

## The Long and Winding Road

Daisy Ayllon '11 A&S

BY SHAWN PROCTOR

Whether raising money in support of affordable housing or studying for an upcoming final, Daisy Ayllon '11 A&S brings powerful drive to her academic and service ambitions.

And her hard work is paying off for her as much as it is paying it forward for others. A recipient of several scholarships, including ones from Ronald McDonald House of Charities and Children's Fund of Chester County, Ayllon began the next chapter of her compelling story this summer.

She left her family in Kennett Square to complete a 4,000-mile cycling expedition from Virginia to Oregon to raise awareness of the affordable-housing crisis with Bike and Build. Just six days later, Ayllon began her studies at Chicago-Kent College of Law, where she received a full-tuition merit scholarship.

Both experiences offer a perfect integration of service and the spirit of St. Augustine, who famously wrote, "The world is a book and those who don't travel read only a page," according to Ayllon, who was raised in Mexico until age 13 and is the first female in her extended family to attend college.

"It is the perfect end to my undergraduate career," she says.

### Above and Beyond

Even as a freshman, Daisy impressed Kristina Ruiz-Mesa '05 A&S, '07 MA, program director of the St. Thomas of Villanova Scholars Program. She remembers Ayllon was something special, a unique person who channeled incredible positive energy through every aspect of her life.

"Daisy's amazing and will do whatever it takes to accomplish her goals," she says. "The law school scholarship was above and beyond what we were expecting, but I can't think of someone more deserving."

In turn, Ayllon acknowledges the role that Ruiz-Mesa played in easing her transition from small-town life to a bustling campus. "She understands where I come from. She was the bridge that connected me to many great people at Villanova."

Ayllon believes, like her Villanova Communication degree, attending law school will provide her with flexibility and a broad set of skills to develop her interests. In any case, she knows the future will involve service to community and helping others discover similar opportunities to the ones she has been offered.

"I believe in investing in people, just the way that people have invested in me," she says.



Academic standout Daisy Ayllon '11 A&S cycled 4,000 miles to raise awareness of the affordable-housing crisis in America.

### Honors' Role

The Honors Program is doing its part to help enroll the highest-achieving applicants to Villanova. This year for the first time, early-action candidates who were admitted to the University were simultaneously invited into the Honors Program. A special information session was held for these students and their families during Early Action Candidates' Weekend, and the response was overwhelming. In addition, Honors leadership and faculty are revising the Honors experience to make it more distinctive, to give students more opportunities to talk about ideas outside of the classroom and to encourage them to become intellectual leaders on campus.