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This newsletter is dedicated to the graduating class of 2017 in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University.

### CONGRATULATIONS

“I applaud your achievements and accolades as a graduating class, and I am impressed with who you are as young men and women. I challenge you to continue to make great things happen and share the Virginia State University story.”

Dr. Makola Abdullah, President

“Your scholastic achievements speak for themselves and make me proud to share a stage with you at graduation.”

Dr. Donald Palm, Provost

“The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business is in your debt for all of your contributions. We are a stronger and a better place because of you. Thank you!”

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

## 2017: THE SPRING SEMESTER IN PICTURES



Diamond Sims, Kapri Armstead, Zymir Batts, Aneja Padgett, Messiyah Kerr, and Mark Grant having fun with the camera on a visit to Howard University.



Dr. Omojokun with Angelique Johnson, Philandra Jordan, and Otis Jones from IBM.



Monet Graves and Messiyah Kerr show off their new hardware.



Danielle Stanback at ChamberRVA.



Racheal Ajibolade at General Electric.



Students in Dr. Hari Sharma's Investments class.





President Abdullah with Renee Chapline, Tiffany & Bernard. Earon in Richmond networking.



Kire and Jasmine with Joe Casey, Chesterfield Administrator.



Essence with Adrienne Whitaker & Bernard Robinson.



Jean and Myia are superstar sophomores!



Mabertine, Keana, Brianna, and Hirut are all smiles.

## Students take 1st prize

On April 1st in downtown Richmond, undergraduates in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business competed against students from thirteen other institutions of higher learning for an opportunity to qualify for the Phi Beta Lambda National Business Competition. One of the largest business career student organizations in the world, Phi Beta Lambda helps college students learn business skills along with providing personal and chapter development opportunities. Despite stiff competition against schools including UVA, GMU, JMU, UR, etc.; the VSU students were top performers. Awards earned during the competition included Justin Camp (Management major) and Regan Taylor (Management major) placing first in Strategic Analysis and Design, Elette Ocloo (Management major) and Kamyia Reid (Management major) placing first in Business Sustainability, and Elette Ocloo and Kamyia Reid placing first in Emerging Business Issues. Also finishing strong were Brandon Green (Management Information Systems major) placing second in Website Design, Justin Camp earning second in Public Speaking, Regan Taylor and Terrill Shephard (Accounting major) finishing second in Business Ethics; and Terrill Shephard and Brandon Green placing second in Business Presentation. Justin Camp earned the Outstanding New Member award and the VSU students also placed first in the Shark Tank Team building event exercise!"

## NABA

Students in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) hosted their predecessors for a meet and greet event at the College. Participating alums included Calvin Corbin (Accounting major and 14 grad), Amanda Diaz (Accounting major and 13 grad), Kenzele Mason (Accounting major and 14 grad) and Frednesha Sanders (Management major and 16 grad).



## Telling Our Story

Dr. Makola Abdullah has shared that upon his arrival at Virginia State University in his capacity as President he identified that not enough persons and/or business units were bragging on VSU. Yet, the College of Business was an exception. In newsletters, press releases, emails, video, word of mouth, and in social media the College of Business doesn't miss an opportunity to champion student accomplishments. And, people are listening! This semester alone, the College had over 100,000 views of its social media posts. Myia Jones (Marketing major) said, *"It is really important that we tell our story and the College of Business does that really well."* Zacara Dunn (Marketing major) added, *"I love that the College of Business celebrates students so much."* Jonathan Young (Director of Corporate Relations) is often teased by his students for taking so many pictures but he regularly reminds them that *"if there isn't a picture, it didn't happen."*



## IBM

IBM has been working with the College of Business for the past few years specifically in the classroom and perhaps because of it Otis Jones (Regional Director of Sales) saw something special and decided along with his colleagues to champion Virginia State University. This year in collaboration with the College of Engineering and Technology, the College of Business instituted a program in concert with IBM that realized in fifteen students visiting the company's facilities in Raleigh where Angelique Johnson and Philandra Jordan (both Management Information Systems majors) were awarded job offers for after graduation. Said Philandra, *"I cannot wait to get started!"* Angelique added, *"I am so very excited!"*

## Build Something

Preceding editions of this newsletter have provided information on the launch of the College's Entrepreneurship Center, opening of the student-run clothing store, entrepreneurship competition(s), and successful student businesses. Now, the College can report the introduction of a new minor in Entrepreneurship! Consisting of courses like Entrepreneurial Marketing & New Product Innovation, Entrepreneurial Finance, Small Business Consulting, and Social Entrepreneurship & Sustainable Ventures; the minor requires 18 credits. Already popular with students, the program Director Dr. Patrice Perry-Rivers said of the new offering, *"This minor provides students with fundamental knowledge of entrepreneurship and small business management, including what it takes to launch, fund, market, and successfully operate a sustainable social or commercial enterprise."* Ahmad Alnigrish (Marketing major) is a graduating senior and business owner said, *"I wish this minor had been available during my stay."*



## Graduation, In their own words

On May 13<sup>th</sup> on the campus of Virginia State University seventy-five graduates of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business walked across a stage to accept a diploma in acknowledgement of their hard work. Zacara Dunn (Marketing major) said *“It’s been a long four years but we finally did it, thank you God.”* Bashirah Bostic (Accounting major) added, *“I am graduating; it’s finally starting to hit me. I cannot wait to cross the stage.”* Andrew Clarke (Management major) said *“I am smiling, we are graduating.”* Kevin Carter (Accounting major) contributed, *“Long year, hard work.”* Monet Graves (Marketing major) shared, *“I am so happy.”* Jenelle Bazil (Management major) volunteered *“I am excited to graduate.”* Messiyah Kerr (Management major) added, *“We made it.”* Jhadee Gordon (Accounting major) proclaimed, *“Hi world, I am Jhadee Gordon and a future alumna of Virginia State University.”* Earon Chandler (Management major) said, *“I am about to graduate, I am excited!”*



### Profiled on TV

Earon Chandler (Management major) aims to pursue a career as a City Manager so when afforded the opportunity to shadow alum and VSU Rector and Cincinnati City Manager Harry Black, Earon jumped at the opportunity. To watch, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fgm1Q72i4-U&t=1s>

### Summer Travels

Students this summer will take business trips to Morocco, Italy, Greece, Hollywood, Anaheim, and the sunshine state.

## MVPs

The College of Business’s own

Jhadee Gordon (Accounting major) was recognized by the Virginia State University Honor’s Program as the Most Outstanding Senior of the Year. Jhadee has accepted a job offer from KPMG. Stacey Elder (Management major) was recognized by the university as Valedictorian and delivered remarks at commencement. Stacey has accepted a job offer from Deloitte. We will miss both ladies along with all of their colleagues; they are all MVPs in our book!



## 5 a.m.

At 5 a.m. the only thing most people want to be doing is lying in bed sleeping but for forty students on February 24<sup>th</sup> they were on a chartered bus heading to D.C. for the day to participate in a business conference at Howard University. Even the prospect of waking up super early didn’t deter the students who had an opportunity to participate in workshops with leading companies like e.g. Bain & Co.

## Rubbing Elbows

The College of Business encourages students to participate in the democratic process and to that end provides opportunities to interface with local, regional, and national leaders. Student this semester met with Congressman Donald McEachin, Mayor of Richmond Levar Stoney, Delegate(s) Lashrecse Aird and Riley Ingram, Chesterfield County Administrator Joe Casey, and members of multiple jurisdictions’ City Council(s), Board(s) of Supervisors, and School Boards.



Said Levar Stoney when he met Monet Graves (Marketing major) for no less than the second time, *“I had the pleasure of meeting you before.”* Monet would say later, *“That is cool that the Mayor remembered me.”* In the College of Business, students are regularly provided opportunities to rub elbows with not only business leaders but also elected and non-elected officials.

## International Business

A big congratulations to Monet Graves (Marketing major) on winning a scholarship from the Virginia International Business Council. Monet submitted an award winning essay identifying how her internship(s) in China complimented her experiences in the U.S. ensuring her desire to pursue a career relevant to international commerce. A candidate for admission to the Virginia Commonwealth University Brandcenter, Monet is a talented artist committed to allowing more persons to fully appreciate art and self-discovery. Monet aims to represent talented artists around the world.



## An Interview with a Student



Ibukun Jimoh is a senior Accounting major from Nigeria and an aspiring CPA

Ibukun has been in the U.S. since 2011

**Regarding your future, what are you most excited for?** To earn an income that will accommodate me starting a family and achieving stability.

**Identify your favorite quote.** *“You are your only limits.”* Unknown

## An Interview with Faculty



Michael Hawkins is an Academic Advisor and teaches Professional Enhancement

Place of origin: Petersburg, Virginia

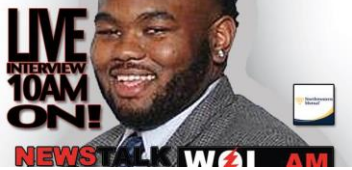
Education: Bachelor’s Degree from Virginia Commonwealth University, and Master’s Degree from the College of William & Mary

**What do you like most about teaching?** When students come to me and express their appreciation for what I did for them.

**What has been your biggest contribution here?** In concert with Dr. Sharma, creating a curriculum planner in Excel to give students an exact G.P.A.; the planner is being used by other faculty.

## An Interview with an Alumnus

*Sam Kelly*



Sam Kelly is a 2016 Management graduate

Employment: Financial Advisor, Northwestern Mutual

Residence: D.C.

**What is the most challenging part of your job?** Starting a business; I have the capacity but it requires talking to a lot of people. There is no 9 to 5 with this job.

**Most rewarding?** A lot of people can benefit from talking to me because personal finance is not well known in my community. The work that you do is very rewarding because it's important. Retirement is something that people need to have a handle on.

## An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Todd "Parney" Parnell is VP & COO at the Richmond Flying Squirrels

Education: Messiah College

Place of Origin: Locust, North Carolina

Under Parney's tutelage, the Squirrels were nominated for the 2016 John Henry Moss Community Service Award.\*

\* [http://www.milb.com/content/page.jsp?ymd=20100106&content\\_id=7882704&sid=t3410&vkey=team5](http://www.milb.com/content/page.jsp?ymd=20100106&content_id=7882704&sid=t3410&vkey=team5)

**What are your biggest goals and challenges for your businesses?** I wake up every day 12 months a year with two things in mind: positively affect others and try to get better personally and professionally.

**What is your advice for our students?** Relationships, relationships, relationships. Embrace people as you meet them and develop relationships personally that will also help you professionally.

## An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Angela Roisten is the Membership Development Director at the Virginia Credit Union

Trained in leadership at The Grace E Harris Leadership Institute  
Certificate of Completion from LMR  
M.B.A.

**Causes that your care about?** Education & Literacy, Community, Disabled, Children & Youth. I believe everyone should have access to resources that support the growth of knowledge and the skills



needed to make wise choices.

**What recommendation would you share with a freshman?** My advice is to set a realistic goal that will serve as the foundation for reaching other goals so that you have the confidence and oomph to do more!

## The College of Business Earns Reaccreditation

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University has been awarded reaffirmation of accreditation by the prestigious Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), International. Following an in-depth review of the College's programs and personnel, AACSB granted a five year extension of reaccreditation to the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business for demonstrating continuous improvement and for its exemplary work in engagement, innovation and societal impact.

AACSB Accreditation is the hallmark of excellence in business education, and has been earned by less than 5% of all business schools in the world. Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun (Dean of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business) praised the College's students, alumni, faculty, and staff for all of their hard work. Said Omojokun who has been in the College for nearly thirty years, *"This reaffirmation could not have been possible without tremendous work by a lot of people including faculty, staff, students, alumni advisory board and industry advisory council. It was teamwork and it began with a commitment by President Makola Abdullah. AACSB accreditation is not easy but President Abdullah supported the College every step of the way."* The accrediting body also praised the College for "the strong leadership of Dean Omojokun as an effective and respected leader who is transforming the College."

Dr. Makola Abdullah (President of Virginia State University) added, *"I commend the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business on being granted a five year reaffirmation of accreditation by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). Virginia State University is proud of our College of Business and all of their accomplishments. Every week I am provided a list of student accomplishments in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business so I know what terrific work is being done there. It is rewarding to know that AACSB when provided the opportunity to see what I get to see affirmed the College's excellent work." Accreditation signals to alumni, students, prospective students, faculty and staff, and our friends in industry and government that Virginia State University is a place where a young person can go to achieve their dreams. At VSU, we are proudly committed to: providing a transformative experience for our students, strategically investing in our academic programs, embracing our position as a top Land Grant University, embracing our role as Virginia's Opportunity University, and partnering together as a University to tell our story."*

Dr. Donald Palm (Provost) said *"We are fortunate to have a terrific team in the College of Business. Our faculty put in a lot of hard work to ensure that they retained accreditation. It should be noted that AACSB accreditation is a faculty driven process. Despite their many responsibilities, the College's faculty gave of themselves to make this happen."*

AACSB also noted faculty research, a top-notch advising center, contributions in the community, and a commitment to continuous improvement. *"The mantra for AACSB" Dr. Omojokun said, "We are always improving and looking for ways to get better."*

## Leading by example

As soon as he learned that the College of Business had a student-run clothing store that was soliciting donations, Dr. Makola Abdullah in his capacity as President of Virginia State University made a very generous donation of suits and more. President Abdullah leads by example! In other store news, check out the students' new commercial.

CLICK HERE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPE8hnHa9aU>





## Service to Country

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business is developing a reputation not only for student accomplishments in the classroom and in the workplace but also in service to country. A growing number of students are signing up for the Armed Services. The College made international headlines relative to service to country with the crowning of Deshauna Barber as Miss USA but other students and alums are also giving back. In the week before graduation, Andrew Clarke (Management major) said *"I really want to join the Air Force as an Officer"*. John Miles (Management Information Systems major and 15 grad) just returned from Afghanistan and has secured employment as a Network Administrator at Fort Riley. They are but a few of the many who have been led to service to country.



## Ghost Red

Philandra Jordan (Management Information Systems major) and Erica Pickens (Management Information Systems major) represented the College of Business in a Ghost Red ethical hacking competition hosted by General Electric (GE) at the company's cyber security facility. In competition with students from other universities in the Commonwealth, the Virginia State University team showed determination. No matter what obstacles the team had to overcome, they persevered. Adopting the spirit of their members, the team outperformed a lot of their peers and showed what is capable when four tenacious ladies put their heads together. For Philandra, it was not unlike her resolve as it relates to her experience as a student-athlete who sustained injuries but finished her tenure at VSU with a conference championship ring on her finger. For Erica, it was not unlike her perseverance in raising three boys while going back to school. This team of ladies is as good as it gets!



## Giving Back

A big thanks to the senior capstone course that participated in a service learning project and developed a new strategic plan for the Ettrick United Methodist Church.

## Wall Street Traders

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business because of a generous donation now provides undergraduates an opportunity to play the part of a Wall Street trader. Students in Dr. Hari Sharma's investments curriculum are able to trade real stocks with real monies. Sharma (Professor and Chair of the Accounting & Finance Department) with a background in finance industry including as Vice President (Market Risk Management) at Bank of America affords students training in making sound investment decisions. A \$100k portfolio provides for the training to be more than typical academia but rather experiential learning. Students are evaluated for their decision making processes assessing how companies have been performing and why. Said Kevin Carter (Accounting major) of the experience, *"It is rewarding to manage real monies and real stocks."* Added Daushay Campbell (Accounting major) *"I really enjoyed participating in this unique curriculum."* An extra treat for the students regarded an opportunity to visit the Big Apple for an opportunity to spend time on Wall Street and become acquainted with where at least some of the students aim to work subsequent graduation. Still, Daushay who is from the the Windy City was heard saying, *"New York is okay but it's not Chicago."*



## Faculty Led

A new faculty initiative this semester regarded convening presentation opportunities for faculty to share their research with colleagues. In Wednesday noon assemblies, faculty provided an abbreviated synopsis of their work. Faculty shared that they enjoyed the opportunity to learn what their colleagues have been working on and that it inspired more collaboration. Though faculty in the College of Business prioritize teaching, research and publication constitutes an important part of what they do. Together as a group, faculty this semester published, presented, and were cited for all of their contributions to the academic community.

## Certifications

In the preceding edition of this newsletter readers learned about new certifications available through the College but still the most successful certification for business students regards Enterprise Resource Planning and SAP. The hard-work and determination of Dr. Dong Yoo in Management Information Systems is resulting in scores of professionals earning certification. This certification has been instrumental in a lot of undergraduates earning full time employment at companies including in particular at Deloitte. The origin of the SAP certifications regards an industry focus group convened seven years with leading SAP users like Dominion and Dupont. In the College of Business, students are earning a lot more than just a degree!

## More Pictures



## Alumni Advisory Board

One of the most important contributions an Alumni Advisory Board can make is to provide career opportunities and in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business no one is contributing as much as Mr. Marvin Allmond (Owner of Allmond & Company). To date, Mr. Allmond has hired nearly twenty students! Located in Landover, Maryland the firm is a certified public accounting firm with a Federal accounting and auditing practice. Said Nicole Layne (Accounting major) of her hire, *"I like that so many other VSU people are at the firm. I think it's really special!!"* Indeed it is!

Not unlike Mr. Allmond, another member is providing exciting career opportunities. Specifically, Mr. Greg Whirley is leveraging his relationships at the Virginia Department of Transportation where he retired as Commissioner to deliver internship opportunities. This summer, Barry Brown (Management major), Tiffany Tucker (Management/HR major) and Jasmine Baskett (Marketing major) will intern at VDOT.

A big thanks to all of our alumni for their invaluable support!





## Another Miss

First Deshauna Barber and now Karmeshia Tuck; there must be something in the water in Singleton Hall. The College of Business is turning out young professional women recognized for their brain, brawn, and beauty!

This summer, Tuck will compete for an opportunity to be crowned USA National Miss. A different competition that the better known Miss USA won by class of 2011 graduate Deshauna Barber, USA National Miss will host their pageant in Boca Raton, Florida.

A 2013 graduate of the College of Business, Karmeshia studied Management Information Systems while in school and according to Virginia State University *“is now a Management and Program Analyst for the Office of Trade Relations, within Customs and Border Protection for the United States Government. In 2016, she received a certificate of Merit from the World Customs Organization (WCO) for rendering exceptional service to the international customs community, for her contributions to the East Coast Trade Symposium and North American Summit. Tuck was just recently crowned USA National Miss District of Columbia 2017. She plans to use the national platform The Crown CARES (Creating A Respectful Environment in Schools) to help bring awareness against childhood bullying in schools as well as focusing on youth development, while helping young adults become more informed about what steps they should take when applying for college.”*

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business is so very proud of all our young ladies and men for all of their extraordinary accomplishments!



## Student Accomplishments

Check out our students' spring 2017 semester accomplishments at <http://business.vsu.edu/news/2017/05/spring-2017-student-accomplishments.php>

## Another entrepreneur

In this newsletter's preceding edition readers learned about three students with successful businesses; the College has a fourth! Congrats to Jeremy Stokes (Management major) on his Club Z tutoring franchise.

## Message from the Dean

After much hard work, the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business was awarded reaccreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International. We all put in a lot of effort and it was acknowledged by AACSB.

New policies along with a renewed commitment to recruiting allowed us to reverse a downward trend and increase enrollment in the College.

A new minor was added in Entrepreneurship and new faculty joined our ranks. One of our students



was profiled on NBC and one of our faculty/staff was regularly profiled on TV and in the newspapers. Alumni regularly returned to campus to interface with students and to give back. Over 100 companies participated in the classroom and scores of students attended networking events. Faculty were commended for their teaching, research, and publications. Altogether between students, faculty, staff, and alumni; the College donated countless hours to community service.

As always, the priority of the College is to expand opportunities for our students. Of the 75 students that graduated on May 13, a majority have already secured full-time employment and/or admission to graduate school. The list of employers includes companies like Deloitte, PricewaterhouseCoopers, IBM, Allmond & Company, KPMG, Federal Reserve, Dominion, Northwestern Mutual, and Capital Area Health Agency. The list of graduate schools include George Washington University, Louisiana State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Southern University. In addition, our students received first prizes in State-wide College and University competitions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our students, staff, faculty, University Administration, alumni and industry partners for another successful year. Our young professionals are performing so well. Every semester our team of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and industry raises the bar setting even higher expectations that always are fulfilled. That for me defines success!

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun  
Dean



Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun (Dean)  
congratulates Beta Gamma Sigma  
inductees after awarding them medals