

Spring 2021 Issue



This newsletter is dedicated to all of our graduates who after a year of COVID were able to celebrate in person.

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CONGRATS!

“Each of you now are VSU’s points of pride.” “Go forth and let them know your name and let them know the name of Virginia State University.”

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

“We have planned a ceremony that honors our deserving graduates while also keeping safety protocols at the forefront of our event.”

Dr. Donald Palm, Provost

“Congratulations to our graduates and I am so glad that we were able to honor them in person.”

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

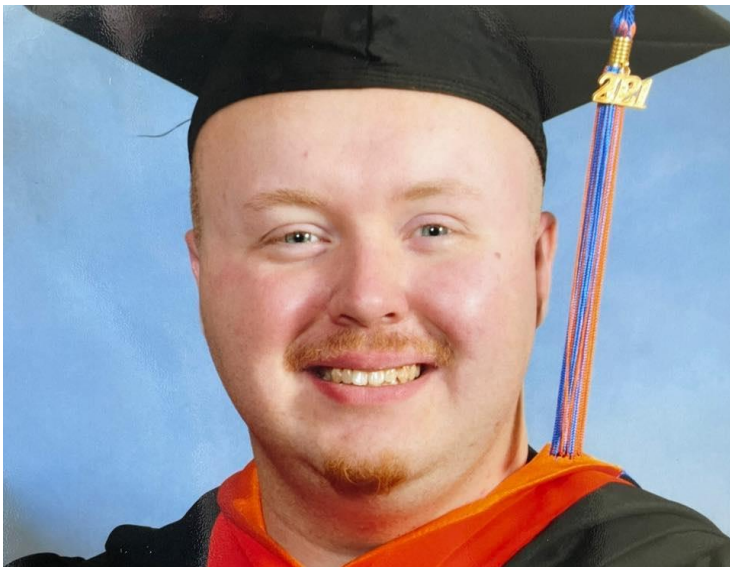
2021: THE SPRING SEMESTER IN PICTURES



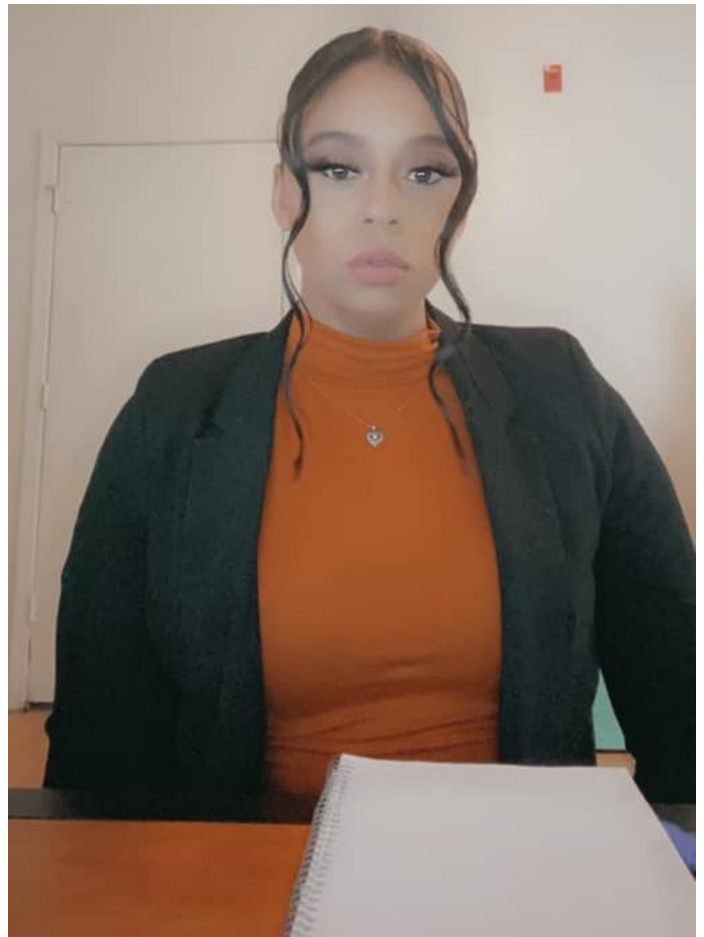
Addison Adams is proud of the College's namesake.



Marcus Jones enjoys a little leisure.



Andrew Stegman shows off his cap and gown.



Cristy Hinton is a scholar.



Abraham Schlossberg is an accomplished accounting major with natural sales attributes.



Donea Brooks, Catera Ruth, and Adiana Brittle are all rock-stars in the College of Business. Above.

Jahla Mercer-Smith, Christian Cozart, and Kobe Cheseman constitute big-time talent in the College. Below.



Kyla Best, Quentin Gray, CJ Epperson, Marcus Jones, and Derrick Lowe are a force to be reckoned with in the College. Below.



BGS

Congratulations to the newest Beta Gamma Sigma (BGS) inductees including Addison Adams, Beyonce Allen, Sakile Cobb, Tiara Jasey, Jaycee Lowe, Kayla Perkins, and Sierra Robinson (Marketing majors), Blaise Davenport and Janayah John (Management Information System majors), along with Patrick Grier (Management major). The ten scholars were acknowledged for their academic achievement by the BGS Advisor Ms. Sharon Taylor.



A tradition of winning

Not unlike a sports team, the College is attracting talent because of its tradition of winning. Specifically, for several years the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) collegiate chapter Phi Beta Lambda has accrued a lot of wins. This semester was no different! Congratulations to Idayziah Jones (Management major) and Alex Wade (Management Information Systems major) on winning first and second place respectively for Business Presentation; Shannon Lee and Jael Rogan (Management majors) on first place for Business Sustainability; CeAra Donald (Management Information Systems minor) on first place for Community Service; Scott Hill (Management Information Systems major) on first place for Emerging Business Issues; Kenneth Bittner (Management Information Systems major) on first place for Impromptu Speaking and second place for Strategic Analysis and Decision Making; and Nigel Stewart (Accounting major) on first place for Sales Presentation. A special congrats to Christine Bautista (Management Information Systems major) on being recognized as the Outstanding VP of the Year in Virginia and to Dr. Aurelia Nicholas-Donald on being recognized as Outstanding Advisor of the Year in Virginia.



Christine Bautista (on the left) and Aurelia Nicholas-Donald (on the right).

Go Virginia

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University was awarded a major state funded grant pertinent to entrepreneurship. Awarded by Go Virginia to spur economic development, the grant amounts to \$453,000 to create The Minority Small Business Launch Center. Authored and submitted by Dr. Patrice Perry-Rivers, the grant proposes to offer certificate training and co-working space, facilitate access to networking and venture capital, host intellectual property and patent workshops, create youth innovation and entrepreneurship fellowships along with training programs, sponsor pitch competitions, and provide access to maker space, etc. Perry-Rivers said of the initiative, *“Ultimately, our program seeks to link high-potential, nascent and existing minority entrepreneurs via Virginia State University, a reputable and “friendly” gateway, to key training, resources and networks, some that already exist in Region 4’s entrepreneurship ecosystem, but that are rarely utilized because of lack of perceived access to entrepreneurship-facilitating resources.”* If you have a business or are planning to launch a business in the Richmond metro, including its surrounding suburbs, you may enroll in the Minority Small Business Launch Center at no cost at www.vsuentrepreneurship.com/minoritybiz

This project was funded in part by GO VIRGINIA, a state-funded initiative administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) that strengthens and diversifies Virginia’s economy and fosters the creation of higher wage jobs in strategic industries.

Safety First

Dr. Dong Yoo (Management Information Systems Associate Professor) won a grant from the Virginia Transportation Research Council in the amount of \$71,526 pertinent to traffic fatalities/injuries and socioeconomic inequality on roads in Virginia. Constituting an advanced business analytics research project, students in the College will evaluate real world cases to learn traffic operations and economics, machine learning, artificial intelligence, and deep learning. The objective for the research regards if and how socioeconomic status has an impact on traffic crashes and injuries in Virginia. The goal for the project regards making the community a better place for all!

PwC

The College for the second year in a row won a grant from Fortune 100 PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). Relevant to digital enablement, the invaluable funds will help pay for integrating SAP modules in to the curriculum and for hands-on training in cybersecurity. It is anticipated that no fewer than seven classes will benefit from the additional resources.

More Pictures



Graduation, In their own words

When invited to share what it was like to walk across the stage after more than a year away from school because though he graduated, in person commencement ceremonies were until now taboo, Cyrus Jones (Accounting major) said, *“Delayed but not denied.”* The same sentiment was shared by many of the eighty-three graduates that took part in the Spring 2021 Commencement exercises. For May 2020 and December 2020 grads along with students finishing in Spring 2021, the experience was the same, i.e. an opportunity to resume normalcy, celebrate resilience, and initiate the next chapter in life. Congratulations to all!!!!



Trojan GPS

Christine Bautista (MISY major) and Kyla Best (Marketing major) presented to Ford Motor Co. relevant to a grant opportunity. Entitled Trojan GPS, short for both “global positioning system” and “go pedal somewhere”, the effort regards a smart bike share program on the campus of Virginia State University.

Educator Award

Congratulations to Dr. Ephrem Eyob (Chair of Management Information Systems) on winning the HBCU SAS Educator Award. An industry award, the acknowledgement recognizes Dr. Eyob’s contributions and celebrates his accomplishments.

Celebrating history

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business in February celebrated Black History Month and hosted alum Greg Whirley for a virtual conversation with more than one hundred students. Mr. Whirley shared invaluable life lessons and conveyed some of his own experiences including as now retired Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Transportation. Students had the opportunity to ask questions and to celebrate Black History Month with a proud ambassador for the College and a member of the University’s Board of Visitors.



AMA Scholarship

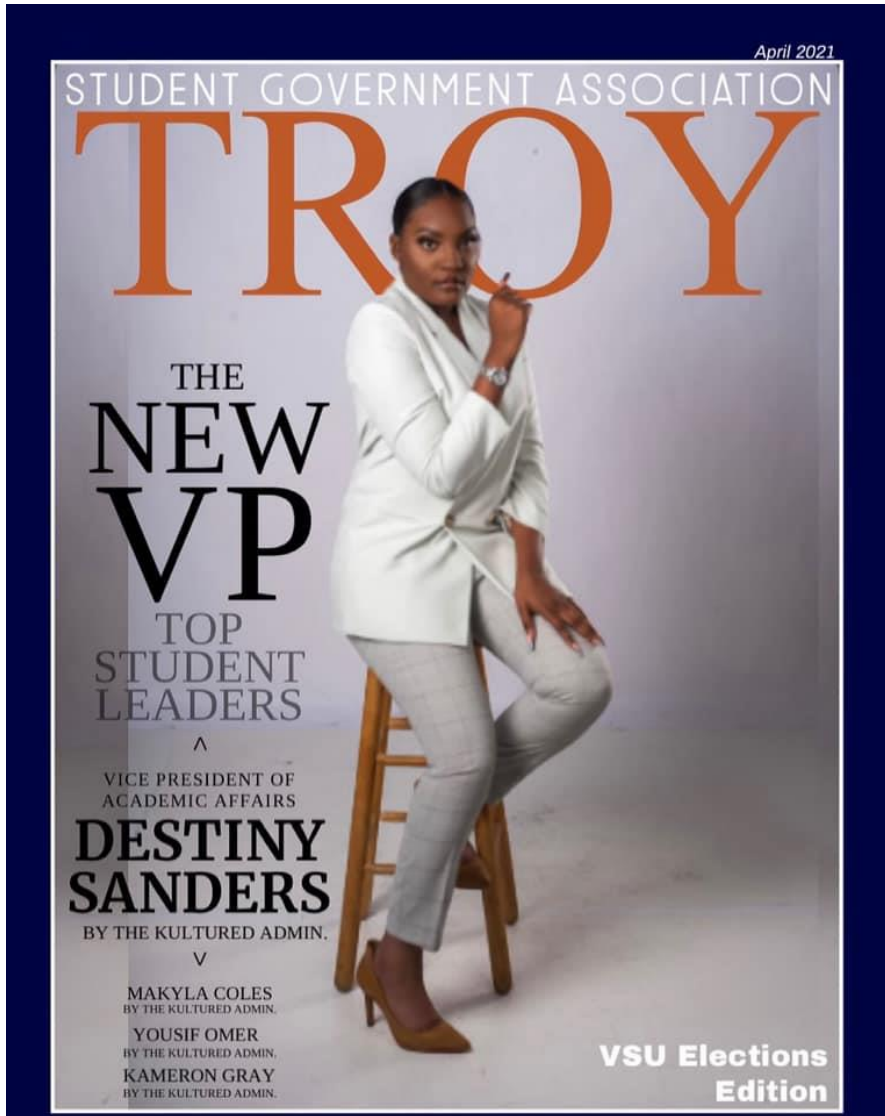
Congratulations to Addison Adams (Marketing major) on winning an American Marketing Association scholarship this semester. Addison is the President of the College’s AMA chapter and has big plans for the organization for the resumption of normalcy in the fall semester!

Bert Smith Scholarship

Congratulations to Nigel Stewart (Accounting major) on winning the Bert Smith Memorial Foundation scholarship. Nigel is doing big things in accounting!!



More Pictures



Destiny Sanders and Blaise Davenport are superstars in the College. Above.

Anjanette Byrd is an accomplished double major in the College of Business. Below.

NFL Big Board 2021

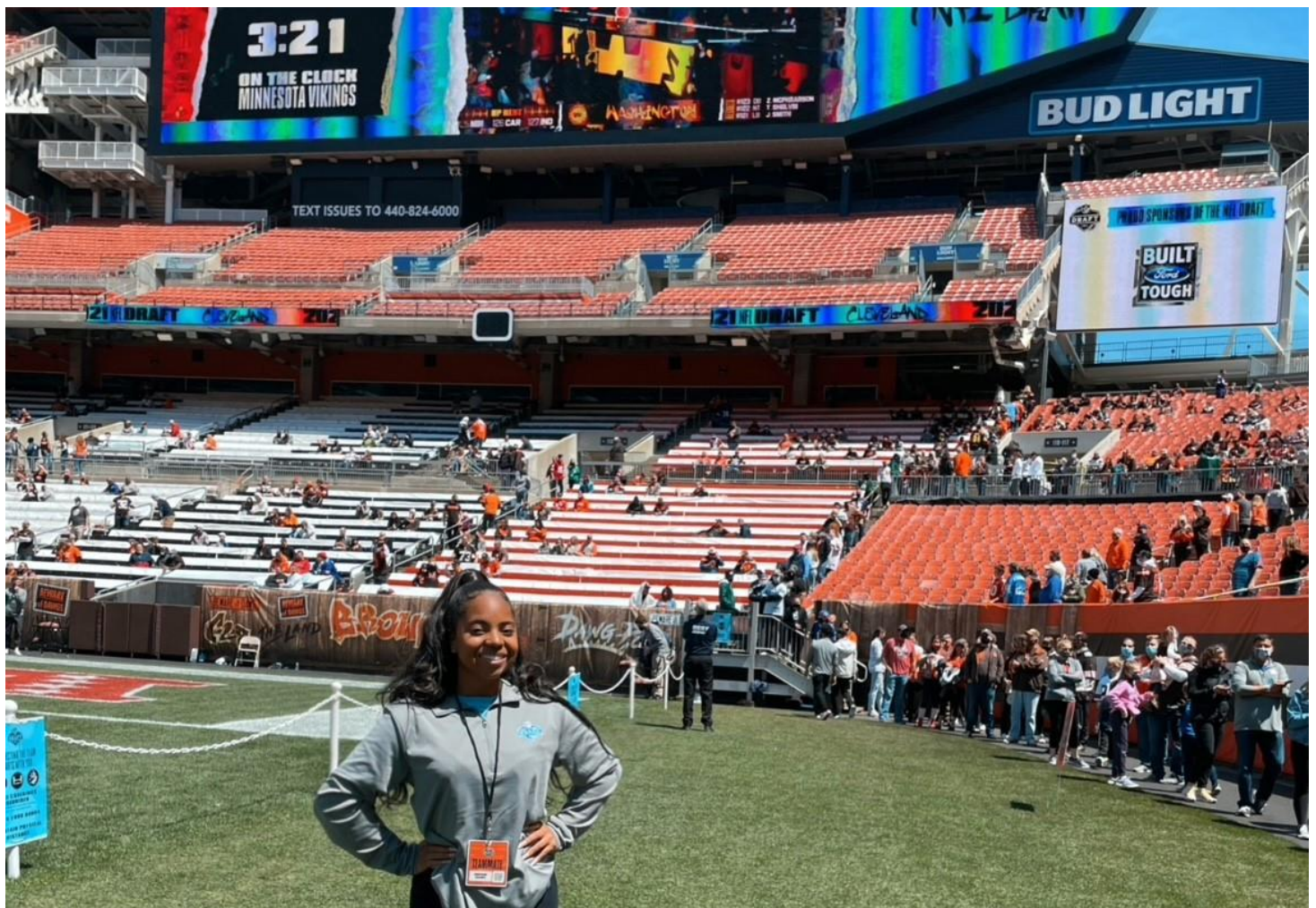
For 259 college students, the NFL Big Board 2021 meant a job opportunity in the NFL playing on the gridiron but because the National Football League is about more than X's and O's, the NFL Draft also constituted an opportunity for Addison Adams (Marketing major) to show off her skills!

An accomplished undergrad in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business, Addison is achieving in the classroom and beyond! Chair of the College's American Marketing Association chapter, Addison spent a weekend in Cleveland this semester working with the NFL to put on the league's draft.

Aspiring for a career related to representing professional athletes, the opportunity to rub shoulders with NFL team executives along with NFL staff and players' agents was like a dream come true! *"I was surrounded by persons doing what I dream to achieve. The experience helped cement for me my career objectives and only affirmed that I am on the right track."*

A rising senior, Addison also this semester connected with the College's alum Chris Carter at the Washington Football Team. An Account Executive in Washington, Chris also owns the title of Treasurer of the NFL Black Engagement Network. Offering to help Addison, Chris said *"Only four years ago I too was in Singleton Hall dreaming of working in the NFL so anything that I can do to assist other Trojans is all my pleasure!"*

Between Addison and Chris, students in the College of Business can be reminded that the NFL Big Board is about more than just the jobs on the field!



ANA Education Foundation

Congratulations to Alahna Knight (Marketing major) on winning the ANA Education Foundation scholarship. In an interview submitted via YouTube, Alahna articulated why she is passionate about marketing. To view Alahna and to learn about her career interests, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUeXxs31Q7A> We are proud of you Alahna!!



International Business

Congratulations to Mia Bennett (Marketing major) on winning the Virginia International Business Council scholarship. Mia is now the third College of Business student to win the award after her predecessors Ashley Vines Holloman in 2013 and Monet Graves in 2017. Congrats Mia!!



Message from the Dean

After more than a year of COVID, no less than three graduating classes had the opportunity to walk across the stage at Rogers Stadium to celebrate their accomplishments in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University. Perhaps more than that, students along with their families and friends celebrated a resumption of normalcy and beginning of the end of the pandemic. Perhaps the most apt word for the experience was resilience! Though the description was not relevant to just students but to faculty/staff and all of the College's stakeholders.

Indeed, it has been a tough year for everyone though because of a lot of hard work and perseverance, the College came out on top and despite the awfulness pertinent to a pandemic still achieved. In fact, students still accrued scholarships, earned jobs, and participated in internships. Faculty and staff still published, won grants, and were active in the community. Alumni still advocated, hosted virtual events, and bragged on their alma mater. Together, we beat COVID though we are mindful of all of the loved ones lost to this awful virus. We commemorate their lives and lift them up because they will not be forgotten.

Going forward, we know the College will be stronger. Excited for the fall semester, everyone is anxious to do everything even bigger and better than before! Grateful to the University's leadership, we know that first this summer and then the fall will be special opportunity to launch new programs and initiatives and to affirm existing ones. Surely there will be challenges, some new and some old, but after this past year we are certain in our capacity to prevail!

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

