My passion for Religious Studies took me by surprise when I first signed up for an intro level class at the end of my freshman year. I declared my major the following semester and I know that it was absolutely the right choice. During my time in college, I have been able to participate in departmental research about the religious history of CofC, multiple independent studies, and had the opportunity to be a TA for a class on religion, art, and culture. In addition to my academic work, I also became involved with the Charleston Area Justice Ministry, a local interfaith activist group, and helped to run a student CAJM group on campus.

**Research Focus or Project:** During my senior year, I completed a bachelor’s essay centered around the writings of the French philosopher Georges Bataille and his unique approach to analyzing religion. In this project, I explored the relationships between religion, materiality, utility, and time, in order to make a broader argument about how the different ways that we assess the value of our experiences affects how we live in the world. Writing my bachelor’s essay really helped me to refine my interests in theory and philosophy as they relate to religion, and I hope to continue with similar kinds of research in the rest of my academic career!

**Future Plans:** I plan on applying to graduate school in the future but will be staying in Charleston to work for a few years first. I’m looking forward to returning to academia eventually, after a good break!

This award is presented by Gibbs Knotts, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Department of Religious Studies at the College of Charleston, Spring 2022.