

2020-2021 Chemistry Student Award Winners

Please join us in congratulating our newest Chemistry Student Award winners. The College of Science and Mathematics held its awards ceremony on April 21 face to face and also broadcast on Facebook. This year's winners are:

Academic Excellence in Physical Chemistry
Academic Excellence in Analytical Chemistry
Academic Excellence in Biochemistry
Academic Excellence in Inorganic Chemistry
Academic Excellence in Organic Chemistry

Nathan Hart
Alana S. Hiers
Taylor Wilson
Thomas Falkenhausen
Shaun W. Anderson, Jr.

Freshman Chemistry Award
American Institute of Chemists Award
Southwest Georgia ACS Optima Chemical Award
Dr. M. Elizabeth (Betty) Derrick Award
Chemistry Undergraduate Research Award
Outstanding Chemistry Senior Award

Hannah Michael
Nathan Hart
Brooke Wiggins and Danielle B. McKay
Estefani Quinones
Kayla R. Mills (Nease)
Thomas Falkenhausen

We asked each awardee in Chemistry to tell us their future plans, favorite VSU class, and extracurricular activities.

Undergraduate Award in Analytical Chemistry: Alana S. Hiers

I've been accepted to the University of Georgia to pursue my PhD in Chemistry. My favorite class that I've taken in the chemistry department has been Instrumental Analysis with Dr. Manning. I've been involved with SMACS, the Honors College, and I've been a Chemistry Tutor with the ASC since January 2018.



Undergraduate Award in Biochemistry: Taylor Wilson



Undergraduate Award in Organic Chemistry: Shaun W. Anderson, Jr.

After Graduation I plan on getting my Masters degree then continue my education to Medical school as I aspire to become an Anesthesiologist. My favorite class at VSU was Medicinal Chemistry with Dr. Manning because it involved dealing with the different uses and origins of drugs, on the molecular level how these drugs are assembled and arranged, and how they have such good and bad impact on our bodies. During my time at VSU I was involved in research involving antibiotics/cancer drugs, the ACS (American Chemical Society), Black Student League, and the NAACP - all great organizations and great networking opportunities. I highly recommend and you learn, get different perspectives, and get the opportunity to have those uncomfortable conversations in the world we live in today.

**Freshman
Chemistry Award:
Hannah Michael**

After graduation, I will likely take a gap year or pursue a Master's, after which I will apply to medical school. My favorite class at VSU was Calculus 1 with Dr. Charles Kicey.



**Southwest Georgia
ACS Optima
Chemical Award:
(Co-winners)**

Brooke Wiggins

I am a senior chemistry student at VSU. My plans after graduation are to attend Mercer College of Pharmacy starting in August 2021! My favorite class at VSU was Biochemistry and lab with Dr. Gosnell as well as Quantitative Analysis with Dr. De la Garza! A few organizations I was involved in were SMACS, Wesley campus ministry, as well as president of the pre-pharmacy club! Thank you very much!



**American institute of
Chemists Award:
Nathan Hart**

I have been accepted to attend the University of Florida for a PhD. Program in analytical chemistry. My favorite class at VSU was Quantitative Analysis with Dr. Linda de la Garza. I did research in the Chemistry Department for Drs. Dean Duncan and



Gopeekrishnan Sreenilayam. I also published a journal article in the American Chemical Society's Journal of Chemical Education with Dr. Linda de la Garza. In addition, I was a member of the Student Members of the American Chemical Society (SMACS) club on campus.

Nathan also received the **Undergraduate Award in Physical Chemistry.**

Danielle B. McKay

Post-graduation, I plan to pursue a career as a Cosmetic Chemist. My favorite class at VSU was biochemistry.

During my time at VSU, I participated in research under the mentorship of Dr. De La Garza. Our project was entitled "Spectroscopic and Electrochemical Characterization of Iron (III) Oxide Based Electrodes for Photo Electrochemical Cells." I am also serving as the President of the Student Members of the American Chemical Society.



Dr. M. Elizabeth (Betty) Derrick Award: Estefani Quinones

I am a Junior and am debating my options. As of right now, after graduation I plan to get an internship and take a gap year between undergrad and graduate school. If I do not get an internship, I plan on going to graduate school after VSU. My favorite class at VSU is Environmental Chemistry, I loved the hands-on experience and real-world problems discussed in the course. I am part of the 2018-2019 CAMP alumni; I was in the program freshman year. During my time at VSU, I was involved in Latin American Student Association (LASA), Habitat for Humanity, and participated in other community service projects around campus.

Chemistry Undergraduate Research Award: Kayla R. Mills (Nease)

My post-graduation plans are to attend pharmacy school at South University in Savannah, Ga. I will begin classes June 14, 2021. My favorite class at VSU was medicinal chemistry with Dr. Manning. Activities



I participated in included SMACS (Student members of American Chemical Society). I served as president of SMACS in 2019-2020. I also participated in pre-pharmacy club, and acted as the pre-pharmacy event coordinator for 2019-2020. I conducted cancer drug research with Dr. Thomas Manning.

Outstanding Chemistry Senior Award: Thomas Falkenhausen

My plans after graduating in the fall will be to apply to graduate school to further pursue a doctorate in Chemistry with a focus on biochemistry. As for my favorite courses I have taken here at VSU, they would have to be Biochemistry 1 and 2 with Dr. Woldman. I really enjoyed learning about how complex the



chemistry of life can be! A few activities I did here at VSU were the following; I am currently the Student Chair of Valdosta State Pride Connection, a tutor/SI Leader/Mentor/Sr. Mentor over at the Academic Support Center where I supported courses from Math, Biology, Chemistry. As far as research goes, I have been on two professors' research teams and presented my research at Ga Capital, GURC, and this coming week NCUR. My experience here at VSU has been amazing!

Thomas also received the **Undergraduate Award in Inorganic Chemistry**.

Congratulations to all of our student awardees!