

WELCOME TO



# VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY









**TOP RANKED**

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY,  
US NEWS AND WORLD REPORT**

**100+**

**MAJORS AND MINORS**

**4**

**UNDERGRADUATE  
ACADEMIC COLLEGES  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
AND SCIENCES**

**FITZPATRICK COLLEGE OF  
NURSING**

**VILLANOVA SCHOOL OF  
BUSINESS**

**COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING**



87%

OF STUDENTS WHO SOUGHT A RESEARCH EXPERIENCE PARTICIPATED IN ONE IN 2022

92%

OF CLASS OF 2022 PARTICIPATED IN AT LEAST ONE INTERNSHIP

30

PRESTIGIOUS FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS INCLUDING 19 FULBRIGHT RECIPIENTS IN 2022-2023



# STUDENT LIFE





**250K**

**HOURS OF SERVICE  
PERFORMED EVERY YEAR**

**ST. THOMAS OF  
VILLANOVA DAY OF  
SERVICE**

**HABITAT FOR  
HUMANITY**

**FALL AND SPRING  
BREAK EXPERIENCES**

**SOPHOMORE SERVICE  
LEARNING COMMUNITY**

**SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
PENNSYLVANIA FALL  
FESTIVAL**

**MLK DAY OF SERVICE**



99%

**SUCCESSFUL  
PLACEMENT RATE**

96%

**FRESHMAN-TO-SOPHOMORE  
RETENTION RATE**

92%

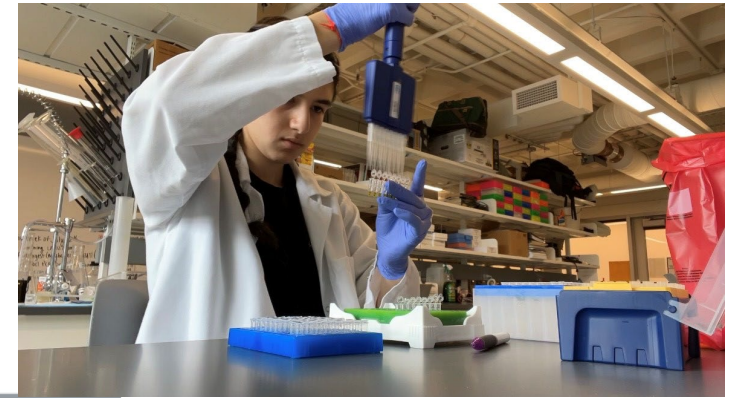
**GRADUATION RATE**

92%

**OF CLASS OF 2022  
PARTICIPATED IN AT  
LEAST ONE INTERNSHIP**



# Center for Research & Fellowships Presidential Scholars Program



[CRF.Villanova.edu](http://CRF.Villanova.edu)



Chelsea Benincasa | Associate Director



Kelsey Fenner | Assistant Director



Emily Wetzel-Ulrich | Assistant Director



Kate Vicente | Sr. Admin. Assistant



Gray Kidd | Assistant Director



Catherine Stecyk | Director

# Our Three Areas

Student  
Research

National  
Scholarships &  
Fellowships

Presidential  
Scholars  
Program

CRF ignites curiosity, exploration, and discovery through its research programs and support for nationally competitive awards.

Our advisors work with Villanovans to forge new paths, pursue their ambitions, and create the tomorrows about which they dream.



# Villanova Undergraduate Research Fellowship (VURF)

- Independent research with a faculty mentor
- 10 weeks (Summer)
- \$3500 stipend, \$500 for supplies, on-campus room and board

## Other Research Funding

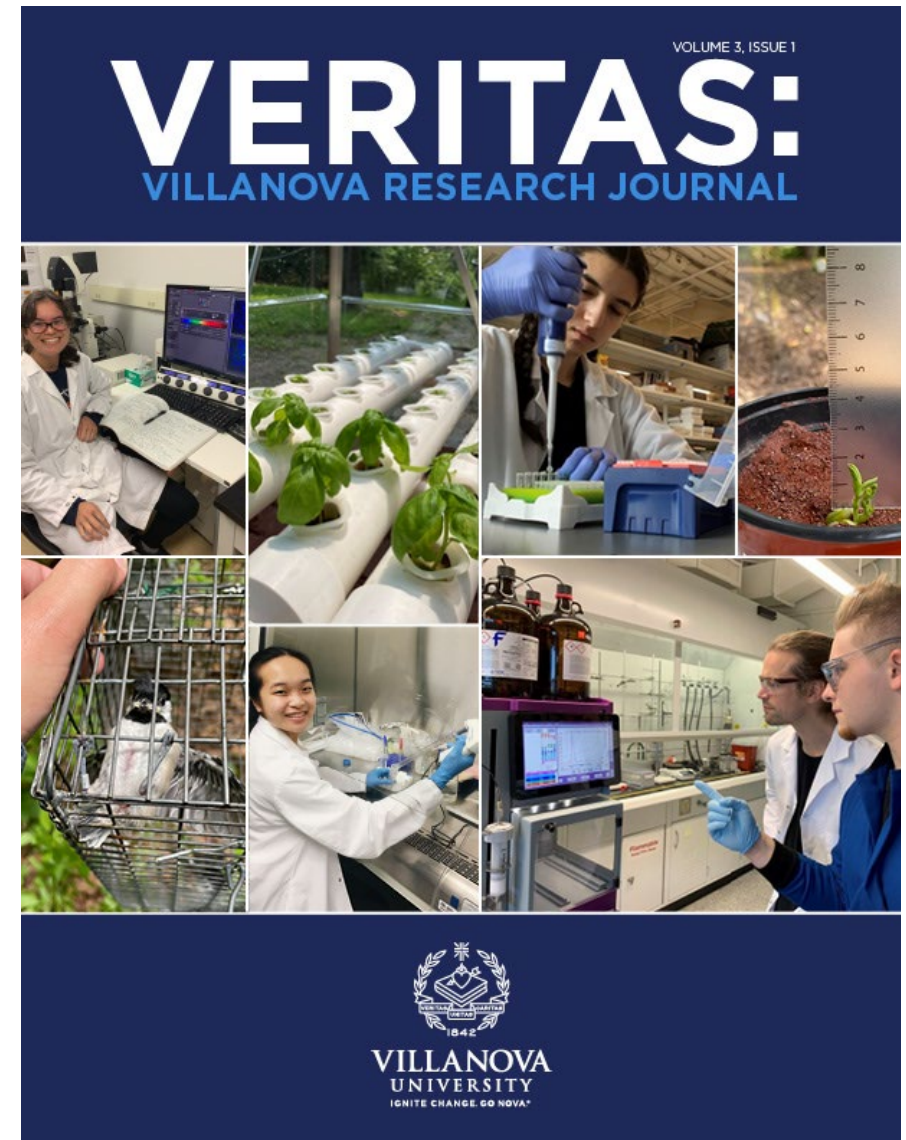
- Research Summer Housing Award
- Conference Travel Grants (\$500 toward conference travel/expenses)
- Research and Travel Grant



# *Veritas: Villanova Research Journal (VVRJ)*

- Villanova's undergraduate research journal
- Student editorial board
- Launched in Fall 2019

[veritas.journals.villanova.edu](http://veritas.journals.villanova.edu)



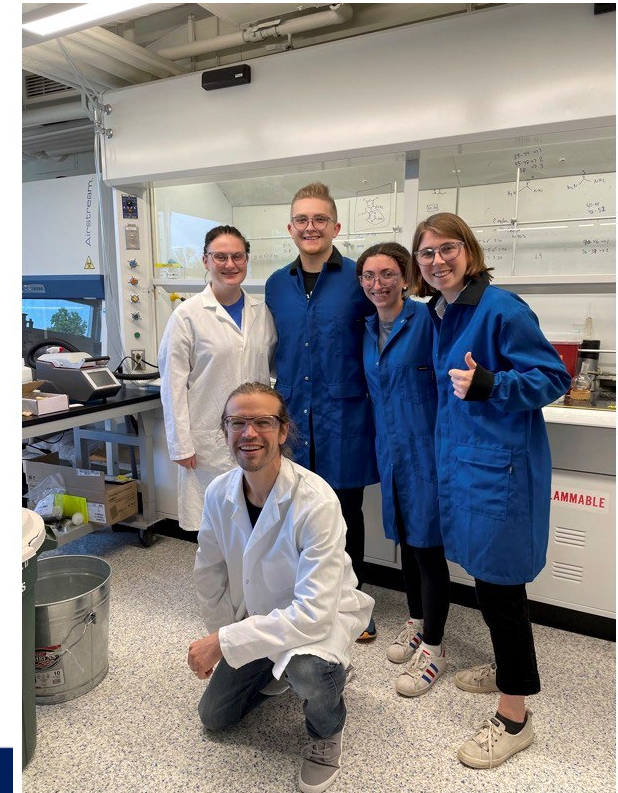
# Professional Development

- Guidance on Letters of Recommendation & references.
- CV & resume support for undergraduate and graduate students.
- Graduate school advising & application support.
- Fireside chats with alumni pursuing graduate school.



# Nationally Competitive Fellowships & Scholarships

- Institutional processes, workshops, application development.
  - Fulbright, Rhodes, Marshall, Mitchell, Knight-Hennessy, Truman, Goldwater, CLS, NSF-GRFP
- Top Producer of Fulbright Student grantees for 15 years.



# Presidential Scholars Program (International students eligible)

The Presidential Scholarship is a renewable, merit-based award covering full tuition, room, meals, the general fee, and the cost of textbooks for an undergraduate degree. Representing diverse intellectual, social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds, Presidential Scholars are transformational leaders both on and off campus who have demonstrated a love of learning and a commitment to enhancing both their local and broader civic communities.

## Fast Facts:

2000 nominations

1200 applications

50 interviewed

25 scholarships



# Applying to Villanova (Undergraduate International Students)

- Common Application
- TOEFL
- Financial Information
- Essays





# Applying: Essay Prompts and Writing to an American Audience

- *Prompt One:*

St. Augustine states that well-being is “not concerned with myself alone, but with my neighbor’s good as well.” How have you advocated for equity and justice in your communities?

- *Prompt Two:*

What is the truest thing that you know?

- *Prompt Three:*

One of the themes in St. Augustine's book, Confessions, is the idea of redemption. Tell us your story of being given a second chance.

- *Prompt Four:*

In the Villanova community, we believe that we all learn from one another. What is a lesson in life that you have learned that you would want to share with others?

- *Prompt Five:*

Augustine's “Miracles are not contrary to nature but only contrary to what we know about nature.” Tell us about a societal issue that you believe the wonder of technology is well-poised to help solve.

- *Prompt:* Why do you want to call Villanova your new home and how will you become part of our community?

# For Writers of Letters of Recommendation

Think about the letter:

Audience

Purpose

Context

Consider expectations of American universities

What are the top 3-5 reasons that this student pursues this opportunity or program?

Length

Follow instructions/guidelines

Standard for most awards and graduate school is **two pages**

# Letters of Recommendation: a Framework

## Introduction (1 paragraph)

Student's name, opportunity sought

Your name, position; what does your unit do? Give context.

How do you know the student?

## Body (2-3 paragraphs)

Relationship with student: "I first met X in Spring 2018, when..."

Provide **detail**, specificity, examples, context, stories

Did you select this person to lead? Did they overcome a challenge?

Reinforce their academic/co-curricular involvement

Present and explain personal characteristics and their relevance

## Conclusion (1 paragraph)

Final, enthusiastic endorsement

Invitation for further discussion

January 25, 2018

## **Recommendation for Wil D. Cat – Nemours Summer Undergraduate Research Program**

Dear **Members of the NSURP Selection Committee:**

I am writing to strongly support the candidacy of STUDENT for the Nemours Summer Undergraduate Research Program (NSURP). I am an Instructor at and Director of the Villanova University Center for Research and Fellowships. Our division administers the University's undergraduate research programming, including the Villanova Undergraduate Research Fellows Program, the Undergraduate Research Symposium, the Match Research Program for First Year Students, and Responsible Conduct of Research workshops for undergraduate researchers.

I have known STUDENT since February 2015, when she visited Villanova University as a high school senior and Presidential Scholarship Finalist, one of 45 Finalists chosen from a pool of 1200 applicants. At the time, STUDENT expressed a strong interest in participating in research. It was no surprise when, in the Fall semester, STUDENT made several appointments with faculty in biology and biochemistry to discuss their research interests and to become involved in a lab. She also made advising appointments with the CRF team to create a resume and to learn about how to begin her career in research so that she could be a successful MD-PhD candidate in three years. These interactions showcased STUDENT'S tenacity and persistence in methodically pursuing a long-term goal. She exhibits outstanding patience and maturity; in her first year, she heard many "no" responses from potential mentors and could have easily been discouraged. Instead, she persisted, joining the Smith lab in October 2015-- just two months after beginning her studies at Villanova.

In this capacity, she has conducted research on the molecular basis of aging and stress resistance. Using a genetic approach, she studies how the expression of certain genes relate to a specific pathway in the roundworm *C. elegans* and contribute to the functional decline of tissues that occurs with aging. She has continued her work with the Smith lab throughout her undergraduate career and will complete a senior thesis on her research. However, as she has maintained her focus on a research career beginning with a MD-PhD course of study, STUDENT aspires to broaden her research experience and learn from leading researchers at Nemours as a NSURP student.

Wil's intellect, proven leadership, and commitment to community stand out. Since 2012, she has worked as a **tutor in the sciences**, helping students understand the very subjects she loves dearly. She also worked as a **summer teaching intern** in 2016, seeking to enhance her teaching and communication skills. STUDENT understands the importance of science communication and is motivated to continue to effectively communicate science throughout her career. I have observed her enthusiasm for embracing each opportunity available to her and her aptitude for forming strong relationships: all skills that are critical in a researcher and clinician.

In the time that I have known her, **STUDENT’S character, maturity, and kindness** have impressed me the most: she is **receptive to feedback** and does not shy away from **constructive criticism**. In my interactions with STUDENT, I have observed her **tenacity and compassion**, her **maturity and patience**—characteristics that are important in a person who seeks to facilitate **sensitive** conversations about health as a physician-researcher. In my previous roles, I found that people like STUDENT—**those willing to listen, willing to put forth the extra effort** to build significant research backgrounds, **willing to identify creative solutions** to persistent issues—are those in whom it is critical to invest. As a NSURP student, STUDENT will utilize her previous and current leadership and research experiences to make a positive contribution to the research group in which she works.



I enthusiastically offer my endorsement for the candidacy of STUDENT as a NSURP fellow. She is personally and professionally suited to take on this role, and I am confident that she will continue her trajectory as a researcher and represent Villanova University. I would be happy to provide further insight or clarification if needed.

Sincerely,

**DR. YOUR NAME**

Director, Center for Research and Fellowships

Villanova University | Garey Hall 200 | 800 E. Lancaster Avenue

Villanova, PA 19085 | (610) 519-8766

[CRF.villanova.edu](http://CRF.villanova.edu)