

**First Year Research Award:**                    **Chemistry**

**Faculty Supervisor:**                         **Dr. Kristin Cline**

Position Title: First Year Research Scholar in Chemistry

Criteria: The Wittenberg University Chemistry Department will offer a First Year Research Award for the academic year 2024-2025 to an incoming student to work with Dr. Kristin Cline. This student will have a demonstrated academic ability and/or research interest in Chemistry.

Expectations: FYRA Scholarship recipients will devote between 6 and 8 hours per week across their first year to FYRA program and their research-related project, according to the FYRA Learning Contract agreed upon by the sponsoring professor and the scholarship recipient. Recipients will also be expected to participate in a regular meeting of FYRA recipients, present their results in an appropriate forum and submit a copy of their presentation to the appropriate university office. FYRA Scholarship recipients will also participate in an assessment of the FYRA program. (The FYRA Scholarship is not part of a student's work study award.)

Research Activity: Microplastic pollution has been an increasingly reported problem in recent years. These small (less than 5 mm) particles can come from commercial products, such as microbeads in beauty products, as well as from erosion of larger plastic pieces in the environment. The FYRA scholar will continue a project to characterize the presence and identity of microplastics in local water sources. The recipient will collect and process stream water samples and use analytical methods to quantify and identify the microplastics collected. Recipients should have an ability to work independently, good mathematical skills, good manual dexterity for handling small samples, an attention to detail, patience for repeating experiments, and a curiosity about how the physical world works.