



COLLEGE of  
CHARLESTON

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCES

*HSS Scholar*

# Laura Johnson

## MAJORS: COMMUNICATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

**Educational Highlights:** In these last four years, I have taken advantage of every opportunity the College of Charleston has provided to help me flourish in my academic career. I have been on the Dean's List since my freshman year, a member of both the Psi Chi International Honor Society and the Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society, and the president of the College of Charleston Film Club. Two of my most memorable educational highlights were my study abroad experiences. My freshman year, I studied abroad in Paris, France, through the International business department, and then, my junior year, I went to the Czech Republic and Poland to take a dual-course through the communication department. In addition, I represented the College at two academic conferences where I presented two of my research projects.

**Research Focus or Project:** My most recent research project was an experiment in nonverbal communication, investigating the relationship between eye gaze and perceptions of personality and attractiveness.

This experiment was the final project for my capstone in nonverbal communication research and would not have been possible without the enduring patience and guidance of Dr. Jenifer Kopfman. My partner Rachael Avery and I presented our work at the Southern States Communication Association Conference. In addition, media analysis is another area of interest of mine. With the help of my longstanding mentor, Dr. Celeste Lacroix, I wrote a feminist analysis on the cult comedy series *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, analyzing the role of the main female character, which I presented at both the Southern States Communication Association Conference and the Southeastern Women's Studies Association Conference. Aside from those projects, I also worked as an undergraduate research assistant in Dr. Jennifer Wright's psychology lab and conducted research at the Medical University of South Carolina and at the corporate office for Goodwill in North Charleston—none of which would have been possible without the resources provided by College of Charleston.

**Future Plans:** As of right now, I am deciding between two brand management jobs in Washington, D.C., and Asheville, North Carolina. I know I want to go to graduate school, but I am not yet sure what program I would pursue. So, I have decided to explore my options for the next couple years until I figure it out. Whatever the future holds, my time at College of Charleston is something I will cherish the rest of my life.



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