



Hannah Wilks
Neuroscience Program 2020 Stark Award

The faculty of the Neuroscience Program are proud to award this year's Stark Award to Hannah Wilks. The Stark Award, named for Dr. William Stark, Professor Emeritus of Biology and one of the founding faculty of the Neuroscience Program, recognizes a senior neuroscience major for excellence in research.

Hannah joined Dr. Jill Waring's Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience of Aging Lab in the summer of 2018. In Spring 2019, Hannah enrolled in Dr. Waring's Brain-Body Connection Psychophysiology Capstone Research course. After Capstone projects were finished, Hannah had additional research questions about the relationships among emotional face processing, psychophysiology, and anxiety. She was extremely motivated to carve out her own research project from the larger group Capstone project. Hannah played a large role in the data collection and data analyses, which were submitted for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuroscience last October and also at the SLU Center for Neuroscience symposium in November. She clearly differentiated her independent contributions from her peers and the graduate students who helped to develop the protocol. As further evidence of the high quality and effectiveness of her efforts, she was recognized with a prestigious Society for Neuroscience 2019 Trainee Professional Development Award, supporting \$1000 of her conference travel expenses to present her research project.

After graduation, Hannah plans to pursue graduate training in clinical psychology after gaining additional research assistant experience. She intends to pursue a research-oriented neuropsychology program to foster her interests in the neuroscience of aging and dementia.