

# Senior Receives Prestigious Scholarship From Across Pond

By Makenna McCall News Editor

EASTON - Tess Stanley '25 will be completing research in the department of physiology, development and neuroscience at Cambridge University. (Photo courtesy of Tess Stanley '25)

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Tess Stanley '25 fell in love with London during a spring study abroad trip. In the fall, she'll return as one of just 35 students from the United States to be named a 2025 Gates Cambridge Scholar.

Stanley — a neuroscience and philosophy double major — said that getting the award and completing the process “is so exciting and very validating.”

She is the first Lafayette student to receive the Cambridge University award in the program's 25-year history. The award, as described on the Gates Cambridge website, is granted to “scholars with a commitment to changing the world for the better.”

The scholarship will cover Stanley's

studies to receive a doctorate with the department of physiology, development and neuroscience. She will begin research on a self-proposed project when she begins studying at Cambridge in October.

“My project will be looking at how microglia and neurons interact in different sensory conditions in the olfactory bulbs of mice,” Stanley said, explaining that microglia are cells that function to monitor neuronal activity.

Stanley highlighted that there has been significant research on microglia's relationship to sensory adaptation in the visual system, auditory system and somatosensory system. However, her research on the olfactory system will be among the first of its kind.

“There was basically no research on the olfactory bulb and how we smell,” she said. Stanley added that this inspired her to create a research proposal on the topic.

“Tess has been great to work with through the years,” said assistant professor of neuroscience Tamara Stawicki, the mentor for Stanley's honor thesis. “She's really committed. She's been engaged in her research and has done great work.”

“Whenever we say anything about microglia, she gets all excited,” she continued.

Stawicki mentioned that the specific topic Stanley will research at Cambridge is “an interest she came to on her own.”

Stanley will join a cohort of 100 scholars from across the globe. The award was established through a donation from the Gates Foundation, founded by Bill and Melinda Gates.

“It was the product of a lot of hard work over the last four years.”

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