

Fall 2018 Issue



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This newsletter is dedicated to Destanee Lyles who tragically left this planet sooner than is right for any eighteen year old. We miss you Destanee!

CONDOLENCES

“As you can imagine in this difficult time, the family is having challenges. They’re doing what they can to overcome the very difficult loss of a child. Her mother told us she loved VSU and we made sure that we told her we love her too.”

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

“No parent should have to lose their child but particularly when so young it’s only that much more difficult.”

Dr. Donald Palm, Provost

“The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business is pained to lose one of our own. For a car accident to rob us of Destanee is truly painful though Ms. Lyles will always be a part of our family here.”

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

2018: THE FALL SEMESTER IN PICTURES



President Makola Abdullah along with Monique Daniels shows off our new hardware for being recognized as the Best HBCU by HBCU Digest.



Bethelhem Beza and Jahard Cooper share a fireside chat at a HPG event.



Destiny Smith and D'Angela Jones represented the College at the Folk Festival.



Liz Mosley attends a Richmond Advertising Club event.

Delegate Jeff Bourne guest teaches in the College.

Dr. Omojkun counsels students all captured on film.



Tom Katovsich poses for the camera with students. Diamond and Madison attend a networking event. Catera Ruth enjoys her leadership conference in L.A.



Students visited the Fed Reserve, attended conferences in New York, participated in scores of networking events off campus, and benefited from faculty guidance.

Ph.D. Project

A new initiative in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University is really not new at all but instead a resumption of past efforts that had gone dormant of late. Specifically, the College's collaboration and support of the Ph.D. Project is generating a lot of interest from students. The impetus for the resumption in interest regards new faculty including principally Dr. Aurelia Donald (Management Information Systems professor). *"Founded upon the premise that advancements in workplace diversity could be propelled forward by increasing the diversity of business school faculty,"* the Ph.D. Project *"helps African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Native Americans attain their business Ph.D. and become the business professors who will mentor the next generation of leaders."* This semester, Jean Cain (Management major) and Tiffany Tucker (Management/HR major) constitute arguably the leading candidates to be considered. Both ladies are graduating with a near perfect G.P.A. and want to return to academia to teach. So, the way it works is that students can be admitted to what can be described as a fast-track program that expedites the time in school. Both ladies are considering leading institutions. Said Jean Cain, *"I enjoy teaching, I have taught before and want to do it again."* Tiffany Tucker added, *"I want to give back. I like the idea of working with college students and because I am a non-traditional student I have been doing it for a while!"*

Big Apple

Essence Bridges (Marketing minor), Jahard Cooper (Management Major), Tyshaun Harris (Management major), and Angela Scott (Management major) paid a visit to the Big Apple this semester joined by Louis Dabney (Management Professor) as part of the Future Business Leaders of America program. The visit regarded career connections but the experience was more; said Jahard, *"It was a great networking experience."*



Center for Entrepreneurship

The College's Center for Entrepreneurship this semester relaunched its highly popular Workshop Series hosting a wide range of very diverse entrepreneurs including for example an event management business, a train the trainer biz, a cooking company, an information technology group, a body products firm, etc. Altogether, sixteen businesses agreed to participate. The objectives for the series regards celebrating local entrepreneurs while exposing students to the invaluable lessons that are unable to be learned in a textbook. From risk-taking to breaking the rules to owning your brand to leveraging relationships, some students had their entrepreneurship goals affirmed while others had a spark lit some of them for the first time. Kierra Anthony (Marketing major) said, *"Though each of the entrepreneurs had very different products and/or services they all had a lot in common in regards to the lessons that they shared with us. It was interesting how that worked."*



Banking is Business

In a semester the College hosts over 250 companies in the classroom and this semester's guests included no less than three prominent bank presidents including Victor Branch, Pat Collins, and John Asbury from Bank of America, TowneBank, and Union Bank & Trust respectively. The three presidents taught in the classroom, participated in luncheons with students, and hosted students in Richmond. Students learned that absent banking business is nearly impossible but above all else undergrads learned from Branch, Collins, and Asbury that if they work hard enough, prioritize people, and lead by example they too can one day be a bank president!

Alumni Advisory Board

Every semester the College hosts scores of alumni who return to campus often to guest teach and this semester was no different. One particular event this semester regarded Homecoming when the Alumni Advisory Board supported a panel conversation for students considering career relevant strategies. Participant students remarked that they enjoyed the programming. Jahwon Taylor (Management Information Systems major) said *"I was unsure what to expect but I had a lot of fun and learned a lot."* For the College of Business, Jahwon's assessment regards precisely what the College aims to achieve in all of its programming. Of course, it's easier when terrific alumni partner with the institution to give back and to invest in our young professionals. Already the Alumni Advisory Board is planning for 2019 and how it can contribute to our students' success and to ensure that like Jahwon said, students have a lot of fun but also learn a lot.

Graduation, In their own words

On December 15th on the campus of Virginia State University graduates of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business celebrated the culmination of a lot of hard work and determination. Said Shaieek Turner (Management major) *“It has been a long time coming.”* Kire Worley (Accounting major) added, *“I earned two internships, was profiled on NBC, secured a job, and was married while in school.”* Kiara Sharpe (Marketing major) contributed *“It feels really good to be done!”* Amanda Worthy (Management major) shared *“I really look forward to starting my next chapter whatever it is.”* Jean Cain (Accounting major) who is graduating early said, *“I am excited to next attend grad school and earn my Ph.D.!”* Bryana Thomas added, *“I got to meet our very own College of Business graduate, Miss U.S.A. Deshauna Barber!”*



Harriet

What began with an internship in the Virginia Film Office materialized in a position as a leader on the casting team for a major motion picture, i.e. Harriet. Sefiyetu Abdullah (Marketing minor) may only be 19 but she is as accomplished as anyone around here many years her senior!

Best HBCU

To watch our students celebrating VSU as the best HBCU, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfDHqn2gAYs>

Around the world, Again

Nearly every issue of this newsletter readers learn about students studying abroad and this issue is no different. Since the last publication students including Mohamed Keita (Accounting major) and Nadia Victor (Accounting major) studied in Shanghai and London respectively. The College is committed to providing students opportunities to learn by doing and few invites are as experiential as immersion in another culture and place somewhere around the world!



Design-athon

Emmanuel “Manny” Saunders (Management major) wasn’t quite sure what he was signing up for when he agreed to participate in Dominion Energy’s Design-athon held in Richmond but nearly 48 hours straight on his feet later he helped create innovative new approaches to energy delivery.

Folk Festival

In partnership with Venture Richmond, students this fall attended and participated in what amounts to one of the largest events in the Commonwealth with over 160,000 attending. D’Angela Jones (Management major), Jajuan Peel (Management major), Tamia Reese (Marketing major), Destiny Smith (Accounting major) and Aishata Wann (Accounting major) hung out in the VIP tent, represented the College, networked with leaders in Richmond like



for example Virginia Commonwealth University President Michael Rao, and of course sang and danced. Said Aishata, *“Only in my first semester I didn’t know how soon I would make friends but the opportunity to have fun off campus is really important. I particularly enjoyed the shopping and meeting so many different and unique people. From West Africa, I liked the diversity of the event.”*

Brilliant but Beautiful, Part II

Last issue of this newsletter readers learned of our models and this issue we are pleased to share that the College’s own Kaylee Lambert (Marketing minor) and Monique Daniels (Accounting major) participated in a selective pageant and won the top awards including Miss Kappa Alpha. Attended by a near capacity crowd in the Anderson-Turner Auditorium in Virginia Hall, the ladies showed off both their brilliance and their beauty. Again, the College’s ladies demonstrated their excellence in every regard and made their peers proud!



An Interview with a Student



Trenique Phillips is a junior Management major from Richmond.

Career aspirations include fashion designer, wedding planner, and motivational speaker.

TreNique has already started her own fashion line.

Regarding your future, what are you most excited for? My overall goal is to speak to the youth and encourage and push them to follow their dreams. Some short-term goals I have are to be able to build up my resume with community service acts and find a job based around fashion.

An Interview with Faculty/Staff



Kelley Fowler is an Administrative Assistant for the Department of Computer Information Systems

Place of origin: Fredericksburg, Virginia

Education: Bachelor’s Degree from Virginia State University

What do you like most about working with students? Seeing the smile on their faces when they accomplish their goals and objectives including earning good grades.

What has been your most memorable experience here either as a student or as staff? As a student how helpful my professors were in assisting whenever my colleagues and I needed their contribution.

An Interview by an Alumnus of her Mom



Aiyana Glover is a 2018 Marketing graduate

Employment: Digital Sales Associate at IBM

On film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYQcM-hRcVE>

What is your favorite memory with me as asked by Aiyana? *"You peeing in a cup (as a little girl) because there were no bathrooms"* said Aiyana's mom. *"Okay, Okay, next story"* said Aiyana!

What is your biggest hope for me as asked by Aiyana? *"You realize your greatness, you already know it but I hope you achieve it"* said mom. Watch interview at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzujEqL1T8>

An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Sheila Villalobos, Account Manager at Precision Marketing Group

Place of Origin: Woodbridge, Virginia

Education: Bachelor's in Marketing from Virginia Commonwealth University

Volunteer Experience: Vice President of Community Relations for American Marketing Association, Richmond Chapter

What causes do you care about? Equal Education For All, Sustainability, Mental Health.

What recommendation would you share with a freshman? INTERNSHIPS. Get a taste of the real world and intern at small and large companies. It's the best way to make professional connections, get accustomed to a professional setting, and determine what you really want to do after you graduate.

An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Shirley Crawford along with her business partner just opened an Entrepreneurship Center for Women at Willow Lawn.

Education: Bachelor's in Business Administration from Virginia Commonwealth University

What are you attempting to achieve with your Women's Business Center? The Women's Business Center of Metro Richmond (WBCRVA) aims to provide the resources, education and support to eliminate persistent institutional hurdles. WBCRVA is a hybrid of an incubator and standard rental office space. Everything led us here and so now here we are. Ready to make your business dreams a

reality. We love it here and it shows.

Why is this important? We are passionate about helping women succeed. So much that we've made it our full time purpose. Every woman who is able to start and sustain her own business as her full time income or as a side hustle is one more woman living out her total purpose while also increasing the GDP (win/win).

Industry Council(s) Relaunch

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business has developed a reputation for its interface with industry including a portfolio of over 600 companies that collaborate with the College in some regard in a year. The College's Industry Council(s) comprised of leading business professionals is and has been the tip of the spear in this regard providing e.g. curriculum consultation, lending advice and support, offering students opportunities, guest teaching, etc. but candidly the Council(s) hadn't met in a little while largely because Jonathan Young (Director of Corporate Relations) understood the need to reconstitute the group after the kind of attrition that is natural when folks retire, move out of state, or just take another job. So, this semester the *"band got back together"* as Council(s) Chair Bernard Robinson (President & CEO of Networking Technologies + Support) said. What materialized was an augmentation of what was already a strong group. Aided by the addition of new members along with new groups including an Entrepreneurship Advisory Council, an Investments Committee, and a Young Alumni Committee the umbrella organization of altogether 6 groups relaunched officially on September 28th.

Up first for the Council(s) represented by about 60 persons, developing a Strategic Plan for the umbrella organization and recommendation for inclusion in the College's strategic plan. What came out of the September 28th meeting was 23 recommendations that were considered by the groups at a December 4 meeting. Highlights include scaling up inclusion of SAP, making internships mandatory, continuing the soft-skills training, adding more certifications, supplementing peer-to-peer mentoring, increase diversity within the school, etc. What is more, the Council(s) initiated a new round of curriculum consultation, started work on a new Mission Statement, and convened leadership elections.

Perhaps the big takeaway is that the College is in good hands and is fortunate to have so many friends in industry. It should be noted that students pay attention. Charly Mitchell (Marketing major) said of the groups, *"It is an impressive roster of business professionals and that they so graciously give of their time, talent, and treasure speaks volumes about them but also about us."* Guy DeWeever (Marketing major) facilitated conversations at one meeting added, *"It makes me proud to be a student in the College of Business."* Alum and Council(s) member Jhadee Gordon from KPMG said, *"I had the fortune to attend a lot of networking events when in school and these meetings are as impressive as any of those events."* Another alum and Council(s) member Sam Kelly at Merrill Lynch contributed, *"It makes me realize what a unique experience I was afforded while in college to have access to these companies."*

In a semester the College hosts on average over two hundred and fifty companies on campus and in a term scores of students depart the grounds to participate in networking events. From dinners to conferences to breakfasts, the College's students are interfacing with thousands of professionals in the region.

Wedding Bells

Some of the most precious moments for The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business are when students are married and when babies are born. This semester it was Kire' Worley (Accounting major) who married his sweetheart Brianna at a beautiful event attended by the College's Director of Corporate Relations, i.e. Jonathan Young. To watch the wedding, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hM4ZCujHL1w>



Coming Soon to TV

The College of Business has partnered on a lot of projects with Emmy Award winning filmmakers Jesse Vaughan and Cedric Owens and this semester was no different when three students, i.e. Destiny Hodges (Marketing major), Destini Woods (Management/HR major), and Kire' Worley (Accounting major) were captured on film shadowing three CEOs in the Richmond market. Specifically, Destiny shadowed Dave Saunders at Madison + Main, Destini shadowed Dennis Bickmeier at Richmond International Raceway, and Kire shadowed Victor Branch at Bank of America. What culminated in a documentary to air on NBC is a testament to the College's commitment to provide students premium access to industry. What is more regards our good friends in industry who are so giving of their time!



Google

Marcus Lowery (Marketing major) had what some of his colleagues describe as an opportunity of a lifetime when he visited Raleigh to participate in a Google sponsored American Underground Entrepreneurship event. A component of his internship, Marcus indeed did relish the occasion to interface with movers and shakers and to impress on everyone his capacity to persuade. An accomplished communicator, Marcus is driven by entrepreneurial values like risk-taking, being different, pushing boundaries, charting his own course, and being unorthodox. Said Marcus, *"My entrepreneurial values align well with Google. I am forever grateful to both Google and to VSU because of the opportunity to participate in an incredible internship with an amazing employer."* What was most rewarding for Lowery was the acknowledgment of his hard-work. A leader on campus in his fraternity, in the College of Business, and his community, Marcus for example presented along with Chanel Brown (Marketing major) at the selective Tom Tom Festival in Charlottesville where he and Chanel were singled out by the Founder of Reddit. Now with his experience at Google and his portfolio of work so profound he is ready to graduate and take on the world. *"I am not shy about launching the next chapter in my entrepreneurship career but should Google come offering a full time job I will gladly accept."*



Marty's House

Sefiyetu Abdullah (Marketing minor) and Chanel Brown (Marketing major) joined recently retired CEO of Altria Marty Barrington at his house for a networking event. Our ladies make us proud!

Def Jam

Shanice Allonce (Marketing minor) aspires to be in the music and entertainment industry and she is off to a terrific start! Already she has interned for alum Kelsey Evans at THE ROEW and this semester she went on tour with Def Jam Recordings putting on events at college campuses around the U.S. Shanice even hosted Antwan Williams from Def Jam on campus in the classroom and Williams said of Shanice, *"She isn't an intern, she is a business partner."* Now an accomplished events manager and marketer, Shanice has been offered the opportunity to return to her hometown, i.e. New York to continue her efforts. Recognized for her contributions, Shanice is now being courted by underclassmen interested in following her big footsteps. Regularly authoring cutting edge blogs and a rockstar in her own right, Shanice is on her way to stardom herself working with labels like e.g. Def Jam.



Hosting his Excellency

For Rachel Ajibolade, Avontae Ferguson, and Jahwon Taylor (all Management Information Systems majors) the invite to make a presentation to the most powerful person in the Commonwealth of Virginia, i.e. Governor Ralph Northam would be intimidating but for the three seniors it was exhilarating. In fact, Rachel, Avontae, and Jahwon hit a homerun in presenting on what the College is doing to prepare cyber security warriors. In fact, the Governor was so impressed with the students that he remarked on their presentation skills but what he was most impressed with was their knowledge of the content area. Virginia needs more cyber warriors and the College is graduating them!



Big Brothers Big Sisters

President Makola Abdullah upon his arrival to Virginia State University challenged the VSU community to take ownership of the City of Petersburg to include considering residence there but most importantly to give back and in particular to give back to Petersburg Public Schools. In the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business and under the leadership of Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, that is precisely what is being done. One particular initiative regards the College's collaboration with Big Brothers Big Sisters and a cadre of students that are mentoring children at Walnut Hill Elementary School. In giving back, the College's students are as always leading the way!

More Pictures



Rain or Shine

For the second consecutive year The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business sponsored a parade float for Homecoming. This year however started with rain in the morning but our students didn't allow a little precipitation to dampen their spirits. Said Charly Mitchell (Marketing major) who represented the College's American Marketing Association, *"Rain or shine we proudly advocated for the College."* Seth Mitchell (no relation) (Management major) added *"I had a blast! I don't think anyone expected me to be so outgoing on the float because usually I am rather quiet."* The float was comprised of students representing the College's many student organizations including the aforementioned AMA, National Association of Black Accountants, Student Advisory Board, etc. When asked if it was worth it to have to wake up super early in the morning and put up with the rain, Chanel Brown (Marketing major) said, *"I would do it all over again!"*



TMCF

The College's collaboration with Dan Roberts and the Honor's Program continues to bear fruit and one particularly bounty regards the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. Students have an opportunity to earn scholarships, compete for internships, and attend conferences. Regarding the latter, this semester students visited Washington, D.C. and came back with internship opportunities at Altria and job offers from PricewaterHouse Coopers and Deloitte. In fact, for quite a while students have been reaping the rewards of this partnership. Said Nadia Victor (Accounting major) who will intern at Wells Fargo this summer, *"The Thurgood Marshall College Fund is something that my mentor Jhadee Gordon told me about from when she was in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business so I understood as soon as my freshman year how important it is to participate."* Added Corey Vickers (Marketing major), *"The opportunity to participate in the TMCF conference was unlike any other because I was able to impress on so many employers that I am hungry!"* He continued at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDZbDZm4byE>

Of course it's not just about scholarship and job opportunities but also about networking, camaraderie, and fun! Javae Terrell (Management major) said, *"I really enjoyed spending time with my colleagues off-campus in another city."* Barry Brown (Management major) added, *"We were a force to reckon with in D.C."* Indeed, indeed they were! A big thanks to Dan Roberts and a big thanks to the Thurgood Marshall College Fund and all of its member companies for investing in our talented undergraduate leaders.



TMCF 31st Anniversary Awards Gala "Developing Minds... Delivering Dreams"
October 29, 2018 - Washington, DC



Student Accomplishments

Check out our students' fall 2018 semester accomplishments at <http://business.vsu.edu/news/2018/12/fall-2018-student-accomplishments.php>

BGS, IBM, NABA

Students this semester visited Chicago for a Beta Gamma Sigma (BGS) conference, a hackathon in Raleigh at IBM, and Norfolk for a National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) conference.

Message from the Dean

What began with the University celebrating yet another accolade this time for Best HBCU of the Year finished with the College's students helping to host Governor Northam for a presentation regarding cyber security. In between, faculty/staff/students were filmed for profile on NBC, faculty and students started businesses, competitions were won, tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships were earned, publications were authored and presented, and the College's stakeholders were regularly profiled in the news. What is more is that we celebrated another successful Reginald F. Lewis College of Business graduation!



Of note; students attended conferences, earned internships and jobs, participated in networking events, and mentored children in local elementary schools. Regarding the latter, the College's students are contributing countless hours to give back and to lead by example.

Our alumni continue to invest in their alma mater from financial donations to curriculum consultation to guest teaching to hiring our graduates. Industry stakeholders are so giving of their time. If we were to add up all of the hours and compensate them accordingly it would break the bank! Of course, what can I say about our amazing faculty and staff but that they make my job as Dean so much easier than for most. The College's faculty and staff are truly representative of our values of inclusion, transparency, inviting, excellency, and commitment. Last but not least, a thank you note would be incomplete absent acknowledgement of the University's leadership. Our President, Provost, Cabinet, and Board of Visitors are so very supportive of what we are accomplishing in the College and I cannot adequately begin to say thank you.

So, what is next for the College on the precipice of a new year? For starters, we continue to make advances in regards to our M.B.A. proposal and are excited for the opportunity to add more certificates. Additionally of note, the College is retooling our curriculum to accommodate more electives. Readers may anticipate learning more about that development shortly but in the interim I need to convey gratitude to our department chairs for all of their hard work thereto. Lastly, the College will continue to be a leader in regards to providing students an experiential education while affording premium access to industry. We will continue to recruit young people to the University and the College will invest even more time and efforts in mentoring children in the community. The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business will again lead.

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun (Dean) walks and talks with students as part of a film shoot for a new show to air on NBC.

