

Spring 2020 Issue



Spring Semester in Pictures — 2, 3
Global Pandemic Response — 3
Grateful — 3
Going Forward — 3
VSU Lobby Day at the State Capitol — 4
Leadership and Achievement — 4
Working Remotely — 4
Graduation, In their own words — 5
Focus Group — 5
Deserving Recognition — 5
Strong Men & Women — 5
Johns Hopkins University — 5
Swan Lake — 5, 6
MVP — 6
Students on Reel — 6
More Pictures — 7
Thank You! — 8
Loss of a Saint — 8
Adulting — 8
Virginia21 — 9
Labor Market Blues — 9
Faculty Exchange — 9
When We Could Still Travel — 9

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Black Excellence — 10
CDC — 10
More Pictures — 10
Curriculum Consultation — 10
A Transformative Experience — 11
Student Accomplishments — 12
Presidential Leadership — 12
Until When We Can — 12
Moguls in the Making — 13
Message from the Dean — 13

This newsletter is dedicated to all of the victims of COVID-19 all around the world. We miss you and remember you.

REFLECTIONS ON THE TIMES

“In spite of this pandemic and the uncertainty that we may face, each of you continues to rise up to ensure that our Virginia State University remains vibrant and well-positioned to continue a transformative educational experience for our students. No matter what your role or your position, you are an integral part of what it takes to make us great each and every day.”

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

“Together, we can survive this season of uncertainty while continuing to build responsible learners. Thank you for all you do.”

Dr. Donald Palm, Provost

“Thank you for all that you do. Please be safe, stay healthy, and know that we are here for you.”

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

2020: THE SPRING SEMESTER IN PICTURES



Bethlehem participates in a career expo in D.C.



Destiny, Mychala, and Kyla take in the view out the James River.



Students visited the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond to network.



Imani and Beyonce shadow alum Chanel Brown.



Manny shadows at NBC.



Marcus participated in the CIAA.



Hugh Steiner and Keith Boswell work with Christine.



Unique stays healthy because she works hard.



Students participate in a session with Johns Hopkins U.



Jeremiah learns from industry instructors.



An evening at ballet in Richmond.



Benjamin in S. Korea before the pandemic.



Destiny is a scholar. Amaya/Marcus.

Global Pandemic Response

The health and safety of students at the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University constitutes the number one priority. Following the lead of the University including President Makola Abdullah and Provost Donald Palm, the College in March moved all classes to remote instruction in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business encourages:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.



Grateful

A big thanks to the College's students, faculty, and staff for being so accomodating during these trying times. The patience and resilience of the College is remarkable and most commendable.

Going Forward

President Makola Abdullah addressed the University community to provide information and to address questions regarding the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. The President while providing critical information also aimed to reassure members of the community. In his address, the President spoke to what going forward will look like. Among the actions taken included moving instruction to online, suspending all in-person events, closing residency halls, etc.



For additional information, click here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CYcPDnX1gE&feature=youtu.be>

VSU Lobby Day at the State Capitol

The College and the University have no greater ambassadors than its students. For that reason, the College invited undergraduates to spend a full day at Mr. Jefferson's house lobbying state legislators along with Governor Ralph Northam. The objective regarded advocating for their institution to include pressing for more financial resources relevant to financial aid, capital outlay, etc. The question regards how did the students do? Well, the proof is in the pudding as the General Assembly sent to the Governor historic levels of funding for the University. On their success, Jaylin Crawley (Management major) said, *"I was very proud of my colleagues for what we accomplished."* Alex Wade (Management Information Systems major) added, *"It was a busy day but we accomplished a lot evidenced in the way that state leaders listened attentively to what we had to share with them!"*



Leadership and Achievement

When Dr. Michael Edwards at the Leadership and Achievement Academy in Richmond was considering where to recruit talented undergrads to lead educational programming for elementary students in the region, he knew to first contact The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University. What resulted was the hire of Christine Bautista (Management Information Systems major) and Reem Idris (Marketing major). What the ladies couldn't have known at the time was however that they would be instrumental in building curriculum and touching lives all the while flying the flag for the College and for VSU in the region's K-12 schools. Way to go ladies!!!

Working Remotely

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University is recognized for its traditions like e.g. students in professional dress attire but at the same time the College is celebrated for its innovation like e.g. its many awards from the Governor. Working remotely this semester was necessitated by the pandemic and like so much of innovation, it is necessity that is the engine of inspiration. So, we thought that we would remind readers of some of the College's other innovations including its trading laboratory, shadow program, student-run clothing consignment store, cyber-security minor, small group role-play with industry curriculum, entrepreneurship center, mentoring program, digital learning and textbooks, integrated curriculum, students on reel videos, etc. If the College has learned anything from past innovation, it is that this pandemic while changing things for the moment is not insurmountable but like so many other occasions will be met and bested by the College's students/faculty/staff/alums/industry.

Graduation, In their own words

Well, what can be said of graduation from The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University in 2020? *“It is hard to depart after four years on these terms but I am forever in debt to the College and to the University”* said D’Angela Jones (Management major). Destiny Smith (Accounting major) added *“I miss VSU already but am excited for when we can all return after the virus and celebrate in person.”* Hirut Sheta (Marketing major) contributed, *“I am excited for my next chapter even as we are all a little anxious for what comes next. I suppose we are a little more anxious than most graduating classes.”* Unique Lotman (Accounting major) said, *“I am just very proud of us all!”*



Strong Men & Women

Kyle Jacobs (MISY minor) and David Buchanan (Management major) participated in Dominion Energy’s Strong Men & Women event in Richmond including networking with hundreds of attendees. Among those that the gentlemen networked with was former Governor Terry McAuliffe who took time to chat with the undergrads. For Kyle and David, both of whom are interested in politics, the experience was *“exhilarating”* said David.



Johns Hopkins University

A budding relationship with one of the premier institutions of higher learning in the U.S. has materialized in students participating in a Summer Business Academy and this semester hosting Johns Hopkins for a lunch and learn with twenty-five students interested in earning a M.B.A.

Swan Lake

Thanks to the generosity of Hugh Steiner at Morgan Stanley, students in the College were afforded the opportunity to along with their closest 3,000 friends attend a ballet performance of Swan Lake at the Carpenter Theater. What commenced with a nearly three hour display of beauty and grace adjourned with a networking event that included scores of persons. Said Chamyra Riddick (Management major), *“I participated in ballet most of my life so it was a real treat to attend. A big thanks to Hugh Steiner and Morgan Stanley.”*



Focus Group

Twelve marketing majors this semester participated in a University initiative relevant to branding the institution when they provided candid consultation to a marketing company leading a focus group. The consensus was that VSU is a transformative and most special place.

Student Produced

Kyren Clemons (Marketing major) and Benjamin Petway (Marketing minor) produced a 16 second commercial featuring their colleague at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ci9JzE682B8>

Jahmeil Wright (Marketing major) added, *“I love ballet! I had a blast.”* Hirut Sheta (Marketing major) contributed, *“I really think it is cool how Morgan Stanley invests in VSU students. Hugh Steiner guest teaches at VSU, he invited us to ballet, and he facilitated an introduction to his colleague Gerty Simon who does recruiting for Morgan Stanley. Jonathan Young in the College encouraged me to connect with Gerty and we did just that in Charlotte during the CIAA tournament.”*

MVP

Congratulations to Kyla Frank (Management major) on earning Most Valuable Player at the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Indoor Track Championships. A graduating senior, Kyla will be missed for many accomplishments in the classroom, on the track, and in the halls of power where she interned at the General Assembly along with leading voter registration initiatives.



Students on Reel



Helena Abu and Mia Bennett are best friends from T.C. Williams in Alexandria.

Both aspire to be marketing managers.

To watch: click here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_vkyRjN9e4



Sierra Robinson and Jade Chapman are friends and both first-generation students Jade from Baltimore and Sierra from California.

Both marketing majors, they are aspiring entrepreneurs.

To watch: click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrul61hoFTc>



Aaliyah Duah started in the College early at the age of seventeen and is motivated by law and giving back to her community.

Aaliyah is a Management major.

To watch: click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NM31oDxNVMY>

Students on Reel constitutes an unscripted, unrehearsed, and unfiltered or “real” film “reel” of our students. Students are asked to provide their elevator speech on camera and the results are shared with all students/faculty/staff. What is enclosed above is but a small sampling of the inventory. In the College, it is all about always being prepared and about simultaneously celebrating our students!

More Pictures



Thank You!

To all of the persons that had committed to guest teaching and were scheduled for the second half of the semester and to all of the companies that had arranged to visit to recruit and to network we can only say thank you and that we look forward to seeing you again soon. Thank you for what you do for our students!!

Loss of a Saint

Virginia State University (VSU) mourns the loss of a donor and loyal son of the University, Marvin C. Allmond, CPA, CFE. Mr. Allmond was a member of the class of 1972 and the managing partner at Allmond Company, LLC, an accounting firm in Landover, Maryland.

Mr. Allmond was a generous donor to the University and demonstrated his support through his investment into the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business (RFLCB) and VSU. In April 2019, Singleton Hall Auditorium was named after Mr. Allmond for his financial contributions to the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business and his dedication to hire and train VSU students. Mr. Allmond not only invested his financial resources, but he also served on the RFLCB Alumni Advisory Board, helping to enhance and strengthen the college. Mr. Allmond was also instrumental in assisting with restoring the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation for the RFLCB.

Through his firm, he provided several career opportunities to VSU graduates in entry-level positions. In a 2018 interview with VSU, Mr. Allmond shared, “This shows that we have some confidence in the accounting program at VSU and have identified a good number of graduates that can fit into the culture we build at Allmond & Company.”

While at VSU, Mr. Allmond had the opportunity to be one of the first VSU students to sit for the certified public accountant (CPA) exam while enrolled in college. He earned his bachelor’s degree in accounting from VSU, a master’s in management from Central Michigan University and studied Business Management at Old Dominion University.

Virginia State University extends their thoughts and sympathy to his wife Mrs. Linda Allmond, his sons, Tyrone and Jason, and the entire Allmond family. The University honors the life, work and commitment of Mr. Allmond.

This story originally appeared at www.vsu.edu



It is with heavy heart and sadness that I announce the passing of Mr. Marvin C. Allmond, CPA. The Singleton Hall Auditorium was recently named after Mr. Allmond because of the various types of support he had given to our College and VSU – including financial and moral support, and hiring many of our Accounting graduates. Please, put the entire family of Mr. Marvin C. Allmond in your prayers. Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

Adulthood

Congratulations to a Reginald F. Lewis College of Business alum for getting published this spring! Aiyana Glover (2018 Marketing graduate and Digital Sales Representative for IBM in Atlanta) wrote a book targeted to Generation Z entitled *The Unconventional Guide to Adulthood From A-Z*. Additionally, Aiyana launched a podcast series and between the book and the podcast is dispensing some invaluable advice to young people whom like everyone else now arguably need it more than ever! Stay safe!



Virginia21

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business is proud of the partnership with Virginia21. Self-described as the “voice of a generation”, Virginia21 aims to encourage more college students to become politically active. Every year students participate in programming to include the Summer Leadership Institute held at Christopher Newport University and in the winter Lobby Day at General Assembly. For Kyla Best (Marketing major), Destiny Blount (Management major) and Mychala Walker (Marketing minor), perhaps the highlight was networking with Attorney General Mark Herring.



Labor Market Blues

In the matter of weeks what amounted to the best labor market since World War II went to the worst unrivaled except for the Great Depression. Prior to the pandemic students were securing career opportunities unlike never before. In fact, many students before Coronavirus had multiple offers only to like everyone else see things unravel with the uncertainty of what will happen next. Fortunately for our students they are terrific and marketable and fortunate for the College that it has extraordinary relationships with industry. While much is unknown, what is certain is that now more than ever with unemployment estimates around 22%, that relationships will matter more than ever.

For all of our students, there are still opportunities and The College is still here to help you. For our alums, if we can be of any resource do not hesitate to ask. For our industry partners, thank you for what you do and please know that we are more grateful than ever because of your leadership and commitment to our young professionals. We will get through this. Stay safe and stay strong!



Faculty Exchange

The tradition of hosting faculty from other universities to guest teach continued with Professor Ricky Parker from Virginia Union University and Jonathan Young (Director of Corporate Relations) reciprocating at the VUU campus.

When We Could Still Travel

Before the world knew the name Coronavirus, students saw the world by participating in study abroad. At the onset of the spring semester students including Derrick Lowe (Accounting major), Ishmael Checkley (Management major), David Buchanan (Management major), and Kyle Jacobs (Management Information Systems minor) spent time in Brazil while Benjamin Petway studied in South Korea. For the gentlemen it was an unbelievable experience but now considering how the world has changed it is all the more special. “It is hard to believe how different the world is just a few months later. I feel so fortunate that we were able to have that study abroad experience before the pandemic.” said David Buchanan.



Black Excellence

For Black History Month in February, students championed the College's alums increasing awareness among the student body relevant to the many great men and women that came before them. Led by Dr.s(s) Louis Dabney and Patrice Perry-Rivers (Management Professors) the effort realized in a marked improvement pertinent to students' knowledge of history in the building. The campaign included posters, fliers, social media, and tabletop displays. The College has a lot of history to be proud of and now more people can tell that story.



CDC

When Qahir Girard (Management major) accepted an internship in early March for the summer at the Center for Disease Control (CDC), little could he know or for that matter anyone else just how consequential a summer would be at the Atlanta headquarters campus of the organization leading the fight against Coronavirus. Girard, a leader both in the classroom and on the gridiron, was accepted in to the CDC Public Health Leader Fellowship Program. Needless to say, the country needs these kinds of leaders now more than ever! Girard is certain to be provided an upfront and close view of the fight against what has been described as the invisible enemy. Stay safe and healthy and strong!

More Pictures



Curriculum Consultation

Perhaps it takes a pandemic to fully appreciate what you have, but in the College of Business, students/faculty/staff have long been grateful to our Alumni Advisory Board and Industry Councils for their invaluable contributions in refining curriculum. What is different is just how obvious their contributions have been. Fortunately for the College, hybrid and/or remote instruction was always a priority for the Industry Council(s) and in fact included in the groups' top 10 priorities. Indeed, even before the pandemic the College had adopted remote instruction by incorporating elements within hybrid classes that convened both in person and online. In getting ahead of the curve the College was able to adopt quickly and accommodate even the worst case scenario that materialized in shuttering physical doors because of the virus. For all of the countless hours the College's Alumni Advisory Board and Industry Council(s) contributed in past years it was well worth it and a debt of gratitude is forever ours.



A Transformative Experience

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University again partnered with the University's Creative Services Department and Jesse Vaughan to profile students and what amounts to a transformative experience at Virginia State University and in the College. The students have been featured in television commercials and can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/user/VSUOfficialChannel>



Student Accomplishments

Check out our students' spring 2020 semester accomplishments at <http://business.vsu.edu/news/2020/05/spring-2020-student-accomplishments.php>

Presidential Leadership

In a letter to Congress on behalf of not just Virginia State University but also the other 18 HBCU members of the Council of 1890 Institutions, President Makola Abdullah pressed the case for investing in historically black colleges and universities and as first reported in the Progress Index proposed *temporarily tripling Pell grants, which he said affects anywhere from two-thirds to 90% of the student population at the institutions; investment in higher learning and information technology degrees, rebuilding and solidifying technological infrastructure; and maintaining and expanding research opportunity, and bolstering healthcare degree programs to address health disparities. "This pandemic has shown that this missed opportunity with NIH should be corrected immediately," he wrote.*



Until When We Can

Until when we can embrace, until when we can shake hands, until when we can be closer than six feet apart, until when we can resume some sense of normalcy please stay connected, remember your friends, check in on folks you haven't heard from, and continue to stay strong, stay healthy, and stay safe.



Moguls in the Making

Congrats to Cyrus Jones (Accounting major) and Catera Ruth (MISY major) on earning invites to the Moguls in the Making competition in Detroit; like so much else it was a casualty of COVID-19.

Message from the Dean

To our Spring 2020 graduates, I say to you – Big Congratulations!!!

In spite of the coronavirus pandemic, you demonstrated strength and fortitude. You were the senior class that exhibited patience and accommodation. You were the senior class that articulated what mattered most and put things in perspective. Indeed, you will never be forgotten for the very best reasons. I cannot begin to tell you how much I miss each one of you and how I missed being able to shake your hands and congratulate you in person on a job well done. Like me, your faculty are heartbroken that they too were unable to celebrate your accomplishments.



I want to thank so many of you who have been calling me and your faculty or Face-timing us or sending handwritten notes. You have taken graduation pictures in your regalia so that you could share with your family and friends. You are posting your celebratory pictures on social media and I love that, and you are now even more than ever, connecting with the world around you. It is my prayer that you will not be overcome by the coronavirus pandemic. To our graduating seniors, bless you. We celebrate you and we congratulate you on a job well done!!

To you our Spring 2020 graduates, bless you. We celebrate you and we congratulate you on a job well done!!! Please, go into the world and do great things and transform your community in the same way that the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University constituted a transformative experience for you. Good Luck to all of you and please continue to keep safe!

To all of our other students/faculty/staff/alums/industry stakeholders, we shall persevere. I first want to extend my thanks to our amazing students for your outstanding work. Your fortitude has been inspiring in this crisis. To our faculty/staff, I cannot adequately express my awe. You have transitioned everything in a matter of weeks and did it nearly seamlessly. I remain in your debt. To our alumni and industry stakeholders, how can I ever begin to repay you for rolling up your sleeves in joining us in this fight against a truly awful enemy. Perhaps in knowing that together we are stronger, we will come through this even better. We honor all of our many traditions in Singleton Hall and look forward to resuming them soon.

Thank you for who you are and what you do as together we are changing countless lives for the better and in doing it providing for a transformative experience by embracing our role as Virginia's Opportunity University!!!!

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean



Guest instructors including Jack Berry (left) and Chanel Brown (right) provide invaluable contributions in training the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business undergraduates.