

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

Commencement 2006!

From the Editor

My but how we've grown! My primary goals upon becoming editor of *VSU Magazine* were to help the University reconnect with our alumni; to communicate to our alumni the many positive stories involving VSU's students, faculty and programs; and to provide a forum in which our alumni can share their good news with classmates and friends.

In reviewing the magazine over the past six issues, it's apparent each of these goals have been met. I'm especially grateful to all of my co-editors – you, our alumni – who have given me so many items for our Alumni News. That first issue, back in Winter 2004 contained five Alumni News items. This issue has more than 30. Thank you alumni for sharing your news and accomplishments! It's obvious that a VSU education prepares our students for whatever challenge life throws at them.

This issue explores some of our alumni who met these challenges head-on and who are using, or did use, what they learned “On the Hill” in exemplary fashion. Sindy Benavides, only two years removed from being Commencement Valedictorian, is reaching out to Virginia's burgeoning Latino community, teaching them how to get the most out of U.S. society. In 1967, First Lieutenant Ruppert Sargent put the values he learned as a VSU ROTC cadet into action, giving his life to save his comrades. He was rewarded with the Medal of Honor. Also heroic is Mark Adams, who persevered at VSU as a student-athlete and single father, to provide a better life for his young son.

These stories represent the diversity that has come to characterize Virginia State University. There is no “typical” VSU student. With representation from 35 states and over 40 countries, it is impossible to single out a student, or a group of eight students, and say they “represent” our University. Every single student brings a unique quality to VSU.

We acknowledge and encourage these diverse experiences, even while we may not always agree with or condone behaviors that have been shown for the entire world to see. Having been students ourselves, we understand the exuberance of youth and hope our alumni can too.

I hope you'll take some time to enjoy this issue. Join us in celebration of the accomplishments of our faculty, whose work is being recognized for literally changing the world; to our recent graduates, who are entering “the real world” with fresh ideas and dreams; to our alumni, who have carved out niches of excellence throughout the world.

Thomas Reed
Editor

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A Prince Among Us

Ghanaian Royalty Studies at VSU

By Jamie Fleece

"What does HRH mean in front of your name?"

"It means His Royal Highness."

"Royal Highness?"

"Yes, I am a prince."

This dialogue didn't take place in a castle or in a storybook between a fair maiden and a gentleman on a horse. It took place in Vawter Hall at Virginia State University between two students.

The prince, HRH Duke Adu-Gyamfi is a senior, political science major. Although His Royal Highness is his formal title, the prince prefers "Duke."

"I don't mind if people call me by my first name," says Duke. "But it does feel good when people recognize HRH in my name or when my professors know what it means."

Duke, born in Ghana, is indeed a prince. His bloodline is royalty and his ancestors were kings and queens. Born in the Okyeman city of Kyeibi, in the eastern region of Ghana, Duke came to America at age 17.

Duke acknowledges that he had a very different upbringing from his classmates. "Growing up in Ghana and as royalty," he says "has given me opportunities and life experiences most people can only dream of. These experiences have helped shape my worldview and outlook for the future."

Some hear "prince" and imagine a life of pampering and privilege. In some regards, this is true. "I've had drivers, cooks, bodyguards, and even servants to bathe me," Duke confesses. "However, my life in America has taught me to be more self-sufficient and independent."

Duke has lived in Florida, Georgia, Maryland and now Virginia. For the past four years, he has resided in the

Richmond and Tri-cities area. After starting a hotel management consulting company, Global Hospitality Management, Duke chose to go back to school at VSU.

Why did His Royal Highness decide on VSU?

"I live in the area and VSU was the logical, most appropriate choice for schooling," he says. "I like the Black college environment and wanted that experience. VSU has a beautiful campus and the professors are very knowledgeable."



Duke acknowledges that his royal lineage hasn't given him any leverage with faculty.

"I appreciate my teachers. They respect me for my professionalism and willingness to learn," he says. "They respect me for who I am as a student and who I am beyond the classroom as a businessman and thinker, not for my status."

Contrary to what is shown on television, the life of a prince also comes with huge responsibilities.

According to Duke, royalty doesn't always equate to wealth. "Being royalty means that you live a life of service, and in return, your country honors you by paying homage and giving gifts. My family members are, and have been, politicians and community leaders in Ghana. They are in place to oversee the welfare of the country and maintain stability for its people."

Duke's father personifies this manifestation of "noblesse oblige"—obligation of the nobles. In Ghana, he helps refugees and works tirelessly to protect human rights there and around the world.

In preparation for his station in life, Duke is studying political science and plans to attend law school in the near future. His goals include more involvement in governmental affairs.

Early in life, Duke realized that, regardless of one's social stature, education is often the determining factor of his or her fate. "My family is well-educated and politically active,"

he says. "If you have the chance to learn and acquire knowledge, you can do anything and be anybody."

Duke praises the political science faculty for the impact they have on students. "Professors take the time to invest in you if you position yourself as a student who wants to learn," he says. "They will take the time if you are serious. Most of them are flexible and understand I am an entrepreneur and a student, but they don't cut me any slack."

With the maturity that comes from being an older student—Duke is 30—and because of his unique background, Duke views higher education as a serious matter. He is self-employed and a full-time student taking classes around his work schedule.

"I am humbled because I know there are many students like me, who want to do well and have ambition and dreams," Duke acknowledges. "They may not be royalty, but I love being around like-minded people who want to learn and achieve. I get that interaction at VSU."

No, the setting isn't a golden palace or a time long, long ago. There aren't any knights and maidens.

The place is Virginia State University, the school far above the Appomattox. Yet, among the students, who come from all walks of life to study, learn and make their dreams reality, there walks a prince.

Rector Johnson Finds "Value in Old Things" on Founders Day

Noting "a special serenity in this room," Dr. Ronald C. Johnson, Rector of the Virginia State University Board of Visitors, delivered the keynote address on the 124th anniversary of the founding of the University.

Dr. Johnson, speaking in Virginia Hall's Anderson-Turner Auditorium, reminded his audience of VSU's "great purpose – the education of young minds." His remarks touched upon not only the school's mission, but included remembrances of his days on campus.

Arriving at VSU from Amelia County, VA, Dr. Johnson, as a student, sang in the concert choir and participated in many demonstrations for changes on campus. He also lettered in football, becoming the first athlete from Amelia County to play at the collegiate level.

Dr. Johnson asked "is there value in old things?" In answer, he recounted VSU struggles and allowed "we need to let our work speak and let history judge our work."

In summation, Dr. Johnson concluded there is, indeed, "great value in old things." He said, "We honor all who bear the special name ... Trojan."



VSU Board of Visitors Rector Ronald C. Johnson welcomed his mother, Rebecca Johnson and wife Bessie, during his Founders Day address.

PRESIDENT MOORE ELECTED VICE CHAIR OF NCAA COUNCIL

Virginia State University President Eddie N. Moore, Jr. has been elected Vice Chair of the Division II Presidents Council, replacing Arthur F. Kirk, Jr. Besides filling in during the absence of the chair, the Presidents Council vice chair also chairs the Division II Budget and Finance Committee. Moore has been a member of the Council since 2004.

Moore became Virginia State's 12th president in 1993. Before assuming that responsibility, he served as treasurer of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Moore began his career in the private sector in 1971 with Gulf Oil Corporation. During his 14-year tenure with Gulf Oil, he rose to direct major components of the corporation's accounting and budgeting functions. He entered the public sector in 1985 as the assistant comptroller for accounting and reporting for the Commonwealth of Virginia. In 1988, he was selected to serve concurrently as the university comptroller for the College of William and Mary and the treasurer of its endowment association.

In 1990, Moore was appointed state treasurer. As treasurer, he led the Department of the Treasury and also served on 15 state boards and authorities with oversight for more than \$20 billion of state assets.

As president, Moore has led Virginia State through a period of unprecedented growth, with more than \$100 million in capital improvements made to the main campus.

Private support for scholarships has increased from \$83,000 in 1993 to more than \$1.6 million. In 2001, Virginia State exceeded its original capital campaign goal of \$10 million, raising \$11.6 million. The campaign increased endowments for student scholarships, faculty chairs, centers of excellence and capital improvements.

A native of Philadelphia, Moore holds a bachelor of science degree in accounting from Pennsylvania State University and a master of business administration degree from the University of Pittsburgh. A Vietnam War veteran, Moore received five military decorations, including the Bronze Star and the Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Achievement.



VSU Ranks Among Top Degree Producers

Diverse Issues in Higher Education recently ranked Virginia State University 14th among all colleges in the United States in awarding bachelor's degrees to African-Americans in the 2004-2005 academic year. This year's ranking marked a rise from 32nd in 2003-2004. VSU also ranked highly in several disciplines in degrees awarded to minorities in general and African-Americans specifically.

The magazine ranked VSU 10th in granting bachelor's degrees in agriculture and related sciences to African-Americans and 22nd in granting bachelor's degrees in that area to minorities. VSU ranked 10th in granting bachelor's degrees in education to African-Americans

and 36th in granting bachelor's degrees in education to minorities.

VSU ranked 37th in granting bachelor's degrees in psychology to African-Americans; 41st in granting bachelor's degrees in social sciences and history to African-Americans; 41st in granting bachelor's degrees in biological and biomedical sciences to African-Americans; and 48th in granting bachelor's degrees in business, management and marketing to African-Americans.

For a complete listing of the rankings, visit <http://www.diverseeducation.com>.



Wondi Mersie (left) the Project Director from Virginia State University examines a parthenium flower. The plant can grow and complete its life cycle under various climatic conditions, allowing it to invade many parts of the world. Here it is flowering and setting seed in December when other plants will not be able to do so. This allows it to out compete and displace native plants, thus it is a threat to plant biodiversity.

Alumni: Be a Part of History!

As part of VSU's 125th Anniversary Celebration, we're seeking film or video of campus events from the 1940s to the present. If you have film or video of any campus event, including graduations, athletics, social functions, Homecoming or any other random campus scenes, we'd love to see it.

All video will be returned. Please send film or video to:

University Relations Office
202 Storum Hall
VSU
Petersburg, VA 23806

If we use your film or video, you will be listed as a contributor and will receive a complimentary copy of VSU's 125th Anniversary DVD.

For more information call (804) 524-5045 or email tereed@vsu.edu

VSU Awarded Competitive Research Grant

Virginia State University has received a four-year, \$520,000 Integrated Pest Management Collaborative Research Support Program (IPM CRSP) grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development to establish an integrated weed management system in Africa.

Dr. Wondi Mersie, associate director of research at VSU's Agricultural Research Station and the project's principal investigator, said the aim of the research project is to reduce the adverse impact of the weed parthenium on humans, crops, livestock and plants.

Parthenium is an invasive weed found in eastern and southern Africa that releases toxic chemicals harmful to other plants, some of which could be sources of valuable medicinal or industrial compounds, Mersie said.

This weed reduces the yield of all major crops, taints the milk and meat of domestic animals that consume it, and causes severe dermatitis and respiratory ailments in humans, he added.

VSU will serve as the lead institution, partnering with Virginia Tech and scientists from nine countries on the research project titled A Management of the Weed Parthenium in Eastern and Southern Africa Using Integrated Cultural and Biological Control Measures.

Research recommendations will be provided to small-scale African farmers for implementation.

For more information on the project, call Mersie at (804) 524-5819 or e-mail wmersie@vsu.edu.

VSU Board Honors L. Douglas Wilder With Building Name

Calling him “a great American with integrity who served his country with honor and distinction,” the Virginia State University Board of Visitors resolved to name the University’s Cooperative Extension Building The L. Douglas Wilder Building.

An official dedication ceremony was held Saturday, May 13 in conjunction with this year’s Commencement Weekend.

Mayor Wilder, though honored, said he was nevertheless humbled by the building bearing his name. “There are many hundreds of people, whose names you’ll never hear, who are responsible for the success of this University,” he said.

Mr. Wilder, who in 2004 was the first directly elected Mayor of Richmond in 60 years, has enjoyed a long and illustrious career in public service. Perhaps most historic was his election as Virginia’s Governor in 1989. Upon assuming this position, Mr. Wilder became the first elected African-American governor in U.S. history.

As Governor, Wilder redefined the role of VSU’s Board of Visitors and supported the hiring of President Eddie N. Moore, Jr. in 1993. These actions, said current Board Vice Rector Dr. Harold T. Green, Jr. led to a dramatic turnaround for a school that was undergoing financial and administrative upheaval. “This individual [Wilder] started a geometric progression that propelled VSU to greatness,” Dr. Green said during the dedication ceremony.

Mr. Wilder was first elected to public office after winning a 1969 special election to the Senate of Virginia, becoming the first African-American state Senator from Virginia since Reconstruction. In 1985, while still holding office in the state Senate, Senator Wilder was elected Lieutenant Governor of Virginia.

In the 1970s, Mr. Wilder taught as an adjunct faculty member in VSU’s political science department. He has twice delivered the University’s Commencement address, in 1983 and 1991. In 1991, Virginia State University bestowed upon Mr. Wilder an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

VSU Board of Visitors Rector Dr. Ronald C. Johnson said the decision to name the building after Mr. Wilder was an expression of “admiration and appreciation of his service and leadership to this Country, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and his ever continuous support of Virginia State University.”



Dignitaries (l to r) Dr. William E. Ward, Board of Visitors Secretary; Richmond Mayor L. Douglas Wilder; Board Rector Dr. Ronald C. Johnson; and Board member Dr. George Hampton celebrate the dedication of the L. Douglas Wilder Building.



Board Vice Rector Dr. Harold T. Green, Jr. joins Rector Johnson at a reception following the dedication of the Wilder Building.

This dedication marked the first during President Eddie N. Moore, Jr.’s 12-year tenure. The last building named at VSU was the M.T. Carter Building in 1990. That facility, also associated with VSU’s School of Agriculture, is used as a research facility.



VSU Researcher Receives Honorary Award

Dr. Steven Pao, food safety microbiologist in Virginia State University's Agricultural Research Station, recently received the President's Volunteer Service Award for his efforts to improve food and agricultural communities in Central America.

The honorary award was issued during National Volunteer Week in April on behalf of President Bush by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation.

"I was very surprised when I was informed that my outreach activities had been recognized by the president in such a way," said Pao. "My international experiences have been rewarding since I've been able to deliver knowledge to developing countries while becoming more enlightened on global food systems and agricultural needs."

In 2005, Pao lectured and provided practical training on food microbiology to quality assurance laboratory representatives from the government, universities and private companies in El Salvador.

That same year, he also visited Nicaragua where he worked closely with industry and regulatory laboratories, and lectured on laboratory certification programs at the University of Central America.

Previously, in 2002, Pao served as a technical consultant assigned to the Kano State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority in Nigeria where he conducted "train-the-trainer" microbiology and citrus processing workshops for extension agents.

A member of VSU's research faculty since 2002, Pao's responsibilities include developing basic and applied research in microbiology and food safety, food quality and food processing.

He earned his bachelor's degree in food and nutrition from the Chinese Culture University, and his master's and doctorate in food science from Ohio State University.



VSU Extension Specialist Receives Award



Barry W. Fox, 4-H marine/aquatic education extension specialist with Cooperative Extension at Virginia State University, has been selected as the 2006 recipient of the Thomas Jefferson Award for Outstanding Contributions to Natural Science Education by the Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation.

An affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, the Virginia Museum of Natural History seeks to increase understanding of, and appreciation for, the natural history of Virginia through education, research, collections, publications and exhibits.

The Thomas Jefferson Award is presented to a Virginia educator who has consistently made outstanding

contributions to natural history, environmental and science education in either the formal or non-formal sectors.

"I am honored to be recognized by my peers," Fox said. "This is a lifetime recognition and it certainly makes me feel that I have had measurable impact on the youth and adult educators I have served."

Fox served nine years as a classroom science teacher before joining Cooperative Extension at VSU. An extension specialist for the past 25 years, his focus has been on developing curricula and training teachers and extension agents in water resource education with emphases on water quality, watershed structure and function.

Fox said, "My goal has been to make learning enjoyable and help people relate to, and understand, the importance of a healthy environment."

A graduate of Old Dominion University, Fox earned his bachelor's degree in marine ecology. He holds a master's degree in freshwater marine ecology from VCU.

LIFTS PROGRAM OFFERS COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL AID

Program is first-of-its-kind among HBCUs

In a first-of-its-kind effort among state-supported, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Virginia State University is implementing a financial aid program that promises to meet 100 percent of a qualifying student's financial need. The Low Income Families with Talented Students (LIFTS) program will provide 75 percent of a student's need through scholarships and grants and limit debt through student loans to 25 percent of VSU's in-state cost of attendance over four years, regardless of state residency.

Students enrolling in the Fall 2006 semester are eligible to participate in the LIFTS program. To be eligible, a student's family income must be no more than twice the poverty guidelines set by the Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, VSU has set several academic criteria for students to meet in order to be eligible.

These are:

- Applicants must be selected as Presidential, Provost or University Scholars and participate in the VSU Honors Program or University Scholars Program;
- Applicants must meet certain deadlines for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA) and the VSU LIFTS Application. Both of these are available at www.vsu.edu;
- Applicants will be encouraged and assisted in obtaining outside scholarship assistance;
- New applicants or incoming freshmen must accept admission to VSU on or before June 1; and
- Renewal applicants must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA and earn at least 30 credit hours per academic year.

As a LIFTS participant, students will be enrolled in VSU's Honors Curriculum. Within this challenging area, students are provided the opportunity for academic enhancement and cultural enrichment. Honors students participate in a wide variety of on- and off-campus cultural activities and engage in challenging coursework.

According to VSU President Eddie N. Moore, Jr. the LIFTS program was developed in response to the increased competition for top students. "Other schools within Virginia have developed programs similar to LIFTS," he said, "but I can't recall another HBCU, particularly a state-supported HBCU, that has put into place such a far-reaching guarantee.

"The competition for top students has become very intense. We know we can provide the academic coursework these students desire, along with the unique experience of attending an HBCU. The LIFTS program makes us equally competitive in the financial aid we can offer to a talented student considering VSU."

Virginia State University estimates the LIFTS program will cost about \$732,000 in its first year and \$2.56 million over the program's first four years. Based on current figures, 30 percent of current Presidential, Provost and University scholars would be eligible for the LIFTS Program.

For more information on the LIFTS Program, contact VSU's Office of Student Financial Aid at (800) 823-7214 or at www.vsu.edu.

"The LIFTS Program makes us equally competitive in the financial aid we can offer to a talented student considering VSU"

President Eddie N. Moore, Jr.

Commencement 2006



The day began under bright, sunny skies, but ended in a burst of thunder, lightning and rain. But inclement weather did little to diminish the joy of nearly 600 graduates and a packed Rogers Stadium of families, friends and well-wishers.

Virginia State University's 2006 Commencement will long be remembered for the weather that transformed the stadium into a sea of orange ponchos, but also for the words of the day's speakers, especially Richmond Mayor L. Douglas Wilder.

Mayor Wilder acknowledged the historic climate in which the Class of 2006 matriculated. He urged the class to use the global events that occurred during their college careers to the benefit of mankind.



"Undoubtedly, during your years at VSU, the world has witnessed some of the most cataclysmic and devastating events of our lifetime — some of them visited upon us by Nature, but the most appalling of them inflicted by fellow human beings," he said. "Yet, in the midst of such chaos and calamity, we have been moved not only by acts of unparalleled bravery but also by simple, everyday acts of compassion."

As the first raindrops began to fall, Mayor Wilder urged the Class of 2006 to take control of their collective destinies. "Do not let others tell you the way the world is. Discover it for yourself. Do not let others characterize your generation. Define it for yourselves," he said. "If I impart any useful counsel to you, it would be this: Take care to meet the three essential duties that you have — a duty to yourself, to your family and to your community."

Also during Commencement, several alumni and faculty members were recognized. Mr. Clarence L. Sessoms of Norfolk, VA, was honored as Alumnus of the Year; The Hon. Rosalyn R. Dance '86 of Petersburg, VA, who represents Virginia's 63rd House District in the Virginia General Assembly, was awarded a Certificate of Merit; Dr. Michael S. Joshua, of Petersburg, VA was named Professor Emeritus; and Dr. Carey Stronach of Petersburg, VA was also named Professor Emeritus.







Governor Kaine Appoints 2003 Graduate as Latino Liaison

Benavides Reaches Out to the Growing Population

By Jamie Fleece

When searching for their first job, graduates are advised to follow their dreams, reach for the stars and find a job they love. Though cliché, this advice rang true for 2003 graduate Sindy Benavides, who followed her dreams, reached for the stars and has a job she loves assisting the Latino community in Virginia.

This year, at age 23, Sindy was appointed Deputy Director of Constituent Services and Latino Liaison in the Governor's Office. In this position, she provides outreach to Latinos statewide and educates them on available state services.

Sindy finished her bachelor's degree in three years, graduated class valedictorian and received her master's in international affairs from American University.

However, outreach to the Latino community did not begin with her recent appointment. She has been helping others since she was a youth—and in the most unsuspecting ways. "I remember helping people translate in the doctor's office or in the local Food Lion," recalls Sindy. "It was a small effort, but it really helps in a major way."

According to the 2004 U.S. Census, about 426,000 Latinos live in Virginia. Sindy believes not all know the issues facing them as working citizens.

"Knowledge is the key to Latino participation in the community," she contends. "Whether it's education or transportation, as US citizens, they need to be informed and know how to vote."

Teaching Latinos the importance of voting is a responsibility Sindy has taken on professionally and personally.

"Some [Latinos] come from countries where corruption is rampant in the government," she says. "They don't understand that here, their vote is important. It matters and it's their privilege."

During Gov. Kaine's campaign, Sindy provided outreach to the Latino community. "There were six staff members under my charge," Sindy says, thinking back on the campaign. "We would go door-to-door in heavily populated Latino neighborhoods, have community fairs and go on the radio. You name it. We did it. We found every way possible to inform Latinos on the issues and that Gov. Kaine had their best interests in mind."

For Sindy, it boils down to information. "Knowledge is power," she says. "It's redundant, but true. They need to know the facts, elect the best official and hold them accountable for making life better."

What inspires a young woman to care so much about her fellow man? To Sindy it's simple.

"I am inspired when I think my work makes a better life possible for others."

Sindy's family comes from humble beginnings in Honduras and that, she says, is her motivation.

"My mom was born in extreme poverty and is the first generation to come to the United States," Sindy says. "She managed to get a scholarship to become a nurse and owns her own house-cleaning company. She has achieved so much and never forgets where she comes from."

While idolizing her mother, Sindy now realizes she has become a role model to others. "I went to my

high school in Alexandria and spoke with some students there," she recalls. "Some of them don't have examples of Latinos who go to college. I am proof to them. If I can do it, they can do it."

Those who know Sindy, comment on her infectious smile. "I have a permanent smile on my face because I love what I do," she says. "I am happy to do this job. I think the old saying is true, 'find a job you love and you'll never work a day in your life.' What I do is my calling, not my job."



Sindy Benavides and Virginia Governor Tim Kaine

VSU Pays Tribute to a "True American Hero"



The Virginia State University Military Alumni and University administration paid tribute during Alumni Weekend to First Lieutenant Ruppert L. Sargent, who received the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery in Vietnam. Lt. Sargent was killed after throwing himself on an enemy grenade in 1967. His heroism saved the lives of men in his platoon. Sargent attended VSU

and was a member of the ROTC "Warrior Battalion."

In addressing Lt. Sargent's actions, Maj. Gen. W. Montague Winfield, also an alumnus of VSU's ROTC program, said "we will never know the thoughts going through Lt. Sargent's mind as he placed his soldiers' lives above his own, but I can't help believing it went back to the lessons he learned at VSU."

In recognition of the only VSU alumnus to have received the nation's highest military honor, a special display was unveiled on the first floor of Johnston Memorial Library. The display includes Lt. Sargent's commendation, photos of the Hampton, VA administrative building named in his honor and examples of Vietnam-era military uniforms.



Mrs. Clara Challenger and her son Alvin, sister and nephew of Lt. Ruppert Sargent, admire the display in Johnston Memorial Library honoring Lt. Sargent's heroism and Medal of Honor.



Alumnus of the Year Clarence Sessoms (center) is honored by Dr. H. Ray Davis and his daughter and VSU Board member Daun Hester during Alumni Weekend.

2006 Alumnus of the Year

Consistency is a true mark of dedication. It is evident of one's commitment and passion for a cause. Clarence Sessoms, 2006 Alumnus of the Year, has worked for his alma mater consistently and selflessly since matriculating in 1951, which is an indication of his loyalty to VSU.

"It is only fitting for Clarence to be recognized in this way," says Willis Gay, President of the Alumni Association. "He has supported VSU's Athletic Booster's Club, increased scholarship initiatives and helped grow alumni membership. We are proud of his commitment."

A modest and humble servant of Virginia State University, Mr. Sessoms is thrilled to receive this recognition. "Words can't explain how it feels to receive this honor," he says. "I love VSU and helping other people. I especially enjoy helping young people obtain a college education. So it's wonderful to be acknowledged for doing something I love that benefits others."

ALUMNI NEWS

50th Class Reaches Endowment Goal

Reaching the milestone of 50 years, the class of 1956 came together to remember the past and celebrate the future. Not only was the reunion a time to fellowship and reconnect with classmates and friends, it was an opportunity to commemorate an extraordinary accomplishment. The class of 1956 is the first class to contribute more than \$225,000 to its endowment fund.

Working tirelessly and giving unselfishly, the class achieved its goal and showed a tremendous loyalty to the University. "We are proud of our efforts," says class President, Mildred Johnson. "Raising this amount of money was not easy, but it was a joy. We want to make a college education possible for all students."

According to Mildred, nearly a quarter million dollars is only the beginning. "We aren't going to give up, we are only going to give more. Our work is motivation to keep going and aim higher. Let it also be a model for other classes. There is more work to be done for our alma mater."

The '56 Class Donors Plaque of 144 donors hangs on the wall in Storum Hall—the largest class endowment in VSU history.



Class of 1956 co-coordinators Dr. Mildred F. Johnson (left) and Ann C. Taylor present President Moore with a check representing the extraordinary gift toward the Class of 1956 endowment.

Chapter Gifts

Chapter	Other Gifts Given	New Gifts 7/1/06 thru 6/2/06	Endowment Status (original)	New Total
Agriculture Alumni	-	\$20,000.00	\$70,105.00	\$90,105.00
VSU Alphas	-	\$370.00	\$9,670.00	\$10,040.00
Baltimore Metro	-	\$1,200.00	\$7,975.00	\$9,175.00
Brunswick/Mecklenburg	\$1,000.00	-	-	\$1,000.00
Chicago Area	-	-	\$21,250.00	\$21,250.00
Columbia	-	-	\$4,549.02	\$4,549.02
Military	-	-	\$65,170.00	\$65,170.00
Greater New York	-	-	\$11,291.33	\$11,291.33
Peninsula Chapter	-	\$650.00	\$11,601.00	\$12,251.00
Greater Petersburg Area	-	\$5,000.00	\$44,000.00	\$49,000.00
Philadelphia	-	-	\$10,300.00	\$10,300.00
Northern VA Area	-	-	\$41,250.00	\$41,250.00
Richmond	-	\$2,220.00	\$27,081.83	\$29,301.83
Tidewater Area	-	\$5,125.00	\$61,880.41	\$67,005.41
Washington DC-Metro	\$1,375.00	\$5,000.00	\$31,500.00	\$36,500.00
Total	\$39,565.00	\$417,623.59	\$457,188.59	\$2,375.00

Class Endowments

Class Year	New Gifts 7/1/05 thru 6/30/06	Endowment Status (original)	New Total	Class Year	New Gifts 7/1/05 thru 6/30/06	Endowment Status (original)	New Total
1940	\$100.00	\$6,659.30	\$6,759.30	1960	-	\$6,400.00	\$6,400.00
1941	-	\$8,650.00	\$8,650.00	1961	\$17,725.00	\$13,676.80	\$31,401.80
1942	-	\$7,845.00	\$7,845.00	1962	\$4,904.86	\$22,174.43	\$27,079.29
1943	-	\$8,760.00	\$8,760.00	1963	-	\$4,300.00	\$4,300.00
1945	\$145.00	\$16,200.00	\$16,345.00	1964	\$250.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,250.00
1946	\$5,725.00	\$5,450.00	\$11,175.00	1965	\$3,979.00	\$32,009.86	\$35,988.86
1947	-	\$21,344.00	\$21,344.00	1966	\$18,955.01	\$9,519.00	\$28,474.01
1948	-	\$35,602.00	\$35,602.00	1968	-	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00
1949	-	\$42,740.00	\$42,740.00	1970	-	\$8,047.50	\$8,047.50
1950	\$500.00	\$22,977.50	\$23,477.50	1971	\$6,850.00	\$100.00	\$6,950.00
1951	\$18,935.39	\$48,045.00	\$66,980.39	1975	-	\$10,150.00	\$10,150.00
1952	\$600.00	\$50,815.00	\$51,415.00	1976	\$7,525.00	-	\$7,525.00
1953	\$200.00	\$10,400.00	\$10,600.00	1977	-	\$4,554.00	\$4,554.00
1954	-	\$35,850.00	\$35,850.00	1980	-	\$2,140.00	\$2,140.00
1955	\$10,050.00	\$50,810.00	\$60,860.00	1981	\$2,200.00	-	\$2,200.00
1956	\$55,302.87	\$168,554.22	\$223,857.09	1991	\$1,250.00	-	\$1,250.00
1957	\$5,200.00	\$42,606.00	\$47,806.00	1996	\$475.00	-	\$475.00
1958	\$300.00	\$1,600.00	\$1,900.00	2000	-	\$225.00	\$225.00
1959	-	\$27,400.00	\$27,400.00	2001	\$550.00		\$550.00
				TOTAL	\$161,722.13	\$727,854.63	\$889,576.76

SAVE THE DATE:

Friday, September 29, 2006
8– 11 p.m., Front lawn of Virginia Hall



“Jazz on the Hill” returns for Homecoming featuring saxophonist & VSU Alumnus James “Saxsmo” Gates. For more information go to the Alumni Page at www.vsu.edu, or contact the Office of Alumni Relations at alumni@vsu.edu.

Tickets go on sale August 1. Limited seating will be available.

ALUMNI NOTES

Ceola Wright '55 of Louisa has been named among the nation's Poets of the Year for her poem *A Psalm of My Life*. The poem has been published in *Great Poems of the Western World*, produced by the Famous Poets Press of Oregon.



Arthur C. Dawkins, Ph.D. '56 was recently honored with a tribute concert in recognition of his 30-year career as director of Howard University's Jazz Studies. Under Dr. Dawkins' leadership, Howard's Jazz Studies achieved academic credibility and emerged as an incubator for world-class practitioners of the art form.

Wilhelmina Santiful '56 has joined the *Fluvanna Review* as a monthly contributor. She will write on Fluvanna County people and places.



Willie Wright '59 recently completed a 99-day voyage around the world with the University of Pittsburgh Semester at Sea Program. The program involved 700 college students on 24,710-mile journey that visited Nassau, Venezuela, Brazil, South Africa, Mauritius, India, Burma, Vietnam, China, Japan and Hawaii.

Distinguished Professor Emeritus **Dr. Bryant N. Wyatt '59** of Petersburg is featured in the 60th Diamond Edition of *Who's Who in America*. Dr. Wyatt is also profiled in the 2006 edition of *Who's Who in American Education*.

Ed Carter '62 was recently profiled in the Greenville, NC *Daily Reflector*. Carter was the first black mayor of Greenville and has served on both the city council and school boards. He has continued to be active civil rights, especially as a member of the Pitt County branch of the NAACP.



Blanche D. Maness '65 was recently elected to the Alexandria School Board, District C, for a term July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2009. Ms. Maness is a retired school principal in the Alexandria School District. In 1996, she received the

Distinguished Educational Leadership Award from the *Washington Post*.

The Virginia State Bar recently honored **David P. Baugh '71** with the Lewis F. Powell Jr. Pro Bono Award. Baugh was selected for his representation of First Amendment cases, his work with indigent clients and for teaching other criminal defense attorneys.

Larry Lewis '71 recently retired as principal of Jouett Elementary School in Louisa. He had been the only black principal in the Louisa County School System. Lewis also serves as Associate Minister of First Baptist Church and is pursuing a master of divinity degree from Virginia Union University.

Maryland Governor Robert Ehrlich recently appointed **Ms. Merlyn Mayo Bell '72**, treasurer of the Baltimore-Metro Chapter of the VSU Alumni Association, to the Board of Professional Standards and Teacher Education for the state of Maryland.

Robert Allen Dock '77 was appointed to the Board of Directors of the prestigious Friends and Relatives of Institutionalized Aged, Inc. (FRIA) to a three-year term. Robert is only the second black, as well as the first black male, to ever serve in this capacity during organization's 30 year history. FRIA is dedicated to promoting the dignity and independence of seniors in long term settings, with special emphasis on those in residential facilities and ensuring their prompt, high quality and compassionate care.

The Charlottesville school system recently named **Rosa S. Atkins '78, '90** as superintendent. In this role, she will oversee all administrative functions of that city's elementary, middle and high schools and lead the system as it embarks upon a five-year strategic plan.

The Harrisburg, PA *Sunday Patriot News* recently profiled **Fred Humphrey '80** as an African American Making a Difference. Humphrey is an agent with RE/MAX Realty Professionals of Lower Paxton Township and President of the Greater Harrisburg Association of Realtors.

Tony Leon Powell '80 recently released his first book, *The Race of the Century: A Case Study of Harvey Gantt and Jesse Helms*. The book examines southern politics as it relates specifically to North Carolina's powerful political figures. The book also examines the role of media in terms of history, and its coverage of Harvey Gantt, an African American, with roots in South Carolina, not North Carolina.

Gracie B. Quarles '80 was recently named Louisa County Middle School Educator of the Year. She is a veteran educator and also was named Family, Careers and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) advisor throughout the state of Virginia. Her local FCCLA club has earned numerous state and national awards, including the 2006 National Families First Middle School Award.



J. Otis Harris, Jr. '83, '86: Is the recipient of the "Most Outstanding Educator of the Year" award from Prince George's County, MD. Mr. Harris received his award at an employee recognition dinner held on May 17 at Martin's Crosswinds in Greenbelt, MD. A music teacher and mentoring

coordinator at Martin L. King Middle School in Beltsville, MD, Harris is former National Alumni President of VSUAA and former president of the VSUAA-Washington, DC Chapter.



Shereé M. Johnson, PhD '92 is pursuing collaborative research interests as a Visiting Assistant Professor/Research Associate in the Department of Neurology at Yale University, College of Medicine in New Haven, CT. She is in the midst of a five-year grant award (September 2004-

August 2009) from the NIH, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke totaling \$720,889 in research funding and is principal investigator of a study entitled *CO₂/H⁺ Modulation of Rhythmogenic Inspiratory Neurons*. Data obtained from this investigation will answer fundamental questions related to neurochemical regulation of breathing and reveal how dysfunction of a critical population of neurons may lead to pathological conditions such as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and other respiratory disorders.



Donald Curry '94, owner of The Negro League Café, at 301 E. 43rd St. in Manhattan said he got the idea in July 1996 after he attended a Negro League night in Chicago and noticed the amazingly long line of people waiting to see these former greats. "There were about four players there. It struck me as pretty interesting how their love for

baseball caused them to stand in this line, but also the pure delight of meeting these players," Curry recalls. "It hit me that if they were interested in standing in these long lines to get their autographs, they would be willing to pay to patronize a restaurant with a theme revolving around Negro League players." And after some going back and forth, The Negro League Café opened to throngs of fans on July 29, 2004.



Nolan V. Rollins '94 is the senior Vice President of Economic and Community Development for the Greater Baltimore Urban League (GBUL), where he oversees all social entrepreneurial, business and community development projects. Prior to joining GBUL Mr. Rollins worked for the

Department of Public Safety and the Baltimore City States Attorneys Office.

Trina A. Francis '96 was recently selected to be a national spokesmodel for Ebony Secret Miracle Skin Conditioner. Miss Francis will represent the product in the national product launch. Ebony Secret Miracle Skin Conditioner is an all-natural skin toner and conditioner that helps reduce many unwanted skin conditions.

Sherida Gholson, '96, '98 has been named Director of Student Support Services at Halifax (NC) Community College. The SSS program provides tutoring, counseling, mentoring, college transfer advising and visitation, the laptop loan program and financial services to qualified participants.

Jame'l Hodges '97 has been accepted to the University of Southern California's Doctor of Education program in the Rossier School of Education. Hodges, along with several other members of the fraternity, recently represented Alpha Phi Alpha in a nationally televised "Step" performance highlighting the Fraternity's Centennial. He is the Coordinator of Greek Life and Education at California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, CA.

LaShawn Harris MA '99, a doctoral candidate at Howard University, has been awarded a research fellowship by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Harris will conduct research at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Her project title is "Beyond Responsibility: The Remaking of Black Women's Activism, 1900-1950."

Daniel Ben-Yisrael '00 has been named City Planner for Goose Creek, SC.

Tasha Stevens '00 was recently featured in the *Lewes, DE Cape Gazette*. Stevens, an attorney in, and native of, Sussex County, DE is a criminal defense attorney specializing in misdemeanor cases. She also handles occasional cases as public defender.

Pervis O. Blake '03 recently sang in three productions of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* as part of the Amalfi Music Festival in Naples, Italy.

Rhonda L. Myrks '06 recently received her degree in Independent Studies and retired from the U.S. Army. She is employed by the Division of Public Works and Logistics in the Family Housing Office at Fort Lee, VA.

The Zion Baptist Church family recognized **Lula Divers** as the church's Alumnus of the Year at this year's VSU Day service. Mrs. Divers received a certificate of appreciation for outstanding contributions and dedicated service, along with a standing ovation from church members.

CHAPTER NEWS

Members of the **Agriculture Alumni** Chapter and friends of Virginia State University were recognized for their leadership in presenting more than \$3,000 in scholarships to Agricultural students at their 24th Annual Recognition Banquet held in Jones Dining Hall. Dr. Alma Hobbs, Dean of the School of Agriculture, gave the keynote address at the event. Special awards were presented to Vernon Heath '72, Jimmy Mullins '90 and VSU Professor Dr. Michael Joshua.

More than 150 alumni and friends gathered for the **Baltimore-Metro** Chapter's Annual Scholarship Dinner-Dance at the Forum in Baltimore. The event supported the chapter's scholarship fund, which provides financial support to students from the Baltimore area who attend VSU

The Greater New York Chapter hosted the Virginia State University Gospel Chorale with a Midnight Buffet on April 1. The choir had performed under the direction of James Holden, Jr., at the National Black Music Caucus Gospel Choir Competition, which was held at the New York City Technical College in Brooklyn.



The **VSUAA Human Ecology** Chapter hosted a "Tips for Healthy Living" Workshop in April featuring VSU alumna Dr. Rovenia Brock '81. "Dr. Ro" inspired the audience by sharing her personal story and encouraging audience members to

make healthy lifestyle decisions. Dr. Ro is a renowned nutritionist and author of *Dr. Ro's Ten Secrets to Livin' Healthy*. She has been featured on BET, The Today Show, CNN, MSNBC and NPR.

The **Louisa County** Chapter celebrated its annual Black History program at First Baptist Church in Louisa. The program, "Celebrating Our Glorious Heritage," included six gospel groups in a joint musical extravaganza. Proceeds benefited the chapter's scholarship fund, which provides awards to local students attending VSU. The Louisa Chapter also presented a gift of \$250 to VSU's 2005-06 Annual Fund.

The **Northern Virginia** Chapter has established a partnership with Saint Mary's Catholic Church and its annual raffle. The chapter's Scholarship Fund realized 60 percent of the sales proceeds. In May the chapter honored outgoing President Paul Garner, outgoing Board Representative Anita Jackson and recognized Shirley Alexander, recipient of the President's Award 2006. The Northern Virginia Chapter will hold its Fourth Annual Fall Scholarship Dinner Dance and Show, featuring "BAK N DA DAY" on Nov. 18 at the Fort Myer Spates Center in Arlington, VA. For ticket information, contact Valarie A. Jones at vsuwig70@aol.com.

In April, the **Richmond** Chapter joined the Fourth Baptist Church of Richmond's Music Ministry in sponsoring a fundraiser to benefit the University's Concert Choir. The event, "Music and the Arts in our Schools and Community," featured VSU's Concert Choir, a brass band from the United House of Prayer, Fairfield Middle School Gospel Choir and the Carla Lightfoot Praise Dancers. Through the generosity of the Richmond Chapter and Fourth Baptist Church, a substantial donation was presented to the Choir.

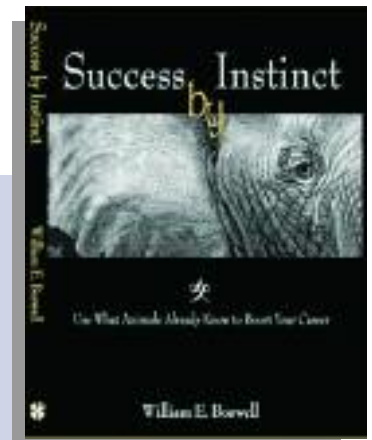
Congratulations to the following newly elected 2006-2008 VSU Alumni Association Executive Board:

President:	Charlyne Jackson-Fields '73, Greater Fredericksburg, VA	Financial Secretary:	Rachel Hamilton '65, Dinwiddie County
Vice President:	Keith Yancey '83, Washington, DC Metro	Chaplain:	Goldie Miles '62, Peninsula, VA
Recording Secretary:	Irene F. Logan '75, Military Alumni	Parliamentarian:	Valarie Jones '70, Northern Virginia
Corresponding Secretary: ..	Starrie Jordan '81, Greater Petersburg	Immediate Past President: ..	Willis Gay '63, Columbia, MD
Treasurer:	Yvette Robinson '72, Agriculture Alumni		

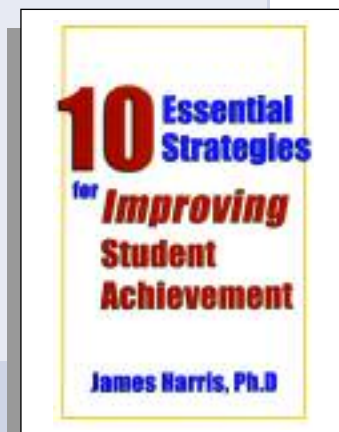
Alumni Authors

Four VSU alumni have recently published books on topics as diverse as business principles, educating today's youth, money management for African Americans and a memoir recounting the civil rights struggles of the early 1960s.

Success By Instinct – Use What Animals Already Know to Boost Your Career by **William Boswell '68** identifies 14 principles for success and emphasizes the instincts of animals to explore them. It is directed at career minded professionals who seek success in all types of organizations. Boswell's practical approach to success is based on 32 years of experience as a senior corporate executive and four years as a senior appointed government official. The book, published by Brown Books, is available at www.brownbooks.com or www.successbyinstinct.com.

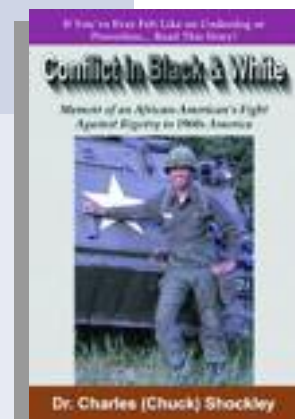


Education is the key to achieving the American Dream. Only when adults get serious about fulfilling their responsibilities to the students in our schools, will this dream be fully realized. In *10 Essential Strategies for Improving Student Achievement*, **James Harris, Ph.D. '69** presents the unique concepts that hold adults responsible for 10 fundamental areas to foster high student achievement. His concepts are based on decades of personal and practical experiences. Harris has been a leader in education, as a teacher, principal and superintendent for four school districts. *10 Essential Strategies...* can be ordered at www.amcanpublishing.com.



Bryant Murphy '85 offers "secrets schools don't teach" in *Black Money Power*. These secrets include: The six things you need for success; How people's shopping can make you a fortune; How to REALLY choose an advisor; and Why most people end up broke by age 65. The book is available for \$24.95 (plus \$2 s&h) at NBG; 219-24 138th Rd.; Laurelton, NY 11413.

Dr. Charles (Chuck) Shockley is a 1961 graduate of Virginia State College/University. In 1960, as president of the college chapter of the NAACP, he was involved in sit-in protests in Petersburg. In 1962, as a VSC ROTC graduate, he was in the middle of a race riot in downtown Oxford, MS when James Meredith integrated the University of Mississippi. *Conflict In Black & White* deals with Shockley's civil rights activities at the school and paints a picture of life in and around campus and in America at that time. The book is available at www.bbotw.com.



PASSINGS

VSU Deceased Alumni, Students, Faculty, and Staff

Clyde E. Bailey, Sr.
1969 BS; 1973 MS
Fairport, NY

Luke T. Baugh
Former Staff
Petersburg

Gerald Benson
1961, Track Star
Pittsburgh, PA

Herbert E. Bowen
1940s
Baltimore, MD

Lloyd L. Boxley, Sr.
1947
Bowling Green

Michael A. Branch
1987
Richmond

John M. Brickell, Sr.
Retired Staff
Petersburg

Shirley Watlington Brooks
1958
Temple Hills, MD

Milton L. Brown
Former Staff
Petersburg

Paul Walton Buford
1940s
Petersburg

Anna Plowden Burrell, RN
Florence, SC

David A. Carter
MEd
Petersburg

Doris Quarles Carter
MEd
Petersburg

Ella W. Clark
Former Staff/Library
Fairfax

**Eleanor Boone
Wilson Clark**
1955, BS

Jarlene S. Clayton
1997, MEd
Glen Allen

William D. Cosby, Sr.
1957, MA
Glen Allen

Rebecca W. Cunningham
1977, BS; 1979 MEd
Ettrick

Viola Walker Cutler, Age 93
1920s-30s, Bachelor's
Norfolk

**Florence Mildred
Dandridge**

Susie B. Darden
Faculty
Richmond

Robert E. Davis
Master's
Petersburg

Shirley B. Dillard
1960s, BS
Temple Hills, MD

Dr. Conway Downing, Sr.
1940
Newport News

Annie M. E. English
Capitol Heights, MD

Mary Frances Fairfax
Harrisonburg

John J. Farmer
1990s
Petersburg

Edward A. Hailes, Sr.
1947
Washington, DC

Margaret Spencer Hall
1945
Atlanta, GA

John W. Hardie
1993, MEd
Chester

Cynthia Michelle Harmon
1991
Dover, DE

Leonard G. Harris
1980s, Basketball Star, Pro
Hopewell

Gwendolyn Harrison
1967
Alexandria

Valarie M. Hundley
2004-05
Petersburg

Alice A. Jackson, Age 98
1920s, Virginia Normal,
Ret. Staff
Winston-Salem, NC

James L. Jackson, Jr.
Richmond

John T. Jones, Jr.
Former Staff
Petersburg

Ossie E. Jones
1960s-70s
Hopewell

**LTC. (Retired)
William D. Joyner**
1954, BS
Virginia Beach

John W. Kain
1957, Barbering
Ettrick

Allen "Billy" Knight, Jr
1940s
Richmond

Dr. Cornelius "CC" Lewis
1946
Chesterfield County

Dr. Robert C. Long
Former Faculty, Master
Tenor
Methuen, MA

**Gwendolyn Spencer
Lovelace**
1947, BS
Danville

Walter L. Lovett, Jr.
1960s-70s
Hampton
(Son of Coach &
Mrs. W. Lovett)

Vinetta O. Marecheau
Petersburg

Leroy T. McAllister, Sr.
1947, Former President,
VSUAA Aylett

Velma B. Miller
1971, BS
Petersburg

Virginia D. Miller
1946 BS, 1953, MS;
Retired Faculty
New York, NY

Dr. M. Hadi Moadab
Dean
Colonial Heights

Julia Watkins Moore
Retired Nurse
Prince George

Maggie S. Nelson
1940s BS; MEd
Petersburg

Carl B. Newsome, Esq.
1955
Petersburg

Margaret T. Nicholas
1940s-50s
Petersburg

Deanna Northern Pazant
1960

Dernell Pierce
1999
Richmond

Joan Winston Prescott
1953
Hampton

Joseph P. Press
1950
Baltimore, MD

Mona J. Richie
1942, MS
Dinwiddie

Lester C. Riddick
1967
Baltimore, MD

Fleming Rose, Jr.
1970s
Petersburg

Bertha Turner Sapp,
Age 103
Petersburg

Lillian H. Scott
Staff
Petersburg

Barbara J. Setzer
1950s
Petersburg

Louise E. Shands
Retired Staff
Petersburg

Frances Turner Smith
1942, BS; 1972, MA
Colonial Heights

**Dr. Viola Patricia Elizabeth
Stallings**
1968, BA
Norfolk

George Tate
1960s
Petersburg

Gladys M. Tyler
Retired Staff
Hopewell

James L. Tyler
1960s
Richmond

Jawan Townes-Tyree
1994
Glen Allen

William Washington
1961
West Orange, NJ

Vivian A. Webster
1940s-50s
Petersburg

Roosevelt Wilkins
1970s
Richmond

Frederick M. Williams, Sr.
Trenton, NJ

Glenda Stokes-Wyche
1970s
Prince George

Josh J. Wyche
Former Staff
Petersburg

ATHLETICS

VSU 2006 Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Site	Time
Sept. 2	Norfolk State University	Norfolk, VA	6:00 p.m.
Sept. 9	St. Augustine's College (Faculty/Staff & Military Appreciation)	Petersburg, VA	6:00 p.m.
Sept. 16	Catawba College	Salisbury, NC	6:00 p.m.
Sept. 23	Carson Newman College	Petersburg, VA	3:00 p.m.
Sept. 30	Fayetteville State University Homecoming 2006	Petersburg, VA	1:30 p.m.
Oct. 7	Elizabeth City State University	Elizabeth City, NC	1:30 p.m.
Oct. 14	St. Paul's College	Lawrenceville, VA	TBA
Oct. 21	Virginia Union University	Richmond, VA	1:30 p.m.
Oct. 28	Shaw University Senior Day/Open House/Family Day	Petersburg, VA	1:30 p.m.
Nov. 4	Bowie State University	Bowie, MD	1:00 p.m.

Trojan Guard Excels On, Off the Court

By Jamie Fleece

College students constantly try to master the art of time management. They juggle classes, jobs, student organizations and occasional road-trips with friends.

The task is even more challenging for student-athletes. For them, meeting with the coach replaces hanging out with friends, studying for class is coupled with remembering game plays and road trips are called away games.

For Virginia State University guard Mark Adams, the challenges of being a student-athlete are even greater. He isn't just a student; he's a graduate student. He's not just an athlete. He's a single parent.

Mark, a Richmond-native, started his college basketball career at Virginia Commonwealth University. However, after two years at VCU and changes to the coaching staff, he decided to transfer to Virginia State.

"I was excited about playing at VSU," Mark says. "Lamar Taylor, a good friend, was an assistant coach at the time. Transferring was a great opportunity for me to work with him and grow as a player."

Around the same time, Mark made another huge decision for his life. In 2002, he took custody of his son, Sincere. "When I decided to take custody of my son, I knew it would be a huge responsibility," Mark recalls. "But it was a welcomed one. I was thrilled to have him closer to me."

Mark credits his mother, who helps him raise Sincere. "My mom is the greatest woman ever," he says proudly. "I am able to be a good father because she is such a good mother and grandmother."

Mark's time at VSU has been one of extraordinary growth and self-discipline. "I had to be even more

mature than my friends," he admits. "My life was going in a more adult direction."

As a senior, Mark learned to adjust to life's changes. He adapted to a new school and raising his son. What he didn't know is that more change was waiting right around the corner.

In 2005, VSU announced a change in its basketball coaching staff, hiring Tony Collins as head coach.

"I've seen my share of coaches," laughs Adams. "I've learned how to adjust. Coach Collins is a great coach. In some ways, I wish I had him sooner. He has taught me a new level of discipline."

What proves to be remarkable is Mark's attitude through it all. "It may seem like a lot," Mark says. "But anything that doesn't break me makes me stronger and better."



MAJOR GIFTS IN SUPPORT OF EXCELLENCE

A number of companies and alumni have recently made major gifts to Virginia State University. These gifts recognize the University's excellence and support its ability to recruit and retain top students in diverse areas of study.

If you or your company are interested in learning more about VSU's Major or Planned Giving opportunities, please contact the Development Office at (804) 524-6986.

Dr. Roland Delano Rinsland Endowed Scholarship Fund

Dr. Rinsland earned a bachelor's degree from VSU in 1954. He went on to a distinguished career as an administrator at Columbia University. Proceeds from this bequest of \$260,898 will provide scholarships to students who demonstrate the strongest financial need and best exemplify the qualities of leadership and/or sportsmanship and community service. Preference is given to students majoring in history.

ITT Industries Scholarship

ITT Industries, Inc., a global engineering and manufacturing company has donated \$110,000 toward a \$160,000 pledge to Virginia State University. The ITT Industries Scholarship Fund will provide financial awards to VSU business or science majors. ITT Industries is the world's premier supplier of pumps, systems and services to move, control and treat water and other fluids. The company is a major supplier of sophisticated military defense systems, and provides advanced technical and operational services to a broad range of government agencies. ITT Industries also produces connectors, switches, keypads and cabling used in telecommunications, computing, aerospace and industrial applications, as well as network services.

Catherine McGuire Harris Memorial Endowed Scholarship Fund Webster L. Harris Scholarship Fund

These funds, together totaling more than \$118,000 were established under the provisions of the estate of Mr. Webster L. Harris, a prominent citizen of Fredericksburg, VA. They are unique in that proceeds are generated through both cash and property. Scholarships granted through these endowed scholarships will be provided to VSU students who maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average, regardless of discipline of study.

Rheba Tinsley Smithea Endowment

Through a gift of \$89,050, Room 106 in the Hunter McDaniel Building has been named the Rheba Tinsley Smithea Laboratory. Ms. Tinsley was the first female physics graduate of VSU, receiving a bachelor's degree in 1947. She enjoyed a distinguished career as a scientist and scientific textbook editor. Her husband, Dr. W. Ramon Smithea, also is a VSU alumnus, earning a bachelor's degree in psychology in 1949. Proceeds from the Smithea Endowment will be used to provide scholarships to students majoring in physics or chemistry.

William E. and Audrey W. Brooks Memorial Endowed Fund

Local businessman, entrepreneur and Tuskegee Airman William E. Brooks recently gave \$10,000 to VSU to establish the William E. and Audrey W. Brooks Memorial Endowed Fund. Mrs. Brooks earned her Master's degree at Virginia State University in 1940 and later taught education courses at VSU. She also was a counselor and teacher at Carver High School in Chesterfield County and sponsored a young women's club in Chesterfield County. Both Mr. and Mrs. Brooks were members of St. Stephens Church in Petersburg.

Mary Duncan Rose Scholarship Endowment

Through an initial gift of \$10,000, Mary Rose has established the Mary Duncan Rose Scholarship Endowment in the Virginia State University Foundation. Mary Duncan Rose was the second and youngest daughter of the late Samuel and Helen Duncan of Petersburg, Virginia. She attended the public schools of Petersburg and Newport News, VA. Following her older sister, Deloris, to Virginia State College, Mary matriculated here from 1959-1963. While at VSC, she studied diligently, made many friends, sang and traveled with the Virginia State College Concert Choir. Mrs. Rose worked as an educator in the Petersburg School System from 1963 to 1988, holding various supervisory positions and retiring as an assistant principal after 25 years.

Lucille Virginia Olds Reference Desk.

Upon receiving Board of Visitors approval in August 2006, and by a generous gift from distinguished alumnae Lucille Olds, the reference desk in Hugo Johnston Memorial Library will henceforth be named, and a permanent marker affixed to, the Lucille Virginia Olds Reference Desk. Proceeds from the naming opportunity will be used to also establish an endowment fund in her name, which will benefit library science majors. Education was a big part of the Olds family. One of seven siblings, Miss Olds and her four sisters all received degrees from Virginia State College, while her two brothers earned degrees at North Carolina A&T. Miss Olds received her BA and MA in History from Virginia State College in 1943 and 1950. She was the VSU Alumnus of the Year in 2003 and was also honored that year as Distinguished Alumnae by the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO). Together with her siblings, Miss Olds has also established memorial scholarships honoring her parents as well as their sister, Emma Olds Brooks. VSU is quite proud to count Miss Lucille Virginia Olds among our most loyal daughters.

Correction: In the last issue's Honor Roll of Donors, the contributors to the Loretta and Harold Braxton Endowed Fund were incorrectly listed. The fund's namesakes are the correct donors. We apologize for the error.

continued on page 26

2007 Tuition Assistance Fund Drive

Every student deserves the opportunity to succeed academically, free from the worry of financial restrictions brought on by limited funds. The Tuition Assistance Fund provides immediate direct aid to students with the greatest financial need, which is why your support is crucial to our efforts to raise \$50,000 by September 30. Your gift of \$100 will provide about 60 percent of the cost for an in-state student and 40 percent for an out-of-state student per one-credit hour. However, no matter the size, every gift is appreciated and will help a student achieve their dream of a college education. Please make your check payable to Virginia State University and write Tuition Assistance Fund in the memo section. You may donate online at www.vsu.edu. Click *donate online*, complete the form, select *General Scholarships* and the select *Tuition Assistance Fund*.



Presidential Scholarship recipient, Makena Hammond, '06, and donor, Jimmy Steverson, '65 spoke as part of the First Scholarship Luncheon. More than 120 scholarship donors and student recipients attended what will become an annual event.

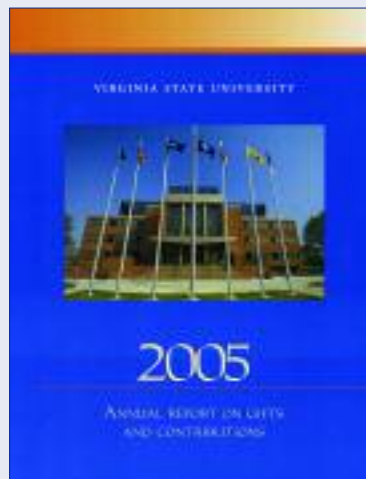
Powell Society Holds First Induction Ceremony and Dinner



Dr. W. Ramon Smithea, '49, and Assistant VP for Development Joy Haliburton were among 160 donors and University Administrators who attended. Members of the Powell Society received special recognition from President Eddie N. Moore, Jr. The Powell Society, named in honor of Dr. Clilan B.

Powell, '13, and his wife, Lena Dukes Powell, recognizes individuals who have made planned gift provisions for Virginia State University. Together, the Powells bequeathed more than \$1 million to Virginia State. If you have made provisions for Virginia State with a will, life insurance or retirement plan beneficiary designation, or other planned gift arrangement, please contact the Office of Development (804) 524-6856 or develop@vsu.edu to let us know and we will include you among the distinguished list of Powell Society members. For more information on planned gifts to VSU, please contact Steven Ward, Development Officer, at (804) 524-5976 or saward@vsu.edu.

Development Publishes First Report on Gifts & Contributions



The report chronicles contributions to VSU in fiscal year 2004-2005. We extend thanks to every donor for your financial support of Virginia State University. Your strategic investment not only assists today but ensures the excellence to which we aspire tomorrow. The Second Annual Report on Gifts to VSU will be published in November 2006 and include the FY 2006 Honor Roll of Donors.

GIFTS continued from page 25



Rosalin Reid Short Endowed Scholarship Fund

Lt. Gen (ret.) Alonzo E. Short, Jr. recently established an endowed scholarship in loving memory of his wife, Rosalin Cleola Reid Short. Mrs. Short received a bachelor's degree in business education from VSU in 1962. General Short also received his undergraduate degree from the University. Through the proceeds generated from this gift, scholarships will be given, in the name of Rosalin Reid Short, to students majoring in business who achieve and maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average.

Homecoming 2006

Fun • Football • Fellowship

Come Back to The Hill for Homecoming 2006

Friday, Sept. 29

8 am: 12th Annual Presidential Scholarship
Golf Tournament
The Highlands Golfer's Club

8 – 11 pm: Jazz On The Hill, Featuring
James "Saxmo" Gates
Virginia Hall Lawn

Saturday, Sept. 30

9 am: Homecoming Parade
Downtown Petersburg to campus

Annual Homecoming Step Show
time tba: *Daniel Gym*

10 am: Vendors Bazaar
University Avenue

1:30 pm: Homecoming Football Game vs.
Fayetteville State University
Rogers Stadium



For information on these events, contact the VSU Alumni Affairs Office (804) 524-6935



ALUMNI WEEKEND 2006

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