



This newsletter is dedicated to the students and faculty that participated in the College's Center for Entrepreneurship visit to London and Paris.

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### GREATER!

*"VSU has always been committed to internationalization and allowing our students to study abroad so they can be global ambassadors for the university. We pride ourselves on providing transformative educational experiences that will have a lasting impact on our Trojan community."*

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

*"I can think of few experiences as valuable as traveling the world being introduced to different cultures and practices."*

Dr. Tia A. Minnis, Interim Provost

*"From Morocco to Thailand to China to Brazil to Mexico to England to France to Japan to Germany, students in the College obtain experience across the globe."*

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

## 2023: THE FALL SEMESTER IN PICTURES



The ladies celebrated Halloween by hosting a pumpkin painting contest.



Quentin Gray attended the RVATech gala in Richmond.



Students visited Baltimore for the HBCU Marketplace.



Daisha Wyatt attended a conference in Atlanta.



Faye Izatt studied abroad in London and Paris. (above)







Subhash Jaini was among over 200 guest instructors this semester.

John Vitoulkas visited with students for Henrico Day. Above.

Jayahna and Monica are all smiles.

Drive Smart brought impairment goggles to remind students to be smart.

Friendship is forever. Below.



Josiah shows off his conference credentials, Adaisha is chummy with NBC12, Fesaija and Mason laugh, Marquis coaches and Liyla and Andreanna pose. Below.



## London and Paris

An experience of a lifetime is how students in the College described the opportunity to study abroad first in London and then in Paris. Made possible by a donation from one of the College's partners, students like Ariel Simmons (Marketing major) was thrilled for the opportunity. Among the most recent accomplishments of student entrepreneurs in the College, Ariel said, *"I was so pleased to be among the undergraduate entrepreneurs who were afforded access to a unique learning experience outside of the country. I am confident that as a big an impression Europe made on us we made on it."*



## Friend or Foe?

The College's students are grappling with precisely that question. Specifically, will Artificial Intelligence (AI) constitute a net plus or instead a net minus for business and for the world's 7.8 billion inhabitants. Six ladies in the College's Information Systems Department participated in an Undergraduate Bridge AI initiative teaming with six ladies from Appomattox Regional Governor's School. The latter is among the most selective high schools in Virginia comprised of students from Richmond, Chesterfield, Petersburg, etc. Together, the twelve built an AI solution(s) for a regional bank, i.e. Primis in concert with the Bank's Chief Information Officer Cody Shefflett. The objective of the STEM challenge was to "help a bank optimize pricing strategies for various financial products and services.....applying machine learning and data analysis to maximize profitability while maintaining competitiveness." [continued below]



However, not lost on anyone is the big picture and what AI may or may not mean relevant to job displacement, industry disruption and if you believe James Cameron's movies a threat to humanity. Okay, so Terminator may be a stretch but for sure the undergraduates and high school students understand that they are living in what the Chinese Proverb describes, "interesting times." Artificial Intelligence is likely to change the world in profound ways arguably unlike any invention before it absent maybe fire and the wheel. For better or worse, it is mission critical that Generation Z and Generation Alpha not be saddled with an AI that they had no say in creating and why VSU/ARGS and Primis Bank are affording students a seat at the table. It should be noted that among the learning outcomes is to "address ethical concerns related to pricing optimization, fairness, and transparency in AI-driven decision-making."

## Hope because of Hopewell

It has become a habit for students at Hopewell High School to visit the College to participate in hands-on workshops, to be heard, to hone their skills and to exchange hope with the College's students. Grateful!

## Dream Life

Dr. Arthur L. Wharton III (Accounting Professor) published a book entitled, *Transform Your Mind and Change Your Life: A Guided Journey Toward Living Your Dream Life*. He drew on his own experience overcoming obstacles and transforming his life. He candidly shares the pain and frustration of his long and elusive search for a meaningful career, financial sufficiency, and personal satisfaction. In his book, he distills the lessons he learned during his twenty-two years of wandering in what he calls “The Wilderness” of one unsuccessful endeavor after another, until finally he realized his true purpose: being a college professor.

## Howard

The College of Business partnered with Howard University this semester relevant to a Howard Day including sending a bus of students to the D.C. campus to attend a Financial Alliance for Racial Equity (FARE) conference and the same day hosting Howard staff for a workshop in Singleton Hall. Like partnerships with other institutions including the University of Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth University, the College’s outreach continues to bear fruit for students. Said Janay Samuel, (Marketing major), *“I am from D.C. so it’s rewarding to know that my College partners with a school back home.”*

## More Pictures







## In anticipation of Graduation

Brandon Anderson (Information Systems major) said, *“I did a lot since arriving at VSU including a 4.0 G.P.A., launched my BXclusive fitness company, participated in the FBI Cyber Collegiate Academy, worked full-time for DOD, tutored K-12 students relevant to STEM, represented VSU at conferences, and mentored scores of my colleagues. I have a lot of reasons to celebrate. When only seven, I lost my mom to domestic violence and because she was a single mom I grew up a ward of the state. I did everything to pursue my dreams but it was at VSU that everything began to come to fruition.”*



### RPS

A big thanks to Richmond Public Schools Superintendent Jason Kamras for guest teaching this semester. Students benefited from a hands-on exercise about budget prioritization.

### Conferences

Students this semester visited AfroTech in Austin, HBCU Marketplace in Baltimore and MY HBCU Matters Summit in Atlanta just to name a few conferences.

## New Wheels

Thanks to the College’s Center for Entrepreneurship, faculty/staff and students are the beneficiary of a brand new shiny passenger van with sleek messaging on the side of the vehicle. Already, students along with faculty and staff used it for a trip to a financial literacy conference at the National Harbor. One could say that both the College and the Center for Entrepreneurship are now mobile!



## Swagger

As soon as she arrived in Singleton students began to recognize actress and model Catherine Owens. A lead on the TV show Swagger, Catherine guest taught students relevant to brand and shared her experiences both on the silver screen and on the runway.

## Here is the Bride

Aishata Wann (Accounting major and 2020 grad) made such an impression on the College that at her wedding one could say it was kind of a reunion of sorts. Alumni along with faculty and staff attended the big celebration outside of D.C. Jonathan Young (Director of Corporate Relations) said, *“I wouldn’t have missed Aishata’s wedding for anything.”* Aishata’s accounting professor Dr. Art Wharton added, *“Aisha makes us proud. She is at Deloitte and she represents us most well.”*



## Impact

It would be a very very long read if all of the many hundreds of stories that materialize in a semester in The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business were to be told so instead the following page will but include a news-brief to encourage readers to contact the College to learn more.

**Students Prepare Taxes:** Accounting majors again this semester hosted the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program and prepared taxes for scores of persons in the community.

**American Marketing Association is Official:** The College's marketing majors formally launched an American Marketing Association (AMA) chapter officially recognized by the national umbrella group.

**Students Win Pitch Competitions:** Undergraduates again this semester participated in pitch competitions including e.g. Aniya Omopariola (Marketing major) who won money relevant to a U.S. Veteran event.

**Center for Entrepreneurship Offers Certifications:** The College's Center for Entrepreneurship afforded students access to certifications relevant to insurance and all at no cost to the students!

**Industry in Singleton:** The College hosted over 250 industry representatives in Singleton this semester to guest teach and to coach and to mentor.

**Faculty Celebrate Research:** College faculty regularly convened to champion colleagues' research and to learn more about developments including but not limited to Artificial Intelligence.

**Student Invited to Support Foundation:** Isaac Savage (Accounting major) was invited to provide support to the VSU Foundation and to assist in decision making for the Foundation's finances.

**Faculty/Staff Photo Shoot:** The College's faculty/staff participated in a photoshoot including headshots for all faculty and staff. A big thanks to Digital Image House.

**Partnership for Petersburg:** Students again this semester helped host the Governor and his Cabinet for a visit to Petersburg to celebrate the Commonwealth's partnership with the City.

**College Jam:** Students participated in the ChamberRVA College Jam hosted for VCU/UR/VUU/VSU in Richmond and interfaced with employers.

**Scholarships:** Students earned all kinds of scholarships from varying organizations accruing thousands of dollars to put toward their education.

**In the Press:** The College's faculty/staff/students were featured on TV or in newspapers more than forty times this semester.

**Thanksgiving:** The Student Advisory Board dressed up the building to celebrate Thanksgiving and the American Marketing Association hosted dinner in Singleton including serving a twenty-pound ham!

**Jobs and Internships:** Students earned employment to places too many to cite herein but suffice it to say are doing very well and excited for their next pursuits.

## Yet More Pictures

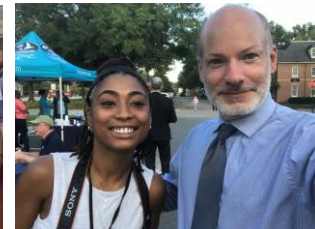


Faculty and Staff celebrate camaraderie. Above.

Rebecca Fender at Spider Management hosted Adaisha Jordan for a shadow visit. Below.



Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University





## Visit from Congress

Virginia State University welcomed Congresswoman and Petersburg native Jennifer McClellan to campus on Wednesday, August 30, as part of its Black Business Month celebration. Congresswoman McClellan spoke to students enrolled in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business and learned more about the VSU Center for Entrepreneurship, whose programs help support minority entrepreneurs and small business owners. *"This is an amazing place that is helping not only the entrepreneurs of tomorrow but the entrepreneurs of today and helping to connect with resources to be a coach, provide resources that they specifically need not only to launch successfully but to thrive going forward,"* said McClellan. McClellan also had the opportunity to meet student entrepreneurs who participated in the Minority Small Business Launch Center program. The VSU Center for Entrepreneurship at the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business is an education, research, networking, and business planning hub for entrepreneurs in Central Virginia and beyond, launched in September of 2016. Its mission is to assist the region's large minority, military and veteran, and student populations with launching and operating successful, socially responsible ventures that lead to economic growth for our regions. *This story was first published at [www.vsu.edu](http://www.vsu.edu)*



## FBI

If you are going to learn cyber security, who better to learn it from than the FBI. This semester, that is exactly what a group of students did by week after week visiting Richmond to participate in the FBI Cyber Collegiate Academy. Among the participants was Tamir Campbell (Information Systems major) who said, *“I really learned a lot and am grateful”*.



## French is Fashion

Emanuel Harris (Marketing major) is a fashion designer and among his achievements is inclusion in a fashion show at the French Embassy in Washington D.C. Said Emanuel, *“I am really honored to have been invited to participate. I am excited for what is next in my career.”*



## Message from the Dean

It has been a good semester, in fact, a good year in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business. What is to say that already has not except perhaps thank you! Thank you to our students, alumni, faculty and staff, industry partners, and of course the University Leadership. We would be unable to do any of what is included in this newsletter absent your support.

From faculty publishing a book and journal articles to attending conferences, to serving on committees, to visiting scores of K-12 schools, to students starting businesses, to volunteering countless hours, to earning scholarships, to securing jobs, to alumni donating, to guest teaching, to championing our brand, to industry hiring our graduates, to providing curriculum consultation, to hosting workshops, to University Leadership providing resources, to celebrating our wins and to piloting initiatives with us; we are in debt. Thank you!

At the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business, we are indeed grateful, we are enthusiastic for what has been accomplished, we are excited for what comes next, and we are firm believers that Greater Happens Here at Virginia State University. I trust you enjoyed reading this newsletter documenting the semester and we look forward to seeing you in 2024. Thank you for what you do!

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

