

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS



VSU Goes Global

From the Editor

Upon opening its doors nearly 125 years ago, Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute enrolled 62 students. Two-thirds of the initial class journeyed only as far as across the Appomattox from Petersburg. Only one came from outside of Virginia.

Things have certainly changed. Today, Virginia State University is a truly global institution whose mission of scholarship, research and outreach profoundly enriches not only the livelihoods, but lives, of neighbors across the river, across the country and across the globe.

This issue of VSU Magazine examines the many ways our University is enriched, as it enriches, through its involvement on the World Stage. This year, students from more than 20 countries have matriculated to VSU. One of these, Adorna Hayward, literally bowled over the CIAA on her way to becoming one of the conference's top keglers. Adorna further expanded her international credentials by engaging in a study abroad program, with other hospitality management students.

Before graduating in May, Lieutenant Rymingtahn Reese experienced an internship that few students can boast. She led a platoon and supervised vehicle and artillery maintenance in Korea.

Not to be outdone by their students, members of the VSU faculty shared and gained international perspectives to share with their classes. Dr. Sheikh Kamarah was chosen as one of only 35 scholars worldwide to participate in this year's prestigious Oxford Round Table. Dance professor Dr. Benita Brown visited Ghana to discuss African Dance and its influences on Western culture.

Even President Eddie N. Moore, Jr. got into the globetrotting spirit. In the fall, he traveled to Ethiopia with Vice President for Development Robert L. Turner, Jr. and faculty researcher Wondi Mersie. There, President Moore reviewed life-saving research projects led by VSU and signed agreements to further share resources with Ethiopian universities.

It's this spirit of cooperation that will lead Virginia State University's global journey. The Internet can easily link Ettrick with Addis Ababa and tomorrow's classroom might just as easily be in Cairo than Colson.

Finally, out of nearly 350 Fall Commencement graduates, we salute Dr. Michelle R. Belle of Cumberland, VA who received her Doctorate (Ed.D.) in Education Administration. Dr. Belle is the first terminal degree alumnus in VSU's illustrious history, marking another milestone in the evolution of this great school from one that served students primarily from across the river to one that, today, knows no global limitations.

Thomas Reed
Editor

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Ranger Challenge Team Captures Victory

Each year, the Eastern Region (ROTC) 4th Brigade Ranger Challenge competition provides promising ROTC cadets with a chance to test their mettle. This year's event was held at Fort Pickett, VA, pitting 21 Virginia and North Carolina colleges and universities in a competition aimed at fostering skills, and camaraderie, while testing individuals' leadership and group abilities. Virginia State University's ROTC Ranger Challenge team proved they are on their way to becoming the soldiers that make us proud each day.

Led by team captain Darcelle Fielder, a senior BIS major, specializing in criminal justice, VSU's Ranger Challenge Team braved the two day competition through injury and extreme weather to capture the gold streamer, the highest level award presented, and a first in VSU's 47-year ROTC history. The VSU team ranked first among the competing HBCUs and placed among the top five overall, beating out larger schools such as Duke, UVa, Virginia Tech, Wake Forest and ODU.

The Ranger Challenge plays an important role in furthering a cadet's development as

leaders and future Army officers. "We are able to attack any challenge. It's all in your frame of mind and dedication," Fielder says. "This Challenge, the training, the regimen, allows you to learn a lot about yourself and your strengths and weaknesses." Fielder says the victory reinforces the cadets' sense of pride, togetherness and confidence, not only in the ROTC, but in their personal lives as well.

However, the focus is less about individual achievement than team success. The Ranger Challenge events include the Army physical fitness test, basic rifle marksmanship, construction and execution of a one-rope bridge, patrolling, weapons assembly, orienteering, hand grenade assault course and a 10K road march.



Cadets negotiate a 100-yard obstacle course, over which they had to transport a 100 lb mannequin, simulating a wounded soldier. Pictured climbing the logs are Cadets Regina Lewis and Lemja Allen. Slightly behind them are Yasheba Robinson, Darcelle Fielder and Alphonso Williams. Cadets Phillip Williams and Rob Moore assist with the wounded soldier on the front side of the logs.



VSU BREAKS GROUND FOR NEW RESIDENCE HALL AND DINING FACILITY

In September, Virginia State University broke ground for a \$27 million, 504-bed residence hall and dining facility. According to VSU President Eddie N. Moore, Jr. the Gateway 500 project is "long overdue and an important accomplishment in the University's 2020 Vision Plan."

In addition to the 504 beds, Gateway 500 will accommodate 1,500 students in the planned dining facility. The facility will also have the ability to host 500 guests in a banquet setting. The dining and banquet facility represents \$8 million of the project's \$27 million total cost.

The project is being co-developed by Student Suites of Blue Springs, MO and the VSU Real Estate Foundation. The Real Estate Foundation previously developed the University Apartments at Ettrick, which fully opened in

2005. According to Student Suites President Steve Papa, the VSU project represents his company's first venture in Virginia.

Ms. Joyce Henderson, vice president of the VSU Real Estate Foundation, said the Gateway 500 project represents the first time in Virginia that a private developer is working, in conjunction with state funds, on a project of this nature.

Dr. Michael Shackelford, VSU's Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, said this project "exemplifies the University's commitment to a quality living and learning environment."

The Gateway 500 facility is being built on River Road, near the entrance to the VSU Student Village. It is anticipated to open in Fall 2007.

Kamarah Represents VSU at Oxford Round Table

Virginia State University's Dr. Sheikh Kamarah participated in this year's prestigious Oxford Round Table on Bilingual subjects. Dr. Kamarah, an associate professor of English, was a Round Table discussion leader on the subject of foreign language instruction.

Since 1989, the Oxford Round Table has established itself as the premier international conference to examine major issues in contemporary educational policy in the United States, the United Kingdom and other selected countries. The Round Table meets in London for five days, allowing 35 of the World's top educators the opportunity to discuss theories and findings. The success of the round Table is based on the premise that this learning community will include only the most outstanding educational leaders.

Invitations are issued following a highly discriminating screening process. Dr. Kamarah was one of only two

table Delegates who showcased their creative talents. A published author and poet, Dr. Kamarah shared an original poem, *In This Union*. "It was very well received and has been distributed to my fellow Oxford Round Table participants," he says.

Dr. Kamarah hopes to participate in future Round Table conferences. "It is an experience I would like to gain many times over," he says, "I would be very much interested in doing it again."

Meanwhile, Dr. Kamarah is keeping busy. He spoke at the LINGUA unit within the Swiss Federal Office for Migration in December, sharing his expertise in Sierra Leonean languages. In January, he spoke in Anaheim, CA at the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, a conference in conjunction with the 81st Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America.

Students Experience Study Overseas

VSU students travel to Korea, Italy

Summer internships offer students a chance to shadow professionals in their prospective field. But what they envision as a beneficial, hands-on experience often turns into filing papers and answering phones.

The lucky few though, have experiences like Lieutenant Rymingtahn Reese, recent ROTC graduate; and hotel and



Lt. Rymingtahn Reese

hospitality management majors Adorna Hayward, Gabrielle Tinsley and Shayla Draughn.

Lieutenant Reese visited South Korea for six weeks training in armament maintenance and management. While there, she received invaluable experience leading a platoon of 55 soldiers and supervising \$250,000 worth of weaponry and vehicles.

"As an intern, I didn't think I would be tasked with such huge

responsibilities," Lt. Reese confesses. "It was a challenge and honor to have so much authority."

Her duties included supervising maintenance on vehicles and security over artillery. Lt. Reese also gained a priceless experience most internships do not include in their job descriptions: supervising soldiers younger and older than herself.

"Some soldiers in my platoon were my age or younger," she says. "However, some were older than me. That experience helped me grow personally and trust myself. Because I was able to handle it, I gained the respect of my superior officers."

Beyond professional development, she witnessed local culture. "It's really different in Korea," Lt. Reese says. "The food is very spicy and the air is dry. I'm not fluent in Korean, but the people were flattered at my attempts."

Lt. Reese made such a positive impression on her superior officers that upon graduation she was stationed in Korea as the supervisor of armament and transportation.

Like Lt. Reese, Adorna, Gabrielle and Shayla had wonderful summer internship experiences in other countries.

Chaperoned by Dr. Deanne Williams, director of the Hospitality Management Program, the three traveled to Italy and Switzerland to study European hospitality. VSU's George Bennett International Education Fund sponsored the trip.

"In class we study cultural differences in hospitality," Adorna says. "Seeing it first-hand is amazing. Hotels in Italy are so elaborate and room service has more options."

The experience allowed the VSU students to broaden their horizons and note how other countries manage hotels



Gabrielle Tinsley, Shayla Draughn, and Adorna Hayward

and restaurants. According to Gabrielle, one attractive feature of Italian hotels is art.

"Of course, Italy is known for its architecture," she says. "They also incorporate art in hotel decor. Each room had a theme. That feature makes the customer stay like an adventure."



BOARD ELECTS DR. HAROLD T. GREEN, JR. AS RECTOR

At its November meeting, Virginia State University's Board of Visitors elected Dr. Harold T. Green, Jr. of Richmond as Rector.

Dr. Green serves as Chief Executive Officer of Green Medical Center in Richmond, VA. He is a licensed physician specializing in internal medicine. He is a member of the medical staff of Richmond Community Hospital, Memorial Regional Hospital, Richmond Metropolitan, Chippenham Hospital and St. Mary's Hospital. Before establishing his practice in 1991, he served as President of Health Care Associates, Inc. and was also the physician in charge at the Virginia Public Health Service Dawn Health Clinic.

Dr. Green received the Bachelor of Science degree and a medical degree from Howard University Medical School in Washington, DC and completed his post-graduate work in internal medicine at the Martin Luther King Hospital in Los Angeles – Charles Drew Medical School and with the Howard University Medical School. Green is involved with many civic and professional organizations. He has served as president of the Richmond Medical Society; Board of Directors for Howard University's Alumni Association; and member of the National Board of Medical Examiners, the Virginia Hospital Authority Committee and the Virginia Workmen's Compensation Board.

Green was appointed to the Virginia State University Board of Visitors in November 2000 and was re-appointed in July 2004. He and his wife Alfreda have three children and reside in Midlothian, VA.



The visit proved to be that for each student. All three enjoyed something different. For Gabrielle, it was the art and well-thought out themes in the hotels.

Adorna appreciated the history of Rome and Venice. "Everything had a legend or story associated to it," she explains. "Each tour was like a history lesson."

Shayla fell in love with the authentic Italian food and the skills chefs devoted to each meal. "They put so much time in preparing food," Shayla says. "It's an art form to them."

Eating authentic Italian food, staying in expensive hotels and admiring the exquisite architecture imparted upon the students lessons they look forward to using in the future.

"The fact that I can list this experience on my resume will be a huge plus," Shayla contends. "Potential employers will see that I have been exposed to foreign culture and

witnessed hospitality from another perspective. Most people won't have that."

These summer internships do set the students apart from others entering their fields. Lt. Reese supervised a quarter-million-dollar artillery and vehicles unit while managing a group of 55 soldiers.

Adorna, Gabrielle and Shayla got an actual taste of Italy while learning how to pamper guests with style.

Each student experienced a different culture and enhanced their knowledge of the profession. Being exposed to a whole new world certainly beats shadowing professionals and organizing files.

DANCING IN AFRICA

Dr. Brown presents in Ghana

The influences of African dance, with its rhythmic and upbeat movements, are often apparent in many popular styles like the mambo, rumba and samba. Dr. Benita Brown, dance professor at Virginia State University, commits her research and teachings to the impact of West African dance on other cultures and genres.

Recently, Dr. Brown visited Accra, Ghana to discuss African dance with 600 scholars from Africa, North America and Europe at the African Literature Association's 32nd Annual Conference.

The conference, titled Pan-Africanism in the 21st Century: Generations in Creative Dialogue, featured more than 100 panels, screenings and seminars on the growth of African literature and arts.

"African dance in America traces back to slavery and is a lot about tradition," Brown says. "So, meeting with others who study dance and African culture is important to understanding those traditions. It's the basis of Sankofa."

"Sankofa," an African ideology, emphasizes learning from the past.

"In this teaching, people must go back to their roots in order to move forward," Dr. Brown explains. "The principle



helps my students gain a sense of cultural pride while expressing themselves through dance. If they reach back and gather the best of what our past has to teach, they can achieve their full potential."

Dr. Brown also advises VSU's Sankofa Dance Theatre. The group of 40 students who learn and mimic the ritualistic and expressive Ghanaian dance.

"I hope students will have the opportunity to attend the conference in the future," Dr. Brown says. "The experience will strengthen their appreciation of the influences of African dance throughout the world."

Administrators Receive First-hand Look at Life Saving Research

At the invitation of Project Director Dr. Wondi Mersie, VSU President Eddie N. Moore, Jr. and Vice President for Development Robert L. Turner, Jr. traveled to Ethiopia in October to review an important research project spearheaded by VSU.

Under the direction of Dr. Mersie, VSU's Interim Associate Dean and Director of Research in the School of Agriculture, the University is involved in a research project aimed at eradicating Parthenium, an invasive weed that harms both agriculture crops and livestock (see Summer 2006 issue of *VSU Magazine*).



President Moore opened the Parthenium Project Workshop at Amhara Regional Agricultural Research Institute within Bahir Dar University. During the visit, President Moore also signed Memoranda of Understanding with Bahir Dar University and Agri-Service Ethiopia to share research and faculty expertise.

VSU maintains an office of two employees in Addis Ababa. The Farmer-to-Farmer Office serves a function similar to the Cooperative Extension Service, where the findings of research are shared and implemented to improve productivity and standards of living.

The Parthenium Project in Ethiopia has become symbolic of how the helping hand of VSU has stretched across the globe to improve, and even save, lives in a country long beset with struggle.

2006

On a historic Saturday in December, Virginia Governor Timothy M. Kaine urged the graduates at VSU's 2006 Fall Commencement to remain humble and strive to overcome personal adversity.

"None of us can do it by ourselves," he said. "We all had help along the way."

Governor Kaine told graduates, family and friends among a festive, capacity Daniel Gymnasium audience that the most important thing they could do during the holiday season, and throughout their lives, was to give to others. "When you're faced with a tough decision, ask how you can benefit others," he said. "If you do that, you'll never make a bad decision."

Giving, he said, is the key to happiness. "I never met a giver—no matter how poor—who wasn't happy."

On Historic Day, Governor Kaine Urges Grads to Give

December's ceremony was marked with history. In addition to graduating the largest class in the four-year history of Fall Commencement, Virginia State University bestowed upon Michelle Belle of

Cumberland, VA the University's first doctoral degree. Dr. Belle received an Ed.D. in Educational Administration and Supervision.

VSU bestowed upon Governor Kaine an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree and awarded Chesterfield County Deputy Administrator Millard "Pete" Stith an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Governor Kaine recognized the achievement as part of his administration's goals for Virginia's educational institutions. "We want Virginia's schools to move from competence to excellence," he said. "Today, this institution is taking that step. You see it in Michelle Belle and you see it in the goals VSU is pursuing."



Fall Commencement 2006





Fountain Symbolizes Founder's Thirst for Knowledge

The Alumni Fountain has come to symbolize Virginia State University and Founder Alfred Harris' vision for a school where every student "may go and drink from the fountain of knowledge." But, as landmarks go, the Alumni Fountain is relatively new.

In 1985, a group came together to discuss erecting a memorial to VSU alumni. The core committee was initially comprised of only alumni, but was expanded to include students, faculty and staff. A fundraising effort was launched to build the fountain, but the project became a part of the University's capital outlay requests.

With state support for construction, money raised through the initial campaign was designated for student scholarships. Subsequent contributions to the Fountain Committee went into a fund that provides emergency loans for students in need, while continuing to build the group's endowment.

After the fountain was built, active fundraising ended. According to Committee Chairman Fred Green '58 of Henrico County, VA, VSU's 125th Anniversary has provided impetus to regenerate the campaign.

"We're in another phase of raising money toward the endowment," he says. "We want to raise an additional \$125,000 in celebration of the 125th Anniversary."

Green says the latest campaign has already netted more than \$30,000. He reminds prospective donors that with a gift of \$500 or \$1,000, the donor's name will be inscribed on a plaque at the fountain. The Alumni

Fountain has become a place where students can socialize, reflect and study. It is an everlasting monument to all Trojans: past, present and future.

To donate to the Alumni Fountain Fund, please make a check payable to "Virginia State University" and designate "Alumni Fountain" in the memo section. Donations can be sent to: VSU; Office of Development; P.O. Box 9027; Petersburg, VA 23806/



Philly Alumni

The Greater Philadelphia Area Alumni Chapter held its 2006 Awards Luncheon honoring members who made significant contributions to their community, higher education and Virginia State University. The luncheon was held at Zion Baptist Church in downtown Philadelphia.

President Moore and honorees (l to r) Mildred Johnson '56, Thurman Lyles '50 and Dr. Edward Robinson '40 celebrated the legacy of former church leader and humanitarian Reverend Leon Sullivan (photographed).



At the reception, Dr. Johnson presented a donation of \$12,500 to VSU to commemorate the University's 125th anniversary.

Matthews Scholarship Honors Coach and Mentor

As a basketball coach, Shelton Matthews motivated his players not through fury or fear, but respect. Matthews, who coached the Trojan men's basketball team from 1949 through his death in 1963, led by example, establishing himself as a man his players strived to emulate.

"He had a certain demeanor not many coaches have," says Bernard Reese '63. "I never heard a curse word come out of his mouth."

In the mid-1980s, Reese, along with a friend Leroy Ellis '65, sought a way to honor their beloved coach and mentor. Together, with other former basketball players, they established the Shelton Matthews Scholarship Trust.

The scholarship supports basketball players and has issued an award each year since 1987. This program gained support through out the Trojan Community and in 1989 Herman Bell '66 joined Reese and Ellis in administrating the program.

Matthews' impact was far-reaching. He served for many years as the Secretary of the CIAA Basketball Coaches Association from the group's creation in 1954 until his death.

This widespread admiration led to enthusiasm for the trust fund beyond former players and students. "We brought a lot of non-basketball players, non-athletes, even non-VSU people into the [fund raising] effort," Bell says.

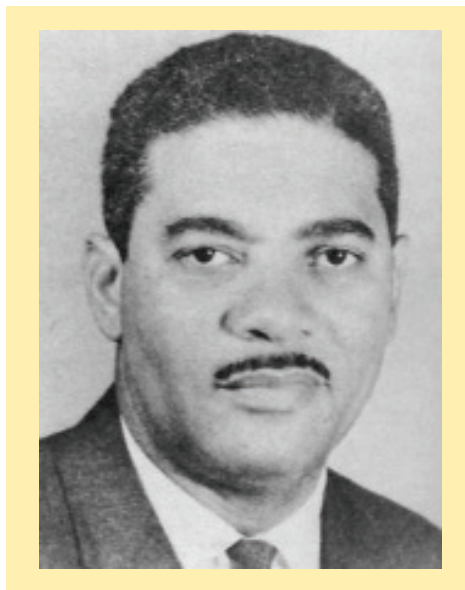
Ellis concurs, "The 'Friends of the Trust' didn't necessarily attend VSU," he says. "They just felt good about what we were doing. It shows you the kind of impact Coach Matthews had. It made you want to be a part of something like this."

But Matthews' impact extended beyond the hardwood. He was an associate professor at Virginia State and it was here that he taught perhaps his most valuable lessons.

"Coach Matthews was a good role model," Bell says. "He wanted his players and students to excel not only in

sports, but in life. His emphasis was not on the NBA, but succeeding in life."

Matthews' wife, Laureta remains involved in the Scholarship efforts and, Ellis says, her impact on the players, should not be underestimated. "She was just as vital and just as strong as Coach Matthews."



In the early years of raising money for the scholarship, Bell, Ellis and Reese, with some help from others, held "mini conventions" at the CIAA Basketball Tournament. At their peak, these events hosted nearly 150 people and culminated with a post-tournament Gala featuring such luminary speakers as John "City" Green, Rick "Doc" Walker and Clarence "Big House" Gaines.

The time and effort involved in planning and carrying out these events eventually became too overwhelming for the trio. Now though, they want the VSU community to once again acquaint itself with the coach who touched so many.

The group is grateful to those who donated in the past. Even though they are not having the annual activities at the tournament, it is their hope that people will still see this as a worthy project and continue to donate.

"We want people to know that the Trust is still here and annually provides awards from the interest earned," Ellis says. Indeed, the scholarship now holds nearly \$90,000, which they would like to see reach \$100,000.

Topping that mark would be a fitting tribute to a man who, to this day inspires loyalty among his former players and students.

To contribute to the Shelton Matthews Scholarship, please make a check payable to "VSU Foundation" and indicate, "Shelton Matthews Trust" in the memo section. Checks can be mailed to: VSU Foundation; PO Box 9027; Petersburg, VA 23806. Information is available at www.smt-vsua.org.

RETIRED, but Still Educating

Josephine Bennett

Teaching is a noble profession. Often underpaid and under appreciated, teachers devote their careers to molding bright young minds.

Josephine Bennett, a 1960 biology alumnae and nationally renowned science teacher, knew teaching was her calling and way to make a difference in the world. "Teaching has allowed me to counsel and mentor young men and women," Bennett says. "Teachers wear so many hats. They are educators, mentors, counselors and friends."

Bennett's life work is dedicated to educating youth and helping others advance their businesses and communities in the fields of health and science. Among her numerous awards, honors and certificates are two national honors: The Presidential Award for Teacher Excellence presented by Ronald Reagan in 1983 and the Salute to the American Teacher Award by the Disney Channel in 1990.

Bennett served on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) from 1989 thru 1995. "One moment I will never forget is when I retired from the board," Bennett recalls. "We met in Washington, DC when President Clinton handed me the Award of Service for my commitment to teaching. It was quite an honor."

Though retired since 1996, Bennett continues to teach others in her community on how to live healthier. As a promoter of Mannatech, an Optimal Health System Program, she encourages the use of nutritional products to build healthy cells and strengthen the immune system.

"Cells send messages to each other," Bennett says. "When cells communicate, glands and organs function properly, leading to optimal wellness and health. It is my goal that others understand how this process works."

Bennett has written textbooks covering biomolecular research and held health forums to offer tips on healthy living.

Retirement has not stopped Bennett from teaching. Though not in a classroom, she continues to educate others on the importance of maintaining excellent health and wellness.



CHAPTER NEWS

The **VSUAA, Northern VA Chapter** held its annual Scholarship Dinner, Dance and Show in November at the Spates Community Club at Ft. Myer Army Base, Arlington, VA. This event is sponsored annually by the chapter to raise funds for its "VSUAA, Northern VA Chapter Scholarship Fund." Live entertainment was provided by the R & B vocal group "BAK N DA Day." The sold-out event draws approximately 250 people committed to assisting students attending VSU.

For the past three years this event has raised over \$10,000 for scholarships to Northern VA area students who attend Virginia State University. Like other alumni chapters that support higher education institutions, Virginia State University Alumni Association, Northern Virginia Chapter is reaching out to its alumni and friends for financial support.

The **Greater New York Alumni Chapter** hosted the VSU Concert Choir in November at the St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn, NY. The concert was attended by several hundred guests, including approximately 45 VSU Alumni, who joined the choir in the singing of the "Evening Song" at the end. To everyone's delight various choir members rendered impromptu moments of inspirational classical and gospel music at a reception following the concert. The alumni took special pride in knowing that we have such refined and talented members in our VSU family.



The **Agriculture Alumni Chapter** of the Virginia State University Alumni Association recently celebrated 25 years. Dr. Beverly B. Archer was honored for 25 years of service as Secretary-Treasurer. Pictured with him are Mrs. Yvette G. Robinson, Awards Chair, and Dr. W. Eric Thomas, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Virginia State University.



In October, the **Williamsburg Alumni Chapter** and the New Zion Baptist Church sponsored a trip for 45 students, grades 7-12, to attend "High School Day" at VSU. The Chapter won the first place trophy for having the most students from a church. Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church also supported this effort. The students enjoyed the tour and the briefings that were presented on student life at VSU.

Celebrating 125 Years Honoring Our Past...Shaping Our Future

Alumni Weekend 2007, May 11-13

Honoring classes ending "2" & "7"

Class Coordinators

Class of 1947

Dr. William Craig
Alyce Gordon Willis

Class of 1952

Dr. James & Viola Clark

Class of 1957

"50th Class Reunion"
Shirley Montgomery
Alexander
Dr. J. Corene Elam
Robert "Bob" Mills

Class of 1962

Dr. Lillian King-Boyd
Goldie Allen Miles
Carolyn Loney Taylor

Class of 1967

Pamela Coggs Alexander
Lila Johnston King
Goldie White Settles
Pauline Ford Sharper

Class of 1972

Dr. Sandra Anderson Bell
Alexander "Mundy"
Lawrence

Class of 1977

TBD

Class of 1982

Beverly Everson-Jones

Class of 1987

TBD

Class of 1992

Dr. Sheree Johnson

Class of 1997

Jame'l Hodges

Class of 2002

TBD

Plans are already under way for Alumni Weekend 2007. Plan now to attend a weekend of fun-filled events. Registration materials coming soon!

Don't see a name under your class, and you would like to volunteer? Contact the Office of Alumni Relations at (804)524-6935 or alumni@vsu.edu. Keep checking the Alumni page at www.vsu.edu for up-to-date information.

ALUMNI NOTES

Rachel Parham-Cole '64 was named in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* in the 2005-2006 10th Edition, Volume 1. Teachers featured in this volume work in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont. Rachel has Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU) and Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC) designations from The American College in Bryn Mawr, PA. Currently, Rachel teaches Math and Science at Brooklyn Bedford Stuyvesant Learning Center and is an active member of the Abyssinian Baptist Church and The Greater New York Alumni Chapter of VSU.

James H. Stith '63, '64, vice president of the Physics Resources Center for the American Institute of Physics, honored with the Penn State Alumni Association's Alumni Fellow Award, the most prestigious honor given by the association. The awards are administered in cooperation with the academic colleges and are presented annually to alumni who have demonstrated excellence in their chosen professions.

Stith directs a broad portfolio of programs and services that include magazine publishing, media and government relations, education and student services, statistical research, career services, and the history center of the American Institute of Physics. Throughout his career, he has been an advocate for programs that ensure ethnic and gender diversity in the sciences.

A retired colonel, Stith spent 21 years on the faculty at West Point and was the first African American in its history to be named to the tenured faculty. He also has been professor of physics at Ohio State University, a visiting associate professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy, and visiting scientist at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

He is past president of the American Association of Physics Teachers and the National Society of Black Physicists. He is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a fellow of the American Physical Society. He received an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Virginia State University.

Janice Payne Cromwell-Nowell '65 received the 40th Anniversary Wildcat Educator Honor Award for her effective teaching, sponsorship of many classes, and caring concern for young people during her 30 years at Northwestern Senior High School. This affair was sponsored by the Northwestern Senior High School Alumni Association 40th Anniversary Committee.

Shirley Revis '71 was recently inducted into the Goochland County, VA Educators Hall of Fame. Ms. Revis retired in 2005 after a 34-year career as an educator.

Esther Jones '72 of King & Queen, VA recently retired after 34 years of service to the U.S. Government. Ms. Jones' career was spent with the Department of Defense, including the Army, Air Force, Defense Finance and Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Rita Harper '75, '78 has been named Principal of Petersburg High School. She has served as Assistant Principal and Acting Principal at the school before being named Principal before the 2006 school year.

Bernard Joseph Lundy, Jr. '83 was elected and is currently serving his third year term as a school board member for the Petersburg Public School System. Bernard, Jr. is a member of the Delta Omega Chapter Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.



Silas Demary '95 one of the premier defensive linemen in the Arena Football League, recently completed his fourth year with the Los Angeles Avengers. He signed a contract extension with the Avengers on Jan. 24, 2006, after originally inking a three-year free agent contract with the team on Oct. 21, 2003. Last season, Demary finished with 19 tackles (including 6.5 for losses) and four quarterback sacks. He also was credited with eight "quarterback hurries," batted down three passes, forced two fumbles and blocked a pair of kicks, and caught one pass for four yards on offense.



Nicole Parris '96 (M.Ed.) recently completed her first novel. *The 8th Journal* is a thrilling romantic adventure about the life-altering secrets a young woman discovers in a mysterious antique journal. *New York Times* best selling author Ellen Tanner Marsh says of the book "the pace never flags and readers will find the ending of this rollicking adventure cum tender coming-of-age story more than satisfying. The book is available online at Amazon.com, Borders.com and Booksurge.com.



Taylor Whitehead '96, Director of Bands at Warren County High School in Warrenton, NC recently competed in the Fifth Annual National High Stepping Marching Band Championship. His band competed in the Class A Division and received the following awards: First Place Band, First Place Musicians, First Place General Effect, First Place

Marching and Maneuvering, First Place Percussion and Second Place Flags. His drumline also captured First Place in a National Drumline Competition. This is Taylor's 10th year as director.

Rickie Hopkins '98 (MA) has been named principal at Montross Middle School in Westmoreland County, VA. Hopkins has worked in public education for over 20 years, as teacher and assistant principal. This appointment is his first as principal.

Vernita Robinson '98 was selected as a finalist for Northampton County, NC Teacher of the Year. Ms. Robinson is a fourth grade teacher at Squire Elementary School.

Joseph Allen '04 has been hired to teach special education at Amelia County, VA Middle School.

Founder's Day Celebration

Sunday, March 6, 2005

Memorial Service 4:30-5:00pm

Convocation 5:00pm

Anderson-Turner Auditorium

Two Trojans in One!

Two Virginia State University Alumnus, Brigadier General Dennis L. Via (class of '80) and Lieutenant Colonel Jarvis McCurdy (class of '86), share the distinction of serving within the same command in the United States Army. General Via is currently the Commanding General, 5th Signal Command, United States Army – Europe, and Lieutenant Colonel McCurdy commands the 39th Signal Battalion, a subordinate command of 5th Signal Command, located in Chievres, Belgium.

The Army's largest and most forward deployed and strategically positioned Signal force, 5th Signal Command is located in Manheim, Germany, and is comprised of over 3,600 Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians geographically dispersed over six countries (Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom). The command also has forces currently deployed to Iraq and Kuwait in support of the Global War on Terrorism, and also in the Balkans. Under General Via's leadership, 5th Signal Command leads the Army's Signal modular transformation efforts in many areas, while continuing to support the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) and the Department of Defense's Global Restructuring and Restationing initiatives.

LTC McCurdy commands the 39th Signal Battalion, one of eight battalions under 5th Signal Command. The battalion is responsible for installing, operating, and maintaining Information Technology (IT) communications infrastructure, information systems and services in support of Army, Joint and Combined Forces throughout the Benelux, United Kingdom and Northern Germany.

Not only are General Via and LTCl McCurdy graduates of Virginia State University, their wives, Linda (Brown) Via '82, and Sharon (Harris) McCurdy '89, are also Virginia State Alumni.



Pictured above left to right are Brigadier General and Mrs. (Linda) Via, Mrs. (Sharon) McCurdy, and LTC McCurdy.

A Message from the President of the Virginia State University National Alumni Association, Inc.

The governing body of the Virginia State Alumni Association, Inc. (VSUAA) is a Board of Directors representing membership from each of its affiliated Chapters. The VSUAA is organized for the mutual benefit and prosperity of VSU, its graduates, former students, and others committed to the success of our Alma Mater. As a collective expression of gratitude to VSU, we form ourselves into this Association so that our work and dedication will strengthen and support our Alma Mater, ensuring that it remains a viable institution and that memories of our school life will be kept alive.

The 2006 VSUAA National Convention held on campus identified a number of challenges for our Association. Two of those challenges are (1) to increase membership and (2) to develop effective communication vehicles. The Association is aggressively addressing these challenges with the implementation of a strategy for developing membership and immediate enhancements to the Association's web site.

We encourage all Trojans and friends of VSU to join hands with the Alumni Association as this organization moves forward to enhance Alumni loyalty and support to our Alma Mater. If you are not a current member, activate your membership now and stand with us as we move this Association forward.

We take this opportunity to say thank you for your continued support of the VSUAA.

Charlyne E. Jackson-Fields

President



**IF YOU HAVE NOT FILLED OUT AN APPLICATION
TO BECOME AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION,
DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE
COMPLETED THIS APPLICATION.**

Over 15,000 VSU alumni will receive this issue of the *VSU Magazine*. Fewer than 1,000 are members of the VSU Alumni Association. Help correct this situation. Heed the STOP sign and become a member by completing the Application for Membership, writing a check and mailing it to the address below. Support your Alumni Association's purpose of "strengthening and supporting our Alma Mater".

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI/Maiden Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Year Graduated _____ Major _____ Occupation _____

Phone: _____ E-mail _____

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

Member with Chapter Affiliation _____ (\$30 plus local dues) (We will provide you with a Chapter point of contact)

Member-at-large: No Chapter Affiliation (\$30) _____

**Life Member: One payment \$750 _____ Two payments of \$375 _____
Three payments of \$250 _____ Four Payments of \$187.50 _____**

Note: Installments must be paid within 24 months of the initial payment.

**Make all checks payable to: VSUAA, and mail to: VSUAA, P.O. BOX 2488,
PETERSBURG, VA 23804**

PHONE: (804) 524-6820

FAX: (804) 524-6914

WEBSITE: WWW.VSUAA.COM

PASSINGS

VSU Deceased Alumni, Students, Faculty, and Staff

FOUNDER'S DAY, 2007 (Recorded February 27, 2006 to February 28, 2007)

NAME	YEAR OF GRADUATION ATTENDANCE DATES, POSITION	HOMETOWN
Victoria Adams	Civil Rights Figure, Staff	Petersburg
Martha Rogers Adkins	1950s	Tampa, FL
Alana Archer	1998, B.A., 2004, M.A.	Brooklyn, NY
Walter E. Bailey	1954	Fort Washington, MD
Robert H. Belle	1960s	Matoaca
Thelma Young Boone	1960s	Petersburg
Curtis L. H. Bouldin	1970s	Richmond
Burnie H. Branch, Sr.	1957	
Rawn Boulden, Sr.	1991	South Boston
Leoloia M. Brown, age 93	Va. Normal, circa 1920s-30s	Petersburg
Joyce L. Choice	Former Staff	Ettrick
John C. Christian	1961	Gloucester
Dr. William M. Clayborne	1959, M.S.	Ettrick
George L. Davis, Jr.	1957	Washington, DC
Alexander Easley	Basketball Star	
George A. Ellis	1960s	Colonial Heights
Marshall T. Emery	Former Coach	Petersburg
Inez Perry Fowlkes, Age 100	1955	Petersburg
M. Louise Freeman	1947	Petersburg
George R. Friend	1957	Richmond
Kirk N. Gaskins, Jr.	1950	Jessup, MD
Clarence Gillis	1947	Roanoke
Jackie Gilmore	1952	Sarasota, FL
William T. Goodwyn, Sr., Age 93	Va. Normal, 1930s	Colonial Heights
Ginter O. Gwathmey	1949	Richmond
Harden Gwathmey	1948	Richmond
Alanna "Peaches" Hawkes	1980s	Petersburg
George Edward Heflin	M.S., Ind. Ed.	Mt. Pony
Johnny Humphrey	1960s	Petersburg
Ronald T. Jackson	1969	Tappahannock
Naomi Winston Jeter, Age 94	1933, B.S.	Richmond
LTC (Ret.) Harold O. Johns	1959	Hampton
Herbert A. Johnson, Jr.	1988	Chester
Ethel Kemp Jones	1946	Shacklefords
Yolanda Oliver Key	1980	Crewe
Charles Sumner Lofton	Faculty, 1934	Washington, DC
Phillip B. Massenburg	B.S. '78, M.Ed. '93 Former Staff	Petersburg
Elder Vanessa R. Marshall	1970s	Petersburg
John H. Matthews	Former Staff	Dinwiddie
Carolyn Graves Mayfield	Former Staff	Petersburg

NAME	YEAR OF GRADUATION ATTENDANCE DATES, POSITION	HOMETOWN
Johnathan Anthony McKee, Sr.	1953	Greensboro, NC
Tyrone Mitchell	Art Major	Petersburg
Linwood J. Monroe	Former Staff	Richmond
Ernest Lee Morse	1943, B.S., 1956, M.S., Chair VSUAA Life Memberships	South Hill
Evelyn Williams Owens	2004	Petersburg
Mary Christmas Gibson Parrish	1946	Washington, DC
Louse J. Penn	1943	Roanoke, VA
Victor R. Powell, Age 93	1948, B.S., 1957, M.S.	Boydton
Arthur Redman	1957	
Lamont Antonia Reaves	2006, Junior	Charlottesville
Juanita Bland Robinson		Henrico
Glenice James Sabourin	1967	Colonial Heights
Charles W. Scott	1970s	Ettrick
Ernestine Allen Smith	1955	Ettrick
Harrison R. Smith	1957	Keyport, NJ
COL. (Ret.) Melvin S. Smith	1964	Cherry Hill, NJ
Helen M. Spencer	1957, M.S.	Suffolk
Lottie Barksdale Spencer	1956	Hampton, VA
John Stradford	1951	El Cerrito, CA
Jeanne Mebane Swanson	1952	Washington, DC
Rosa Beale Tapscott	1962	Richmond
Murrie Wead Taylor, Age 96	Va. Normal; circa 1918-20	Petersburg
Barbara Lundy Thomas	1989, B.S., Nursing; 1996, M.Ed.	Petersburg
Dr. Charles H. Townes	1935, B.S.; Univ. Physician	Colonial Heights
Thomas E. Turpin	1940s, 50s; also Faculty	Lynchburg
Wanda Harris Walker	1978	Petersburg (Dinwiddie)
Priscilla Dale Washington	1961	Baltimore
Dr. Oscar R. Williams	Ret. History Professor	Colonial Heights
Lelia Woolfolk		Caroline County
Phillip B. Massenburg	1970s	Petersburg
Wanda H. Walker	1970s	Dinwiddie
Juanita L.B. Robinson		Dinwiddie
Barbara L. Thomas		Petersburg
Thelma N. Y. Boone	1960s	Petersburg
Charles Townes	1950s	Petersburg
Ernest A. Gaines	1930s	Tappahanock
Alanna Hawkes	1980s	Petersburg
Bessie Savage	1950s	Petersburg

Toppling Pins From Bermuda to VSU

Bermuda has given the world pink sand beaches, unsightly shorts and a well-known "Triangle." This beautiful and mysterious island has also given the VSU Bowling team its own treasure: 2006 Most Valuable Player, Adorna Hayward.

Adorna arrived at Virginia State in the fall of 2004, as a transfer from Bermuda College. She was excited about coming to the United States. "I was happy to receive the bowling scholarship," she explains. "Students in Bermuda want to attend college in America, but the tuition is too expensive."

Bowling punched Adorna's ticket to the United States and the team provided a support system as she transitioned to Virginia State.

"My parents have friends in Petersburg," Adorna says. "They helped when I was homesick, but my teammates became my family away from home. We have a great chemistry. It may be the best in the CIAA."

According to Adorna, VSU's bowling team is truly like a family. They laugh together and look out for each other in tough situations. But most importantly, they work hard together.

"We constantly practice and help each other get better," says Adorna. "We offer constructive criticism and try our best to improve."

Adorna remains modest about her personal accolades and shies away from the spotlight. Her first year at VSU, she rolled a high game of 278, breaking the CIAA record. She has been All-CIAA for three consecutive years, 2004 Rookie of the Year and CIAA Most Valuable Player.

Adorna attributes her success to her father, teammates and coach. "My father helped me build a strong work ethic," she says. "He was a professional bowler and has been working with me since I was four-years-old. Coach Jones is also competitive, which motivates the team and helps us do well."

Upon graduating in May, Adorna will earn her bachelor's degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management and say

good-bye to her VSU family. She has three job offers from hotels and restaurants in Atlanta, Arizona and Bermuda.

Initially, Adorna will stay in the U.S. and work the one-year allowed on her student VISA. Afterwards, she may return to Bermuda. Or, she may stay in America if offered a full-time job that grants her citizenship.

Adorna aspires to bowl professionally. "I have been bowling so long," she says. "I can't imagine quitting. Bowling is my passion and favorite thing to do."



Trojans' Rapada Makes the Bigs!

The Chicago Cubs signed former Trojan Clay Rapada to the club's 40-man roster after playing in the fall league this season.

Rapada, a Portsmouth, VA native, signed with the Cubs after his VSU career ended in 2002. He was selected for the Midwest League All-Star Game in 2004.

In 2006, the left-handed pitcher was promoted to Triple-A Iowa of the Pacific Coast League. Rapada went 3-2 with a 3.04 earned run average with 21 strikeouts in 23 innings pitched.

ANNUAL FUND & GIVING

ANNUAL FUND/CALL CENTER

The 2006-2007 VSU Annual Fund drive is under way and runs through June 30, 2007. Our goal for this year's campaign is \$500,000. The Annual Fund provides unrestricted, and much needed, support for the university's areas of greatest need. Gifts to the Annual Fund are available immediately and help VSU fulfill its commitment to provide the best possible educational experience by helping to fund these most critical priorities:

- Providing scholarship assistance to students
- Strengthening and enhancing academic programs
- Sustaining and growing athletic programs

Our greatest priority this year is increasing scholarship funding and, toward that end, the Office of Development has opened a Call Center to support the Annual Fund Drive. The Office of Development Call Center is a student-staffed telefundraising operation, located in the basement of Seward Hall, and operates Sunday from 3 to 7 p.m., and Monday – Thursday from 5 to 9 p.m. during the academic year. Student callers contact VSU alumni and friends to keep them informed of VSU's progress, to update their alumni records and to raise money for the Annual Fund.

A gift to the Annual Fund is the most effective way for alumni, friends, parents and students to demonstrate their belief in our mission. Every dollar counts, so please give whatever you can to the 2006 – 2007 VSU Annual Fund Drive.

Honor Roll of Donors

The Honor Roll of Donors that has appeared in past winter issues of VSU Magazine will now be included in the Office of Development's Annual Report on Gifts and Contributions. This publication is scheduled to arrive in mid-February.

Any questions regarding the Honor Roll of Donors should be directed to Barton Blanks, Stewardship Administrator at (804) 524-5559 or bblanks@vsu.edu.



Lt. Gen (Ret.) Alonzo E. Short, Jr. has added to his family's rich legacy at VSU with a donation of \$50,000 toward the Alonzo E. Short Endowed Scholarship. Over the past year, Lt. Gen. Short has donated more than \$100,000 to the University toward this scholarship and another named in memory of his wife, Rosalin Reid Short.



H. Carter Myers, III (r.), president of Colonial Auto Center in Charlottesville is joined by Mike Erwin (l.) of Colonial Honda in Chesterfield, in presenting VSU Development Officer Steven Ward, with a check for \$1,500 in honor and memory of H. Carter Myers, Jr. The gift was made possible by the National Automobile Dealers Charitable Foundation's Ambassador Program, of which both Mr. Myers and his late father are Ambassadors.



Nathan Dial presents a check to President Moore in recognition of his donation to the VSU Annual Fund. At 18, Nathan is the youngest member of the President's Club. Nathan, the son of VSU Chief of Staff Cortez Dial, is a freshman at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO.



(Right) At the Annual Homecoming Luncheon, Anthony '91 and Monique Spence presented a check of \$50,000 to President Moore. This gift is the largest single donation made to VSU by a young alumnus. Mr. Spence challenged members of alumni classes from 87-95 to match or exceed his donation with a major gift to VSU.

PLANNED GIVING

Five Reasons to Die Without a Will

There must be powerful reasons to avoid having a will, because so many people die without one. In case you happen to be among the 70 percent who will depart without a will, here are five reasons to buttress your position. You can use these to help you sleep tonight.

1. The court can do a better job deciding how to disburse your assets than you can.
2. The court can choose a better personal representative to handle your estate during probate than you can.
3. The court can choose a more caring guardian for your minor children than you can.
4. The government will use your estate tax dollars more efficiently than your favorite charity would use a charitable bequest.
5. Your grieving loved ones will be better off resolving your affairs without your will.

Powerful reasons? Hardly. Nonetheless, people unwittingly affirm these reasons year after year as they continue to put off the minor inconvenience of making a will.

Virginia State University urges you to take action now! Your family will appreciate it. The charities you support will appreciate it. And, you will appreciate the peace of mind you get from fulfilling one of your most important stewardship responsibilities.

A bequest in your will to Virginia State University provides the ultimate gift to your Alma Mater and perpetuates your life interest and influence into the future. A bequest is a provision in one's last will and testament where a gift or property is transferred from your estate to a charitable organization. If you already have a will, a bequest to VSU can be made simply by adding a codicil that includes the following language:

I hereby give, devise, and bequeath to Virginia State University...

1. **SPECIFIC BEQUEST:** *the sum of \$_____ (or, the property described as _____), or;*
2. **RESIDUAL BEQUEST** *of assets remaining after all other bequests have been satisfied:*
 - a. *the rest, remainder, and residue of my estate, or;*
 - b. *____% of the rest, remainder, and residue of my estate.*
3. **CONTINGENT BEQUEST** *to take effect only if those name as primary beneficiaries predecease you: If any or all of the above-named beneficiaries do not survive me, then I hereby give the share that otherwise would be (his/hers/theirs) to Virginia State University.*
4. **GENERAL BEQUEST:** *the sum of \$_____, or _____% (fractional interest) of my estate.*

Like many people, you may be uneasy about going to an attorney. Yet, an attorney who specializes in estate planning knows the right questions to ask and the best ways to help you accomplish your goals. These professionals are well-trained and normally well worth the time and expense they require.

Steven Ward, our Major and Planned Gifts Officer, can help you with this. Steven has helpful printed material on making a will. He can provide a list of names and addresses of professionals and, if you like, supply information on additional ways you can include charitable giving in your estate plans. You'll still need to meet with your professional advisor for expert counsel, but an advance meeting with Steven Ward will prove useful and could save costs by helping you make the best use of your professional advisor's time. His services are available to you with no obligation. You can contact Steven at (804) 524-5976 or by email saward@vsu.edu.

Caring for the disposition of your assets is too important to delay. It's important for you, for your loved ones and for your dear Alma Mater.



12TH Annual VSU Presidential Scholars Golf Tournament

Friday, Sept. 30 was a perfect day for golf, fun and fellowship and support to a most-worthy cause: Scholarships for our best and brightest students!

VSU alumni, friends, faculty and staff made the 12th Annual Tournament another sell-out, raising more than \$25,000 in scholarship money for VSU Presidential Scholars.

Generous in-kind donations by Pepsi, Frito Lay, Ukrop's Colonial Square, and Boars Head Provisions, keep fundraising costs down. Aiding the cause further

were hole sponsorships by Chesterfield County; Federal Express; Pepsi Bottling Group; E.I. Dupont de Nemours & Co.; Sungard Higher Education; V.T. Griffin Services, Inc.; McDonalds

– Mechanicsville; Harris-Wesley, Inc.; Dr. Harold D. Jones, Manchester Pediatric Associates; and the VSU Foundation. Raffle prizes were donated by Pepsi, Wal Mart Southpark and Enterprise Rent-A-Car. Direct gifts of \$500 and above were generously contributed by Colonial Honda; Bank of America; Strategic Marketing Affiliates; and alumnus Willie J. Bradley, Jr., '49 & '72.



Virginia State University

Honoring Our Past.... Shaping The Future

IMPORTANT DATES:

Tuesday, March 6, 2007:

**The 125th Anniversary of the Founding of Virginia State University
Founder's Day Celebration
Anderson-Turner Auditorium
7:00 pm**

Saturday, April 21, 2007:



HOMECOMING 2006



HOMECOMING 2006



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