



HONORS PROGRAM

FALL 2026

ANNUAL ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Dear Honors Alumni,

Another school year is underway. Here in Garey Hall, classrooms buzz as Honors students encounter one another and their own curiosity around the seminar table in our hallmark courses that foster whole-person learning. Honors is growing in every way; below, you'll read about grants that are supporting curricular and co-curricular innovations that draw deeply from the Augustinian tradition.

We hope to hear from you this year about how your Honors experience continues to shape you, in your work and rest, in your friendships, families, and communities. See below for opportunities to connect with us, including alumni mentorship, a Happy Hour in New York City on February 5, 2027, and an Alumni Seminar and Dinner on campus on February 26, 2027.

We are proud of our alumni community—the work you do and the lives you lead. My inbox, my Zoom room, and my office are always open to you. Do not hesitate to drop me a line to update me about life beyond graduation.

Warmly,

Anna Bonta Moreland, PhD

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Educating Augustinian Character

We continue to celebrate our receipt of a three-year \$822,858 grant, awarded to support a [collaborative project on “Educating Augustinian Character”](#) between the Honors Program and Villanova's Department of Humanities. Led by Dr. Anna Moreland and Dr. Michael Tomko, this project seeks to cultivate those virtues from the Augustinian tradition that can guide us through the pilgrimage of life. The grant was awarded through the [“Educating Character Initiative” \(ECI\) at Wake Forest University](#) and funded by a generous grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. The scope of our work is enhanced by additional funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the John Templeton Foundation.



We are also grateful to have [Evelyn Boyden, PhD](#), on the Honors faculty as postdoctoral fellow in the Educating Augustinian Character initiative, where she leads our Augustinian Ambassadors Program for undergraduates. Dr. Boyden is joined by [Monica Horvath](#), Grant Administrator, who oversees the various projects empowered by this generous funding.

Become an Honors Alumni Mentor

We are delighted to invite you to serve as an Alumni Mentor for 2026-27 Honors Thesis students.

If you sign up as an Alumni Mentor below, we will seek to match you with a current Villanova Honors senior who is writing a thesis on a topic related to your own studies, research, or profession.



The purpose of this program is for Alumni Thesis Mentors to offer insight, perspective, and a new lens on a student's work. In addition to having one-to-two

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thesis, an Alumni Mentor is an outlet and resource with whom the student can discuss their topic from a new angle and get advice on the writing process.

For more information about the Honors Thesis course and our expectations for students, please click [here](#). If you're interested in becoming a mentor, please click the button below to apply.

[Click to learn more and apply](#)

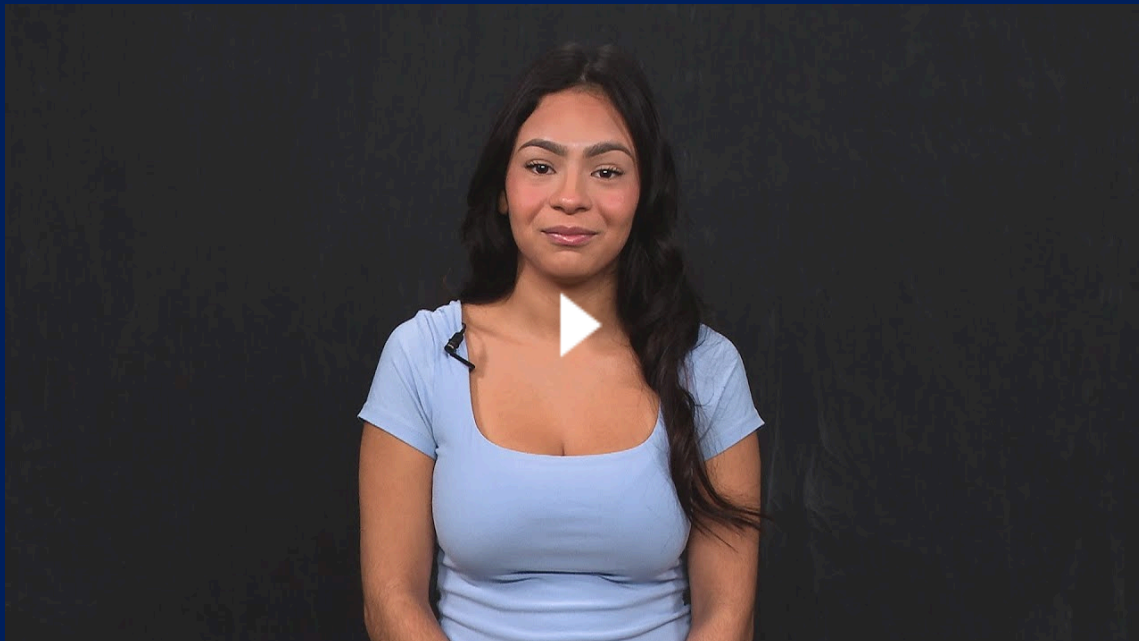
Contribute to the common good

Villanova's annual day of giving, 1842 Day, officially takes place on September 29, 2026. This year the Honors Program is asking for your contribution.

Your generosity makes our **Vocare Summer Fellows Program** possible. Grounded in our belief that advancing the common good is an indispensable ingredient of meaningful work, the Vocare Summer Fellows Program offers funding up to \$5,000 to support students who take unpaid internships that help to build a more just and peaceful world.

Watch the video below to hear from Angelina Rivera (CLAS '27) about the positive impact that her Vocare fellowship had on her Villanova experience.

[Donate today](#)



New Honors Course — Vocare: Discern Your Calling

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The Honors Program is proud to offer a brand new course in tandem with the *Vocare* Summer Fellowship. *Vocare* is Latin for “to call.” The *Vocare* program helps students ask big questions about vocation, which Fredrick Buechner defines as “the place where our deep gladness meets the world's deep need.” This program aims to expand students’ imaginations for offbeat, meaningful career paths. In Summer 2026, *Vocare* Fellows did good work all over the country and the world, including at an arts festival in San Diego, CA, at the National Peace Corps Association in Washington, DC, at a non-profit for aging in the UK, at the Wind Aid Institute in Peru, and at a cardiac health clinic in Brazil.

This year introduces a new one-credit course on career discernment. We sensed that *Vocare* fellows, as well as other Honors students, could benefit from a course in which they could process their summer internship experiences with faculty, peers, and mentors in their field. *Vocare: Discern Your Calling* is designed to introduce students to practices that aid in the spiritual practice of decision-making, such as silence, self-reflection, small group discernment, and professional mentorship. It launches this fall and is taught by Catherine Ricketts, Director of Honors Program Operations.

A retrospective with David Brooks

In one of the first initiatives of the Educating Augustinian Character grant, we happily invited former *New York Times* columnist and current *Atlantic* writer David Brooks to Villanova's campus last fall.

On October 21, 2025, Brooks spoke to a full audience of over 500 people about how to want the things that are truly worth wanting. This event was cosponsored by the Honors Program and the Eleanor H. McCullen Center for Law, Religion & Public Policy.

Click below to read how David Brooks thinks the Villanova Honors Program is among what's going *right* in higher education right now!



Brooks addresses the assembled crowd at Villanova, Fall 2025.

[Click to read Brooks' *Atlantic* piece](#)

Connect with fellow Honors alumni

One of our favorite events in the Honors Program is the chance to connect with Honors alumni face to face.

Save the date for two upcoming opportunities to see your fellow VU Honors alums:

Honors Program Happy Hour — For alumni and friends in New York City, Friday, Feb 5

Alumni Seminar and Dinner — Hosted at Villanova University, Friday, February 26

More information is forthcoming and will be shared via email. We hope to see you at one or both events.



Dr. Moreland with alums at last year's happy hour event.

Stay up to date with alumni opportunities

Click below to update your Alumni information page. Share your contact information to ensure that you're up to date with Villanova alumni opportunities, university news, and more.

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