

***“Be mindful that the disposition to seek the truth is safer than one that claims to know the unknown. Let us search in ways to make discoveries, and discover in ways to keep on searching.”***

St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, IX, 1,1

Normal.

*What is normal?*

The past 1.5 years have illustrated that we should take nothing for granted. That “normal” may turn upside down in the blink of an eye. As we return to campus, vaccinated and ready to move forward and resume some sort of normalcy, is normalcy even an option? And if “normal” means going back to what was before the pandemic, do we want that?

Through the lens of research, this volume of *Veritas: Villanova Research Journal* honors the purposeful pursuit of what comes next. We will never return to who we were and how we approached the world before the pandemic, but we will acclimate and innovate toward our next normal.

In 2020, we celebrated the creativity of research conducted from living rooms, bedrooms, backyards, and rooftops. This year, we celebrate the new ideas and creativity that we took away from the constraints of 2020: the foundational elements of our next normal. To commemorate this, the 2021 VVRJ cover is a student-sourced collage of “normal” research from Summer 2021. This year’s cover depicts the “normal” of the 2021 VURF cohort.

With this third publication of *Veritas: Villanova Research Journal*, we celebrate creativity, new ideas, and the brave pursuit of truth. On behalf of the Villanova University Center for Research and Fellowships, we proudly present the 2021 *Veritas: Villanova Research Journal*.

Sincerely,

Catherine Stecyk,  
Sage Milo, and  
The VVRJ Student Editorial Team

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