

# A&S Explorer

January 2021



Though our country is experiencing a period of profound challenge and partisanship, evidence-based discourse is a proven tool for fostering unity and sound decision-making. In this month's letter, Dean Geer shares why he's hopeful that A&S's evidence-focused educational and research approach will help create a brighter future for our nation.

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## Alumni Spotlight



### Beyond A&S | The Value of an Interdisciplinary Education

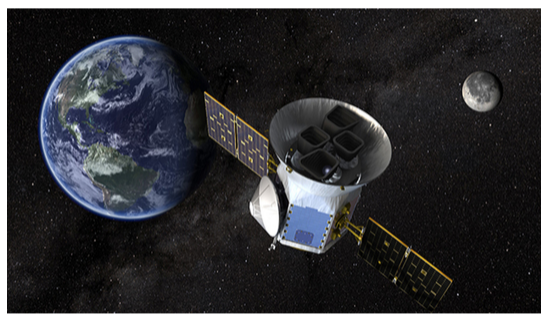
From philosophy major to...commercial banker? For Jewelle Vernon, BA'19, the answer is a resounding "Yes!" Watch as she shares how her philosophy degree taught habits of mind that prepared her for success at one of the nation's biggest and most prestigious financial firms.

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## Featured Stories



[Vanderbilt Debate overcomes COVID-19 challenges to break new ground in civic engagement](#)



[Student's fascination with astronomy inspires first completed Immersion Vanderbilt project](#)



[Vanderbilt Project on Unity and American Democracy aims to heal societal divisions](#)



[Sociology research: Success is all about making social connections--or is it?](#)

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## In the Media

**The New York Times:** [Why Kamala Harris and 'Firsts' Matter, and Where They Fall Short](#)

(Amanda Clayton, assistant professor of political science, quoted)

**Politico:** [Biden Wants to Unite the Country. How Can He Do It?](#)

(Amy Cooter, senior lecturer of sociology, contributed)

**CBC News:** [Sabre-toothed tiger cub fossils may reveal family secrets](#)

(Larisa DeSantis, associate professor of biological sciences and earth and environmental sciences, quoted)

**Elemental:** [Why Covid-19 Is Deadlier for Males](#)

(Derek Griffith, professor of medicine, health, and society, quoted)

**Nashville Scene:** [A Science Writer Travels to the Fields and Labs Where Agriculture Is Changing](#)

(Amanda Little, writer-in-residence in English and communication of science and technology, interviewed)

**Newsweek:** [Joe Biden's Options for Dealing with Donald Trump Are Worse than Watergate](#)

(Robert B. Talisse, W. Alton Jones Professor of Philosophy, quoted)

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## Snapshot



(John Russell/Vanderbilt University)

### History in the Making

Medicine, Health, and Society major Sarah Fuller ended her fall semester on not one, but two, high notes. After a stellar goalkeeping performance to help the Vandy women's soccer team win the SEC championship, she walked on as a substitute kicker for Vandy football and became the first woman to play in a Power Five game. The community-minded senior was honored during last week's inauguration festivities as a boundary-breaking inspiration to student-athletes, girls, and women everywhere.

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