

Hi Class of 2024,

Welcome to the UVA family! I am Julia Gilliam, a Fourth Year African and African American Studies Major on the Pre-medical track. I hope you are doing the best you can during these uncertain times with the deaths of countless Black and Brown people and COVID-19. I know with all of these events, it can be difficult to truly enjoy your first year; however, I hope you feel welcomed by the Fourth Year class!

Although my first year granted me more freedom to explore Charlottesville, the class of 2021 entered with the tragic events of August 11th and 12th. Even as these events occurred, I found my community and people I could rely on. The friendships you make in these four years are irreplaceable, and I am grateful I met them at this university. Just to plug a couple of orgs/clubs that have kept me afloat as a Black woman on Grounds:

- ★ Daniel Hale Williams Pre-Health Honors Society
- ★ Black Student Alliance
- ★ University Achievement Award Scholar Community

As I entered the University of Virginia during the Summer of Hate and you during COVID-19 and a racial/social injustice crisis, just know you have a supportive community in the Class of 2021. You will have a great and SAFE first year! I believe in you!

Sincerely,

Julia Gilliam
Echols Scholar | UAA Scholar
The University of Virginia | Class of 2021