



This newsletter is dedicated to the two hundred thirty-six academic scholars awarded for achievement this semester.

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GREATER!

“In spite of the looming global pandemic, the 2021-2022 year at Virginia State University has been epic and a year for the record books, a year we can all be proud of.”

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

“The 2022 Spring Commencement marks an important academic milestone for our graduates that they will forever cherish.”

Dr. Donald Palm, Provost

“I am so proud of all of our students and am grateful to our faculty/staff.”

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

2022: THE SPRING SEMESTER IN PICTURES



Indacia Turner is a legacy student and among the best of the best.



Ruqayah Ebrahim is an entrepreneur and was selected to intern for Wall Street.



The College's Future Business Leaders of America chapter is phenomenal.



Jauslynn Israel is a very talented writer who enjoys poetry.



Students in the College enjoy visiting museums particularly when they get to test drive classics; just kidding, no test-driving.



Folake and Justin pose for a pic; both are among the best of the best. Cameron stops for a pic at her namesake. Khadijat is all smiles. Above.

Lahtiana, Shannon, and Mariaja showcase tree blossoms. Aeriya, Reem, and Donnasia are doing big things in marketing. Alahna hosted Rachel from VCU. Below.



Janay is a person of faith, CJ and Laurie return to campus, Blaise and Joe are awardees, Emani and Ty are all smiles, and Davon, Mia, and Scott pose. Below.



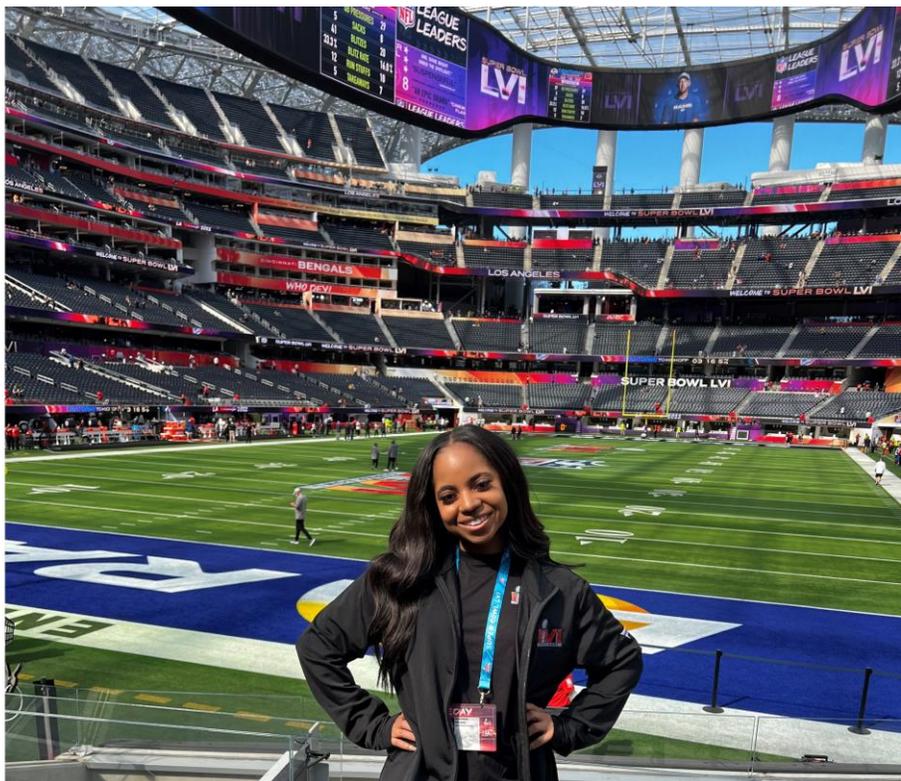
PwC

A growing number of students are interfacing with Fortune 500 and Big Four accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers. In the Richmond office alone, Monique Daniels (2020 grad), Jermaine Perrine (2019 grad), Jahla Mercer-Smith (Accounting major), and Indacia Turner (MISY major) are all turning heads for their acumen. Along with monies provided by the firm to support curriculum and software, PwC is affording the College's accounting majors a jumpstart to their career. Said Indacia, *"I am ecstatic to join Monique, Jermaine, and Jahla this summer; I know I will learn a lot and am eager to make my contribution."*



Super Bowl

Considered the crème de la crème relevant to marketing events, the Super Bowl is synonymous with securing eye balls and a lot of attention. It's why Addison Adams (Marketing major) courtesy of the NFL flew across the country to staff marketing and media. Already had participated in an externship at the NFL Draft, Addison is making a name for herself in the sporting universe. Up Next, Addison will attend law school to practice sports law.



Addison Adams in between helping to manage marketing and media relations takes in a picture at the Super Bowl.



Awards Show

Students in Singleton were celebrated for their academic accomplishments at the College's Forty-Eighth Annual Awards Show. Specifically, two hundred thirty-six undergrads were presented plaques and/or certificates in an event attended by the Dean and faculty. An all-time record relevant to recipients, The College of Business celebrated students for earning a 3.0 or better. Also of note, student leaders including on the Student Advisory Board and participants in the College's Voluntary Income Tax Association (VITA) were recognized for their contributions. Done' Prunty (Marketing major) delivered the keynote address and congratulated her peers on a job well done only lamenting that her colleagues lost so much time in the building because of COVID. Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun (Dean) in his remarks encouraged the students to continue to achieve and to demonstrate excellence. Jonathan Young (Director of Corporate Relations) presided over the ceremony and championed the students for their individualism making a point to identify what distinguished each student. Senior CJ Epperson (Management major) said of the event, *"I was proud to hear my name called, to come forward, and to be presented a plaque that I will forever hang on my wall."* Shannon Lee (Management/HR major) added, *"I just want to leave the College of Business a little better of a place than I found it."*

Future is Bright

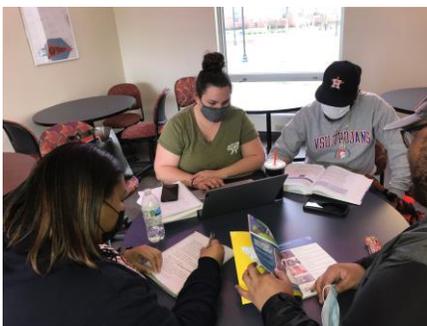
Thanks to the leadership of Dr. Aurelia Donald (Professor in Management Information Systems) and Dr. Louis Dabney (Professor of Management) the College's Future Business Leaders of America Phi Beta Lambda chapter continues to do big things! This semester the following students participated and placed relevant to an intercollegiate competition; Davon Bell (Management major), Monet Creque (Accounting major), Cynthia Davis (Accounting major), Ruqayah Ebrahim (Management major), Kameron Lawrence (Marketing major), Kameron Spence (Management major), and Nylan Taylor (Marketing major). Congrats to all!!

Governor's Mansion

The College last semester initiated a relationship with then candidate for Governor and former CEO at The Carlyle Group Glenn Youngkin. What began with a visit to guest teach in the fall led to an invite to reciprocate and an invite to participate in an event at the Governor's Mansion. Now Governor Youngkin, His Excellency hosted faculty/staff and alumni of the College for an event at what the Governor referred to as the people's house and encouraged attendees to stop in and say hi when in the neighborhood!

More Pictures





Graduation, In their own words

In the moments immediately preceding commencement, Amaya Moses (Management major) said on camera, *“I wore heels and my feet are very much hurting. So, if I were you ladies, when you graduate next year and the years to come, please wear comfortable heels or don’t wear heels at all. But we are out of here, out in four!”* Destiny Sanders (Marketing major) added, *“Congratulations to all of the graduates!”* Abraham Schlossberg (Accounting major) said on film, *“From Troy, New York to the land of Troy at VSU, all I bleed is orange and blue!”* Adiana Brittle (Marketing major) shared, *“We finally made it, out in four. So excited, I love Virginia State but I am glad to go.”* Kenneth Massenburg (Management Information Systems major) added, *“I made it, I made it!”*



Faculty Awardee

Congrats to Dr. Hari Sharma (Chair of Accounting & Finance) on earning from the Institute for Global Business Research the Distinguished Service Award along with the Distinguished Research Award.

MBL

Amaya Moses (Management major) rubbed elbows with a Who’s Who in Richmond at the annual Metropolitan Business League dinner and awards show. Thank you MBL!

Remembrance

Few experiences are as hard as losing a loved one prematurely and unexpectedly so when Anisa Sistare (Marketing major) left this place for another, hearts wept for her loss. First at the funeral and then at a remembrance event in Singleton, students along with faculty celebrated the memory of Anisa and championed everything good about her and the difference she made in her too short life.



Tis the Season

The College’s tradition relevant to providing free tax services for persons in the community resumed again this semester. Under the leadership of Mary Scott (Assistant Accounting Professor), the Voluntary Income Tax Assistance program gifted scores of persons tax help; tis the season!

The First

Students in the College of Business this semester had the opportunity to spend part of an evening with former Governor of Virginia L. Douglas Wilder. At an event at the historic St. John’s in Church Hill best known for Patrick Henry’s famous Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death speech and only a few blocks from where Doug Wilder grew up in a segregated Richmond, the former Governor juxtaposed his experience with the speech and celebrated being the first black governor in the U.S.



Student Advisory Board

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University in its commitment to continuous improvement and affirmation of tenets established by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) is consistently soliciting input from stakeholders. From alumni to faculty to industry to most importantly students, the College has established many vehicles for obtaining feedback.

Regarding the latter, but one tool relevant to encouraging meaningful dialogue is the Student Advisory Board. Comprised of a record number of students and led by Sierra Robinson (Marketing major), the group hosted a town hall this semester. The objective regarded facilitating a candid conversation pertinent to how to improve the student experience in the College. Like her colleagues on the body, Sierra is committed to truth telling even when uncomfortable. Recognizing that change is constant and that business demands adaptation, Sierra and the other undergrads celebrate the culture in Singleton Hall that encourages candor.

Next semester, Sierra has big plans for the Student Advisory Board and aims to in collaboration with her team put on programming that both meets the demands of their customers but also makes up for lost time because of COVID. Said Sierra, *“I cannot believe that I am about to be a senior. COVID only expedited my tenure in the College of Business because nearly half of my time was affected by the pandemic. I know I speak for all of my peers when I share that I have been afforded countless unforgettable moments in Singleton that I will cherish forever but because of these experiences, I am anxious for more! I really want next academic year to be the best ever in The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University.”*

Already selected to intern in Chicago for the summer at United Airlines, Sierra is synonymous with leader in the College but she is not alone. Aided by Addison Adams (Marketing major), Helena Abu (Marketing major), Kenneth Bittner (MISY major), Jade Chapman (Marketing major), Kyren Clemons (Marketing major), CJ Epperson (Management major), Aaron Hicks (MISY major) and Marcus Jones (Management major), the Board will add next year a new group of leaders.

In her capacity as faculty/staff liaison to the Board, Felicia Turner (Transfer Coordinator) has prioritized growing the Board and facilitating collegiality among members. An example of her efforts included a pot-luck luncheon this semester. Sierra Robinson said of Turner, *“It is really important to have support from the College and Ms. Turner ensures that we have access to the resources to do our job.”*

Between Robinson and Turner, if next academic year materializes anything like what they want for the College of Business, students should expect a robust and engaged Student Advisory Board that is attentive to the wants and needs of customers, i.e. students. Already a proud champion of students, the College boasts 1) Students on Reel, an authentic or “real” conversation with students 2) Student Accomplishments, a weekly celebration of student achievement 3) Student Mentoring, an intentional peer to peer development program 4) Student Shadowing, an initiative to afford real world experiences 5) Student Clubs, a portfolio of organizations that provide development opportunities 6) Student Success Support Fund, a Dean led account to provide monies 7) Student Store, a clothing closet relevant to professional attire only to mention a few resources accessible to undergraduates. Along with an open door policy, intimate interface with industry, and full-time advisors, the College’s face is what it should be, students!

Yet More Pictures



Shannon Lee and Jaylon Dean are superstars in the College. Above.

Kyla Best is a proud champion of The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business. Below.

Across the Pond

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University has a proud tradition of sending scholars overseas to study abroad but because of the pandemic opportunities have for two years been put on pause. That will all change when Blaise Davenport (MISY major) takes a trip across the pond to study at the world-renowned Oxford.

Effective September, Blaise will spend three months in Britain studying side by side with among the top-performing undergraduates at arguably the most prestigious institution of higher learning in the world. For many students the experience may be a bit intimidating but for Blaise it's just the next chapter in an accomplished career that includes multiple internships, high-stakes intercollegiate competition, a hackathon, and most recently being designated the Most Outstanding Junior of the Year at Virginia State University. Blaise conveys enthusiasm for the opportunity in every conversation and reminds persons that her life objectives regard facilitating opportunities for more minorities and woman as soon as middle and high school to be afforded access to the same kind of experiences she has benefited from since arriving at VSU. This semester, Davenport participated in a conversation with Chris Dovi from CodeVA relevant to plugging in to existing nonprofits and coaching young ladies. Her partner in crime, i.e. Kyle Jacobs (Agribusiness major) who incidentally will attend Columbia University for grad school said of Davenport, *"Blaise is setting the bar high and by earning the invite to study abroad at Oxford demonstrates to all of those children out there that aspire for the same that they can do it too"!!*



Battle of the Brains

The College of Business was well represented this semester for an intercollegiate competition in Austin, i.e. Battle of the Brains. Comprised of pitch competitions, workshops, panel discussions, camaraderie and cooperation, the event was attended by Blaise Davenport (MISY major) and Idayziah Jones (Management major). Together, they make for a dynamic duo!!



Faith

The College of Business is comprised of persons representing many faiths for whom their respective religion is most important. A group of students including Abraham Schlossberg (Accounting major) and Janay Samuel (Marketing major) attended a faith conference in North Carolina.



Message from the Dean

The benefit of a long tenure at any one place affords an individual perspective and because I have been at Virginia State University for so long I can share that the quality of our students/faculty/staff are as great as ever and I could not be prouder! I am truly humbled to work alongside such terrific people and because of their accomplishments; I have to brag not for anything I have done as Dean but instead on our team.

This semester, two hundred thirty six students were recognized for their scholastic achievements at our Awards Show, nearly forty students earned new scholarships, students attended conferences and industry luncheons, competed against other schools and won, launched businesses, and undergraduates accrued scores of internships and jobs. Faculty and staff hosted nearly two hundred fifty companies in the classroom, advised more than five hundred students, hosted countless workshops and provided tutoring, facilitated free tax counseling sessions for hundreds of persons, visited more than a dozen K-12 schools, submitted journal articles, won grants, served on boards, and coached entrepreneurs.

On a more somber note, the College of Business did experience loss and because no young person should pass from this place before those of us more senior, I ask readers to pause and remember our special people and what is more to celebrate persons around you because life though special is finite.

Lastly, I would be remiss if not to thank President Makola Adbullah, Provost Donald Palm, the Board of Visitors, alumni, industry, faculty and staff, and of course students for everything that they do!

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

