

Hello and welcome to UVa class of 2024!

Welcome to grounds and to this wonderful community I, and you, presently, have the opportunity to call home. Though this year is far from normal, there is still much to cherish about being a part of this wonderful place. Here, you will have the ability to meet some of the most endearing and amazing people you will ever come across, broaden your horizons intellectually, and partake in the beginnings of becoming a true adult. Do not be intimidated or anxious however, we are happy to have you as part of the UVa community and are sure that you will excel and find your place no matter your circumstances; no matter your background or upbringing, you are wanted and respected here at UVa, and we are beyond elated to be able to include you in the community.

I know it can be difficult to navigate your way through college at a new city, experiencing new people with different lifestyles and orientations, especially this year with the difficulties introduced by COVID, yet there are still wonderful opportunities to meet the people who will make Charlottesville and UVa a home for you. A great way to do this is to join a club or group that aligns well with you or shares similar interests. I played tennis in high school, and the club tennis team here at UVa has provided me a group of people with whom I can share my love for tennis and sports while always sharing a laugh and having a good time. Aside from the club tennis team, I have made friends from classes and dorm rooms alike; one of my best memories here, (which I am sure is shared by many others), is the night we won the national championship in basketball in 2019. Rushing the corner with my friends and chanting with my fellow hoos will forever be a cherished memory in my heart, and though I know COVID will prevent experiences as large as this one, you will have ample time to enjoy experiences such as that night. Further, many memories I have include simple conversations I have had with others which do not require large gatherings. No matter the current predicament, stay positive and stay hopeful; there is always happiness in a dark room so long as one remembers to turn on the light.

I know it can be stressful starting college classes. I remember first going into General Chemistry and first year with only anxiety, but do not worry, you are here because you are capable of success. I would advise you to start studying early, and to stay organized to keep track of your assignments. Keep proactive and reach out when you need help or don't understand material, and you'll do fine.

Go Wahoos!

Sincerely,

Matthieu Poirier

Class of 2021