

Dear Class of 2024,

Welcome to UVA! I'm so glad you chose UVA as your new home, whether you're starting your time here in-person or online. Although this semester is different than most, I'm confident that there are still plenty of opportunities for you to make the most of your time at UVA. All of the upperclassmen and faculty are here to support you as you transition into college and we want you to love UVA as much as we do!

Many UVA students live by the motto "work hard, play hard". Despite the restrictions on extracurricular activities this semester, the UVA community is making sure that the "play hard" spirit stays alive. One of my favorite ways to get involved during my time at UVA has been through Outdoors Club. Whether it be waking up before the crack of dawn to go for a sunrise hike before our 9 AM classes or driving out to Moab, UT for a week of hiking, biking, and climbing, Outdoors Club always has something going on. The annual camping trip at New River Gorge, WV and skiing trip at Snowshoe Mountain are highlights of every school year for me. Outdoors Club can't host trips that require carpools this semester, but that doesn't mean they aren't still connecting with the outdoors. Trip leaders are getting creative and leading trips closer to UVA, like biking on the Rivanna Trail and slacklining on Grounds. Although the outdoor adventures are a great part of being an ODC member, I think the part I enjoy most is getting the opportunity to meet new people on every trip and connect through our love of all things outdoors. This community has made me feel welcome at UVA and allowed me to get to know my fellow students better. Some of my favorite memories are from trips that began with total strangers but ended with new friends.

I hope you enjoy your time at UVA as much as I have and find ways to get involved! College can be a stressful time, especially under the current circumstances. However, I encourage you to seek support from other members of our community and remember to always allow yourself time for enjoyment and growth. Your time at UVA may have just begun but it will fly by, so be sure to cherish it!

Wahoowa!

Sincerely,
Heather Poyner
Class of 2021