



Fall 2014 Issue



The College of Business leads a transformative cleanup at Evergreen Cemetery.

## *INSIDE THIS ISSUE*

Fall Semester in Pictures — 2, 3

Search for New Dean — 3

The man who brought the Internet to campus is appointed Interim Dean — 3

Dynex Capital Business Week — 4

Fulbright Scholarship — 4

Top 40 under 40 — 4

Justice at Virginia State University — 5

Students on Reel — 5

Google and the White House — 5

Zoom Zoom — 5

Allmond & Company, LLC — 5, 6

Globe Trotters — 6

Interview(s) with a student, alum, industry stakeholder, and faculty — 6, 7, 8

Honoring the departed and restoring the neglected — 8

### **INTERIM PRESIDENT APPOINTED**

November 13, 2014

Virginia State University named as Interim President effective January 1<sup>st</sup> Dr. Pamela Valleria Wilson Hammond. “Virginia State University has a remarkable history and a compelling story” said Hammond.

Since 2009, Dr. Hammond has served as Provost at Hampton University where she was responsible for administering a \$35 million budget. A nurse by training, Dr. Hammond served as Dean and Professor of Nursing at Hampton before assuming the role of Provost.

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business welcomes Dr. Hammond to VSU and is excited to work with her. It should be noted that Dr. Hammond and the College are already in communication about how to build on strengths and to demand nothing less than excellence.

# 2014: THE FALL SEMESTER IN PICTURES



Project Shadow at NBC.



DeAnna Waters at Virginia's Gateway Region.



Students participate in Ribbon Cutting in Hopewell.



Marnelle Fanfan volunteers.



Sedrick Brown, Tionna Chambers, and Taji Widgeon join Bernard Robinson, NTS for dinner.



Students participate in Small Group Role-Play with Mike Williams, LMR.



Students participate in Shamin Hotels Breast Cancer Awareness Event.



Dennis McRae joins Neil Amin and Suhail Arora for Project Shadow at Shamin Hotels.



Blair, Candace, and Jahmica at Squirrels game.



Zymir Batts in the classroom.



Students in between class socializing.



Ulysses Knight at White House.



Students participate in a Young Professionals Networking Event.



U.S. Army Audit Agency Day at VSU.



Eric Muite and Diamond Sykes networking.



Allison Selby at business meeting.



Students at Dynex Capital Luncheon.



Networking session in Colonial Heights.



Carol Nitz with Akhenaton Blye.

## Search for New Dean

In the last few months, no less than hundreds of stakeholders have opined on the topic of search for a new Dean. Ever since Dr. Mirta Martin was announced the new President of Fort Hays State University in Kansas, a lot has been said of what kinds of attributes, skills, experiences, etc. is needed in a new Dean. Conversations regarding if a background in industry or in academia or if someone familiar to VSU or someone unacquainted are among the routine topics of discussion. In fact, the College initiated most of the conversations including in focus groups, industry council meetings, anonymous industry and student surveys, etc. The objective is and has been to solicit feedback from all interested parties and to provide the University ample data to make an informed decision. Perhaps most interestingly, all stakeholder groups to include students, alumni, industry, and faculty/staff seem to be in accord on the major issues. At a September meeting with senior University leadership, the consensus was that someone with access to industry and the capability to raise significant sums of money constituted a mission critical part of the portfolio. So, where is the University in deciding on a new Dean? First, a search firm is being procured. Second, feedback has been provided. Third, a decision should be made by July. Fourth, if you would like to submit a recommendation; please contact us at 804-524-5987.

## The man who brought the Internet to VSU is appointed Interim Dean

For over twenty-five years Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun has been teaching, innovating, and leading. Past Chair of the Computer Information Systems Department, Omojokun has served VSU in various capacities including as a member of the VSU Board of Visitors representing faculty, Associate Dean, and liaison to SCHEV but perhaps he is best known as the man who in the early 90s brought something to campus called the Internet. Now, in his new position as Interim Dean of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business, he is doing what he knows best, i.e. still teaching, still innovating, and still leading! Dr. Omojokun is well known to regularly remark, *"It is all about the students!"* Well said, well said sir.



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## Dynex Capital Business Week

Providing students premium access to industry is front and center for the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business. In a semester, over 250 professionals visit with undergraduates in the classroom to refine students' soft skills, to augment career awareness, and to develop real-world skills. However, industry is not invited to lecture but rather to facilitate small group role-play or to coach experiential exercises. At the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business, we believe in learning by doing!

One particular opportunity for students to interface with and to learn from industry regarded this semester's Dynex Capital Business Week. Sponsored by Byron Boston, President & CEO of Dynex Capital, a leading mortgage real estate investment trust (REIT), Business Week consisted of over 100 leading professionals teaming with students on real projects to solve real problems. On why Boston supported the initiative, *"from my own experience as an undergrad I learned how essential it is learn from industry professionals and to learn in an experiential way; for me it is an opportunity to give back."*



For students in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business, opportunities to engage industry happen both on and off campus. The College's popular Project Shadow program affords on average a hundred students a semester the opportunity to spend time visiting companies attending meetings, listening in on conversations, and being exposed to their discipline in the real world. For information regarding how you can participate, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AllAI67HG1w> and contact Jonathan Young at [jyoung@vsu.edu](mailto:jyoung@vsu.edu) or 804-524-5987.

## Fulbright Scholarship

Kelsey Evans began her international travels as an undergraduate Management major in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business with summers spent in places like India and Morocco. Now in graduate school, Kelsey will have an opportunity to continue her journeys in Bangladesh as a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship; Kelsey will teach English while abroad.

Among the most selective scholarships in the world, the Fulbright is reserved for difference makers. Fulbright recipients include fifty-three Nobel Prize awardees, seventy-eight Pulitzer Prize winners, ten members of Congress and eighteen heads of state. Said Jonathan Young, Director of Corporate Relations for Business at VSU, *"we are honored to have Kelsey as an alum achieve so very much."*

## Top 40 under 40

LeQuan Hylton moved from Martinsville to Richmond in 1998. The city made an unexpected impression on him. *"It was my first contact with people who were homeless,"* he says. *"And really, it bothered me that people lived in such conditions."* So he started a homeless outreach program through his church, throwing himself at the problem by leading initiatives to provide free meals. A graduate of the College of Business, Hylton was recently profiled in Style Weekly's prestigious Top 40 under 40 publication for his philanthropic work including starting a company to provide high-quality, affordable housing. *"We do a lot of work to make sure they're nice,"* he says. *"That's the kind of housing we wanted to provide — places we'd actually live in ourselves."* On top of his company and charitable work, Hylton manages information technology projects at the Department of Defense. In his free time, he sleeps!

## Justice at Virginia State University

It's not just every day that undergraduate business students get an opportunity to spend an afternoon with a Virginia Supreme Court Justice but that is precisely what James Barber (Management major) and Tarik Floyd (Marketing major) did this semester when they joined Justice Cleo Powell for lunch and for an intimate conversation regarding topics like equity, impartiality, minority leadership, and jurisprudence. Said Tarik Floyd of the experience, *"This was an excellent experience because it's not every day that you have an opportunity to meet with someone of Justice Powell's caliber. It was impressive to learn of her origins and how a little country girl from Brunswick County climbed the legal ladder; it is very inspiring."* Said James Barber, *"Justice Powell really connected with me, I aspire to be a public servant and I was really touched by how she is so humble despite the influence and authority that she has."*



### Students on Reel

Students in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business are achieving extraordinary success and can now be heard and seen on Camera Reel. Every day a new student is profiled in a brief unscripted video released to the VSU campus. The candid 1 minute testimonials include what about Virginia State University they like and what they don't. For a sneak peek at Students on Reel, click here:

<http://business.vsu.edu/testimonials/index.php>

## Google and the White House

Momentum is increasing in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business pertinent to entrepreneurship. Curriculum is being developed, new faculty hired, industry partners secured, and most recently \$100,000 earmarked for an innovation and entrepreneurship incubator space. At the center of it all is Ulysses Knight (Management alum, Class of 2012). Ulysses is leading the College's and University's efforts to benchmark best practices and as a result has made recent visits to the White House for meetings. Most recently, Knight visited Google and Facebook in California. Said Knight regarding his goals for the College and University, *"building an entrepreneurship culture."*

## Zoom Zoom

Mazda has been investing in Virginia State University ever since the automaker opened their one of a kind remanufacturing center just up the street. From mentoring students to participating in the College's unique Small Group Role-Play with Industry curriculum, to participating in Undergraduate Bridge, Mazda has demonstrated a commitment to VSU. Now, the innovator has started a new scholarship for academic scholars in the College of Business. Thank you Mazda!



## Allmond & Company, LLC

It was a proud moment for Marvin Allmond when the plaque was installed in Singleton Hall in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business just outside the Trading Laboratory. Class of 1972, Mr. Allmond is the Managing Member of what constitutes a leading C.P.A. firm in the D.C. metro region. Allmond and his team were on campus on September 10<sup>th</sup> for Allmond & Company, LLC Day at VSU when the plaque was unveiled by President Keith Miller and Interim Dean Emmanuel Omojokun. The recognition was a tribute to all of the support provided to students in the College of Business. From

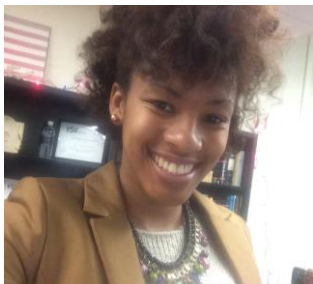
regularly hiring accounting graduates, to paying for scores of students to attend the annual National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) conference to most recently investing \$100,000 in a new endowed scholarship, Allmond & Company is counted among the College's very best friends. When asked why he supports our students, Allmond said, "he is simply giving back." Accounting and Finance Chair Dr. John Moore added, "I cannot think of anyone who has done more for our department."

## Globe Trotters

What does the Taj Mahal, the Great Wall of China, Cassablanca, and the Bangkok Grand Palace have in common, all besides being a long distance from the Virginia State University campus? They are locations at College of Business students' study abroad destinations. What is becoming the most selective invite at VSU, every semester includes undergraduates spending months studying overseas being exposed to new cultures and different peoples. This past semester, Michael McCatrey (Marketing major) spent the semester interning for Shell in China. Next semester, Craig Lowe and Elijah Miller (both Marketing majors) will spend the semester in Thailand. Said Elijah, "I cannot wait to step off the plane and begin my journey."



## An Interview with a Student



Kera Bridges is a senior Information Systems major from Manassas, Virginia

Age: 21 years old Career Goal: Project Analyst

**What is your most memorable experience in the College of Business?** Visiting CCAM for the Siemens announcement of over \$100 million being provided to Virginia State University.

**Identify your favorite quote.** "Everything happens for a reason"

Ecclesiastes 3-1-15

## An Interview with Faculty



James Damico is a Professor in Business Management

Place of origin: Syracuse Education: St. Bonaventure University and Miami University of Ohio and Syracuse University

**What do you like most about teaching?** Every day I get to learn from and with fine young men and women who are driven by their dreams, ideals, and ambitions to create a better world.

**What advice would you convey to a new professor?** The essence of leadership is to pay attention to how your students respond to what you say and do ..... and adjust accordingly.

## An Interview with an Alum



Atiya Leach is a May, 2014 graduate

Employment: Marketing and Sales Coordinator for MWV (MeadWestvaco) in downtown Richmond

**What is the most challenging part of your job?** Take initiative, assume responsibility, and deliver. No excuses.

**Most rewarding?** I picked a career that I am really passionate about and something that I really enjoy. The opportunity to see my peers turn a complicated concept in to a tangible product that a billion other people can buy from a store shelf-that's pretty cool.

## An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Mark James is Owner of Hearth and Home Shoppe in Mechanicsville and an Owner of the Growth Coach

Education: Bachelors in Mechanical Engineering from U.S. Naval Academy and M.B.A. from Duke University

**What are your biggest goals and challenges as CEO?** Visioning, i.e. defining the purpose for going in to business, assembling the right team, and systematizing the business so that it runs even after the owner withdraws from daily operations.

**Identify your favorite quote.** *“Good business leaders create a vision, articulate the vision, passionately own the vision, and relentlessly drive it to completion”.* Jack Welsh

## An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Tonnic Charles is Director of Category Management at Owens and Minor

Education: Bachelors in Electrical Engineering from Southern University and A&M and M.B.A. from University of North Carolina

**Why do you work with students in the College of Business?** *“If you get, give. When you learn, teach.”* Maya Angelou It is important for me to share and assist in development of our young people.

**What recommendation would you share with a graduating senior?** Be the architect of your career and begin building a network. Stay flexible and open so you can adjust your plan as necessary.

**Identify your favorite quote.** *“Things will happen around you, things will happen to you, but the only thing that matters is what happens in you.”* Author Unknown

## Honoring the departed and restoring the neglected

For the past four years the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University has been using community-based learning in its senior capstone Strategic Planning course. Community based learning, formerly known as service learning, is a popular academic engagement tool that encourages students to apply what they have learned in the classroom to assist not for profit organizations in their community. Through this learning pedagogy, the students gain extensive real world experience, build a valuable business skill base, and fulfill the university’s mantra of Building a Better World.

This year the seniors are tackling a monumental task. The Four Cemeteries at Evergreen, which is cited as the “preeminent resting place for many of Virginia’s most influential African Americans”, spans about 13 acres in the south corner of Richmond, and is the final resting place for up to 13,000 people. Tragically, the property has been grossly neglected, vandalized, and has become a dumping ground for discarded tires and trash. The class of December, 2014 is participating in the extensive clean up and restoration of Evergreen Cemeteries, and developing a strategic plan for the ongoing, perpetual care of the property.

It will take years for clean up to be completed, and that is why the College of Business seniors are volunteering, seeking volunteers, and working to raise awareness of the tragedy of Evergreen Cemeteries. There is currently one Richmond man, John Shuck, who has taken it upon himself to recruit and equip volunteers, and he is graciously working with the seniors on this project. Please check John’s Facebook page for the ongoing work schedule: <https://www.facebook.com/VSUSeniorProject2014>

Timothy Blanks (Management major) said of the conditions at the cemetery before the students’ work, *“Nobody should be treated like this.”* On the experience of restoring the cemetery, Lashanta Boyd (Management major) said, *“I am loving the work that we are doing. We uncovered four graves and one “person” happened to die on December 28<sup>th</sup> which happens to my birthday and I am just so excited for all of the work that we are doing.”* Said Colisha Davis (Management major), *“This experience has been very fulfilling. I am very tired but it’s very fun to uncover the different tombstones to think about the history with it and the lives that they lived. It’s pretty sad to see the cemetery in this state but I believe with all of the hard work and volunteers that this is going to be a success and something that will continue as a legacy of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business.”*

Dr. Kim Gower, professor of the Strategic Planning course said, *“There is plenty of work for everybody, including raking, carrying, trimming, planting, and visiting.”* Gower continued, *“I am proud to say that the seniors’ dedication and hard work is paying off - in a BIG way!”*

*“This experience has been very fulfilling ..... I believe with all of the hard work and volunteers that this is going to be a success and something that will continue as a legacy of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business.”* Colisha Davis, Management Major