2018 Undergraduate Award for Excellence in Chemistry

Peyton Higgins
Smith College

With strong research skills and a goal of educating not only future chemists, but also non-STEM students, Peyton Higgins is a sterling example of the scientific excellence and community focus that are the mission of Iota Sigma Pi. As a participant in the STRIDE program at Smith College, Peyton carried out research during all four of her undergraduate years on a variety of topics including surface chemistry, biofilms, and natural products. Peyton was a chemistry tutor and a TA. Her academic advisor Kate Queeny writes: "Peyton works very well with her peers, both as a newer student learning from veterans in the lab and as more of a veteran herself, giving guidance to new students." Peyton wishes to pursue a Ph.D. in chemistry and an academic career. She is a natural leader with a variety of interests. Peyton was also a member of the equestrian team during all four years of college. Peyton’s participation in undergraduate research at Smith, as well as her summer internship in the pharmaceutical industry sets her apart. Her research advisor Kevin Shea writes: "Peyton is a very special student who will succeed at the highest levels in graduate school." She has set her career sights on one that involves both research and teaching – primarily at a liberal arts college – where she can foster scientific inquiry for the next generation of students. Training the next generation of scientists and citizens is a high calling.