Educational Highlights: The Political Science and English departments have afforded me the flexibility to incorporate a multitude of experiential learning opportunities into my undergraduate career. I spent a summer in Cambodia and Vietnam studying genocide, international intervention, and peace and conflict resolution. This trip introduced me to the field of humanitarian action and sparked my interest in human rights and social justice work. Two years later, I studied abroad for a semester in Amman, Jordan, where I studied humanitarian action in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis. I also spent a semester in Washington, D.C., where I interned with the Department of Justice in the Civil Rights Division. These opportunities allowed me to return to campus with a stronger understanding of social injustices that I had studied in the classroom. While in Charleston, I had the opportunity to engage with my community through internships with AmeriCorps and Elizabeth Warren’s presidential campaign, both of which allowed me to speak directly with members of the Charleston community.

Research Focus or Project: My research project focuses on the current humanitarian crisis in Yemen. While studying humanitarian crises during my time abroad in Amman, we briefly touched on the crisis in Yemen, noting that, while it is the world’s worst crisis, it is largely underfunded and under-researched. I came back to the College wanting to learn more about the crisis that, despite its severity, is rarely talked about. My bachelor’s essay focuses on the effect of global trends on humanitarian crises and analyzes the impact it has on aid organizations and their capability to alleviate suffering. I argue that humanitarian crises are getting infinitely more complex, making it more difficult for aid organizations to operate and provide relief to vulnerable populations, with the current crisis in Yemen serving as a prime case study to demonstrate these complexities.

Future Plans: I hope to pursue a career in community organizing for organizations that are committed to electing women into positions of office or returning to D.C. to work on making policies more equitable and inclusive. Down the road, I plan to obtain a joint JD/MPP degree in Public Policy.

This award is presented by Gibbs Knotts, interim dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Department of Political Science at the College of Charleston, at the end of the spring 2020 semester.