



Fall 2025 Issue

Greater Happens Here

www.vsu.edu/business/



Emmanuel Omojokun, Ph.D.
Dean

This newsletter is dedicated to retiring Dean, Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun after nearly four decades at VSU.

GREATER!

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"It is with deep appreciation for his dedicated service that I share that after 37 years of exceptional leadership and unwavering commitment to excellence, our esteemed Dean of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business, Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, will retire, effective July 1, 2026.

Dr. Omojokun's legacy at Virginia State University is defined by innovation, service, and an unwavering commitment to his students. His work has shaped not only the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business but the University as a whole.

Virginia State University owes a debt of gratitude to Dr. Omojokun for his extraordinary leadership, visionary spirit, and devotion to student success. His transformative impact exemplifies how Greater Happens Here."

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

"Your visionary leadership of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business has left an enduring legacy ... you have exemplified what it means to lead with purpose, honor and excellence."

Dr. Tia A. Minnis, Provost

Congrats on Your Career Dean!

Often credited as the man that brought the Internet to Virginia State University (VSU), Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun's accomplishments since then and in his 37 year tenure in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business includes the recent launch of a M.B.A. Program, recognition of the College by a national publication as the best business school in the nation at an HBCU and an enrollment boom that has grown in five years from 535 to more than 900 students in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business.

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun announced that after nearly four decades at VSU that he will retire as Dean of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business effective July 1, 2026. Affectionately referred to as Dr. O by students and faculty/staff alike, he will after 12 years as Dean retire to spend more time with his wife and children and grandchildren.

From when in the 1990s he disrupted campus with the big dig even temporarily halting telephone service to lay the underground infrastructure for the Internet at VSU, it was obvious to everyone that Dr. O was a transformative leader intent on bringing big change to this institution of higher learning. Since then, Dr. Omojokun has held countless leadership positions often among a select group of persons to make hiring recommendations for Provosts, Deans, Vice Presidents, etc. He has personally secured more than \$25 million in research grants and published many journal articles. Dr. O's credits include launching a cyber security program, a Center for Entrepreneurship, a Student Success Fund, and supporting initiatives that would earn national, regional and local accolades. In his tenure at VSU, the now College of Business was recognized by the Governor multiple times including for transformative leadership.

Dr. Omojokun has been profiled on NBC and Fox for his College's accomplishments, served multiple times as an accreditor as it relates to reaccreditation of other business schools around the country, and taught and mentored countless students, faculty and staff. Perhaps what is less known is that he was invited multiple times by other institutions of higher learning to assume leadership in other places but because of his love for VSU always respectfully declined, and that he was known to personally contribute to student, faculty and staff causes and needs. Beyond VSU, it should be noted that the College of Business is widely recognized by VSU alumni, higher ed, K-12 school districts, industry, etc. as a flagship College of Business in the Commonwealth of Virginia. From hosting 250 companies a month in the classroom to lead experiential learning exercises to earning successive reaccreditation from the prestigious AACSB to graduating young professionals that at least partly because of Singleton Hall are afforded the opportunity to chase their dreams, the College of Business under Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun's leadership and his tenure has accrued a reputation as among the best of the best. It's perhaps why everyone from the sitting Governor to a sitting U.S. Senator to a sitting Congresswoman to scores of CEOs to entrepreneurs, etc. have visited Singleton Hall to see firsthand what has materialized because of Dr. Omojokun and his leadership.

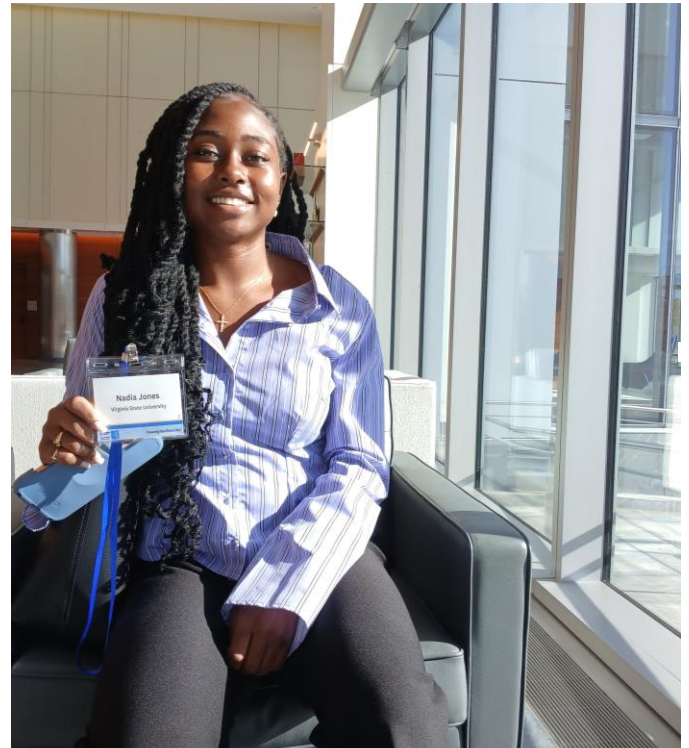
He was recognized by the VSU Board of Visitors after serving multiple years on the Board representing faculty. The Board issued a resolution to be maintained permanently in the archives for his experience, wisdom and leadership qualities. At home, he is a great husband and father of five children with three M.D.s, one Ph.D. in Computer Science and another computer scientist along with 9 grandchildren.

All of the preceding is to say that the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business will sorely miss Dr. O upon retirement next summer as will the countless persons at VSU that have been positively impacted by this gentle giant. Congrats to Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun on retirement after 37 years at VSU!

2025: THE FALL SEMESTER IN PICTURES



Amyia Morgan won \$2,500 for her business from WBENC.



Nadia Jones attended a Dominion Energy leadership conference.



Micah Stewart made new friends in Richmond at a corporate party.



Zania Lawton attended a dinner in Richmond courtesy of industry friend Steve Farbstein. (above)

Justin, Gabby and Maleca visited the accounting firm BDO in Richmond. (left)







Louis Dabney and Tradarius Harper talk shop at a SHRM conference at the University of Richmond. Rylee Finney helps host an industry friend on campus.

Willie Randall guest teaches and hosts a lunch and learn.

Michael Hawkins helps host prospective students.

Ajee and Justice were high school friends. Below.



Tania and Lauryn are pals, Nakiyah hosts Santia, learning is best in the sun, Monique visits with accountants and small group learning is preferred. Below.



Future in Film

Aszwan Hite (Marketing major) has developed quite the brand on campus relevant to filming and producing top notch videos but could he realistically capture the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business on camera and turn it around for dissemination in 24 hours? Said the film genius, *"If I didn't believe I could I would have respectfully decline the invite."* What materialized because of Hite's work features students along with faculty/staff and has been disseminated on and off campus. To watch, click here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K83dgWlegIU>



Teaching in Taiwan

Bryan Hobbs (Management major) is becoming quite the globe trotter including a recent visit to Tanzania to participate on a debate team but perhaps most rewarding was the opportunity this semester to teach elementary children in Taiwan. Said Bryan of the experience, *"I encourage all of my colleagues at VSU to travel abroad and to give back! VSU affords students so many opportunities, it would make no sense to do anything but capitalize!"* In fact, Bryan has become a big champion in Singleton for studying abroad regularly educating his peers on how and why to spend part of their career in the College of Business abroad!



TAIWAN

Curb Side Appeal

Students in the College's Professional Enhancement/Career Launch curriculum again this semester 1) retrieved litter from campus and 2) planted flowers/spread mulch to improve aesthetics around Singleton Hall but also to affirm that the best classroom is an outdoor classroom. Few antidotes are as effective relevant to mental wellbeing as sunlight/planting/a little exercise. It also is an opportunity to give back!



Northwestern, the feeling is Mutual

It would be a long long long list if this publication were to document all of the industry friends that in a semester contribute in some way to the College but it's worth noting that few companies jumped in like Northwestern Mutual in the fall. For sure, the College's relationship with the firm is 15 years old and includes a lot of accomplishments but it was this semester when Santia McLaughlin (Recruiter) on a recommendation of her colleague Brandon Byerson (Financial Advisor) decided to go all in. Santia hired two interns including Lauryn Dildy (Management major) and Justin Francis (Accounting major) and is visiting Singleton so frequently that she was even mistaken for faculty/staff! A mainstay at the College's clubs along with in the classroom, Santia is owning the adage that repetition is everything!

Industry Advice

The College's Industry Advisory Council comprised of among Singleton's principal stakeholders convened in September and reviewed the University's new strategic plan and capital outlay initiatives. Regarding the latter, corporate allies learned of the University's plan to invest \$700 million in facilities. Pertaining to the former, attendees were invited to weigh in on the University going all in on Artificial Intelligence. It should be noted that the University won a \$2 million grant to facilitate and a College of Business survey of industry obtained nearly 200 responses.

More Pictures





It's a Wrap

Bob Obiora (Accounting major) welcomes graduation and is of course prepared to celebrate but perhaps what is more, he is grateful that he departs with a job! Bob will relocate to Maryland and commence his career in accounting at Allmond & Company. The prominent firm too is enthusiastic for Bob to start and



to join his predecessors who too did big things when in Singleton. Said Bob, *"I am grateful to the College and to Allmond & Company and I look forward to coming back to take Jonathan Young (Director of Corporate Relations) up on his offer to guest teach in his class!"*

Energy

Five accomplished students in the College attended an energy summit at Dominion Energy and learned how the future is in energy.



Thank You

An enormous thanks to Church & Dwight for investing another \$50k in student scholarships realizing in now a \$300k investment in the future!

Pearls and Ties

A time honored tradition at the beginning of a new academic year regards freshmen receiving pearls if a young lady and a necktie if a young man. This August was no different and scores of business students arrived, many for the first time, in Singleton to be bestowed their gifts but more importantly to set the tone for their next four years.



AI

The College in collaboration with the University is putting a lot of eggs in the artificial intelligence basket; this fall the College solicited feedback from nearly 200 companies relevant to developing new artificial intelligence curriculum including credentialing students that matriculate in the training.

One More Time

Frequent readers of this publication are familiar with the College's relationship with outgoing Governor Glenn Youngkin who guest taught in Singleton, hosted business students at his residence and regularly interfaced with them around town. This fall, students had one last opportunity when the Governor talked for probably 20 minutes with students like Cameron Davis (Management major) about business. It should be noted that Youngkin's successor is by no means a stranger to VSU; already she has been on campus and the College congrats her on her win and wishes her much success!



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.

Auction: Zania Lawton (Management major) attended a corporate dinner and auction in Richmond courtesy of industry friend Steve Farbstein at Pace Equity.

Henrico: The College again hosted Henrico County for an opportunity for students to interface with scores of professionals representative of nearly every county department.

Center for Entrepreneurship: The College welcomed a new staffer, i.e. Rufus Tyler who attended the College when in undergrad.

SHRM: Students attended a Society of Human Resource Management conference at the University of Richmond.

C-Suite: The College again partnered with the University of Richmond to host students at the Robins School of Business for C-Suite conversations and dinner.

Hotel Petersburg: Students again this semester attended corporate networking at Petersburg's newly renovated Hotel Petersburg and enjoyed the best view of campus from atop the rooftop restaurant.

Expo: The College's students attended Career Service's career expo and benefited from meeting with scores of companies.

Photo Shoot: The College's American Marketing Association again hosted a photo shoot for headshots.

Real Estate: Students continued to attend real estate networking events in Colonial Heights.

AfroTech: Information Systems students attended the AfroTech conference in Houston.

IMA: Accounting students attended the IMA conference in Cleveland.

BDO: Accounting students visited with accounting professionals at BDO's corporate offices.

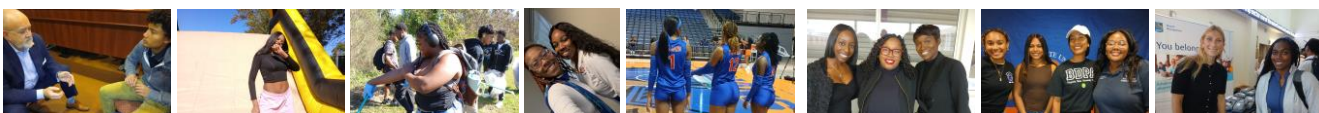
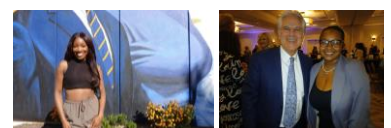
Woo Woos: As always, the College is well represented on the University's cheer team.

Women: The College again partnered with WBENC to afford women entrepreneurship training culminating in winning capital for their businesses.

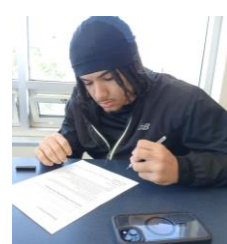
MBA: The College launched new initiatives to champion grad students including an opportunity for students to join a non-profit board and to benefit from access championed in the fall by both of the Commonwealth's U.S. Senators.

FARE: The College hosted the Financial Alliance for Representation and Empowerment on campus.

Yet More Pictures









Experiential Learning

The Chinese philosopher Confucius approximately 2,500 years ago said I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I experience and I understand. That truism is as real today as it was two millennia ago. In the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business, experience in learning or “experiential” learning is the cornerstone of the College’s small group role-play with industry curriculum. Facilitated by industry, in a semester 250 companies lead undergrads in hands-on exercises pertinent to sales, cold calls, conflict resolution, customer is always right, branding, memos and reports, etc. Born out of an industry focus group now 15 years ago, the objectives regard refining soft skills, augmenting career awareness and developing real world skills not often learned in a traditional classroom. In a semester over 200 students participate in what constitutes an opportunity to build a robust portfolio of industry connections. Students at the end of the semester celebrate all of the practical skills that they developed in 15 weeks though the undergrads are not the sole learners. Instead, a recurring theme regards the industry representatives sharing that they learned as much from the students as the students from industry. Often described as the most rewarding experience in the week, the now thousands of industry representatives are imploring other institutions of higher learning to emulate Virginia State University.







Rising Star

Students in the College of Business definitely concur with the University's decision to award Shaun Gao (Associate Professor) in Information Systems the Faculty Rising Star award. In fact, students probably every day celebrate Gao and brag on him for his optimism, generosity and even green thumb! Gao's office is almost a greenhouse! Congrats Dr. Gao and well deserved!



Big Check

A big congrats to Shelby Moore (Accounting major) and graduating senior on winning \$10,000 in capital for her business. Shelby was afforded the opportunity to pitch her business to the Southern Virginia Chamber of Commerce and didn't disappoint!



Message from the Dean

I am eternally grateful to Virginia State University and to the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business for affording me the opportunity the last 37 years to call this very special place home. Indeed, the future is bright. Though I am retiring I look forward to learning about all of our student/faculty and staff/alumni continuing accomplishments. Indeed, Greater Happens Here! Hail State!

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean



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