

May 4, 2008
Volume 2, Issue 9



Briggs' Bytes

Hail State! Hail State!

Dear Trojans:

It is a wonderful time of year! What makes this such a wonderful time of the year? You, the graduating class of 2008!! You as a member of the graduating class of 2008 has successfully completed an academic degree, in a specialized field. Congratulations and Best Wishes!

What now? Are you looking for a job or a position with a company? The first and most important job search tip, for graduating seniors, is to visit the Career Services Office. The Career Services Offices provide students with personal career counseling, job and internship listings, job search assistance, access to recruiting programs, and career networking assistance.

Furthermore, the staff can help you create a resume, draft cover letters, and review your job search correspondence. If you are not sure about your future goals, stop by the Career Services Office on the 2nd floor of Memorial Hall, prior to leaving the University.

There are many resources available to help college graduates with a job search. You may consider alumni who have volunteered to help, visit college job sites that provide job listings and job search tips specifically for students, you'll find a variety of resources available to help with your job search on-line. Hopefully, you will find these tips helpful.

Again, Congratulations! The Department of Residence Life wishes you much success with your future endeavors. We look forward to seeing you at Homecoming 2008.

With Trojan Pride,

Dr. LaVerne J. Briggs
Director of Residence Life

Contents

Briggs' Bytes	1
Upcoming Events	1
Graduation	2
Graduation Trival	2
Graduating RAs	3
May is Mental Health Month	3
History of Mother's Day	4
High Blood Pressure	4

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Summer School Residence Halls open on May 16, 2008
- ◆ Summer School starts on May 19
- ◆ Memorial Day is May 26th

VIRGINIA STATES UNIVERSITY'S COMMENCEMENT

Noted actor Edward James Olmos will deliver the address at Virginia State University's Commencement on Sunday, May 11 at 9 a.m. in the Richmond Coliseum.

VSU expects to award nearly 600 undergraduate and graduate degrees. Also during Commencement, several faculty members and alumni will be recognized. These include: An Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters to Mr. Olmos; Alumnus of the Year to Dr. Porcher L. Taylor, Jr.; Faculty Emeritus to Mr. Barry Fox, Mrs. Yvette Robinson, Dr. Keshau Srivastava and Dr. Michael Sugg; and Distinguished Faculty Emeritus to Dr. Jean Cobbs.

Named by *Hispanic Magazine* as the nation's most influential Hispanic-American, Olmos is a respected actor and a passionate community activist. An award winner on Broadway (*Zoot Suit*), in film (*Stand and Deliver*, *Selena*, *Blade Runner*), and on television (*Miami Vice*, *American Family*), he currently stars on the Sci-Fi Channel's critically-acclaimed hit show *Battlestar Galactica*—which was recently named the most watched drama in the world. Olmos also directed HBO's *Walkout*, a drama that tells the true but little-known story of a group of Chicano students who staged a compelling 1968 walkout to protest the injustices of the public high-school system in East Los Angeles.

Certain restrictions have been placed upon what participants and guests may carry into the Richmond Coliseum. All visitors will pass through a security checkpoint and backpacks, large handbags, balloons and wrapped packages are prohibited. Flowers will be allowed.



Edward Olmos

"There is a good reason they call these ceremonies "commencement excelsis" – Graduation is not the end, it's the beginning" – Orrin Hatch

"An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest" Benjamin Franklin



Graduation Trivia

A graduation ceremony is a cultural tradition termed as a "rite of passage". A rite of passage is a ritual or a ceremony that marks one stage of a person's life to another. Marriage is the most commonly known "rite of passage". Rite of passage was termed by anthropologist Arnold van Gennep in 1909 who believed that passage rituals had 3 steps: separation from society, inculcation - transformation and return to society in the new status. The graduation ceremony dates back to the 12th century. Some feel it began with scholastic monks with their ceremonies in robes and has involved fitting the society in which it is celebrated in.

The American Heritage dictionary defines the **Baccalaureate** as: (1) The degree of Bachelor conferred upon graduates of most U.S. colleges and universities and (2) The Farewell address delivered in the form of a sermon to the graduating class of a High School or College. Legend states the Baccalaureate ceremony originated back to a statute dated 1432 at Oxford University, which required each bachelor to deliver a sermon in Latin as part of his academic exercise. Because the earliest universities in this country were founded primarily to educate ministers, the British practice of a Baccalaureate service continued. Today, the service is usually an interfaith one that celebrates the completion of an undergraduate academic career. The baccalaureate might be included in the graduation ceremony while for other school it is a separate event that takes place before the commencement. What is the difference between a commencement and a baccalaureate? The **Commencement** is when the graduates are handed their diplomas and walk across the stage and flip the tassels on their hats upon receiving their degrees and handshake.

During the ceremony, graduates wear "cap" and "gowns". Originally worn as a head covering in the cold schools of the middle ages, the hood is now used to identify a graduate's academic institution and degree. The velvet color on the outer edge of the hood denotes the graduate's degree - white for arts and letters, gold for science, and brown for fine arts. The shape and size of the hood and the sleeve design of the gown show the degree a student pursued:

- **Bachelor's Degree** gown has pointed sleeves and no hood
- **Master's Degree** gown has long, closed sleeves with arm slits and a narrow hood.
- **Doctor's Degree** has bell-shaped sleeves and a draped, wide hood.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING RESIDENT ASSISTANTS!!!!
THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!**

Barrett-Jackson -	Brandon Benjamin
Branch Hall -	Antionette Odubiyi and Jazzmin Williams
Eggleston Hall-	Danay Freeman
Howard Hall	Marissa Cameron and Takeiya Lee
Langston Hall	Alton Lightfoot* and Audrey Weaver
Memorial Hall	T'Ronda Lockhart
Taylor Williams	Danielle Williams
Whiting Hall	Sharee Coates and Leslie Lorquet**
Williams Hall	Terrell Bratcher

*Senior Class President

** Graduating RA with the highest GPA

May is Mental Health Month - Get Connected

Mental Health Month was created more than 50 years ago to raise awareness about mental health conditions and the importance of mental wellness for all. This year's theme is focused on an essential component of maintaining and protecting mental health and wellness: social connectedness. The tagline for this year's observance is "Get Connected". There are many ways of creating connections that support mental health. Let's explore them:

- Get connected to family and friends to feel close and supported.
- Get connected to your community/church to feel a sense of belonging and purpose
- Get connected to professional help to feel better when you're stressed and having trouble coping.

People today often struggle to keep up with the routine demands of life. In fact a recent national survey found that one in three people in America are living with extreme stress. Stress can come from a heavy workload, college or school pressures, daily traffic jams, dealing with health problems or injury, relationship troubles, parenting, taking care of someone who is ill, aging parents, financial concerns or major life transitions like moving or changing jobs.. Whatever the source, often one can not change the things that cause stress but they can improve how they deal with stress. Social support can help you get through stressful times by providing a sense of belonging, self-worth and security. These are important to humans who are social beings –thus connections are important.

How can people connect? Here are some tips to help you create, keep and strengthen vital connections in life.

Connect to Family and Friends

- Make a short list of friends and family members who are supportive and positive. Also include a list of people you feel the need to stay in touch with regularly as sibling, aging relatives. Once a list is made then make a commitment to call, email, send a card or visit with them on a schedule that is reasonable. Try to reach out to make at least one emotional connection a day, but plan realistically and adjust.
- Share what's on your mind honestly and openly. Talk about concerns in a straight forward way, but try to be constructive.
- Do self – examination – identify your needs, challenges and issues. Work on self improvement so that others will enjoy connecting with you.
- Don't just talk – Listen. Check on someone else's day, Listening to other people's concerns can often shed light on one's own challenges. Listening shows that one values other's thoughts and ideas.
- Make Social Plans- create opportunities to strengthen relationship with fun and interesting things.

Connect to the Community – Volunteer and use local support groups. Get the right match and get involved

Connect to Professional Help – If you feel overwhelmed, unable to cope and feel as though the stress in your life is affecting how you function. Don't let it go unchecked. Help is available. Visit the counseling center and/or call 1-800-273-talk (8255)

The History of Mother's Day

The United States celebrates Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May. In the United States, Mother's Day was loosely inspired by the British day and was imported by social activist Julia Ward Howe after the American Civil War. It was intended as a call to unite women against war. In 1870, she wrote the Mother's Day Proclamation as a call for peace and disarmament. However, Howe failed in her attempt to get formal recognition of a Mother's Day for Peace. Her idea was by influenced Ann Jarvis, a young Appalachian homemaker, who worked to improve sanitation. She organized women throughout the Civil War to work for better sanitary conditions for both sides. When Jarvis died in 1907, her daughter, Anna Jarvis, started the crusade to found a memorial day for women. The first such Mother's Day was celebrated in Grafton, West Virginia on May 10, 1908 in the church where the elder Ann Jarvis had taught Sunday School. From there, the custom caught on spreading eventually to 45 states. In 1912, President Woodrow Wilson declared the first national Mother's Day; a day for American citizens to show the flag in honor of those mothers whose sons had died in war. The concept of honoring mothers expanded. Today all mothers and women who embraced the concept of mother are honor and appreciated. Mother's Day is celebrated differently throughout the world yet the concept that "mothers" deserve recognition is becoming a cultural universal.

Jewish Proverb: A mother understands what a child does not say.

Spanish Proverb: An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy.

Irish Proverb: A man loves his sweetheart the most, his wife the best, but his mother the longest.

What can be said about mothers?

Zora Neale Hurston: Mama exhorted her children at every opportunity to "jump at de sun". We might not land on the sum, but at least we would get off the ground.

Oprah Winfrey: Biology is the least of what makes someone a mother

National High Blood Pressure Education Month



Your Guide to Lowering High Blood Pressure



Learn about Blood Pressure and take steps to lower and control – High Blood Pressure

- ♥ **Follow a healthy eating pattern – lots of fruits, vegetables and moderate portions.**
- ♥ **Reduce salt and sodium in your diet – put the salt shaker down use herbs and spices**
- ♥ **Maintain a healthy weight**
- ♥ **Be physically active**
- ♥ **Limit alcohol intake**
- ♥ **Stop smoking**
- ♥ **Know the numbers – 120/70**

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