**Educational Highlights:** The educational highlight that I am most proud of is my GPA. My overall GPA is 3.72 and my major GPA is 3.91. When I first went to college, so many years ago, I was lucky to wind up with a 2.5 at the end of my freshmen year. Looking back, I have realized that I was in the wrong major and taking the wrong courses. At the College of Charleston, I was able to find a major that inspired me, that challenged me every time I walked into class, and classes that were never boring. I became a better student, one that will graduate with honors, because I found the right course of study for me. I am proud of what I’ve earned during my time at the College.

**Research Focus or Project:** In the fall of 2015, I was able to do a creative writing independent study focusing on connected short stories. How are the stories in a collection connected? Why did the writer choose to connect them in a particular way? How did the writer use that connection to build a world in their story? Those questions helped in my own writing of a connected short story collection about an African American girl coming of age in the American south during the 1950s and 1960s. Not only were my creative writing classes informative on this matter, but so, too, were my African American studies classes, particularly my African American history classes which discussed and analyzed subject matters that made its way into my writing. It was my way of combining my two primary areas of interest.

**Future Plans:** I will be starting the Masters of Fine Arts program at Cornell University come this fall.

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**HSS Scholar**

**Shakarean Hutchinson**

**Major: English**

**Minor: African American Studies**

This award presented by Jerold L. Hale, dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Department of English at the College of Charleston on the 6th day of May, 2016.