

Hello, Class of 2024!

I know this isn't the way that you imagined the start of your time here at WUVA. The racial injustice, climate, and pandemic atrocities that have been brought to a head across the globe have made everyday life tumultuous to say the very least. An altered college experience can only compound the heaviness of all the other current events of the world, and I have no doubt that it can feel very isolating, especially if you've opted to stay at home instead of coming to Grounds, but please know that you have an entire family of Wahoos behind you. No matter where all of us are in the world right now, and no matter what we each may be facing, we're all supporting each other and all of you as well.

As a fourth year, I've had the great fortune of spending three amazing school years in Charlottesville. As cliché as it might sound, I've found some of the best people I've ever met at this school, and we've shared countless amazing memories on and off Grounds. We've gone to many UVA sponsored events, went shopping on the downtown mall, eaten on the Corner, and spent late nights in Clem. Those little moments are what I hold close to my heart, and I hope to have a few more of them before I graduate in May.

Classic events and traditions like Lighting of the Lawn and Trick or Treating on the Lawn may not be happening this fall, but you'll have the chance to enjoy these incredible gatherings one day when it's safe to do so. I guarantee you; it will be worth the wait.

Clubs are a wonderful way to find likeminded people here at UVA, and you're still able to do that despite the current circumstances! Take advantage of this. I spent many semesters involved in a media organization called WUVA. During my time in that organization, I was able to grow in more ways that I'm able to really articulate. Being in that organization was so transformative and it gave me so many treasured memories. I highly recommend checking out WUVA. You won't regret it.

Coming into college and being away from home is naturally a challenging and nerve-wracking experience, and those feelings are probably amplified for you. Know that that is entirely normal and remember that in bad and great times, you're not alone. My biggest piece of advice to you at this time is to get involved -- even if it has to be virtual right now. There are so many different clubs and opportunities here at UVA that there's a very good chance that you can find great friends of many different years and backgrounds.

Welcome to UVA, take advantage of your time here even though your time here right now is atypical, and keep looking forward to the day where you can carry on as usual here.

Best wishes,
A Member of the Class of 2021