

Hello, Class of 2024!

Welcome to UVA! I know that this can be a difficult time to be starting college, but in times of tests is when our greatest strengths can come out. Instead of viewing this time as a period of hopelessness or dismay, instead you can look at this as an opportunity to make the most of this challenging time. I am sure that this is not the first, nor last time, you will experience hardship in life, so use this time as an opportunity to practice detachment, patience, and resilience.

I transferred to UVA as an incoming second year and it was a very difficult transition; I had to start from scratch by making new friends, learn the new geography, and acclimate to a new student culture. During my second year at UVA there were definitely times of loneliness and questioning whether I made the right decision or not, but by the conclusion of my second year rolled around, I knew that I had made the right choice. Yes, I would cry sometimes if I did not do well on an exam or felt lonely, but I was grateful for those moments because I learned to seize my time here and try my best every day. During the duration of that year I met lifelong friends, realized what my calling in life was, and finally memorized where Maury Hall was located. During my first week of school I could never have predicted what an amazing and life changing experience UVA would have on me, but it was because I chose to keep a positive outlook and seize opportunities that I was able to have such an extraordinary year.

Now, obviously your circumstances are different than mine, however, even though we are living in a virtual world for the time being, use this time to be creative and develop new ways to overcome your obstacles. I guarantee that you won't regret this year if you **choose** to make the most of every day. I wish you all the best!

Go Hoos!

Sincerely,
Alyssa P.
Class of 2021