

April 8, 2008
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Briggs' Bytes

Dear Trojans:

April is Men's History Month. Men's History Month was established as a result of a Man-to-Man workshop conducted by Dr. Leon Bey, Associate Professor of Health and Physical Education, in 2002. During the meeting in Puryear Hall, the male students asked that the month be established to celebrate Men. We listen and have responded with various programs and activities to celebrate the many accomplishments of men. The Department of Residence Life has declared April as Men's History Month at Virginia State University.

The theme this year is: "Commit to excellence." The emphasis is placed on academic, relational, and personal excellence. It has been said that excellence is the result of caring more than others think is wise, risking more than others think is safe, dreaming more than others think is practical, and expecting more than others think is possible. It is the commitment to high quality performance that produces outstanding results of lasting value. It is a way of life.

During Men's History Month, the Department of Residence Life will salute three men of excellence. The men selected for the special salute have been chosen for their commitment to excellence as a way of life. The way of life is demonstrated in their various leadership roles in the VSU community; and they are: Dr. Eric Thomas, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, Mr. Cortez Dial, Chief of Staff, and Dr. Michael M. Shackelford, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. Each man has approached excellence from a different perspective. What each man has as a common thread are the students of VSU. Aristotle stated, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit" The men of the month have repeatedly sought excellence as a standard. Gentleman we salute you!

I challenge each male student to set as a goal a commitment to excellence.

With Trojan Pride,

Dr. LaVerne J. Briggs
Director of Residence Life

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ SACS Visit
- ◆ Final Exams April 30 - May 3, 2008
- ◆ Graduation— Sunday, May, 11

Residence Life Celebrates Men's History Month - April 2008

The Department of Residence Life celebrated Women History Month in March with a series of events that concluded with a "Sisterhood" Dinner on March 30, with Dr. Paulette Johnson as the Keynote presenter. Now the focus has turned to the Men. Traditionally, history gives a complete accounting of the contributions of men who are considered "history makers". However, the Department of Residence Life believes that acknowledging the many contributions of African Males at a Historically Black Institutions is important in developing leadership traits in young men. April's programming will focus on men and issues important to young college men as they develop into successful Black men in their communities within the theme of "Commit to Excellence". How can you "commit to excellence?"

The Faces of VSU Men who are "committed to excellence"



Dr. W. Eric Thomas- Provost
Dr. Thomas -"Scholar Extraordinary"
He holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Biology from Tennessee State University and earned his doctorate degree from Meharry Medical College. His commitment to his vision for VSU has translated into the University being listed by US News and World Report as the top Public Master's Level HBCU in America.



Dr. Michael Shackelford, a graduate of VSU, used hard work and determination to capitalize on opportunities to achieve excellence in pursuing his academic training, in the military and in his career. Now, he brings his commitment to excellence to his position as the Associate VP of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management with zeal. He takes a "student center" approach in all that he does for the University.



Mr. Cortez Dial, VSU-Chief of Staff, made a commitment to excellence by developing his leadership skills. Mr. Dial is a retired "colonel" with a federal top Secret Security clearance. His dedication to excellence has resulted in a strengthening of procedures dealing with issues of concerns with student athletes, public safety, and the President's Office.

"Black men who have succeeded have an obligation, to serve as role models for young men entrapped by a vicious cycle of poverty, despair and hopelessness" - Benjamin L. Hooks - Retired NAACP

"You mean so much to me, I am so proud of you. I love you for stayin strong, you got it goin on. I 'm so proud of you. Going through thick and thin, brothas you gonna win. I' m so proud of you." Angie Stone -Contemporary Singer

Residence Life Week - April 8-11, 2008

This year the Department of Residence Life is celebrating Residence Life Week by acknowledging and recognizing the importance of residence life staff and the residents they serve to the University. The Department is the "heart beat" of the University and sees its mission as: creating and maintaining an academically supportive living and learning environment, which encourages students to explore their commonalities, differences and foster an educational community that respects and value each member. The Residence Halls provide an atmosphere that supports our students in their intellectual, moral, personal, social and spiritual growth through the cultivation of responsible citizenship and leadership.

Highlights Residence Life Week will include the following activities and events:

- ♥ Freshmen Achievement Banquet on Tuesday, April 8, 2008 at 4:30 p.m. All freshmen residing on campus with 3.0 or higher GPA will be recognized. Dr. Donna Crawford, Director of General Studies will be the speaker.
- ♥ Trojan Awards on Wednesday, April 9, 2008 at 7 p.m. in Virginia Hall- Residence Life awards ceremony recognizing the achievement of Graduate Assistants and Resident Assistants and noting the outstanding programs held in Residence Halls
- ♥ Voter Registration Drive on Friday, April 11, 2008, Jones Dining Hall to share information on registering to vote for the upcoming Presidential Election.
- ♥ Appreciation Cookout/Cook-in for all the "heart beats" that make Residence Life so special in Jones Dining Hall on Friday April 11, 2008. It is "jeans and t-shirt day".

Freshmen Honors

90 freshmen males were honored for achieving a grade point average of 3.0 on Tuesday, April 8, 2008.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

The Sexual Assault Awareness Month theme for 2008 is **Prevent Sexual Violence... in our workplaces**. Designed to help employers recognize the vital role workplace culture plays in the prevention of sexual violence, this theme promotes a healthy work environment. The history of **Sexual Assault Awareness Month** (SAAM) stems from the early 1970s, when survivors of sexual violence came together and began to speak out against the atrocities they suffered. They held rallies and public speak-outs, and as a result created a movement to end sexual violence and make the public more aware of this type of violence. Sexual Assault is defined as intentional sexual contact by the use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority when the victim does not or cannot consent.

The symbol used is the teal ribbon. The statistics about Sexual Assault reveal that this is a growing problem with real life victims. Did you know? The Statistics on Sexual Assault on College Campuses are staggering. Here are some of the facts and figures based on the American Medical Association (1996) statistics.

FACTS AND FIGURES

- 66% of attacks are unreported, making sexual assault the “silent epidemic”
- 20 -25% of women will be raped during their college career
- 13% of women are stalked during the academic year, and each stalking episode last an average of 60 days.
- 90% of women know the person who sexually assaulted or raped them.
- 75% of the time, the offender, the victim, or both have been drinking.
- 42% of college women who are raped tell no one about the assault.
- 5% of rape incidents are reported to the police
- 10 times more rapes are reported to crisis lines than are reported to the police.

DEBUNKING MYTHS: Both college women and men harbor misconceptions about sexual assault. Getting the facts is essential to combating sexual assault on campus. Eighty percent of the women who are raped try to physically resist yet 43% of college-age men conceded to using coercive behavior to have sex (including ignoring a woman’s protest, using physical aggression and forcing intercourse) but did not admit that it was rape.

The impact to victims is physical and emotional. It is traumatic. General data suggests the following

- 40% of the rape survivors develop sexually transmitted diseases as the result of the sexual assault
- 80% of rape victims suffer chronic physical or psychological problems over time
- 25-50% of sexual assault victims seek mental health treatment as a result of the assault

In addition to physical and emotional damage, college students who have been victims of sexual assault suffer from a host of issues that may impede their academic achievement. In many cases, victims cannot perform at the same academic levels that they did prior to the attack. Sexual assault sometimes causes students to be unable to carry a normal class load, and they miss classes more frequently. (This is often a result of social withdrawal or a way to avoid seeing the perpetrator.) There are reports of student victim who withdraw from courses altogether. In more traumatic incidents, or without support, victims may leave college until they recover, sometimes transferring to another college.

Sometimes people feel responsible when they have been assaulted. It is not the victim’s fault. Regardless, it is illegal for someone to make someone else participate in sexual activity, even if they are dating, friends or have a relationship. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect. If you know someone who has been in a situation where his/her rights was not respected, be supported and make them aware that campus and community resources are available. Residence Educators (REs) and Resident Assistants (RAs) can help residents access the medical, emotional and legal services as needed.

ON CAMPUS

- Police and Public Safety, (804) 524 - : Public safety transports victims to the hospital and help students feel safe
- Counseling Services : Counselors are available to provide confidential support and counseling make referrals to community agencies
- Health Services, (804) 524 : Medical staff can answer health questions and make referrals for follow-up care.

Myths & Realities

Myth: Only Women can be sexually assaulted.

Reality: Although the majority of rape victims are women, and in fact they are 10 times more to be victims than men, many men are still victims of rape every year.

Myth: The only way a rapist can really force a woman to have intercourse is by using a weapon

Reality: A weapon is not necessary for a sexual assault to occur. Fist, body weight, psychological pressure or the victim being drunk are all ways in which rape can occur without the use of a weapon.

Myth: If the attacker is drunk at the time of the assault then they cannot be accused of rape.

Reality: The attacker is responsible for their actions no matter how intoxicated they are. Being drunk is not an excuse to force sex on someone against their will.

Myth: When a woman says “no”, she really means maybe.

Reality: Although mixed messages can be given, when a woman says no she means no. Never assumed that no means anything else, but no and if in doubt, ask.

Myth: Women often lie about being raped to get revenge, for their own benefit or because they changed their minds afterwards

Reality: Only 2% of reported rapes are false accusations. Most women will not lie about being raped for any reason.

What Men Can Do?

- Don't have sex with a person against their will. Make sure that the sex you are having is consensual.
- Take responsibility for your own actions.
- Watch out for your buddies and your friends when you go out to make sure that none of you get into bad situations. Be a friend.
- Communicate -talk with your partner to make sure that you are both on the same page.
- Educate yourself and those around you about sexual assault. Discuss issues such as rape, stalking, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.
- Support organizations which fight to decrease the occurrence of sexual assault and rape.
- Don't condone rape jokes, speak up when you hear one and say that is offensive.
- Treat sexual assault, date rape and harassment as serious
- Don't assume that women want your protection; however, offer it to them and be there for them if they do want it.
- Attend informational seminars on relationships, dating and sexual assault.

Advice for Women

- Don't give mixed messages. Communicate clearly your feelings and be assertive when it comes to your body.
- It is your body take control of it, if your partner is doing something that you don't want them to or is going to far, firmly and clearly tell them to stop
- If you are unsure of a new acquaintance or date, go out in a group or on a double date. Be careful of who you invite into your home or whose home you go into as most rapes occur in the home of the attacker or victim.
- Acknowledge situations that may possibly be dangerous, and always s try to find an escape route. Think ahead.
- Be aware of the non-verbal signals that you are giving. Avoid game playing in relationship- be forceful, firm and assertive. Don't do anything you don't want to simply avoid a scene or causing unpleasantness.
- Look out for your friends.

Alcohol Awareness Month

When people think of alcohol abusers, they picture teenagers sneaking drinks before high school football games or at unsupervised parties. However, alcohol abuse is prevalent within many demographic groups in the United States. People who abuse alcohol can be:

- College students who binge drink at local bars
- Pregnant women who drink and put their babies at risk for fetal alcohol syndrome
- Professionals who drink after a long day of work
- Senior citizens who drink out of loneliness.

Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse:

1. Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad? _____
2. Does your drinking ever make you late for work? _____
3. Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't? _____ .
4. Do you ever forget what you did while drinking? _____
5. Do you get headaches or have a hangover after drinking? _____

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may have a problem with alcohol.

Source: How to Cut Down on Your Drinking. April 7 was National Alcohol Screening Day. If you missed the screening find a screening site near you by contacting The SAMHSA's National Clearing house for Alcohol and Drug information (NCADI) at 1-800-729-6686

Remember the Facts:

- Alcohol affects your brain. Drinking alcohol leads to a loss of coordination, poor judgment, slowed reflexes, distorted vision, memory lapses and even blackouts.
- Alcohol affects your body. Alcohol can damage every organ in your body. It is absorbed directly into your bloodstream and can increase your risk for a variety of life threatening diseases, including cancer.
- Alcohol affects your self-control. Alcohol depresses your central nervous system, lowers your inhibitions and impairs your judgment. Drinking can lead to risky behavior.
- Alcohol can kill you. Drinking large amounts of alcohol at one time or very rapidly can cause alcohol poisoning, which can lead to coma or even death. Driving and drinking is a deadly combination.
- Alcohol can hurt you-even if you're not the one drinking. If you're around people who are drinking. You have an increase risk of being seriously injured or affected by violence.

Before you drink know the Risks..... It is illegal to buy or possess alcohol if you are under the age of 21. One drink can make you fail a breath test. Alcohol is a drug. Mixing it with other over the counter drug can create health risks.

April is Stress Awareness Month s

Stress is your body's response to any stimulus. Any type of stress triggers physiological responses: your adrenaline output increases, your heart pumps faster, and your breathing rate goes up. These bodily responses are positive if you channel them over a short period of time, but if there is no release, however small, then stress becomes a negative force. The strain of negative stress manifests such symptoms as: chronic fatigue, headaches, a change in eating habits, inability to concentrate, general irritability, as well as other physical problems.

Each person should develop stress relief techniques that work for them. When you experience "people stress" consider that everyone is doing the best they are capable of doing. Remember you can't control the beliefs, attitudes and behavior of others so control yours instead. To cope with energy vampires- pessimists, gossips and blamers- Keep your energy up by not taking part in their games. Change the subject when the negativity gets too much even better surround with positive, joyful people.

Un-Scrambled

Names of the Famous Men Below:

1. raackb amaob
2. risch kocr
3. doourgth llahsram
4. zyaj
5. werdna guyon
6. eoj oiwsl
7. yra learsch
8. lleiuqhs olnea
9. cevin gnuoy
10. salgoud iewldr



Ms. Yvette J. Edwards,
RE of Whiting Hall

Staff members are the “heart beat” of Residence Life. They work with “developing community one floor at a time”

Mr. Robert Anderson, Jr. - R E
of Williams Hall



Meet Edwards and Anderson

No, it not a law firm. Ms Yvette Edwards and Robert Anderson, Jr. are Residence Educators with the Department of Residence Life. Ms. Yvette J. Edwards is the RE at Whiting Hall, a coed hall for upper-classmen. Ms. Edwards is a transformational thinker who believes in the impossible and refuses to surround herself with negativity. A Tidewater Virginia native, Ms. Edwards is a VSU alumna with a B.S. Industrial Technology Education and M. ED in Vocational Technology Education. In her free time she plays volleyball, works with the latest technology and watches foreign movies. She loves life, traveling and working with her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta, Incorporated. Her favorite quote is “Give it to God and Smile” because “The will of God will never take you where the grace of God will not protect you”. She encourages her residents to live, laugh and love because life is too short to waste on foolishness.

Her colleague, Mr. Robert Anderson, Jr. has 30 years of work experience in administration, management, counseling, advisement and program development for young men and women. Currently, Mr. Anderson is the Residence Educator of Williams Hall, a residence hall for freshmen males. A retired military man, Mr. Anderson has served as the senior leader and advisor to Commanders, an organizational and logistical expert and a manager of the health and welfare of troops. Following his meritorious military service, he served as a Program Disciplinary Instructor (PDI) for the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice. In his free time, Mr. Anderson enjoys family outings and working with his church. One of his many principles of life is from Proverb 22:6, “Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.
Aesop Greek Fabulist

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence; therefore is not an act, but a habit.
Aristotle

Answers to scrambled Names of Famous Black Men - Barack Obama; Chris Rock, Thurgood Marshall, Jayz, Andrew Young, Joe Louis, Ray Charles, Shaquille O’Neal, Vince Young and Douglas Wilder

Ruth Everson Baker - Editor
Loretta O. Speller - Co-editor

Men History Month Activities in the Department of Residence Life:

Tuesday, April 15, Nicholas Hall host “Rites of Passage becoming a Man in Islamic Nigeria” A Conversation with Professor Abdul O Omotosho, Ph.D. Visiting Fulbright Scholar, University of Jos, Nigeria - The Pavilion - VSU Student Village 6 p.m.- 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 16 @ 7 p.m. Williams Hall

Tuesday, April 22, 2008 Whiting Hall Lobby at 1:00 p.m. Relationship Discussion sponsored by Whiting and Langston Halls over Lunch - Panel Discussion - Panelist include Dr. Oliver Hill and Mr. Shawn Benjamin

Tuesday, April 22, Barrett-Jackson Man 2 Man - @ 6:30 p.m. in Pavilion - Presenter: Mr. William Stanley.

“Commit to Excellence” -- Men’s History Month Theme