

Pria Parker, Winner of Gladys Anderson Emerson Scholarship
By Sarbjeet Kaur, Director of Student Awards



The Gladys Anderson Emerson Scholarship is given to a junior chemistry student at an accredited college or university for excellence in chemistry or biochemistry. The 2024 winner is Pria Parker a junior chemistry major at Smith College. Pria was nominated by Prof. Elizabeth Jamieson, PhD, a distinguished Member at Large (MAL) of Iota Sigma Pi. Currently, Pria is conducting research under Professor Dave Gorin, where they are focused on optimizing a copper-catalyzed O-cyclopropylation reaction. This reaction is significant in medicinal chemistry due to the cyclopropyl group's role in enhancing the metabolic stability of drug compounds. Although the Chan-Evans-Lam arylation of oxygen is well-documented, alkylation processes remain largely unexplored. Pria has made substantial progress by developing an O-cyclopropylation reaction for primary and secondary aliphatic alcohols, improving the yield of the best product from 10-20% to 73%

over the past year. Their future work will aim to further enhance the yield, scope, and efficiency of this reaction as part of her honors thesis.

In addition to their academic pursuits, Pria Parker is actively involved in extracurricular activities at Smith College. Pria runs on the cross country and track & field teams and plays the cello in music groups.