best decisions I’ve ever made.”

NADIA MONIQUE LEWIS
Richmond, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Good, Better, Best. Never let it rest. Until your good is better. And your better is best.”

SIDHARTH MADHAVAN
Springfield, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Pedal-boating and watching the sunset with my friends at Lake Lucerne during the Neuroscience Study Abroad.”

Our Seniors
ANOO MASKERI  
Vienna, VA  
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
“Participating in the Big Event every year.”

SAMANTHA ANN MCCHESENEY  
Kirkland, WA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

MICHAEL JUSTUS MCGREGOR  
King George, VA  
COMPUTATIONAL AND SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
“Late night DX runs and playing VT ice hockey.”

REAGAN MEYERS  
Moneta, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
MADISON ROSE NOBLE
Mechanicsville, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light.” - Albus Dumbledore

NEHA OGALE
Ashburn VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Hiking Dragon’s Tooth and climbing up to the very top of the tooth.”

Our Seniors

JAMIE LEA MUSTIAN
Richmond, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“We always have to walk in the light of the truth.”

RYAN NASSER
Woodbridge, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

JACOB L. NELSEN
Harrisburg, PA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“My last summer on campus serving as a research assistant and Hokie Ambassador.”

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Hiking Dragon’s Tooth and climbing up to the very top of the tooth.”
MARIAM NICOLE OUATTARA  
Ashburn, VA  
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE QUOTE:  
“If I could find a real-life place that’d make me feel like Tiffany’s, then... then I’d buy some furniture and give the cat a name!”  
- Audrey Hepburn as Holly Golightly, in Breakfast at Tiffany’s.
SHRITI PANT
Chantilly, VA

COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

KYRA PARKER
Alexandria, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Creating lifelong friendships and being a helping hand to individuals in the Blacksburg community.”

NICOLE LORRAINE PERITZ
York, PA

CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Life is a journey to be experienced, not a problem to be solved.”
- Winnie the Pooh

MADISON GRACE PHILHOWER
Richmond, VA

CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Creating lifelong friendships and being a helping hand to individuals in the Blacksburg community.”
NIKITA PIKE
Reston, VA

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Visiting Lucerne, Switzerland during the Neuroscience Study Abroad.”

CAROLYN NICOLE POLLOCK
Virginia Beach, VA

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Just work here”
- Dr. Sontheimer

CARLY PORTER
Radford, VA

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Home is not simply a mark upon a map, any more than a river is just water. It is the place at the center of the compass from which every arrow radiates, and where the heart is fixed.”
- Jennifer Worth

KAYLA PURCELL
Millington, NJ

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Going on the field in Lane Stadium during Enter Sandman for the Hokies game.”
**Our Seniors**

**KYLIE REAM**  
Haymarket, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
"Have been jumping to Enter Sandman with my friends before football games begin."

**JULIANNE ELIZABETH REILLY**  
New Canaan, CT  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
"The first time I jumped to Enter Sandman surrounded by all my friends. There really is not a better tradition."

**SASHA MARIE REYNOLDS**  
Vienna, VA  
COMPUTATIONAL AND SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
"Ring Dance!"

**ALEXANDRA NICOLE RHODES**  
Chantilly, VA  
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE  
FAVORITE MEMORY:  
"Ring Dance!"
Our Seniors

GISSELLE NICOLE RIVERO BALLON
Sterling, VA
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Being a part of the VT community through service."

FORREST J. ROBERTSON
Virginia Beach, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"My favorite memory at Virginia Tech is when my roommates and I were able to go see College GameDay."

TANMAYA RODDA
Manassas, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Living on my own for the first time, yet still being supported by my fellow Hokies."

LORIN TYLER ROEMHILDt
Midlothian, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Meeting Frank Beamer on the field during a football game my senior year!"

AMY ELIZABETH SABET
Chesterfield, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"My favorite memories at VT were made with my friends at the amphitheater by the duck pond!"
**ERIC SANDERLIN**  
Richmond, VA  
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

**FAVORITE MEMORY:**  
“One of my fraternity brothers plays on VT Men’s Rugby and one night we all went out to support him at a game. When we won the crowd went crazy, and we all got to storm the field and celebrate with him.”

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**TAYLOR NICOLE SCHAEFER**  
Stafford, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

**FAVORITE MEMORY:**  
“When my grandfather came to Blacksburg to speak to my sorority about his experiences as a caregiver for my grandmother after she was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease.”

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**Nikita Nanna Schroll-McLaughlin**  
Leesburg, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

**FAVORITE MEMORY:**  
“Kansas City Chiefs won the Super Bowl.”

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**CHASE ROBERT SCHULTE**  
Burke, VA  
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

**FAVORITE MEMORY:**  
“One of my fraternity brothers plays on VT Men’s Rugby and one night we all went out to support him at a game. When we won the crowd went crazy, and we all got to storm the field and celebrate with him.”
MEGHAN WALKER SEDOYV
Lexington, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
"A posse ad esse."

POOJA SHETHNA
Burke, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
"Collective memories of walking on campus after class at sunset with my headphones on, just breathing in fresh air and feeling comforted by the ever-present beauty in the scene around me."

ANA SHAFFI
Waterford, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
"Are we what we do with time, or are we what time does with us?"
- Mahmoud Darwish

CLAIRE LOUISE SHIFFLETT
Warrenton, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
"Are we what we do with time, or are we what time does with us?"
- Mahmoud Darwish
ERYNN SORENSE
Norfolk, VA
COMPUTATIONAL AND SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Traveling with VT Engage on a service immersion trip to Peru during the summer of 2017”

NICOLE LOUISE SPIEZIO
Silver Spring, MD
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Enjoying the view from Bald Knob at sunset with friends.”

ALATHEA JOY SMITH
Manassas, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“My favorite memory is studying abroad and coming back to spend the summer in Blacksburg. Seeing the world somehow made this place even better, and made Virginia Tech feel like more of a home.”

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“Discipline is the strongest form of self-love.”
SAMEERA SUNKARA
Ashburn, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

RITHIKA SURINENI
Ashburn, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world.”
-Malala Yousafzai

MICHAELA GRACE STEVENS
North Dinwiddie, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“My favorite memory is when I was on the field for football game day for rescue. Experiencing Enter Sandman on the field was amazing.”

AMBER ELISE STEPHENS
Virginia Beach, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

Our Seniors

School of Neuroscience | College of Science | Virginia Tech

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Memory Book | May 16 | Class of 2020
Our Seniors

ERICA SONG TOWNSEND
Fairfax Station, VA

COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “My fondest memories would have been group study sessions, but I’ll definitely cherish my amazing and intelligent friends that made them so memorable.”

KATIE VAN NUYS
Leesburg, VA

COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “My last home football game. My whole family visited, as well as my roommate’s family, so despite the rain and cold, we made the most of it and had a lot of fun.”

WILHELM HARRY VENITZ
Richmond, VA

CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “First week of school freshman year I was able to meet so many new and interesting people and build some lifelong friendships which is something I will truly cherish from Virginia Tech.”

COLLEEN MARGARET VALENTINE
Chester, NJ

CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY: “Study abroad in Switzerland through the PGS program”
ALEXANDRA WARREN
Manasquan, NJ
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“The feeling of jumping to Enter Sandman with an entire stadium solidified the community aspect of this school. I knew that in that moment I had chosen the right school and Virginia Tech was home.”

LAUREN WEAVER
Pasadena, MD
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Spending last summer in Blacksburg for the School of Neuroscience SURF-n! I hadn’t stayed in Blacksburg over the summer before participating in full-time research without any distractions.”

MARIA VILLAFUERTE
Arlington, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Making neuroscience group chats with my friends and sending memes of our professors to ease the pain of how difficult some exams were.”

RACHAEL ELIZABETH WARD
Vienna, VA
EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE
FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Going on an impromptu road trip to North Carolina to see the eclipse. We watched the eclipse from a rock in the middle of a river.”

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FAVORITE QUOTE: "It is beyond a doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience." - Immanuel Kant

FAVORITE QUOTE: "It does not matter how slowly you go so long as you do not stop." - Confucius
KRISTINA WOODWARD
Reston, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“My favorite memory at Virginia Tech was sitting front row of the Student Section at my last VT Football game.”

MOLLIE MCKENZIE WOODS
Roanoke, VA
COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Helping to start a national service sorority, Omega Phi Alpha. I met so many people who are some of my best friends and I was honored to serve as President of the organization my junior and senior year.”

SARAH VICTORIA WOOLVERTON
Winchester, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE MEMORY:
“Attending my first home football game freshman year.”

MEREDITH K WILSON
Richmond, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
“...I was patient, ay-oh. Now I can scream that we made it. Now everyone, everywhere I go, they ‘gratulations.’” -Quavo
TAYLOR MARIE WYNNE
Virginia Beach, VA
CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE

FAVORITE QUOTE:
"In vain have you acquired knowledge if you have not imparted it to others." -Deuteronomy Rabbah

Congratulations
CLASS OF 2020!
Information about our Majors

Students in the School of Neuroscience program learn directly from experts in the field about advances in genetic, cellular, molecular, cognitive and systems Neuroscience.

**CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE**

Graduates of the Clinical Neuroscience major have completed a curriculum that promotes a detailed understanding of genetic, cellular and molecular mechanisms underlying diseases and disorders of the nervous system. Several Clinical Neuroscience courses emphasize the translation of research findings into clinical practice and the role and responsibility that health care plays in society.

**COGNITIVE AND BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE**

Graduates of the Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience major have completed a curriculum that focuses on thought processes in humans. These students have explored a wide array of topics including sensory and motor systems, learning, memory, decision-making, language, sleep, mood, awareness, and attention.

**COMPUTATIONAL AND SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE**

Graduates of the Computational and Systems Neuroscience major have undertaken an interdisciplinary branch of Neuroscience that incorporates theoretical and experimental approaches to understand the brain. Graduates from this major have explored tools and techniques that neuroscientists use to make sense of vast data in hope of finding solutions to neurological diseases as well as understanding processes such as decision-making, addiction, motivation, and more.

**EXPERIMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE**

Graduates of the Experimental Neuroscience major have completed a curriculum that prepares students for a hands-on career in science or science education. These graduates have gained a comprehensive understanding of genes, molecules, and cells that are the building blocks of the brain. Furthermore, many Experimental Neuroscience students have taken part in undergraduate research.

Commencement Keynote Speaker

**Georgia Hodes**

Dr. Hodes’ work in mice and human subjects identifies the underlying biology that contributes to vulnerability and resilience to stress and mood disorders respectively. She is interested in understanding how the sex of an individual contributes to their susceptibility to stress and depression. Her goal is to develop novel personalized treatments and bioassays for mental illness so these disorders can be medically diagnosed and treated effectively.

Dr. Hodes’ initial education was in the liberal arts. She received a B.A. in Drama/Dance from Bard College and worked as an actor and a designer in New York City. In 1999, she went back to school and obtained post-baccalaureate training at Hunter College in order to pursue a graduate degree in Neuroscience. At Hunter she experienced her first foray into research studying sensory behavior in electric catfish at the American Museum of Natural History and mirror self recognition in Beluga whales at the New York Aquarium. Dr. Hodes was accepted into the laboratory of Dr. Tracey Shors at Rutgers University in 2001. She received her Ph.D. from the Behavioral and Systems Neuroscience division of the Psychology program in 2007. At Rutgers University her research explored sex differences in the effects of stress on learning and brain plasticity across the lifespan. In 2007, she began postdoctoral training in Pharmacology with Dr. Irwin Lucki at the University of Pennsylvania examining the contribution of growth factors and adult neurogenesis to genetic and sex differences in vulnerability to stress. In 2010, she joined the laboratory of Dr. Scott Russo as a post-doctoral fellow for training in molecular neuroscience. Her work at Mt. Sinai focused on neuro-immunological and epigenetic mechanisms contributing to individual differences in stress susceptibility. In 2013, she received a postdoctoral NARSAD young investigator award to examine the role of the cytokine Interleukin-6 in stress susceptibility. In 2015, she was promoted to Assistant Professor at Mt. Sinai. In 2016, she left Mt. Sinai to join the newly formed School of Neuroscience at Virginia Tech as an Assistant professor where she received a second NARSAD young investigator award to examine sex differences in the effects of stress on the peripheral immune system. She is an author of over 50 scientific papers and has contributed to 3 different textbooks. She currently runs her own research laboratory at Virginia Tech examining how sex differences in the immune system interact with the brain to drive behavioral differences in susceptibility and resiliency to stress.

Georgia Hodes
Assistant Professor, School of Neuroscience

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ALUMNI

Stay engaged within the School of Neuroscience and continue to be involved with Virginia Tech community.

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