

VIRGINIA TECH magazine

FALL 2022

MORE THAN A MOTTO
Hokies take *Ut Prosim* to heart

PUZZLED NO MORE
Alumni shape their careers

Phil
"All I have are words"

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Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Jacquelin Harris, photo by Dario Calmese

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HISTORY ON THE BIG SCREEN

Excerpted from a story written by sophomore Brooke Van Beuren.

Hundreds of people paused to witness a bridge to Virginia Tech's history during Homecoming weekend.

The Institute for Creativity, Arts and Technology collaborated with the university's Communications and Marketing Division to create a projection on Torgersen Bridge that explored Virginia Tech's past 150 years through images and sound.

The projection also appeared in the Cube at the Moss Arts Center. With its 128-speaker system, the Cube offered an immersive viewing experience.

Read more of Van Beuren's story about the event and watch the full video of the projection at vtx.vt.edu.



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26 *UT PROSIM*

As Virginia Tech celebrates the 150th anniversary of its founding, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), the motto adopted in 1896, remains at its core. Fully embraced by the university community, the timeless ideal of helping fellow humans and bettering the communities in which they live continues to define the values of our global land-grant university in the 21st century.

38 NIKKI

Nikki Giovanni, an internationally renowned poet and activist, retired from her position as an English professor this fall. Hokies, from NFL athletes to business leaders and professional writers, gleaned years of wisdom and life lessons from Giovanni inside and outside the classroom during her 35-year tenure.

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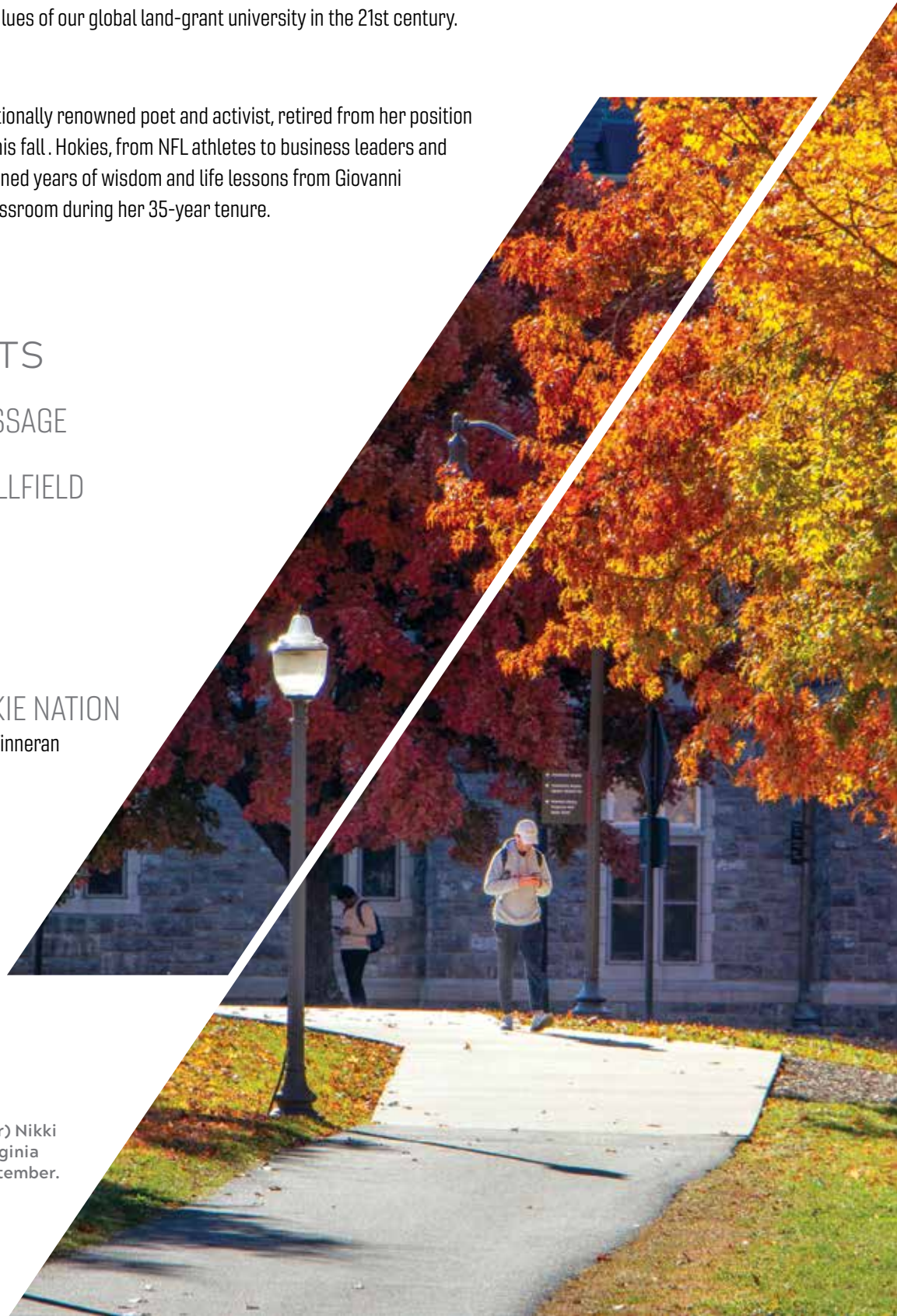
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CHAPTER AND VERSE: (on the cover) Nikki Giovanni turned the page on her Virginia Tech career when she retired in September. Photo by Logan Wallace.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HOKIE COLORS: President Tim Sands and the Blacksburg landscape don maroon and orange to celebrate Homecoming 2022.

A SEASON OF GRATITUDE

When I was installed as Virginia Tech's 16th president eight years ago, I was incredibly honored and inspired by Nikki Giovanni's gift of a poem to memorialize the moment ("Autumn Soup" from her book "A Good Cry: What We Learn From Tears and Laughter"). Nikki retired from our faculty this year, and her nearly four decades of service to the university are among the many things for which I'm grateful as we approach the holiday season. You can read more about her remarkable career in this issue.

I am also thankful for you, our loyal alumni and friends, and the spirit, energy, and support you have provided from the first moment I stepped onto Virginia Tech's beautiful campus. Together, we are distinguishing Virginia Tech as a leading, modern, global land-grant institution.

This year's incoming class is the most diverse in the university's history. Just over 40 percent are underrepresented minorities or underserved students, including veterans, Pell-eligible, and first-generation students. And they are also among the most academically qualified class with a mean high school GPA of 4.05.

As you well know, a Virginia Tech education can be life-changing for graduates and their families and have a positive impact on their communities and the commonwealth. That's why, this fall, I introduced a presidential initiative to ensure that the Virginia

Tech experience is financially within reach for Virginia students, regardless of income. Providing an affordable, quality educational experience that prepares our students to be successful after graduation is a foundational part of our land-grant mission.

Through the dedicated efforts of our world-class faculty, we are making strides to broaden our regional and international impact in research and innovation. And if you've visited our locations in Blacksburg, the D.C. area, or Roanoke recently, no doubt you've taken pride in the ongoing growth and expansion of our campuses as we continue to evolve to meet the needs of the commonwealth and beyond.

As we round the corner on 2022, we also mark the final weeks of Virginia Tech's Sesquicentennial celebration. Thank you for participating in this wonderful opportunity to honor our past and celebrate our present. Reflecting on where we have been and how far we've come makes us ever mindful of the many opportunities that lie ahead.

Thank you for being a part of Virginia Tech's past and present success. Here's to the next 150 years and advancing the global impact of future Hokie generations. ■

Tim Sands is Virginia Tech's 16th president.

EDITOR

Erica Stacy

ART DIRECTOR AND DESIGNER

Shanin Glenn

SECTION EDITORS/WRITERS

Shay Barnhart, Jimmy Robertson,
Travis Williams

CONTRIBUTORS

Diane Deffenbaugh, Annie McCallum,
Alex Parrish, Albert Raboteau,
Courtney Sakry, Cory Van Dyke,
Student writer: Savannah Webb

DIGITAL DESIGN

Bruce Harper

VISUAL ASSETS

Dawn Jefferies, Megan Zalecki

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Clark DeHart, Lee Friesland,
Luke Hayes, Ray Meese

**SENIOR DIRECTOR OF MARKETING
AND BRAND MANAGEMENT**

Heather Ducote

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Jesse Tuel

PUBLISHER

Tracy Vosburgh

CONTACTS

STORY IDEAS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

EMAIL: VT.MAG@VT.EDU. **MAIL:** VIRGINIA TECH MAGAZINE;
902 PRICES FORK ROAD; UNIVERSITY GATEWAY CENTER,
SUITE 2100; BLACKSBURG, VA 24061. **ADDRESS CHANGES:**

EMAIL: ALUMNIDATA@VT.EDU. **PHONE:** 540-231-6285
BETWEEN 8 A.M. AND 5 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY.

CLASS NOTES: EMAIL: CLASSNOTES@VT.EDU. **MAIL:**
CLASS NOTES, ALUMNI ASSOCIATION; HOLTZMAN
ALUMNI CENTER, VIRGINIA TECH; 901 PRICES FORK RD;
BLACKSBURG, VA 24061. **ADVERTISING:** HEATHER DUCOTE,
HDUCOTE@VT.EDU, (540) 231-9745.

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Tech, North End Center, Suite 2300 (0318), 300 Turner St. NW,
Blacksburg, VA 24061.



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LETTERS



TO THE EDITOR

IT'S A SMALL, SMALL WORLD

While perusing the summer 2022 issue of Virginia Tech Magazine highlighting 150 years of existence, I came across your invitation to share meaningful words.

I am from Millinocket, Maine, a small town that was founded in 1900 after the construction of a papermill by Italian immigrants. During summer breaks from Tech, I worked in that paper mill, poling wood and feeding grinders. Although the summer millwork helped pay my tuition, it is my belief that an admissions employee, Esther, was instrumental in my acceptance and decision to attend. When Esther read that I was from Millinocket, her eyes lit up, she smiled, and expressed that she had climbed Mount Katahdin the previous summer. Mount Katahdin, the terminus of the Appalachian Trail, is just 17 miles north of Millinocket.

Fast forward five years. I'm one month away from graduating from what is now the College of Architecture, Arts, and Design, and I'm working on a steel sculpture in the basement of Noyes Hall at about 3 a.m. As I pound the excess metal from the edge of a cut, a tiny piece of slag jettisons past my safety glasses into the corner of my left eye. Unable to remove the piece of metal on my own, I am the very first person at the door of the infirmary when it opens.

Here's where I get goosebumps every time I recall this event.

After calling me to an exam room and looking at my file, Dr. Desjardin looked up and asked, "Was your grandmother Louise Santerre?"

Agog, I reply, "Yes."

"Well young man, I think I brought you into this world." Dr. Desjardin knew my grandmother, her 13 children and spouses, and 45 grandchildren well.

Whether by fate or coincidence, Virginia Tech was and will always be my other home, where I learned about architecture and industrial design, met profound professors, and created lifelong friendships with classmates and local Virginians.

*Patric Santerre '87
Portland, Maine*

CORRECTION: Thomas L. Muller '70, Newark, Delaware, should not have been included in the In memoriam listing on page 69 of the summer 2022 edition of Virginia Tech Magazine.





AROUND THE DRILLFIELD

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NEWS

RECORD \$80 MILLION GRANT TO SUPPORT CLIMATE-SMART FARMING

THE VIRGINIA TECH COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE Sciences received an \$80 million grant from the United States Department of Agriculture to pilot a program that will pay producers to implement climate-smart practices on farms of all sizes and commodities, an initiative that could curb climate-changing gases.

Virginia Tech will distribute at least \$54 million directly to producers to help them enact these climate-smart practices for crop and animal production. Virginia Tech researchers will track the greenhouse gas savings of the initiative as they are implemented, quantify the benefits of other environmental impacts such as reduced soil erosion, and examine consumers' willingness to pay for products with climate-smart labels.

If scaled up nationally, the program could help producers reduce agricultural emissions by 55 percent and total emissions in the United States by 8 percent after 10 years.

"The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has been a driving force for innovation and adoption of best practices that have helped the agriculture industry grow since Virginia Tech was formed 150 years ago," said Alan Grant, dean of the college.

Virginia Tech researchers will create a model that selects participants to ensure program diversity. At least 40 percent of participants will be underserved and small producers. ■

GREEN ACRES: At the Eastern Virginia Agricultural Research and Extension Center, researchers are studying ways to enact practices that are good for the environment and help farmers boost their bottom lines.

SAM DEAN



DIG IT: Christopher Griffin Ph.D. '20 excavating part of the *Mbiresaurus raathi* in 2017.

TEAM DISCOVERS AFRICA'S OLDEST DINOSAUR

AN INTERNATIONAL TEAM OF PALEONTOLOGISTS led by Virginia Tech has discovered and named a new, early dinosaur. A graduate student in the Virginia Tech Department of Geosciences and other paleontologists first found the skeleton—mostly intact—over the course of digs in 2017 and 2019.

The findings of *Mbiresaurus raathi*, this new sauropodomorph—a long-necked dinosaur—were published in the journal *Nature*.

Found in northern Zimbabwe, the skeleton is, thus far, the oldest dinosaur skeleton ever found in Africa. Estimated to have been 6 feet long with a long tail, the

dinosaur weighed anywhere from 20 to 65 pounds.

“The discovery of *Mbiresaurus raathi* fills in a critical geographic gap in the fossil record of the oldest dinosaurs and shows the power of hypothesis-driven fieldwork for testing predictions about the ancient past,” said Christopher Griffin, who graduated in 2020 with a Ph.D. in geosciences.

Much of the *Mbiresaurus* specimen is being kept in Virginia Tech’s Derring Hall while being cleaned and studied. All of the *Mbiresaurus* skeleton and additional found fossils will be kept permanently at the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. ■

RENOVATED HOLDEN HALL REOPENS



A THRONG OF STUDENTS, ALUMNI, and university leaders attended the re-dedication of a renovated Holden Hall on Sept. 8. The group of attendees included Virginia Tech President Tim Sands, Paul and Dorothea Torgersen Dean of Engineering Julia Ross, and various state legislators.

With 102,000 square feet of space, the building boasts high-tech laboratories for research, new computational spaces for transdisciplinary collaboration, and three new 50-seat classrooms equipped with the latest audiovisual capabilities. It is home to the Departments of Mining and Minerals Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering, putting most of their operations under one roof.

“In addition to commemorating how far we have come, the new Holden Hall signifies our forward momentum that continues to amplify the college’s impact on research, education, and industry,” Ross said.

President of the student-led Burkhart Mining Society Meredith Olaya-Ramos, a senior majoring in mining engineering, also praised the sense of community fostered by the new facility, and she noted the important role of donors in creating that solidarity. ■

Y-TOSS TURNS 100 TONS OF TRASH INTO TREASURE

Y-TOSS, COORDINATED BY THE YMCA at Virginia Tech, is one of the largest sustainability initiatives on the Blacksburg campus, and this year's collection, held earlier this summer, resulted in 10.8 tons of material being collected—the most since the program's inception in 2015.

In seven years, the Y-Toss program has diverted more than 100 tons of items from Virginia Tech's waste system, according to Virginia Tech's Office of Sustainability.

"Any number of items kept out of the waste stream is a good thing," said Ron Ovelgoenner, director of thrift shop operations for YMCA at Virginia Tech. "And eliminating 100 tons is a significant amount of aid to the planet."

Each spring, the program collects gently used items—everything from refrigerators to rugs—from residence halls across campus during student move-out days. Once fall move-in arrives, these items are made available at a reduced price to incoming students.

The funds received from Y-Toss sales each year help support YMCA student programs. ■

BARGAIN HUNT: Shoppers search through Y-Toss offerings during move-in.



INSIDE SCOOP: Faculty members in the Department of Food Science and Technology at Virginia Tech are developing ice cream flavors in collaboration with Homestead Creamery.

COLLABORATION YIELDS SWEET RESULTS

THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD SCIENCE and Technology and award-winning Homestead Creamery, a network of locally owned dairy farms in Burnt Chimney, Virginia, teamed to bring innovative food science research to market in the form of Hokie-inspired ice cream.

The first ice cream flavor, Hokie Tracks, will roll out to ice cream shops and restaurants around Virginia in 2023. Hokie Tracks is a creamy vanilla ice cream, with a ribbon of salted caramel and dark chocolate-covered pretzel chunks. Department of Food Science and Technology faculty members Joell Eifert and Brian

Wiersema, in collaboration with Homestead's team, created the flavor profiles and recipe development.

The collaboration serves to celebrate Virginia Tech's roots in agriculture as part of the university's 150th anniversary. Also, proceeds from sales support student engagement and scholarships and benefit Virginia's economy.

"It's rewarding to be able to develop the ice cream recipes with a reputable industry partner, while knowing the work will reap rewards that directly impact our department and students," said Eifert, director of the Food Innovations Program. ■



UNIVERSITY TAKING STEPS TO ENHANCE ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY

WHEN LARYSSA ARMS' FINANCIAL AID package arrived in 2017, it warranted both a second and third opinion.

"I read it and I read it and I read it, and I thought, I don't think my 17-year-old brain is comprehending this correctly," said Arms, who earned a degree in psychology in 2021.

In fall 2017, Arms was one of 85 Hokies selected for the Presidential Scholarship Initiative, a four-year, full scholarship program designed to recognize and reward academically talented and dedicated Virginians with significant financial need. Today, Arms is a Virginia Tech financial aid advisor, and, as of this summer, the scholarship that helped her has been expanded to 95 students per cohort, bringing the total number of Hokies enrolled in the program to 340 undergraduates.

Meanwhile, President Tim Sands and the Board of Visitors have identified access and affordability as a leading strategic priority for the university.

The Presidential Scholarship Initiative is just one example of university efforts to remove many of the traditional barriers to higher education. This work has been key to Virginia Tech ranking

22nd among more than 600 universities in Money Magazine's "Best Colleges for Your Money" rankings in May. The publication based the university's overall score on an estimated full price of attendance, the acceptance rate, the percentage of students receiving grants, the percentage of students who graduate, and the average early career earnings for graduates.

On average, Hokies graduate with less debt than other students in the United States. Because a Virginia Tech degree helps bolster the employment and earnings potential of graduates, Virginia Tech borrowers also default on student loans less often.

In June, the Board of Visitors took steps to increase affordability by effectively freezing tuition for in-state undergraduate students with a special, one-time scholarship to offset a 3 percent tuition increase and by allocating an additional \$5.1 million to undergraduate financial aid programs.

The increase supports programs such as Funds for the Future, which provides protection from tuition and fee increases for returning students with a family income of up to \$100,000. The Presidential Scholarship Initiative also benefits from this additional support. ■

3D MODEL OF BRAIN TUMOR COULD AID WITH TREATMENT



MICRO MODEL: Gabriela Mendes, a postdoctoral associate, holds an example of the 3D model of the glioblastoma tumor microenvironment.

VIRGINIA TECH SCIENTISTS HAVE developed a novel 3D tissue-engineered model of the glioblastoma tumor microenvironment that can be used to learn why the tumors return and uncover the most effective treatments for eradicating them.

Glioblastoma is a deadly brain cancer. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy provide limited effects, and about half of patients die within 18 months.

"Our goal is ultimately to develop a personalized medicine approach in which we can take a patient's tumor, build a model of that tumor in a dish, test drugs on it, and tell a clinician which therapy will work best to treat it," said Jennifer Munson, associate professor at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC.

The microenvironment is crucial to understanding why glioblastoma remains so difficult to treat. Though a tumor can be removed, tumor cells tend to invade the surrounding tissue, allowing the cancer to return.

Munson's models, which are about the size of a pencil eraser, more accurately recreate that environment for study. ■

HELMET RATINGS RELEASED FOR WHITEWATER RAFTING

OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS WHO enjoy whitewater rafting can chase the rapids more safely thanks to the newest ratings from the Virginia Tech Helmet Lab.

In mid-September, researchers in the lab, founded by Stefan Duma, tested 21 brands of whitewater helmets, with four of those brands earning five stars, which represents the lab's top score. Four others earned four stars. Duma, a professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics, and his team recommend choosing a helmet with a rating of four or five stars.

"Millions of people enjoy whitewater sports, but they're also some of the highest-risk sports," Duma said. "There are almost 50 whitewater fatalities in America every year, putting the fatality rate ahead of almost any other sport."

Researchers develop their ratings by using data from real-world head impacts to design test methods that assess helmet performance under realistic conditions. ■

HEAD FIRST: Whitewater rafting helmets recently underwent testing in the Virginia Tech Helmet Lab.



GOING BATTY: Assistant Professor Luis Escobar (at left) holds a vampire bat as Karen Sarmientos, a student at Universidad Distrital in Colombia, feeds it a sugar water solution through a dropper before returning it to the wild.

VAMPIRE BATS COULD PREDICT NEXT PANDEMIC

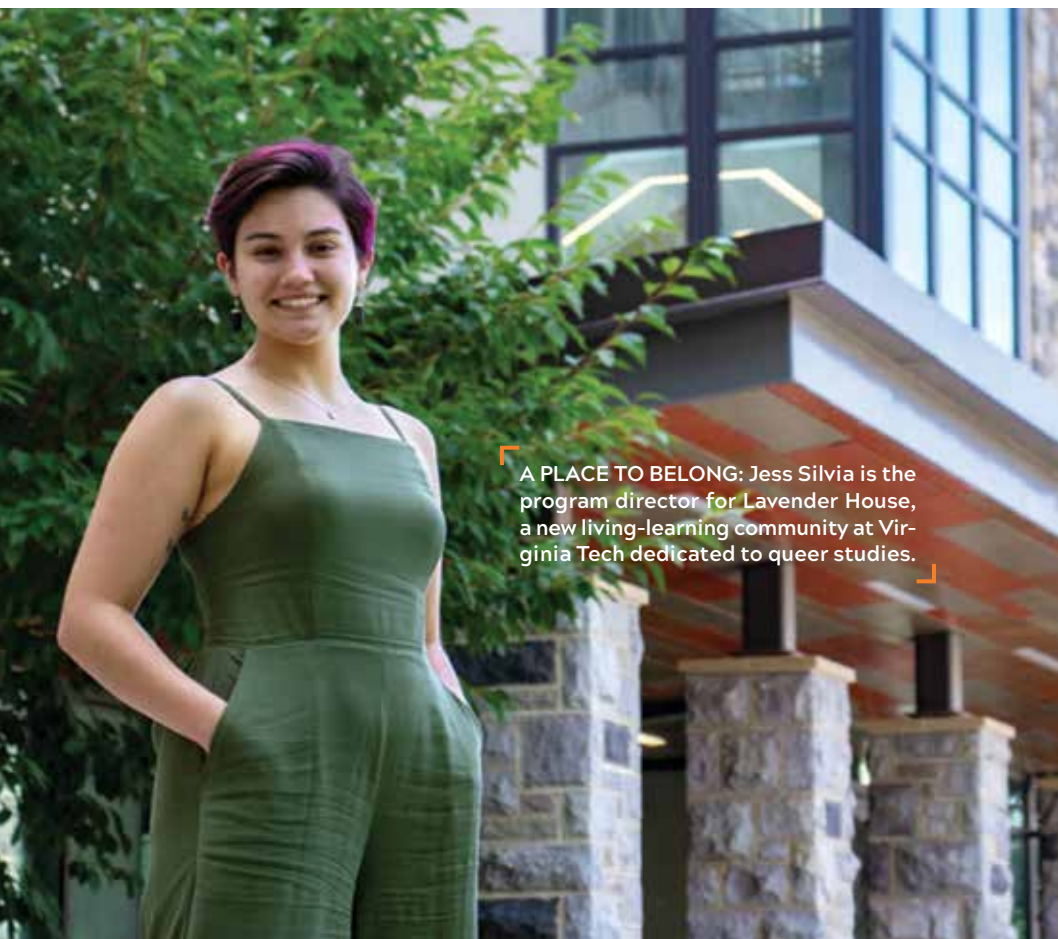
THIS SUMMER, LUIS ESCOBAR LED A team of students into the Andes Mountains and lowlands of Colombia to understand how vampire bats can help predict and prevent the next epidemic.

Escobar, an assistant professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation, is an expert in assessing how diseases respond to climate and landscape change. With a \$358,000 grant from the National Science Foundation and support from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention, Escobar's latest project examines how vampire bats carrying the rabies virus can help scientists forecast areas where

wildlife virus transmission might occur in the coming years.

"Many epidemic-causing pathogens come from bats, which can infect a wide range of species from carnivores to livestock and humans," Escobar said. "We have learned many lessons about disease thanks to rabies, which makes rabies an excellent model for understanding how the ongoing climate change can trigger the next pandemic."

The Virginia Tech scientists are partnering in the effort with senior scientists from the CDC, Universidad de La Salle in Colombia, and officials from the Colombian Departments of Health and Agriculture ■



A PLACE TO BELONG: Jess Silvia is the program director for Lavender House, a new living-learning community at Virginia Tech dedicated to queer studies.

FIRST LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITY FOR LGBTQ+ STUDIES OPENS

IN AUGUST, VIRGINIA TECH OPENED AN academic residential space on campus for students who identify as members or allies of the LGBTQ+ community. Lavender House is the university's first living-learning community for students who want to study queer history.

Located in O'Shaughnessy Hall, Lavender House houses 41 students in double-occupancy rooms. The College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences sponsors Lavender House but welcomes students of all majors as residents.

Lavender House provides students with a built-in community from the moment they step foot on campus and affirms

the lives of LGBTQ+ individuals to be worthy of academic study. Its residents are required to take a three-credit introductory course on queer studies, which focuses on the LGBTQ+ community's history of leadership and advocacy.

"Students report a higher sense of belonging when they're part of a living-learning program," said James Penven, director of Living-Learning Programs at Virginia Tech, adding that these students often have higher cumulative GPAs and retention rates. "It also reinforces the current environment at Virginia Tech, as we are trying to integrate students' social and intellectual lives." ■

CHANGES IN EFFECT WITHIN COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, ARTS, AND DESIGN

RECENTLY, THE STATE COUNCIL of Higher Education for Virginia approved Virginia Tech's request to change the organizational structure and name of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies to the College of Architecture, Arts, and Design (AAD).

"The new organizational structure will provide greater visibility for arts, design, and architecture programs by grouping them together and locating all studio and performance-based instruction related to arts and design classes in one college," said Rosemary Blieszner, Alumni Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech and interim dean of the college.

AAD includes the School of Performing Arts, the School of Architecture, the School of Visual Arts, and the School of Design. The move relocated the Myers-Lawson School of Construction to the College of Engineering and the School of Public and International Affairs to the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences.

Degree requirements, faculty appointments and rank, and courses remain the same.

Virginia Tech officials also named new interim and permanent leadership roles within AAD because of this transition. They named Jim Bassett as the interim director for the School of Architecture and School of Design, with Aki Ishida serving as associate director. Brad Whitney was named the program chair for the Interior Design Program, and Ann-Marie Knoblauch director of the School of Visual Arts. ■



VIRGINIA TECH VIDEOGRAPHERS HAVE BEEN HARD AT WORK CAPTURING THE UNIVERSITY'S NEWS AND EVENTS. CHECK OUT THIS SAMPLING AND MANY OTHERS AT VTX.VT.EDU/VIDEOS.



StREAM Lab restoring Blacksburg creek

The Virginia Tech Stream Research, Education, and Management Lab, which studies the interactions of natural and human systems, is restoring Stroubles Creek, which runs right through the heart of the campus.



Researchers help Pete Dye River Course stay green

Researchers in turfgrass management are using a drone to find pests and then formulating a sustainable plan that applies certain products at certain times instead of making blanket applications.



Study looks at sustainability at assisted living facilities

Jennifer Russell, assistant professor of sustainable biomaterials, uses a unique approach to biological systems analysis. By looking at a facility as an organism, she hopes to improve sustainability at assisted living facilities.



Developing autonomous underwater robots

Faculty and graduate students in electrical and computer engineering are developing teams of underwater robots to autonomously work together to solve problems primarily in survey and search applications.

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RECORD GIVING

SETTING THE STAGE FOR FUTURE ACHIEVEMENTS

HOKIE NATION HAS SET A NEW MARK for philanthropic impact on Virginia Tech's students, faculty, and programs.

Alumni, friends, faculty, staff, and students combined to make nearly \$268.5 million in new gifts and commitments during the 2021-22 fiscal year that ran from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.

The all-time-record show of generosity was a tremendous increase—34 percent—from the \$200.3 million given in fiscal year 2020-21.

"Hokie Nation's generosity is remarkable, inspiring, and empowers our vision for the university's future," said Virginia Tech President Tim Sands. "Philanthropy is essential for recruiting and retaining world-class faculty and extraordinary staff. Support from alumni and friends also helps ensure that talented students from all the communities we serve have access to a life-changing educational experience at Virginia Tech. Thank you to everyone who stepped forward to make a difference."

Along with the record total in new gifts and commitments, the 2021-22 fiscal year saw the largest single gift ever made by a Virginia Tech graduate, \$35 million

from Norris Mitchell '58 and his wife, Wendy Mitchell, to name a new College of Engineering building. The fiscal year also saw the undergraduate alumni giving percentage reach 22 percent, doubling the rate from the end of the fiscal year 2015-16 and achieving an ambitious goal set by Sands in fall 2016 in his first State of the University Address.

Other notable examples of philanthropy in the past fiscal year included \$12.5 million toward quantum research and education from leading global aerospace and defense company Northrop Grumman and nearly \$49.6 million given to athletics, which was an increase of more than 70 percent from athletics donations the previous fiscal year. Athletics announced a \$400 million fundraising initiative called "Reach for Excellence" in 2021 and in April of this year, announced it had raised over \$200 million toward that goal.

"We are extremely fortunate to have so many dedicated partners and supporters who choose to invest in our vision for the future of Virginia Tech," said Vice President for Advancement Charlie Phlegar.

Boundless Impact, Virginia Tech's current fundraising campaign and the most

ambitious in its history, was announced in 2019 with an initial goal to raise \$1.5 billion by 2027. Alumni, industry partners, friends, parents, students, and employees had collectively given nearly \$1.16 billion toward the campaign by the close of fiscal year 2021-22. Virginia Tech announced in April that it would increase the goal of Boundless Impact to \$1.872 billion. The new goal alludes to the 1872 founding year of the university.

"Our community has shown incredible support for the students and faculty of our university during the past fiscal year," said Lynne Doughtie, a member of the Class of 1985 and co-chair of the Boundless Impact Campaign Steering Committee. "The passion and generosity of Hokie Nation has made an impact on countless lives in the form of scholarships, community service, opportunities for students to travel and network in their field, and research that seeks to address the most complex problems facing our society. Virginia Tech achievements on all of these fronts and more are made possible by the thousands of people who choose to invest in our success, and we are extremely grateful to all of them." ■ AR



CLASSWORK: Students in Kevin Young's Civil and Environmental Engineering Land Development Design course meet with a professional engineer to complete a real-world project.

Gift supports sustainable land development design

In the late 20th century, Virginia Tech students and young professionals did not have many opportunities to explore land development design in college. Establishment of the Land Development Design Initiative (LDDI) in about 2005 changed that. Now, all civil engineering students learn about land development design early in their college experience, which allows them to make calculated decisions about entering this broad industry.

Gary Bowman, who graduated in 1980 with a degree in civil and environmental engineering, didn't get to experience LDDI's benefits as a student, but he is passionate about creating such learning opportunities for current and future engineers. Bowman has committed \$5

million to the Charles E. Via, Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering to expand learning initiatives in sustainable land development.

The Bowman Sustainable Land Development Program will encompass the undergraduate and graduate academic components of sustainable land development, including the sustainable land development master's program, now in its second year. The Bowman Sustainable Land Development Program will also now encompass the Land Development Design Initiative, which will be renamed but will continue to serve as a portal through which individuals and organizations in the land development industry can provide input on curriculum and engage with students through mentoring and experiential learning opportunities.

"The Bowman gift solidifies Virginia Tech as the premier undergraduate and graduate programs in the field of sustainable land development," said Via department head Mark Widdowson. ■

Gift to fund commercial kitchen at Reynolds Homestead

Two \$400,000 donations to the Reynolds Homestead will bring culinary classes and cooking demonstrations to rural Patrick County.

Thanks to generous donations from the Reynolds family, via the Richard S. Reyn-

olds Foundation and the Virginia S. Reynolds Foundation, the homestead broke ground on a 1,500-square-foot commercial kitchen expansion during its recent 50th anniversary celebration.

Reynolds Homestead Director Julie Walters Steele said the new kitchen will increase opportunities for community engagement and learning. "This multifaceted facility will provide space for catering demonstrations, culinary-based classes and programming, workforce development, and local value-added agricultural production," she said.

The kitchen will house an assortment of industrial equipment. It will also include eight teaching stations—each with its own stove, sink, and work area. ■

WHAT'S COOKING: (from left) Kimble Reynolds, a descendant of the enslaved community; Patrick County resident Sally Ann Rodgers; Director Julie Walters Steele; and Guru Ghosh, vice president for outreach and international affairs, take part in the groundbreaking for a commercial kitchen in front of the Reynolds Homestead's Community Engagement Center.





CORPS OF CADETS

IT TAKES TEAMWORK: Members of Cadets for a Cause load donated items into a trailer during a recent food drive.

READY TO SERVE

DUTY. HONOR. LEADERSHIP. LOYALTY. Brotherhood. Service. Sacrifice. Ut Prosim. The core values found on Virginia Tech's Pylons are also the core values of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets—and there is one cadet organization that goes above and beyond in representing them.

Cadet Jenner Johnson organized Cadets for a Cause in the fall of 2021 with the intent of giving back to the surrounding community.

"For 150 years, the New River Valley has done a good job supporting the VT Corps of Cadets and being a really integral part of our success," said Johnson, a senior majoring in political science and history. "Each semester, the members of the organization come up with their own ideas for how to give back to the community."

Cadets for a Cause has grown to include 30 members.

In the past year, its members have worked with nonprofits such as Sleep in Heavenly Peace—a bed-building program for children in need—the Giving Tree Food Pantry, and the Johnny Mac Soldiers Fund—a nonprofit that provides scholarships for children of soldiers killed in combat.

"What we do this semester is all dependent on what the people within the organization want to do," Johnson said. "The mission of the organization is very open and ambiguous, and the purpose of that is to give the cadets the opportunity to do what they want—to find their own cause."

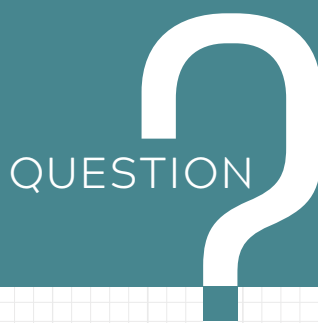
This year, Johnson is passing the role of commanding officer to Cadet William

Connolly, a junior majoring in aerospace engineering.

"A lot of what this year's going to be is community outreach and connecting with more organizations in the New River Valley and seeing where we can fit in, what we can do for them, and what we can do for the school," Connolly said.

The organization also provides an opportunity for cadets to grow and develop their leadership skills.

"There are a lot of cadets with a heart for service and who have a genuine care for the people in the New River Valley," Johnson said. "We want to connect. We want to give back, and we want to embody that family aspect that Virginia Tech and the surrounding area really is." ■ SW



WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR STREAMING SERVICES?

STAR POWER



Jimmy Ivory

THE NEXT FRONTIER OF VISUAL CONTENT in your home will likely star some familiar providers.

“Who’s going to be the big streaming services in 10 to 20 years? It’s going to be the same big four media companies that have typically dominated everything else in the United States, and Amazon,” said Jimmy Ivory, a professor in Virginia Tech’s School of Communication.

Ivory, whose research focuses on the social and psychological dimensions of new media and communication technologies, predicts that group will include:

- The Walt Disney Co., which includes ABC, ESPN, and Hulu as well as the rights to properties such as Star Wars and the Marvel Cinematic Universe.
- Paramount Global, which was formerly known as ViacomCBS and includes

Nickelodeon, MTV, BET, and Comedy Central.

- Warner Bros. Discovery, which includes HBO, Turner Broadcasting, Discovery, and CNN.
- Comcast, which includes Xfinity and NBCUniversal, home to the USA Network, the NBC News networks, and Universal properties.

Apart from Amazon, which Ivory believes has enough diversified interests to also survive, the reason companies will rise to the top is simple—they own the content people want to watch.

Some other changes Ivory predicts include:

ADDED CONVENIENCE AND AFFORDABILITY

“It’s going to get easier to navigate. We’ll finally get back to the point where it’s easier to find out where something is, and I think it will become cheaper too. I’m personally not sure if convenience at the price of diversity of ownership is a good thing, but it’s happening.”

MORE ADVERTISING

“Using advertising to subsidize revenue has been the American broadcast media model since Westinghouse used advertising to drive radio,” Ivory said. “We’re already seeing that a lot with streaming, where what was once a premium service without

advertising is now a streaming service with advertising.”

MORE CONSOLIDATION OF SERVICES

“Already a lot of services are brokered through certain platforms, like having a Showtime subscription through Amazon or Hulu. But it’s not only that these are the biggest media companies who can leverage ownership of content to take over other media companies, but they can also tie subscriptions to your phone contract or to you ordering underwear to your house.”

STRUGGLES FOR THOSE IN THE MIDDLE

“There’s less and less of a place for people trying to rent or buy other people’s media to stream to you, and that’s where we’re going to see some interesting stuff happen with companies like Roku and Netflix who serve as a middleman. We’re already starting to see that with Netflix.”

MORE TRADITIONAL SERVICES FADE AWAY

“Cable will likely follow the path of the landline phone. There’s very little reason for most people to have a landline in their house, and most people who do are probably over 50. Cable will get that way too. It’s a generational shift.” ■ TW

MOMENT



A COMMITMENT TO

TRIBAL STUDENTS

“

WE'RE REAL APPRECIATIVE OF VIRGINIA TECH AND ALL THEY'VE DONE FOR US AND ALL THEY'LL BE DOING IN THE FUTURE.”

Kenneth Branham
Monacan Chief

A CONVERSATION DURING AN EVENT

held to recognize Virginia Tech's history prompted an initiative that will make it a little easier for descendants of the region's First Peoples to attend the university in the future.

During the 1872 Forward: Celebrating Virginia Tech weekend in March, Monacan Chief Kenneth Branham requested a moment with Virginia Tech President Tim Sands. Branham shared the financial burden tribal members face related to higher education, what the Monacan Indian Nation is doing to help, and wondered what assistance the university might also provide.

“I'm one of those firm believers that if there's a need, you try to fill that need, and sometimes it's just a simple thing of asking for a little help,” said Branham. “You know, you don't know what the answer will be until you ask.”

In July, the official answer came in the form of the new Virginia Tech Tribal Match Scholarship, which provides up to \$2,500 per academic year in matching funds to students who receive scholarships from any of Virginia's 11 recognized tribes or the Virginia Tribal Education Consortium.

In many ways, the matching scholarship is a tangible extension of the university's sesquicentennial celebration, as the university was built on the Tutelo/Monacan homeland. And for Sands, who prioritized creating and funding the scholarship, the initiative is also part of the university's evolving land-grant mission.

“Our sesquicentennial exploration of Virginia Tech's founding helped elevate our understanding of the impact on Native peoples and their struggles through the loss of land and opportunity,” Sands said. “This scholarship reflects our commitment to support communities that have been underserved and overlooked and will also enrich our community by including the lived experiences and perspective of students from Virginia's sovereign Indian nations.”

It's unclear how many citizens of the Monacan Tribe will benefit from the scholarship in the future, but Branham hopes it encourages more of them to consider becoming Hokies.

“We're real appreciative of Virginia Tech and all they've done for us and all they'll be doing in the future,” said Monacan Chief Branham. ■ TW



FILLING A NEED

Learn more about the relationship between the tribe and university at vtx.vt.edu.

BEYOND THE MAT



MEKHI LEWIS SPENT A PORTION OF his summer grappling with an important decision.

Last year, the NCAA relaxed rules concerning a student-athlete's ability to profit off name, image, and likeness. Now, student-athletes can make money from sponsorships and endorsements, and earlier this year, Lewis, a member of the Virginia Tech wrestling team, signed a contract with an apparel company that provided him with income.

Lewis wanted to use some of his proceeds to make an impact beyond the mat. But he wrestled with how to go about it.

"I always wanted to donate to a charity," Lewis said. "I just never knew what route I was going to go—if I was going to do it here, Blacksburg or Christiansburg, or back home [in New Jersey]. But I always wanted to donate. I realized when I had the opportunity to do it, I wanted to put it in motion. I was looking at centers back home and saw [one] in my hometown, and it was perfect."

Earlier this summer, Lewis, a 2019 national champion and 2022 runner-up, announced on his Instagram account that he had made an \$8,000 contribution

to the Center for Great Expectations in Somerset County, New Jersey. Matt Tormenti, a former Virginia Tech wrestler who runs Princeton Brain, Spine, and Sports Medicine, matched Lewis' gift, and Mark Whitcomb, the CEO of Engineered Component Solutions, added \$5,000 for a total of \$21,000.

The Center for Great Expectations, supports people, primarily women and expectant mothers, but also adults and children, who need long-term treatment for substance abuse or mental health disorders. In late June, Lewis, his parents, Virginia Tech Wrestling Coach Tony Robie, and Ethan Aguigui, the coordinator for creative communications in the wrestling program, visited the center. They toured the facilities, met with patients, and discussed the inner workings of the organization with staff members.

"It means a lot because I've always wanted to give back to people and give back to my community," Lewis said. "To

have the opportunity to be able to make the next person's life better in any sort of way, whether it's through the money I've donated or by visiting there, just trying to help, I feel like that's the main goal. That's just my main goal in general—helping people."

Lewis signed his apparel deal with FTWR, a veteran-owned company. Its clients are professional fighters and boxers.

Lewis, who is the company's only wrestler, hopes to donate more to the center in the future, but at the least, continue a relationship.

"There are just a lot of things that I thought were good about that shelter," Lewis said. "I feel like the Center for Great Expectations went above and beyond for all their clients. It just made me happy to see people like that trying to help these women who are in need of assistance or who want to get better for their children." ■ JR

HELPING AT HOME: Mekhi Lewis (center, orange shirt), a Virginia Tech wrestler, believes in the mission of the Center for Great Expectations, and earlier this summer, contributed funds to help the center with its efforts.



LOGY

ol·o·gy
äləjē

a subject
of study

GET A GRIP

A TEAM OF RESEARCHERS LED BY VIR-ginia Tech Assistant Professor Michael Bartlett developed an octopus-inspired glove capable of securely gripping objects underwater.

Rescue divers, underwater archaeologists, bridge engineers, and salvage crews all use their hands to extract people and objects from water.

When a delicate touch is required, it would be helpful to have hands made for water. Inspired by the water-agile octopus, the team in the Soft Materials and Structures Lab, part of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, adapted biological solutions into new technologies made from soft materials and robotics.

The research partners also wanted something that felt natural to humans and allowed them to pick things up effortlessly, adapting to different shapes and sizes just as an octopus would. Their solution was a glove with synthetic suckers and sensors tightly integrated together. They called it Octa-glove.

The octopus is one of the most unique creatures on the planet, equipped with eight long arms that can take hold of myriad things. Its arms are covered with suckers that are controlled by the animal's muscular and nervous systems.

To design their glove, the researchers focused on re-imagining the suckers: compliant, rubber stalks capped with soft, actuated membranes.

To develop the glove's ability to sense objects and trigger the adhesion, the researchers brought in Assistant Professor Eric Markvicka from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, who added an array of micro-LIDAR optical proximity sensors that detect how close an object is. The suckers and LIDAR were then connected through a microcontroller, mimicking the nervous and muscular systems.

"By merging soft, responsive adhesive materials with embedded electronics, we can grasp objects without having to squeeze," said Bartlett. "It makes handling wet or underwater objects much easier and more natural. The electronics can activate and release adhesion quickly. Just move your hand toward an object, and the glove does the work to grasp."

The researchers envision the glove playing a role in the field of soft robotics for underwater gripping, applications in user-assisted technologies and health care, and in manufacturing for assembling and manipulating wet objects. ■

Alex Parrish is the communications and outreach manager for the Department of Mechanical Engineering.



HOLD TIGHT: The Octa-glove could be used for underwater gripping and for assembling wet objects.



Lawrence Bechtel

WHAT'S IN THE BACKPACK?

IT'S BEEN A LONG WALK. ADD, AS HIS friends call him, yearns to take off his backpack and relax. Like most, he wants to enjoy all Blacksburg offers to new students, but this is a journey that started in 1872.

Add climbs the stairs to the Upper Quad and remains there, forever frozen in time. “Walking Toward the Light,” a bronze sculpture by artist Lawrence Bechtel '85, depicts William Addison Caldwell, the first student to enroll in the new Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, now Virginia Tech.

Caldwell, 16, arrived in Blacksburg with his brother, Milton, after walking 28 miles from Sinking Creek in Craig County. Bechtel's sculpture captures Caldwell in full stride, holding a walking stick in one hand and a Bible in the other and wearing the equivalent of today's backpack—a haversack.

So what's in the haversack? With over 150 years between today's backpack and Caldwell's carryall, it held a few essentials. Or so Bechtel said, who, besides being a sculptor, was once an English instructor at Virginia Tech and the university's first recycling coordinator. He also is an author and purveyor of creative nonfiction for his sculptures.

Commissioned by the Class of 1956 to create this homage to Hokie history, Bechtel needed to construct a believable likeness of Caldwell, immortalizing his journey to Virginia Tech. The sculptor's research efforts included interviewing Caldwell's descendants, spending hours in Special Collections and University Archives in Newman Library, and understanding the history, customs, and landscape of Southwest Virginia in 1872.

From this data, Bechtel created a character sketch of Caldwell, bought replicas of his historical clothing, hired a model similar in stature to the first student, and even had Caldwell's great nephew pose to make sure the sculpture had a family likeness.

Then Bechtel created a travel narrative for the two Caldwell sons. He imagined they traveled half the 28 miles in a wagon with their father. They would have carried food and supplies in the wagon, and then camped overnight in Caldwell Fields. When the terrain became more navigable by foot, their father sent them on their way to finish the journey.

Traveling with the wagon for the first half of their trip would have allowed the sons to pack lightly for the remaining miles and either buy provisions once they arrived in Blacksburg, or the family

would have brought necessities once the brothers began their formal education.

Bechtel created a narrative involving what Caldwell's mother might have packed for her son for the second half of the journey. Its contents are more pragmatic than fantasy.

For the first day of school, Caldwell carried a clean shirt and pair of pants, a change of socks, pencils, and a sandwich. And perhaps if he grew tired of carrying the Bible with his hands, he would have put that in his haversack as well.

“Their father promises to come down to Blacksburg a little later with more gear and leaves them with these parting words, ‘Right now, boys, you need to get down there. This is the day you need to get in there and get yourself signed up while there's still room.’” ■

Leslie King is the communications manager and an instructor for the Department of English.



MARCH OF TIME

Watch a video about the Addison Caldwell statue at vtx.vt.edu/videos.



HOW TECH TICKS

BEE FRIENDLY

“

TO SUPPORT POLLINATORS ON VIRGINIA TECH'S BLACKSBURG CAMPUS, **WE CONSCIOUSLY SELECT MOSTLY NATIVE PLANTS AND SHRUBS THAT REQUIRE MINIMAL MAINTENANCE AND PESTICIDES.”**

Matt Gart
grounds manager

IN SPRING 2022, VIRGINIA TECH earned Bee Campus USA certification for its commitment to sustaining native insect pollinators. Bee Campus USA is a national initiative sponsored by the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. This certification helps guide universities to work toward transforming their campuses into pollinator-friendly safe havens.

The commitment to Bee Campus USA Certification includes implementing strategies to reduce pesticide usage, alter grass mowing schedules, grow pollinator

gardens, and teach the campus community about the value of these vital species to our ecosystem.

Through these efforts, Virginia Tech will truly become a hive of pro-pollinator initiatives that will create a buzz on campus, all the while working toward a singular goal: making campus a more environmentally friendly place for all.

Virginia Tech also has been a part of Tree Campus USA for 14 years. ■

James Mason is the communications coordinator for the Department of Entomology.



HIVE MENTALITY

To keep up with all the latest about Virginia Tech's Bee Campus USA affiliation, check out our Bee Campus Instagram, Twitter, and website. To learn more about the university's Climate Action Commitment, visit vt.edu/sustainability.



Virginia Tech Bee Campus Standing Committee

BEE COMMITTED

As part of its commitment to become a more bee-friendly campus, Virginia Tech established a Bee Campus committee that includes students, faculty, and staff. This diverse committee unites groups that include the Department of Entomology, the Hahn Horticulture Garden, and the Division of Campus Planning, Infrastructure, and Facilities.



BEE SMART

A large part of Virginia Tech's Bee Campus USA certification involves educating the campus community about pollinator preservation. Committee members led a pollinator walk at Hahn Horticulture Garden to stress the importance of saving these pollinators.

BEE CAMPUS



BEE AWARE

Research shows native insect pollinator populations are declining worldwide. Up to 40 percent of pollinator species may be at risk of extinction in the coming years as a result of habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. Global efforts are needed to preserve these insects and ensure farms are still able to produce the crops the world needs.



BUSY BEES

Pollinators are responsible for the reproduction of 85 percent of the world's flowering plants, and a third of all food humans eat comes from plants that rely on pollinators. In the United States alone, native pollinators, not including honeybees, are responsible for the reproduction of crops worth \$3 billion.





PLAY IT SAFE <<<

CRISP FALL WEATHER, ORANGE AND MAROON APPAREL AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE, FOOD, FRIENDS, AND THE ERUPTING ROAR OF 66,000 HOKIES AS THE FIRST NOTES OF "ENTER SANDMAN" RESONATE THROUGH LANE STADIUM. JUST ASK ANY HOKIE: NOTHING COMPARES TO A HOME FOOTBALL GAME AT VIRGINIA TECH.

HUNDREDS OF HOURS ARE LOGGED BEHIND THE SCENES TO HELP ENSURE THAT FANS ARRIVE TO AND DEPART FROM THE GAME SAFELY, VISITORS HAVE ACCESS TO NEEDED SERVICES, AND PERSONNEL ARE READY TO HANDLE ANY EMERGENCIES.

GAME DAY TIMELINE

5 HOURS BEFORE

Emergency response team members and K-9 units sweep the stadium.

3.5-4 HOURS BEFORE

Traffic units begin operations.

3-3.5 HOURS BEFORE

Officer briefing.

DURING 4TH QTR

Traffic units assume post-game operations.

45-90 MINS. AFTER

Game traffic typically clears.

"OUR GOAL WILL ALWAYS BE TO PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR EVERYONE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE STADIUM THAT ALLOWS FOR THEM TO HAVE A GREAT FAN EXPERIENCE ON OUR CAMPUS. WE ARE FOCUSED ON BEHAVIORAL ISSUES AND WANT TO ADDRESS CONCERNS THAT ARE INFRINGING ON THE GOOD TIMES OF OTHERS."

-Lt. Tom Gallemore, Virginia Tech Police Department

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Responsibilities, in collaboration with Athletics and Virginia Tech Police Department, include weather monitoring and response, event management and coordination of public safety and game operations, and evacuation protocols.

Fly 1-2 drones supported by 2-4 visual observers that deliver pre-game real-time situation updates.

Provide game day specific version of the Hokie Ready App for fans in Lane stadium: bit.ly/HokieReadyApp.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



4-5 people are present for fire safety inspections, fire watch, and hazmat response.

POLICE



About 14 agencies from across the region provide officers and deputies, including emergency response team members, K-9 units, traffic officers, and magistrate staff.

VIRGINIA TECH RESCUE

- 30-60 people treated per game.*
- About 50 volunteers (10-15 are alums).*



SAFETY NET

For a video about game day emergency management, visit vtx.vt.edu/videos.






Ut PROSIM

MORE THAN A MOTTO

BY JIMMY ROBERTSON



A glance at Virginia Tech's résumé reveals 37,000 students, nearly 300 degree programs, campuses at locations from Blacksburg to Roanoke and the greater D.C. area, education centers around the globe, a \$500 million-plus research portfolio, a nearly \$2 billion operational budget, and worldwide influence in numerous fields of study.

Yet interestingly, the foundation for all that impact centers on two simple Latin words encompassing eight letters.

***UT PROSIM* – THAT I MAY SERVE.**

John McBryde, the university's fifth president, assigned this motto to the university in 1896. No one has been able to ascertain his exact reasoning, but McBryde's speeches often reflected a desire for students to serve the interests of others. In an 1893 speech to graduates, he said, "And remember that any pursuit honestly followed, with due respect for the interests of others as well as one's own, is honorable."

As Virginia Tech celebrates its sesquicentennial, the 150th anniversary of its founding, the motto remains at its core, having been fully embraced by the university community as a timeless ideal of helping fellow humans and bettering the communities in which they live.

Many Hokies see *Ut Prosim* as the key to overcoming society's struggles, and others cite it as a measure of the true value of a Virginia Tech education.

"I think it's as important as their degrees," said Tom Bagamane '83, who established The Giving Spirit, a nonprofit organization serving those experiencing homelessness and educating communities in Los Angeles. "It [service] basically crosses over so many boundaries. Having a balanced sense of yourself and what's important and especially being able to teach others and guide others as leaders or as parents, I don't know how you can't be a better, more well-rounded, more holistically capable person with service as a part of your walk in this life."

Opportunities for service abound across Virginia Tech's campuses. Fraternities, sororities, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, and countless student organizations do their parts, and the university has a center devoted to service learning and leadership.



VT Engage: The Center for Leadership and Service Learning, led by Director Meghan Weyrens Kuhn, coordinates service opportunities and develops programs to target specific issues. VT Engage hosts leadership workshops, faculty training, and civic engagement workshops, such as voter registration efforts.

“One of the differentiators about Virginia Tech is that students come to Virginia Tech knowing what our motto is,” Kuhn said. “It is one of the reasons why they come to this institution, and one of the reasons why alumni are so connected to this institution. They devote part of their lives to serving and to supporting fellow Hokies and their communities. They’re willing to support industries. They’re willing to support the Hokies who are coming up the ranks. That is something that you just don’t see at many places.”

But service is only as helpful as the people performing it. As we celebrate the university’s sesquicentennial, we recognize just a few of the students, faculty, staff, and alumni who embrace *Ut Prosim*—and more importantly, live by it.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: Some of the interviewees for this story shared handwritten statements noting what Ut Prosim (That I May Serve) means to them.

UT PROSIM’S ROOTS DATE TO FIRST CENTURY

Virginia Tech’s Sesquicentennial offered a perfect opportunity for new research into the meaning of the Latin words, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), the university’s motto.

Andrew Becker, an associate professor of Latin and ancient Greek languages, literatures, and culture, found that most forms of “prosim” indicate beneficial service in a broad and influential way.

Cicero, Seneca the Younger, and Seneca the Elder, all first-century Roman philosophers and writers, defined “prosim” as doing something that’s not only nice, but also helps others in transformative ways. Even Plautus, a Roman playwright, contrasted “generosity,” with the stronger “prosim,” which is helping in a deeper way, in his comedic play “Amphitryon.”

Many Virginia Tech students and alumni equate *Ut Prosim* with volunteering. A person gives, through

actions, to another person or group, and the receiving person or group gratefully accepts the help.

While such work is part of the motto’s meaning, Rosemary Blieszner, interim dean of the College of Architecture, Arts, and Design and chair of the Sesquicentennial Steering Committee, hopes students will take *Ut Prosim* to a deeper level by evaluating the societal structures that created the original need for community engagement through volunteering.

“Sometimes with volunteer work, people go and do it, and it isn’t necessarily connected with anything other than being a good citizen of the community,” Blieszner said. “If we can help students think about working toward what Seneca called ‘striving to do some lasting benefit to one another,’ they might find meaningful links between their academic studies and their community activities.”



Tom Bagamane



TOM BAGAMANE

CURRENTLY: Founder/CEO, The Giving Spirit

DEGREE: Journalism and political science

CLASS YEAR: 1983

ON *UT PROSIM*: Bagamane said his life-changing moment came in 1991, when he was driving home from work in downtown Washington, D.C. On a cold December evening, he saw people sleeping on the steam grates outside newly built office buildings on 15th Street.

"That's when homelessness really hit me between the eyes," Bagamane said. "I got furious. I had to act."

That winter, Bagamane enlisted his sister (Kalpana Bagamane '86) as a volunteer, borrowed their dad's Buick station wagon, and went to an Army surplus store to buy blankets and a local grocery store to buy provisions. Then, after midnight at the coldest time of the year, they returned to downtown D.C. to drop these life-sustaining necessities at the feet of their sleeping homeless neighbors.

Bagamane eventually left D.C. for Los Angeles to pursue business opportunities but took that servant mindset with him. In 1999, he founded The Giving Spirit, a nonprofit whose two-part mission is to provide survival assistance to individuals experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles and to produce truth-based educational programming around poverty. The

Giving Spirit has served more than 88,000 individuals, with the help of 22,000 volunteers, while educating thousands more.

"In 1999, I was at a gathering in Santa Monica and put out a challenge: 'Homelessness has reached epidemic status in L.A. This is what we did in D.C. Our city needs you.' Three people raised their hands and became our first volunteers," Bagamane said. "We didn't have a name but had a purpose that resonates even higher today."

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH IMPACTED HIM: "In *Ut Prosim*, Tech embedded in me the platform to be an activist for good and to take ideas to action. *Ut Prosim*, for me, is not an aspiration. It is a clarion call to action. It's an accelerator. ... Our legacy as Hokies should be measured not on the material value that we have created or possess, but on the impact our learning and success has on underserved lives in positive and sustainable ways."

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH'S FUTURE: "We give students the opportunity and the access to benefit from an exceptional education. The advancements we're creating will economically benefit our society in substantial ways, giving us a chance to extend our lives, enhance the quality of our lives, to be more productive, to be healthier and happier and fulfilled. ... We, as Hokies, should combine those exceptional skills with our DNA of service to design pathways and processes to lift the underserved and provide them opportunities for a better life—lives of hope and the aspiration of advancement. Will that not benefit all levels of our society?"





Gabriela Carrillo

Ut prosim means building community
across all social divides.

GABRIELA CARRILLO

CURRENTLY: Post-doctoral training at Harvard

DEGREES: Psychology and translational
biology, medicine, and health

CLASS YEARS: 2014, 2022

ON UT PROSIM: Carrillo, a California native, has been involved in numerous community engagement events throughout her time at Virginia Tech. She has worked with autistic children, volunteered as a mentor to young women at Virginia Western Community College who were interested in STEM fields, been a mentor for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Virginia, interned with the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley, volunteered with the RAFT Community Crisis Center, and served as a Carilion Clinic hospice care volunteer.

"It's certainly not about the number of hours that you volunteer," Carrillo said. "I see service as a way to build and strengthen our community. I think you can only do that when you truly integrate into the community, when you're able to listen to other people's stories and perspectives and understand the context of how your community has been shaped. Service allows you that opportunity."

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH IMPACTED HER: "My first year at Virginia Tech, I joined a living-learning community called SERVE where I learned about servant-leadership. I tend to be a competitive and ambitious person, but that experience taught

me how to selflessly realign my own personal goals to benefit the community as a whole. ... I really enjoyed it. It also catalyzed my career transition into biomedical research. In everything I do now, I strive to uphold Virginia Tech's motto, That I May Serve, as it has brought so much meaning and purpose to my life."

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH'S FUTURE: "I think *Ut Prosim* is ingrained in our identity as Hokies. To me, that's the definition of a Hokie. It's important to consider, too, that Virginia Tech is expanding quickly throughout the commonwealth. We also have campuses in many countries and ties with universities across the globe. With such growth and distance between all the campuses, we need something that really brings us all together. I think service will be the common thread and bond that we all share, and so it's important to maintain that moving forward."

AARON ROUSE

CURRENTLY: Virginia Beach City Council

DEGREE: Sociology

CLASS YEAR: 2007

ON UT PROSIM: Rouse, a former Virginia Tech football player who played four seasons in the NFL, founded Rouse's House, a nonprofit organization devoted to establishing education as the foundation for success. Originally, Rouse returned to his hometown of Virginia Beach and partnered with community leaders and local businesses to distribute school supplies to needy children. He refused to involve his NFL teammates.

"I tried to stay away from those guys, particularly because the kids see us athletes and celebrities and that's what they want to be," Rouse said. "I wanted to show them that there were other ways of being successful, and the ways that people really were instrumental in the way our city was run and the way our society operates."

Today, Rouse's House has expanded to meet food and clothing needs, to help pay for college application fees, and to provide resources to parents looking to transition into a different career.

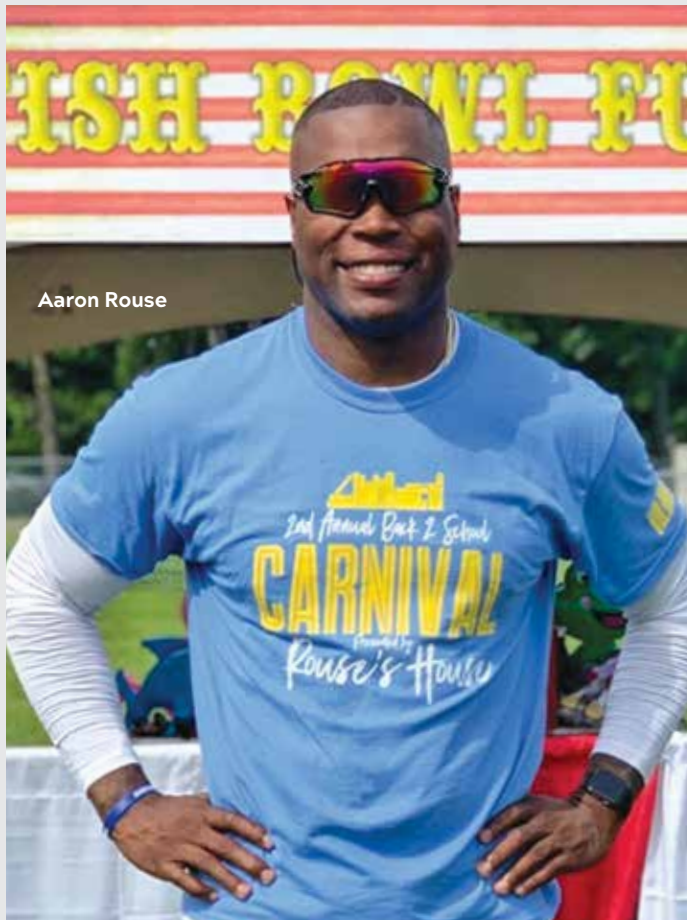
As a member of the Virginia Beach City Council, Rouse, who grew up in a public housing complex, led efforts to build a playground and basketball court in one of the city's historically Black neighborhoods.

"I can tell you, ever since the first day it's opened, the kids have been using it nonstop, and the community just loves it," Rouse said. "It goes to the heart of mental health. It goes to health and

fitness. It goes to community teamwork and instilling a sense of pride in these young kids and where they come from.”

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH IMPACTED HIM: “It’s educators back in Virginia Beach who helped me get to Virginia Tech and educators at Virginia Tech who helped me be successful there, graduate, and helped me develop into who I am today. That’s why I always wanted to give back and made it a point to show the community and other young men and women that, ‘Hey, this is what it’s all about. It’s about educating yourself, being successful and giving back to the community, helping the next person or the next generation to thrive as well.’”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH’S FUTURE: “I’m so proud of my university and President [Tim] Sands and the board [Board of Visitors] for looking forward to those next 150 years and how we can be more inclusive and how we can create an environment where everyone feels welcome, one that is diverse and not just talking about it but putting action toward policies. As an elected member of a governing body, I feel putting action toward words is so important because, at the end of the day, rhetoric only gets you so far.”



Aaron Rouse



MAJ. GEN. TIMOTHY WILLIAMS

CURRENTLY: Adjutant general of Virginia

DEGREE: Management

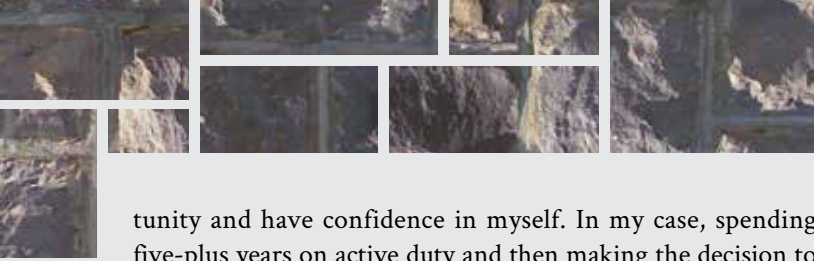
CLASS YEAR: 1985

ON UT PROSIM: Williams, a member of the Corps of Cadets and the Highty-Tighties while at Virginia Tech, has served his country and state in various capacities since being commissioned into the U.S. Army upon graduation in 1985. Williams spent more than five years on active duty before working for the Department of the Army as a civilian for more than 14 years. He was mobilized in 2003 and again in 2007, serving in Iraq. In 2014, Williams was appointed the adjutant general of Virginia, overseeing the Virginia Army National Guard, Virginia Air National Guard, and Virginia Defense Force. He took the oath to serve again this past July after Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin reappointed him for a third term.

Williams’ grandfather, father, brother, and son all have served or are serving in the Virginia National Guard. His father, wife, brother, and daughter graduated from Virginia Tech and were members of the corps.

“All I had to do was look to my dad and my brother, and not only were they inspirational in terms of service, but they certainly served as an example of what was available at Virginia Tech and what the corps did and still continues to do, frankly,” Williams said.

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH IMPACTED HIM: “Tech, and what I went through there, was absolutely one of the key components of my ability to survive and to reach out for any opponent.”



tunity and have confidence in myself. In my case, spending five-plus years on active duty and then making the decision to return to my state and to join the National Guard, Tech was a central part of that. I had the confidence because of that. I could do it and I could find my path.”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH'S FUTURE: “We now face a critical juncture in our nation. Can our nation move into the next 250 years? Not just Virginia Tech’s 150 years, but can we go into the next 250 years? I think Virginia Tech will be a key component of leading that way, so that, as a republic, we continue to thrive and to grow. ... Virginia Tech should be a leader in all that. Virginia Tech absolutely can move into the next 150 years, but frankly, they must, because our nation needs more schools like Tech.”

MADISYN DALTON

CURRENTLY: Working during a gap year
and applying to dental schools

DEGREE: Human nutrition, foods,
and exercise

CLASS YEAR: 2022

ON UT PROSIM: A shadowing opportunity with a dentist during the pandemic led Dalton to make a dental hygiene goodie bag for kids in her hometown, Hillsville, Virginia. She handed out bags filled with toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, a sticker, and an infographic that she designed. Thus, Brush Up, a grassroots nonprofit created to promote dental health, was born. Numerous fourth- and fifth-graders have received the bag, and her infographic was used by Volunteers Around the World, an on-campus group, during a medical trip to Guatemala. Dalton plans to expand Brush Up’s presence by including the bags as part of a Backpack Buddies program in her home county.

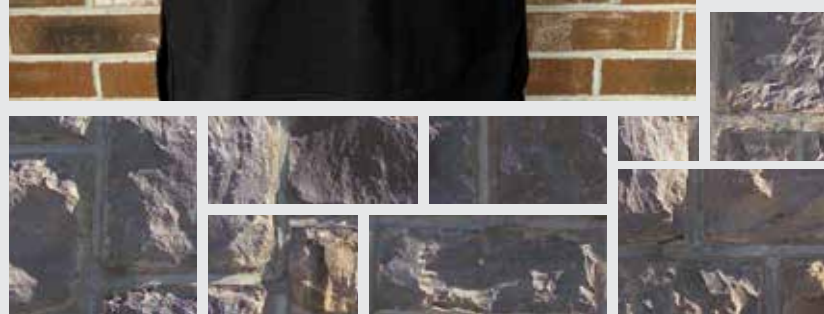
“When you’re worried about shelter, food, clothes, and bills, your teeth aren’t really the first thing on your mind, and I totally understand that,” Dalton said. “While working, I saw many issues that could have been prevented by brushing alone. My original vision for Brush Up focused on my own community, but to my surprise, it has impact beyond the limits of Carroll County, Virginia.”

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH IMPACTED HER: “The attitude of service on campus and among the faculty is so evident and empowering. The pre-dental groups I was a part of would send out weekly emails regarding volunteer opportunities not only at Virginia Tech but also surrounding areas. ... That attitude of

service, camaraderie, and friendship was present from both the academic and social perspective. The unity that the school presents is evident, and I knew that from the first time I toured it.”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH'S FUTURE: “I think it’s incredibly important to continue to put emphasis on the school’s motto throughout the coming years. There is so much opportunity at Virginia Tech, and the university administrators create that. They cultivate those opportunities. Not every college has that. I am grateful to have been a part of this school and its mission.”

Ut Prosim, to me,
is loving others
as myself.





HOLLER TO HOLLER: Virginia Tech students assisted eastern Kentucky residents whose homes were destroyed by severe flooding.

EMILY SATTERWHITE, REBECCA HESTER

CURRENTLY:

Satterwhite: Associate professor, Department of Religion and Culture, and director, Appalachian Studies

Hester: Associate professor, Department of Science, Technology, and Society, and associate director of education, Center for Refugee, Migrant, and Displacement Studies

ON UT PROSIM: For the third time, Satterwhite and Hester are co-instructing a course called Societal Health that focuses on how health and well-being are influenced by cultural norms, social structures and hierarchies, and inequity and injustice. The course requires students to perform 15 hours of community engagement activities that involve collective action for social change.

“What we’re really trying to get [students] to think about is, are you addressing a problem that’s already in crisis, which is an important thing to do?” Satterwhite said. “And are you also thinking about preventing that crisis from occurring in the future?”

For example, over Labor Day weekend, 28 students and faculty members participated in a mutual aid flood relief trip. They helped with cleanup and discussed needed structural changes to prevent or respond humanely to future disasters.

“We started this class, especially this time in a pandemic mode, discussing how all the research that’s coming out now talks about student and faculty disengagement, and so it feels more urgent than ever ... to re-engage the students and to give them some meaning, not just around their lives and education, but their futures,” Hester said.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF OFFERING SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDENTS:

“One thing that I think about is how hungry the students are to be meaningfully engaged,” Satterwhite said. “We are making space for students to step into, to do work that they really want to do anyway. They want to be engaged in real world research. They want to be connecting with the community.”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH’S FUTURE:

“That’s why this [mutual aid trip] is not charity because charity, in many ways, is about dropping in and doing a few little things,” Hester said. “But all the structures remain in place, and so you’ll just keep having to drop in ... but that doesn’t fundamentally address the structural issues that are historically and socially produced.

“This is also core to us that we don’t just engender gratitude in people that we give a handout to, but we put our shoulders in next to them and say, ‘OK, how do we prevent this from ever happening again?’ or at least build community such that, if this happens again, it’s not about one individual. It’s about all of us together making this better. That’s the kind of service orientation, that kind of community and communal orientation, that we are trying to foster and build up at Virginia Tech.”





CARLA FINKIELSTEIN

CURRENTLY: Director of the Molecular Diagnostics Lab, Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC

ON UT PROSIM: By the end of March 2020, Finkelstein recognized that there was not a well-organized plan to tackle the pandemic. Health departments lacked infrastructure, personnel, and support for the magnitude of the challenge. Offices in local health districts were sending test samples to laboratories, who returned results seven to 10 days later—too late to prevent infection in family members and others. Controlling the spread by testing and isolating the infected individual took on a level of utmost importance.

“I did not think twice when I realized the situation. I knew I had the technical expertise to address the problem,” Finkelstein said. “At the end of the day, these are all molecules, right? So all that I needed to do was to find a way to detect this. More importantly, there were students, postdocs, techs, colleagues, staff, cadets, and administrators who were willing to help at any level.”

Finkelstein was so confident in her team and its method that she told her health district colleagues, “The one thing I’m going to promise is that you will have results for each sample the same day. ... So you will know who is, or isn’t, infected rapidly, and thus, it’s up to you to take action.”

Her lab has run more than 225,000 tests for the community, including nursing homes, businesses, schools, and universities. For her efforts, last year, she earned the Ut Prosim Scholar Award—the university’s top honor for faculty.

“It was very gratifying to see all of us helping together with the same goal in mind—to avoid any major outbreak that could turn into a disaster in our region,” she said. “I think we accomplished that. I will cherish the experience of working with this team forever.”

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH HAS IMPACTED HER: “I’m a person who believes that every scientist has a social responsibility. I think service should be part of being a scientist, so I think the university aligns very well with my beliefs of what science is all about. I think it’s great that *Ut Prosim* is the motto of the university.”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH’S FUTURE: “I believe service keeps us grounded. It reminds us of our ultimate responsibility as scientists in the society where we live. The university doesn’t take its motto lightly and encourages all to be proactive in that space by providing opportunities at all levels to serve. I personally appreciate that.”

MARTHA SULLIVAN

CURRENTLY: Associate professor of practice and design



ON UT PROSIM: Sullivan has overseen a service-learning project entitled Empty Bowls through one of her courses in 12 of her 15 years at Virginia Tech. Empty Bowls is a grassroots national movement of artists and crafters who raise money to combat food insecurity in local communities by selling their art. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, groups of students at Virginia Tech took part by making soup bowls for an event that paying patrons within the community attended, with each student constructing 10 to 20 bowls. Approximately 400 people attended in 2019, ate soup prepared by the students, and then took home the bowls.

“The guests take home the bowls as a reminder of all those who go hungry,” Sullivan said.

Over the years through the Empty Bowls project, Sullivan’s students have raised more than \$20,000 for Micah’s Backpack, which provides direct food assistance to area children experiencing food insecurity. For the past four years, Sullivan and her students have partnered with Plenty!, a food bank in Floyd County that holds a community bike ride annually to raise money to stock a free community food pantry. The students’ bowls are a part of fundraising efforts.

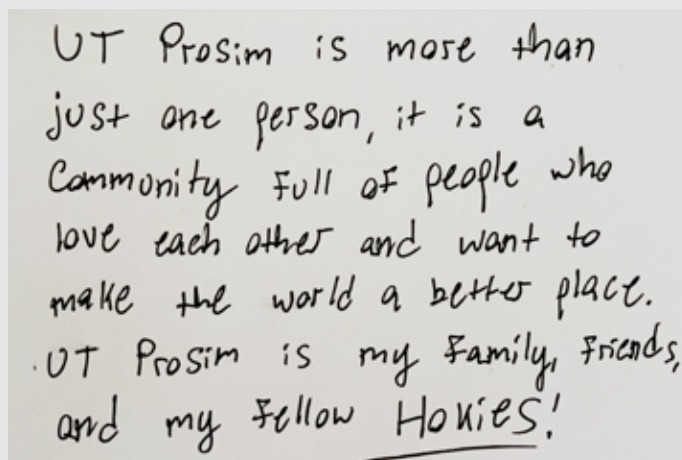
“I think people need entry-level opportunities to really be mindful citizens and really be connected to their community and realize if we all give a little, the community is going to be just amazing,” Sullivan said. “So the community service aspect is really important to me, and it’s important to the department, and the students really benefit from that.”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF OFFERING SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDENTS: “I would say community service is one of the four main pillars of our department. When our students leave here, they have had some form of community engagement. I would hope that most of the kids who graduate feel, in whatever region and whatever way they want, empowered by design and feel like they could be activists toward a healthy, happy future.”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH’S FUTURE: “The idea of a personal or community connection across projects, having this sort of authentic relationship with the community that surrounds Virginia Tech, I think that it’s key to going forward. ... I like to send my students off to internships, but I also like to utilize the resources that we have on campus to better the community because a lot of our folks will stay in Virginia. They may not stay in Blacksburg or Montgomery County, but a lot of the kids who are going to graduate from this university are going to stay in Virginia, and every time we invest in them, we invest in our own state. To me, that is the future.”



Collin Jessie



COLLIN JESSIE

CURRENTLY: Senior

DEGREE: Civil engineering

ON UT PROSIM: In fall 2018, doctors diagnosed Jessie with testicular cancer. He underwent surgery to remove a tumor and then underwent three cycles of chemotherapy over the course of three months. A swimmer on his high school team, he saw his senior season end before it got started.

“At that point, my childhood was over,” Jessie said. “I was done. And I was just like, ‘Alright, well, time to be an adult. Time to make decisions, and fight for your life.’”

Jessie has been cancer-free since 2019. But that experience and having watched family members lose their fights against cancer play a big role in his involvement with Relay For Life.





Jessie, who said he has been involved with Relay For Life since middle school, now serves on a committee that organizes the event at Virginia Tech—one of the biggest in the country. He first saw an event at Tech while visiting his sister and said each subsequent Relay For Life event resonates with him.

“Me getting diagnosed and meeting people who are also going through treatments, meeting survivors and knowing those people after I finished treatment, and knowing some of those people who I went through treatment with passed away, it just basically sparked this huge fire underneath me of like I need to get involved in this,” Jessie said. “If I don’t accomplish anything at Virginia Tech, I need to have this in my life. So that’s transformed into this great thing throughout these four years.”

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH HAS IMPACTED HIM: “Everybody knows that if you want to go and make a difference in the world, you go to Virginia Tech. No matter what you want to do in life, you go to Virginia Tech to make a difference in this world, and I’m extremely proud to call myself a Hokie because of that. ... And these events, this service that I do, it’s changed my life.”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH’S FUTURE: “It is so forged in the backbone of our university that it’s a No. 1 priority going forward. The world will always be in a better place if we help one another, and if we keep going on this trend that we have been going on with this university, then we will keep making changes in the world. I think it’s so important, the No. 1 priority, that they maintain that motto, instill it into every single student, and keep that fire going with every student moving forward.”

ALIVIA COLON

CURRENTLY: Senior

DEGREE: Meteorology

ON UT PROSIM: Colon, a native of Alpharetta, Georgia, has worked for VT Engage: The Center for Leadership and Service Learning during her time in Blacksburg. VT Engage coordinates service opportunities and holds leadership workshops, faculty training, and civic engagement workshops.

Colon also is involved with The Market of Virginia Tech, which addresses food insecurity on campus by providing free food to select program participants. Colon started volunteering as a sophomore, packing food and distributing it, and this past spring, she and others cooked single-serving meals, allowing her to pursue two passions—cooking and helping others.

“I feel like one of the most important things is that through service, you’re taking something away from it,” Colon said. “I feel there’s too many times where people will do volunteer work or service work where they get their hours, and I feel like productive service work is where you take something from it.”

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH HAS IMPACTED HER: “I wouldn’t say [Virginia Tech] has changed it [her view of service], but it has made it more important to where I want to end up in the future. I would encourage all students to try and do some service during their time at Tech. It doesn’t matter—10 hours or 400. To me, if you do one event every semester, that is a perfect way to kind of give back. You put attention toward something, and it grows. ... You see change when you put attention into those kinds of things. So that’s what I would encourage.”

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH’S FUTURE: “I think a lot of this school is built off people giving back, whether it’s physical money or time. The school is only able to be as great and big as it is because of the students and the people, the alumni who want to come back and give back and continue the tradition of *Ut Prosim*. So I think that, in the next 150 years, service is always going to be part of life. You’re always going to be given the opportunity to give back or keep, and I promote giving.”





Ana Montoya

Ut prosim means sharing a piece of my heart with someone in need.

ANA MONTOYA

CURRENTLY: Senior

DEGREE: Neuroscience

ON UT PROSIM: Montoya hails from Bogota, Colombia, and currently works as an emergency medical technician (basic) with the Virginia Tech Rescue Squad, a student-run organization that functions like a municipal rescue squad. She has served on the membership committee and currently serves as the public outreach lieutenant, helping to educate the community on ways to prevent emergencies and to raise overall health awareness. She said she attends various events that require the services of the rescue squad and commits approximately 30 to 40 hours per week to the squad.

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH HAS IMPACTED HER: "I think a community cannot work without service. I think it's one of the integral parts of the growth, development, and even sustainment of a community because it's a two-way street. You give a lot, but you also receive a lot personally, emotionally. I think it not only bonds everyone, but it gives us another reason to live, and it's a very exciting thing, which is why I love Tech and the motto we have because I think that motto really drives people to do service."

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH'S FUTURE: "I think it's one of the things that makes Tech one of the best universities, I would not only say in the country, but in the world, having an outsider perspective. I think it's important to keep that service part going because it's what makes us different. ... I truly feel that this motto, it is one of the biggest reasons that makes our campus and our community that connected, that grateful, and that happy."

EMILY SMITH

CURRENTLY: Graduate student

STATUS: Pursuing a master's degree

in green engineering

DEGREE: civil and environmental engineering

CLASS YEAR: 2022

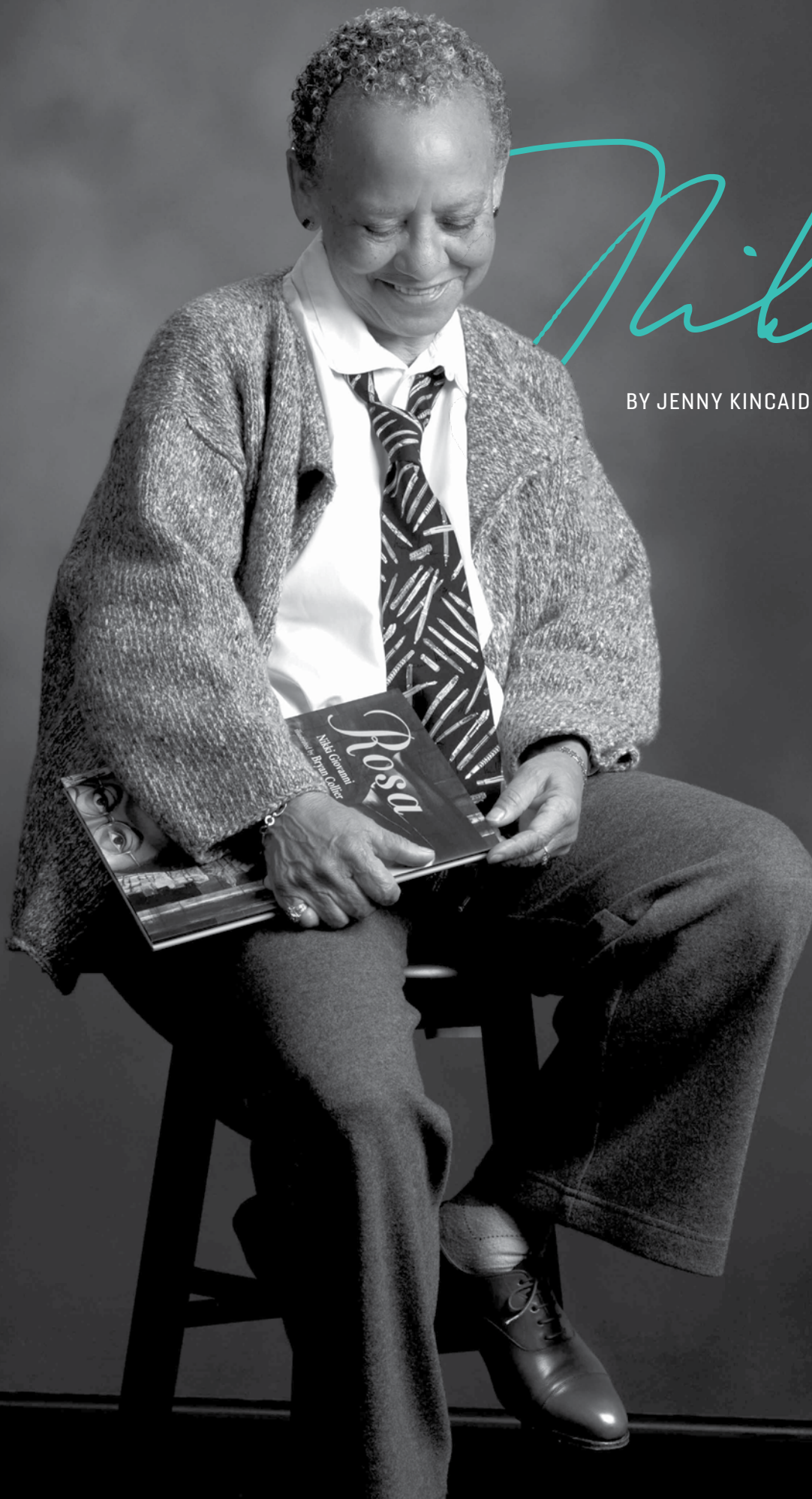
ON UT PROSIM: The Big Event is a student-run day of service that stands as the second-largest event of its kind in the nation. In April, more than 5,100 students performed tasks throughout the local community and the New River Valley, and Smith, a native of Charlottesville, Virginia, served as a co-director. She was involved with The Big Event all four years while pursuing her undergraduate degree.

ON HOW VIRGINIA TECH IMPACTED HER: "I think one of my favorite things about living here is the community. I've spent summers here. I spent some time during breaks here, and the people in Blacksburg just support the school so much more than we realize. And The Big Event is just one day. It's small, but I think that the town really knows it and benefits from it, and it just connects to the town so well."

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FOR VIRGINIA TECH'S FUTURE: "I think service is a product of a small town and a product of Virginia Tech. People want to care about each other and want to be involved in each other's lives. I think service is almost just a byproduct of that, but I think it's so important to Tech because that's what makes this place somewhere you want to be. Service isn't inherently school spirit, but I think ours is very, very intertwined, and people love it here because of the community, and the community is great because people are serving each other, and people are serving each other because the community is great and because they want to be here. They want to celebrate, and they want to have school spirit." ■



Emily Smith



Nikki

BY JENNY KINCAID BOONE

‘All I have are WORDS’

NIKKI GIOVANNI rarely looks back. But when she reflects on her time at Virginia Tech, her accolades as an award-winning writer and visionary are not first of mind.

“I hope that I’ve done a good job,” said Giovanni. “I hope that I’ve done at least my fair share.”

It’s hard to imagine Virginia Tech without Giovanni, but the legendary poet has closed the classroom chapter.

In September, she retired after 35 years as a professor in the Department of English.

“In all fairness, I’m getting old,” Giovanni, 79, said.

Still, the renowned poet is not putting down her pen. In fact, she’s as busy as she’s ever been with a packed schedule of travel, speaking engagements, and book signings.

She still writes regularly—from a computer in her Christiansburg home after her morning routine of breakfast and a coffee run to a nearby Starbucks. Giovanni often gleans ideas for her work by reading “today in history” pieces in newspapers, contemplating how the past fits into the present and connects with her personal stories.

Her newest children's book, "A Library," debuted in September at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. It recounts her weekly visits as a child to a segregated library near her home.

Giovanni also started work on a book named for the Knoxville, Tennessee, street where she lived with her grandparents as a teenager. "A Street Called Mulvaney" will include her memories of the Black neighborhood and community before urban renewal changed the street's name and the landscape.

"I thought, 'If somebody like me doesn't write about Mulvaney Street, it'll be forgotten,'" she said. "All I have are words. You have to use them."

Because of her powerful words, Giovanni is known around the world. Her poetry, essays, and written work delve into social issues, including race and gender, along with her personal experiences.

Among her many accomplishments, Giovanni has published at least 11 illustrated children's books, received 30 honorary degrees and seven NAACP Image Awards, and has been a finalist for a Grammy and for the National Book Award. Oprah Winfrey named her one of 25 living legends. Giovanni is a sought-after speaker and public voice, and this past year she appeared on CNN's "United Shades of America."

At the university, Giovanni used her written and spoken words to mark significant events in Virginia Tech history, creating poems for the April 16 tragedy and for the Class of 2020's commencement ceremony, which occurred at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Nikki Giovanni has been an important and deeply valued presence on our campus, giving voice to the spirit of Virginia Tech and helping us celebrate, mourn, learn, heal, and be better," said Virginia Tech President Tim Sands. "Her words will continue to inspire us and touch readers around the world, and while we will miss her regular presence on campus, she will always be a beloved member of our university community."

Many faculty and students know her for more than her awards. Hokies, from NFL athletes to business leaders and professional writers, have amassed years of wisdom and life lessons from Giovanni.

She landed at Virginia Tech in 1987 after receiving an invitation from Ginney Fowler, a faculty member in the Depart-

ment of English who also retired this past year. Fowler recruited Giovanni after hearing her speak at a conference.

Giovanni said she had never heard of Virginia Tech. But she accepted the offer made over the phone and moved her mother and her son with her to the New River Valley from Ohio.

Giovanni was hired as part of the Commonwealth Visiting Professor program, which sought to bring artists and scholars from minority groups to the university. By then, Giovanni had established her name as part of the national Black Arts Movement while making a living speaking and reading her work. Some nicknamed her the "Princess of Black Poetry," Fowler said.

"Nikki Giovanni has been an important and deeply valued presence on our campus, giving voice to the spirit of Virginia Tech and helping us celebrate, mourn, learn, heal, and be better. Her words will continue to inspire us and touch readers around the world, and while we will miss her regular presence on campus, she will always be a beloved member of our university community."

-TIM SANDS
Virginia Tech President



About a year after Giovanni came to Blacksburg, Fowler said she began to see glimpses of the ways that the author was different from other faculty.

One day, Giovanni decided to organize a fish fry on the Drillfield. She purchased flounder and bread, talked to kitchen staff, and invited the whole campus for a free fish sandwich.

“She was talking to me about the fact that students and faculty needed to get together more,” Fowler said. “I thought ‘She has lost her mind. Who’s going to come to a fish fry on the Drillfield?’”

But people did come, including legendary football coach Frank Beamer and many athletes.

“That was the first time I realized that she could really change things,” Fowler said.

Another example of Giovanni’s unique nature was when she was asked to keep the minutes at an executive committee meeting for the English department. Rather than note the meeting’s main points, Giovanni documented what kind and color socks people were wearing.

“Quite naturally, nobody ever asked her to take minutes again,” Fowler said.

All along, as Giovanni’s reputation as a poet and activist was growing, so was her work shaping students’ lives—in more ways than one.

Take Kwame Alexander ’89, now a New York Times bestselling author and winner of the Newbery Medal, which is awarded to authors of American children’s literature. Alexander took his first advanced poetry class with Giovanni when he was a sophomore at Virginia Tech. But he could not understand why she spent the majority of class talking about life and current events with students. They were not learning how to write, he said.

After receiving his third C grade in her class, a frustrated Alexander visited Giovanni at her office in Major Williams Hall. Giovanni told him, “Kwame, I can teach you how to write, but I can’t teach you how to be interesting,” he recalled.

“When I look back, I learned everything,” he said. “That’s where I got the tools to be able to write.”

Will Furrer ’91, a former Hokie and NFL quarterback who majored in English, said Giovanni taught him how to find his voice.



“She has been a new and different voice on campus. She brought different people, different actors, different influencers to campus so that people in Blacksburg and Virginia Tech could experience diverse points of view.”

—WILL FURRER ’91
A former Hokie and NFL quarterback

“The duty that we had to ourselves was to develop our own voice and learn how to tell our story so that we could do something other than sports,” Furrer said, explaining that this was a point that Giovanni honed during her classes to which many athletes at the time flocked.

Her advice resonated with him, in particular now in his job as chief strategy officer for Q2 banking in Austin, Texas. The company builds banking apps.

When he was a student, Furrer recalled sitting in Giovanni’s office and listening to her stories about Aretha Franklin, Toni Morrison, Morgan Freeman, and other famous U.S. novelists, artists, actors, and leaders. She was close friends with many of them.

In fact, Giovanni organized an event to celebrate Morrison’s legacy in 2012 at Virginia Tech, and among the attendees were Maya Angelou and Rita Dove, literary legends.

“She has been a new and different voice on campus,” said Furrer, who visited Giovanni this past year to interview her for his company’s podcast celebrating Black History Month. “She brought different people, different actors, different influencers to campus so that people in Blacksburg and Virginia Tech could experience diverse points of view.”

Even students who could not get into her classes reached out to her—and she responded.

Christal Presley '99, MA '00 was one of them. As a student, she remembers approaching Giovanni with her manuscript of a children's book in hand to ask for feedback. Giovanni invited Presley to her office and insisted that she call her "Nikki," rather than "Ms. Giovanni."

Shortly after that meeting, Presley received a typed page of feedback about her manuscript from Giovanni, along with the writer's home phone number. "Call me anytime," Giovanni wrote.

"She was the first writer who ever really told me I had talent and who I felt sincerely believed that," said Presley, who went on to publish a memoir about her father in 2012 for which Giovanni wrote an endorsement. "I was a nobody. I believed what she said about my writing, and that's one of the things that has carried me through the years, through a bunch of rejections."

Giovanni's presence has drawn aspiring student writers, such as Honora Ankong, to Virginia Tech. Ankong completed the university's Master of Fine Arts program this past spring.

"She was part of the allure of Virginia Tech for me," said Ankong, who met Giovanni several times but never took a class with the writer. "I was able to be in community with this living legend."

In 2005, Giovanni created a poetry competition named for its benefactor, the late Charles W. Steger, Virginia Tech president emeritus. Later, the event was renamed the Giovanni-Steger Poetry Prize competition. The annual contest recognizes poetry by students from all disciplines and carries a large cash award.

Giovanni was named a University Distinguished Professor in 1999. The honor recognizes Virginia Tech faculty whose scholarly work attracts national or international recognition.

Her most challenging time at Virginia Tech came in April 2007, when Giovanni was asked to speak at a campus convocation the day following the April 16 tragedy.

"I didn't know how it was going to be received," she said. "You just did what you had to do. It still brings tears to my eyes."

In her retirement, she said she will miss talking with Virginia Tech students regularly.

"I do enjoy talking to sharper minds, and Tech has good minds,"

said Giovanni, who describes the Hokie Nation as her family.

One of her goals, along with helping to mentor students, has been to teach them to dig deeper.

"I want my students to not accept what they are hearing, but to look and say 'What kind of sense does this make?' and 'What is going to be the end result?'" she said.

Her work with many Hokies has come full circle, in particular with Kevin Jones '14, MBA '18, a former Virginia Tech football player and NFL athlete, who took a writing class with Giovanni while he was a student and immediately connected with her.

"What I took a lot from those days was her confidence," said Jones, who now owns Joba Design in Blacksburg and has been an adjunct professor at Virginia Tech. "She was trying to instill confidence in us. As a Black student athlete, I felt encouraged and empowered that here was someone who was at Virginia Tech that I could have conversations with and who had a shared experience."

When he was inducted into Virginia Tech's Hall of Fame in 2016, Jones asked Giovanni to help him write his induction speech, which was a poem about Virginia Tech and its community.

"I didn't know how it [remarks at campus convocation on April 17, 2007] was going to be received. You just did what you had to do. It still brings tears to my eyes."

-NIKKI GIOVANNI



"I think that she's part of the reason I am who I am," Jones said. "When I decided to stop football and do more things on the education side, she's the first person I thought of. I thought, 'Oh, Nikki would love this. She's going to be proud.'"

Similarly, nearly 10 years after Alexander graduated from Virginia Tech, Giovanni asked him to submit a poem for inclusion in her book "Grand Fathers," published in 1999. At the time, Alexander was struggling to make ends meet as a writer.

"That letter she sent me with the \$50 check to pay me for the poem, those two things secured another three years of confidence in me that I could do this," he said. "It gave me a three-year boost, like a booster shot."

About seven years later, Alexander was invited to speak at a conference for English teachers in New York. Since he was an up-and-coming author, he wondered why the conference organizers chose him to speak. Afterward, he learned that Giovanni had recommended him for the role.

"This is what a real teacher does," he said. "They give you what you need, they inform and inspire you, they put you on this path, and they do these little things to give you a leg up."

In October, more than 100 people gathered to honor Giovanni at a retirement celebration held at the Taubman Museum of Art in Roanoke, Virginia. Guests included Javon Jackson, renowned saxophonist; Will Schwalbe, Giovanni's editor and executive vice president of Macmillan Publishing; and others, including Jones, Furrer, and Alexander.

While speaking to the crowd, Alexander recounted a time that he and Giovanni appeared together at a book signing in Harlem, New York. Guests were buying more copies of Giovanni's books than his. When they asked him if he would sign her books, Alexander opted out. "I was salty," he said.

Fast forward to October when the two presented together at Huguenot High School in Richmond. Afterward, while they both signed copies of their books, students began to approach Giovanni, asking her to sign Alexander's books. She gladly obliged.

"It's in that moment where I recognize that I'm still being taught 35 years after I sat in advanced poetry class," Alexander said. ■



"It's in that moment [at a book signing for both authors] where I recognize that I'm still being taught 35 years after I sat in advanced poetry class."

-KWAME ALEXANDER '89
A former Hokie and author



SNAP HAPPY: When she isn't overseeing the work of more than 6,000 engineers for General Dynamics, alumna Lisa Finneran focuses her energies on landscape photography.





AROUND THE HOKIE NATION

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LANDSCAPES AND HORIZONS

THE ALTERED NEW YORK SKYLINE AND BROKEN PENTAGON

that surfaced from the smoke and ash on Sept. 11, 2001, instilled fear in the collective heart of the nation. Virginia Tech alumna Lisa Finneran points to this new landscape and its fearful horizon as the catalyst for her calling.

Twice since graduating with a bachelor's degree in computer science in 1985, Finneran declined offers of employment from General Dynamics. When the company approached her a third time—this time after the Sept. 11 attacks—she accepted.

"I never served in the military," she said, "but I feel the work that I do has been a call to duty, a call to service to aid those who put their lives on the line. The complexity of the engineering solutions that we provide enables our customers [the U.S. military and its allies] to take action in support of the safety and security of our country."

Years later, this call to service continues to motivate Finneran in her role as vice president of engineering for General Dynamic Mission Systems, a business unit of General Dynamics. A technology integrator and original equipment manufacturer, General Dynamics has deep domain expertise in land, sea, air, space, and cyber. The company provides mission-critical solutions to those who lead, serve, and protect the world.

"She [Lisa] is compassionate, motivating, and a tremendous advocate for her employees and her customers," said Carlo Zaffanella, vice president and general manager of maritime and strategic systems at General Dynamics Mission Systems. "One of Lisa's

PHOTO COURTESY OF LISA FINNERAN

FAMILY TIES: Lisa Finneran (second from left) celebrates with her family at the 2022 Virginia Tech Academy of Engineering Excellence induction ceremony.



“

EVERY DAY WE HAVE TO PUSH
BEYOND WHAT WE KNOW

**BECAUSE EVERY DAY WE LEARN
MORE ABOUT THE WORLD AND
SPACE AROUND US.”**

Lisa Finneran '85

many strengths is relationship-building. In every position that she has advanced to within General Dynamics, Lisa has built a sense of community.”

Professionally committed to identifying and engaging with the grand challenges of our age, Finneran credits the more than 6,000 engineers in her employ—the “big brains”—with “developing some of the most complex systems known to humankind in the name of the safety and security of our nation. To them, nothing is outside the art of the possible. If the technology doesn’t exist for what we need to accomplish, then we’re just going to create it.”

She finds the work of her team and their commitment to the art of the possible perpetually inspirational.

Before arriving at General Dynamics, Finneran served as senior vice president and chief technical officer for the Software Productivity Consortium, a not-for-profit group dedicated to improving the productivity and quality of mission-critical software.

During this time, she also served as a community reader for the blind and volunteered with her children’s activities.

REVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION

As a computer science major in the early

1980s, Finneran still remembers the challenges she faced. “Early on I struggled with the confidence that I was going to make it. Computer science was hard!” Despite her proficiency, Finneran found the mathematical aspects of the curriculum extremely difficult.

She credits a strong support structure for helping her overcome early adversity in her studies. “My mom worked for a company that had an 800-number, so I could call her every day without any long-distance charges. This was unique for the time, since not everyone had the ability or desire to talk with their parents every day. ‘Stick to it,’ she would tell me. ‘You can do it!’” Her mother’s cheerleading made her stronger and kept her going when she had doubts about her ability to move forward.

Finneran, an introvert as an undergraduate, pushed herself to get involved. She got to know the faculty and made sure the faculty knew her. She became active in the Association for Computing Machinery and served as the student organization president before graduating. “I also cannot overemphasize the importance of the friends I developed at Virginia Tech,” Finneran said, “especially in computer science. We were all in the same boat, and we were able to support each other. These became lifelong

friendships. We still meet together for a weekend each year and pick up exactly where we left off.”

Despite the enduring personal support structure, the infrastructure in place during the 1980s could not support computer science as we know it today. Finneran laughed about the “cutting-edge” 300-baud modems available when she began the program and about her first computer, the Radio Shack TRS-80. “In my apartment I had a TRaSh 80’ that weighed something like 85 pounds. In order to get my assignments done, I still needed to go to a computer lab, where it was a struggle to get in because they were so full. Nevertheless, I loved it all. I especially loved the satisfaction of completing a program and getting it to run.”

Reflecting on the changes in technology that have taken place across the decades, Finneran noted the distinction between revolutionary tech and evolutionary tech. “It’s like that old TSR-80,” she said. “In a matter of decades, we went from an 85-pound machine to incredibly powerful, sleek devices that fit in our pockets. This change has had revolutionary impacts, relatively speaking, but the tech didn’t happen overnight. Its development was an evolutionary process that was responsive to the changing needs of our world.”

As another example of revolutionary impact, Finneran recounted the time she spent after college volunteering as a reader for a lawyer who was blind. “I would go to her home after work and read her mail to her aloud. Because the retail store mailers were so dependent on images, I remember telling her all about the sale items featured each week so she could plan her shopping. Now, it’s as easy as asking Siri or Alexa to order your groceries, clothing, and other needs—and to have them all delivered to your door.”

BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES

“Every day we have to push beyond what we know because every day we learn more about the world and space around us,” Finneran said. She pointed to the James Webb Space Telescope as a timely example of pushing beyond boundaries of what is knowable and what is known (and proudly noted that General Dynamics Mission Systems machined the 18 hexagonal mirror segments that enable the optical power of the telescope).

“There are no boundaries around the challenges that present themselves; it follows that there should be no boundaries in our approach to addressing these challenges,” said Finneran. “Diversity, in all of its manifestations, is absolutely critical to addressing the grand challenges of our age. Multiple perspectives and experiences must be gathered to effectively brainstorm and chip away at the problem.”

Finneran credits her communication skills for allowing her to motivate and

inspire others in her capacity as a leader. She said effective communication spans audiences and is crucial for the adoption of new ideas and technologies: “It doesn’t matter what solutions we bring to the table if we can’t explain their applications and impacts to others.”

Finneran’s contributions to the fields of computer science and engineering led to her recent recognition as the recipient of the 2022 Distinguished Alumni Award in the Department of Computer Science and to her induction into the 2022 Virginia Tech Academy of Engineering Excellence. Her spirit of *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) is visible in her service to Virginia Tech and through her dedication and commitment to the safety and security of our nation. ■

Joan Watson is the director of administrative operations for the Department of Computer Science. Jenise Jacques, former communications manager for the department, contributed to the story.



GOLDEN HOUR: Lisa Finneran, an accomplished landscape photographer, captures the evening glow as the sun sets in the Grand Tetons.



CHAPTER AWARDS 2021-22

PYLON AWARDS

CHAPTER

Atlanta
Baltimore
Central Pa.
Charleston
Charlotte
Cincinnati
Columbia
D.C. Metro Area
Denver
Dallas-Fort Worth
Fauquier
First State
Fredericksburg
Loudoun
Minnesota
N.C. Triad
New England
New Jersey
Palmetto
Peninsula
Philadelphia
Pittsburgh
Richmond
Roanoke Valley
Tidewater

SUPERLATIVE AWARDS

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI CHAPTER EVENT

Cincinnati Alumni Chapter

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI CHAPTER SERVICE PROJECT

Charleston Alumni Chapter

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI CHAPTER MARKETING

Greenville/Southampton Alumni Chapter

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI CHAPTER PHILANTHROPIC EVENT

Peninsula Alumni Chapter

OUTSTANDING COLLABORATIVE EVENT OR ACTIVITY

Ex Lapide Alumni Society

RISING STAR ALUMNI CHAPTER

Tri-Cities Alumni Chapter

RISING STAR VOLUNTEER

Julie Campbell, Dallas-Fort Worth
Alumni Chapter

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI CHAPTER VOLUNTEER

The Johnson family,
Columbia, S.C. Alumni Chapter

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI CHAPTER OFFICER

Elyssa Mackey, Richmond Alumni Chapter

OUTSTANDING REUNION WEEKEND VOLUNTEERS

Ted King, Dianne Simons,
and Melissa Nelson



HOMECOMING 2022

HUNDREDS OF HOKIES came together in Blacksburg this fall to celebrate Homecoming with annual traditions, including the Spirit Rally, alumni tailgate, parade, football game, and more.

Dan Marshall '20 of American Idol fame provided live entertainment for the Spirit Rally.

During the parade and throughout the weekend, Virginia Tech's Sesquicentennial also took center stage.

A special projection was displayed on Torgersen Bridge that explored 150 years of university history through photos, videos, and sound. University officials also unveiled the Sesquicentennial Time Capsule Bench and introduced some of the items to be sealed in the time capsule later this year. The time capsule will be opened during the university's bicentennial celebration in 50 years. ■ AM



150
years

A WAY WITH WORDS

THE SONG EMERGED

whole, like she'd downloaded it from some celestial version of Spotify. Bathsheba Smithen '06 was hanging out in a friend's residence hall when a rap started running through her head that would help her study for her biology final: "I'm thinking biologically through osmosis/The pituitary gland lets down oxytocin/I'm jamming to this beat/Makes me want to dance/Because I feel it coming from my mammary glands."

She passed the final—and changed the course of her life. "That was the beginning of merging education with entertainment," said Smithen, founder of the edutainment company Cage Free Voices.

Smithen and her eight siblings were raised by a single mom in a Newport News, Virginia, public housing project, so words offered a portal to another place. On outings to the public library, Smithen fell in love with Encyclopedia Brown and Amelia Bedelia. As a teenager, she took inspiration from Maya Angelou and began writing her own poetry and songs.

No one in her family had ever gone to college until Smithen won a scholarship to Virginia Tech in 2002. In Blacksburg, words offered a sense of identity. Smithen began taking the mic at poetry slams and rapping at local churches.

"All of that was kind of building something within me," she said. Rather than pursuing a career in medicine as she'd originally intended, Smithen became a charter school English teacher who performed songs and orchestrated classroom plays to engage with students.

Smithen's high-energy approach helped her launch educational services that include a podcast, speaking engagements, and a K-12 and adult digital learning platform called CFVOnlineLearning.com, where Smithen raps, sings, and thunders spoken-word poetry about everything from phonemes to the Cold War.

A believer in *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), Smithen agreed in 2021 to lead a virtual boot camp for Virginia Tech's College Access Collaborative, a program to prepare low-income, first-generation students for college. These students mirrored Smithen's personal experiences. For them, she summed up her childhood struggles: "Raised in poverty. Neglected. Abandoned. Abused."

Then she showed off a photo of her younger sister's college graduation.

Four of Smithen's sisters and brothers, as well as a niece, have all finished college since she graduated from Virginia Tech.

"I started this fire," said Smithen, who recently added a mobile game for first-generation students, First-Gen Pioneers, to her Cage Free Voices repertoire. "Look at how you can start a flame with just one spark." ■

Melody Warnick is the content writer/editor for the Office of the Provost.

CLASS NOTES

Alumni, we want to hear what you've been doing. Mail career, wedding, birth, and death news to Class Notes, Virginia Tech Alumni Association, Holtzman Alumni Center, 901 Prices Fork Road, Blacksburg, VA 24061; email the information to classnotes@vt.edu; or submit the news online at vtmag.vt.edu/submit-classnote.php, where photos may also be uploaded for consideration. For assistance, call 540-231-6285.

'66

CAREER Roger V. Amato, Warrenton, Va., published his fourth book on the history of construction equipment, "Allis-Chalmers Construction and Industrial Machines."

John R. Grant, Lutherville, Md., has published a book, "Thinking Outside the Ballot Box, the surprisingly simple, engineering solution to the most insidious, destructive force afflicting the U.S. Government: PARTISAN POLITICS."

'68

CAREER James A. Casada, Rock Hill, S.C., has published his 18th and 19th books, "A Smoky Mountain Boyhood: Memories, Musings and More" and "Fishing for Chickens: A Smokies Food Memoir."

'74

CAREER John G. Kines Jr., Disputanta, Va., who was elected to a one-year term as vice chair of the Virginia Board of Social Services on Aug. 1, is serving his second four-year term on the board.

William D. Prillaman, Richmond, Va., published a book, "Richmond In Watercolor-Dining Out + Drinking In," an endeavor to assist the local restaurant community adversely affected by COVID-19.

'76

CAREER Luke C. Langford, Mountain Center, Calif., who retired from Oakley Inc. as director of facilities/real estate, is a tennis teaching professional at La Quinta Resort and Club, La Quinta, Calif.

'79

CAREER Stephen J. Skripak, Blacksburg, Va., a retired professor from the Pamplin College of Business, published a book, "From the Boardroom to the Classroom: Quitting Corporate for More Purpose."

'81

CAREER David P. Barondess, Centreville, Va., retired after 35 years as an IT leader at PenFed Credit Union. He was subsequently named to the board of directors at the PenFed Foundation, a national nonprofit organization serving military service members, veterans, and their communities.

'82

CAREER James N. Ellis, Wilson, N.C., is the recipient of the J. Robert Elster Award for Professional Excellence by the N.C. Association of Defense Attorneys.

Laura Stassi, Reston, Va., is the creator and host of the podcast "Dating While Gray" and the author of "Romance Redux: Finding Love in Your Later Years."

'85

CAREER Sampson L. Blair, Williamsville, N.Y., published a book, "Mate Selection in China: Causes and Consequences on the Search of Spouse 2002."

Charles K. Robertson, Oviedo, Fla., co-edited a recent volume of "Anglican Theological Review in Memory of Anti-Apartheid Anglican Archbishop and Nobel Laureate Desmond Tutu," and a book by Lexington/Rowman & Littlefield, "Theology and Batman."

FULL SPEED AHEAD

Christian Rose



Christian Rose, a 10-year-old Chesterfield County, Virginia, resident, debuted his Hokie-themed Pine-wood Derby car during the Cub Scout's annual event this spring. Christian's car finished first among Arrow of Light-ranked scouts at the Arrohattoc District Championship, which encompasses central Virginia.

"Christian is a big sports car fan, so his car was a play on the Ford GT350 sports car. The 'VT' stands for his favorite university, 'GT' stands for the grand touring race class, and '150' is the age of Virginia Tech," said Mike Rose '90, Christian's father.

Christian comes from a long line of alumni, dating back to his great-great-grandfather Robert Brillhart Rose, who attended the university in the late 1800s. His grandfather John Robert Rose earned a doctorate in education in 1972. Mike Rose graduated with a degree in marketing management in 1990.

"Virginia Tech has always held a special place in my life, and I think my kids have picked that up," Mike Rose said.

Have you taken your passion for Virginia Tech to an extraordinary level? We'd love to hear about it. Email us: VTMag@vt.edu. ■

'86

CAREER **James B. Lackey**, Madison, Ala., was promoted to senior vice president and general manager for Mission Solutions Sector, Parsons Corporation, Online/Social Media.

'87

CAREER **Richard J. Golinowski**, Burke, Va., is the current airport manager at Dulles International Airport.

Elizabeth Canevari Sprouse, Palmyra, Va., was promoted to director, alumni career services, University of Virginia Alumni Association.

'88

CAREER **James E. Ayers**, Fredericksburg, Va., wrote a book, "A Walk Through Time and Space."

Stephanie Coleman Overton, Christiansburg, Va., is senior director of communications for the Office of the Senior Vice President and Chief Business Officer at Virginia Tech.

'89

CAREER **Patrick S. Burke Sr.**, Alexandria, Va., was named to the 2022 Forbes Best-in-State Wealth Advisors for Virginia.

'91

CAREER **Kristin R. Morrill**, Christiansburg, Va., is director of alumni relations for the College of Science at Virginia Tech.

Jackie Peltz Nix, Prattville, Ala., published her first children's book, "Modern Farms," an ag-accurate introduction to farming and food production one year ago.

'92

CAREER **Allen D. Snook**, Bothell, Wash., joined Hologram Inc. as principal engineer in March and completed his MSEE at the University of Washington in June.

'95

CAREER **William M. Clemons Jr.**, Pasadena, Calif., was elected to the National Academy of Sciences.

'96

CAREER **Becky C. Bareford**, Mechanicsville, Va., is first vice president and chief operating officer, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond.

Heather R. Franklin, Dallas, N.C., executive vice president of finance for Enlivian, was named 2022 CFO of the Year by the Charlotte Business Journal.

Barbara B. Lockee, Blacksburg, Va., has been named associate vice provost for faculty affairs at Virginia Tech.

David R. Shuster, Smithsburg, Md., was selected by the Appalachian Regional Commission to participate in the 2022-23 class of the Appalachian Leadership Institute.

'97

CAREER **Tammy N. Indseth**, King George, Va., who works at the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Dahlgren, Va., was awarded the Department of the Navy Civilian Service Commendation Medal.

'98

CAREER **Andrea L. Williams**, Arlington, Tenn., was named chief, U.S. Army of Engineers, Memphis District's Operations Division.

'00

CAREER **Tiffany G. Chenault**, East Boston, Mass., was featured in REI's summer 2022 catalog.

Matthew J. O'Sickey, Powhatan, Va., is director of education and technical affairs for INDIA, the Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry.

'02

CAREER **Brent R. Laurenz**, Raleigh, N.C., was named executive director of Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail in North Carolina.

'03

CAREER **Jeremy R. Moss**, Jacksonville, Fla., released his second book, "Colonial Virginia's War Against Piracy."

'04

CAREER **Takiyah N. Amin**, Blacksburg, Va., was named director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for the College of Architecture, Arts, and Design at Virginia Tech.

SAVE THE DATES

We love celebrating the Hokie community. Visit our upcoming events in Blacksburg and beyond. For more events, check out alumni.vt.edu/events.

FEB. 15-16
Giving Day

APRIL 14-16
Black Alumni Reunion



Mark F. Mashack, Washington, D.C., joined the intellectual property and technology practice group in the Washington, D.C., office of Blank Rome LLP.

CHILDREN John Dean Winstead and Ashley Goodroe Winstead '08, Poquoson, Va., daughter, 4/22/21.

'05

CHILDREN Bryan L. Garbett and Laura Young Garbett '09, Richmond, Va., a son, 4/27/22.

CHILDREN Kacy M. McAllister, Blacksburg, Va., a son, 9/20/22.

'06

CAREER George B. Lewis, Satellite Beach, Fla., joined ZF Marine as head of product line commercial-fast craft, North/Central America and the Caribbean.

WEDDING Katherine Lindsay Elkins and Mark R. Vitello, Jr. '07, Wellesley, Mass., 5/15/21.

CHILDREN William R. Lattea, Hampstead, Md., a son, 9/20/22.

Patricia "Tricia" Ricketts Walker, Alton, Va., a daughter, 5/7/22.

'07

CAREER Daniel P. Moses, Wrentham, Mass., joined Hinckley Allen's Construction & Public Contracts Group.

Lesley D. Rohrbaugh, Alexandria, Va., was honored in Dealerscope's 40 under 40 list, representing top young leaders within the consumer technology industry.

CHILDREN Joseph Michael Derlaga and Anna Blevins Derlag '09, Yorktown, Va., a son, 3/30/22

John Chris Flores and Molly Joy Kalogera, Ramsey, N.J., a daughter, 3/28/22.

'08

CAREER Manisha P. Patel, Greensboro, N.C., earned the legal elite distinction as published by Business North Carolina magazine and was honored as an inductee into the North Carolina Pro Bono Honor Society.

Marina Falasca, Greenville, N.C., recently co-edited a book, "Alfabetización y Competencias Transmedia (Spanish edition)."

Wendy R. Stout, Lanexa, Va., was named coastal resilience extension specialist at Virginia Tech.

'09

CAREER Paul C. D'Angio, Arlington, Va., joined Knightscope Inc., a developer of advanced physical security technologies focused on enhancing U.S. security operations, as director robotics engineering.

'10

CAREER Tyler S. Austin, Luray, Va., was named principal of Racey Engineering PLLC, a full service engineering and surveying firm.

CHILDREN Katherine Ferguson Wallace and Brendan Emil Wallace, Arlington, Va., a daughter, 8/23/22.

'12

CAREER Andrew J. Oppenheim, Sarasota, Fla., was recognized in the 2023 edition of "The Best Lawyers in America" as one to watch for commercial litigation.

'13

CHILDREN Emily Mawyer White, Christiansburg, Va., a son, 5/12/22.

'14

CAREER Garrett N. Hehn, Houston, Texas, is a NASA flight director.

WEDDING Hector A. Quesada and Sarah E. Coffey '20, Winston-Salem, N.C., 9/3/22.

'16

CAREER Grace K. Giampietro, Arlington, Va., opened a tutoring business, Open Door Academy.

'17

WEDDING Patrick Joseph Brew and Sarah E. Busch '18, Arlington, Va., 5/28/22.

'18

CAREER Julia Layne Mandros, Bristow, Va., joined Books Forward as a full-time publicist.

'19

CAREER Nicole F. Quinn, Baltimore, Md., joined the faculty of the University of Florida/IFAS Indian River Research and Education Center.

WEDDING Elizabeth P. Mullins Baldwin and Benjamin David Baldwin '20, Luray, Va., 5/14/22.

'20

CAREER Jonathan P. Stanley II, Blacksburg, Va., joined The Christman Company in Knoxville, Tenn., as project engineer.

WEDDING Rebecca Straley Alanko and Eric Alanko, Roanoke, Va. 8/28/21.

'21

CAREER Dashiel N. Elhauge, Blacksburg, Va., released his first novel, "The Deer," through Dalkey Archive Press in August.

'22

CAREER Anvitha Nachiappan, Blacksburg, Va., joined the Institute for Defense Analyses as a summer associate in the Operational Evaluation Division of IDA's Systems and Analysis Center.

ALUMNI TOURS



GO PLACES

VIRGINIA TECH TRAVEL TOURS HAVE RESUMED, AND Hokies are thrilled to be exploring the world again.

Travel tours unite Virginia Tech friends and alumni who are interested in experiencing different cultures, exploring new places, and developing lasting friendships. All you need to do is register for the tour of your choice, pack your bags, and enjoy the trip.



BON VOYAGE

Learn more about the tours available for Virginia Tech alumni and friends. [Visit alumni.vt.edu/travel](https://alumni.vt.edu/travel).

INSPIRED TO ACTION

CLINT MCLEOD



VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTING AIDS BROADCASTING CAREER

When a tree fell on a powerline in Michigan sparking a wildfire just 50 feet from a man's house, the Breitung Township Fire Department came to the rescue, extinguishing the fire in minutes.

One firefighter, Clint McLeod '21, awoke the next day and spent the morning looking for a news story to report for WLUC-TV about the Iron Mountain, Michigan, community.

Full-time bureau television reporter and volunteer firefighter: This is the life of McLeod.

McLeod graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in sports media and analytics. As a student, he worked for Hokie Vision as a production assistant editor and broadcaster for 3304 Sports, the multimedia online platform for student sports journalism at Virginia Tech.

McLeod had noticed the strong pipeline of recent graduates from what is now the School of Communication thriving at small-market TV stations across the country. He ultimately applied for and accepted a position as news reporter in Marquette, Michigan, moving to the Upper Peninsula to begin a new chapter.

"It was one of those things where I really took a chance on myself," McLeod said. "It fell into place. I stepped out of my comfort zone in sports media and tried some news. I don't regret it one bit."

McLeod's position as a bureau reporter required him to become entrenched in the community and build trust. Two co-workers suggested that he volunteer for the fire department to meet people and give back to the community. McLeod took night classes and passed the certification test required for firefighters.

"Just thinking back to all the times at Virginia Tech where they pushed you to give back one way or another, I felt that this

was my way of giving back," McLeod said. "Part of how I identify with my community is through the fire department. It's a great way to not only show my face as a news reporter, but to feel like I belong here in an area where I did not belong."

ERIC SCHNEIDER



THE UNLIKELY PATH FROM ENGINEER TO ENTREPRENEUR

Becoming a success in the business world might seem a stretch from earning a degree in mechanical engineering, but Eric Schneider '15 begs to differ. Schneider earned his degree and worked in the industry, and then discovered a deeper

drive to understand the mechanics of business. Along the way, he also found ways to help others succeed.

Following graduation, Schneider spent more than a year in General Electric's Edison Engineering Development Program, a cohort of aspiring engineers with the capacity to work across disciplines. After that experience, he spent three years with L.E.K. Consulting, gaining a range of new skills. Along the way, he kept another high priority in view: service.

Schneider ultimately investigated the possibility of business school, which meant taking the GMAT test. Although he scored well, he found that others struggled with the pressure of a potentially career-defining test. To address that anxiety, Schneider started Grad Mentors, a nonprofit website.

The site's model is simple: Nobody gets paid, and anybody gets help. Mentees apply for assistance through the site and are matched to a volunteer mentor.

Schneider started with one team, and others eventually joined. To date, the website has connected mentees from more than 25 countries.

Following graduation from Harvard Business School, Schneider and business partner Jared Brier started an electronics protection service, AKKO. The service bundles protection plans for a customer's electronics for a monthly fee.

Schneider's path hasn't been straight, but he never tires of the excitement of trying something new and growing in a different direction.

"What I continue to want to do is meet amazing people and do things that I find interesting, challenging, and helpful,"

he said. "I don't have a particular 5-year plan, but have learned that I love tackling big problems, working with incredible people, and building businesses that matter in people's lives."

ERICA SULLIVAN FEGGELER



PROTECTING SKIN THE FASHIONABLE WAY

Watching her mother's anguish during treatments for malignant melanoma left Erica Sullivan Feggeler '20 feeling as if her life was being pulled apart at the seams.

Prompted by that diagnosis and her own fair complexion, Feggeler underwent a skin check that revealed two atypical spots. Tests for melanoma came back negative, but the two scares put her on the runway toward a career unique for someone with a degree in communication studies—clothing design.

Feggeler serves as the founder, CEO, and top designer for L.U.V., which stands for Low Ultraviolet. The acronym fits a company that focuses on sun-safe apparel.

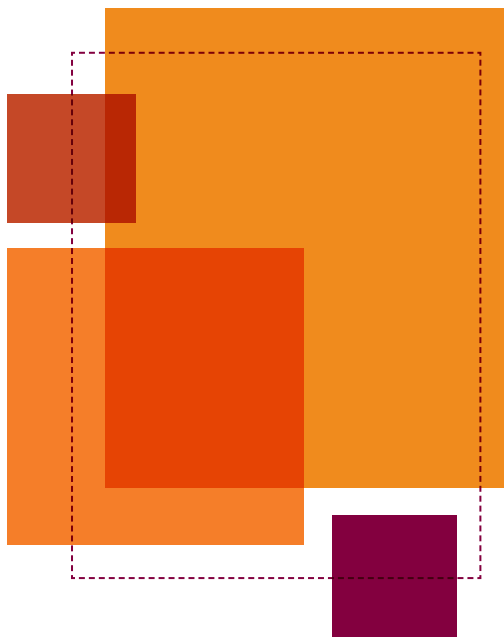
"I was 21 years old when I went for my skin check, and I was just confused," Feggeler said. "Through [various] conversations, I learned that a lot of people my age had experienced it [skin cancer], or had a family member who had, and we just weren't talking about it.

"[From] those same conversations, I was searching through the internet trying to find cute clothing [for protection from the sun's ultraviolet rays], clothing that I felt comfortable in. I hadn't even graduated college yet. I wanted to look cute. I didn't want to wear these old, bright, ill-fitting pieces, and I found that there were a lot of people who felt the same way. So through those conversations, I'm like, 'OK, there's an opportunity here.'"

Using prize money from a business competition organized by the Apex Center for Entrepreneurs her senior year, Feggeler launched her company in October 2020 with help from Snigdha Sangiseti '20, a classmate with a degree in computational modeling and data analytics. The duo run the business and hold full-time jobs with other companies.

Feggeler, who minored in fashion merchandising, said that business has been good, with 99 percent growth year over year since the launch. Feggeler's product line includes women's dresses, shirts, gaiters, and hats and a limited selection of men's clothing.

"I would love for this to be my full-time job. I would love to grow a team," Feggeler said. "I always tell people I think the next three to five years for UPF [ultraviolet protection factor] clothing is going to be crucial for the industry. So I'm trying to figure out how we can make sure that we're at the forefront of it." ■



PUZZLE PROWESS

HIS FINGERS GRASPED THE ICONIC 3-by-3 cube, and he subconsciously started searching for any of the puzzle-solving algorithms digitally imprinted in his supercomputer of a mind. Then those fingers, examples of dexterity, nimbly started spinning the movable rows both vertically and horizontally in dizzying fashion.

Twenty seconds later—in the time it takes to tie a shoelace—Simon Shi had solved a Rubik's Cube.

"I have four steps," he said. "A beginner's method is seven steps."

Shi '20, a former Virginia Tech swimmer, has taken his ability for solving Rubik's Cubes of all sizes and shapes and turned that into a thriving social media business. He's also twisting his natural athleticism honed from years of swimming into an unlikely career as a professional triathlete.

The odd tandem seems counterintuitive for Shi, who graduated with a degree in computer science from the College of Engineering and worked as a software engineer for General Motors following graduation. But this Renaissance

man, who currently resides in Flagstaff, Arizona, enjoys his newfound source of steady, albeit unique, income.

Shi, a native of Leesburg, Virginia, uses a couple of different complicated algorithms to solve the Rubik's Cube puzzles, some of which he has posted on his personal YouTube channel. In 2009, Shi launched his first YouTube page—TheSimonShi.

"That was when I was 12 years old, and that's when I also started solving a Rubik's Cube," Shi said. "That's the time when I learned how to solve it and then ended up buying bigger shapes and bigger puzzles."

Shi eventually started posting videos of himself solving Rubik's Cubes of all sizes and shapes in varying environments. A year ago, Shi took on his biggest challenge to date, solving a 17-by-17 Rubik's Cube with more than 1,700 pieces—underwater.

Wearing a weighted vest to stay submerged while sitting in a chair in a 3-foot-deep section of a swimming pool and breathing through a snorkel, Shi

spent nearly four hours working on the puzzle before finishing it. The subsequent video on YouTube has received more than 2 million views.

"I do insane challenges," Shi admitted. "I'm trying to get an official Guinness World Record plaque for a Rubik's Cube challenge."

Shi has 309,000 subscribers to his main YouTube channel. He also has three other YouTube channels, including ones for triathlon training and financial advice, and one for YouTube shorts (videos of less than 60 seconds) of himself solving Rubik's Cubes.

The numbers are staggering. A video of Shi solving a 13-by-13 cube in his living room has registered 16.2 million views. One of his YouTube shorts—sitting in a chair solving a 17-by-17 Rubik's Cube—has received more than 73 million views. ■ JR



CAREER CHOICE

Learn how Simon Shi became a full-time YouTube content creator at vt.vt.edu.

FAMILY



COURTESY SARAH BUSCH



KELLIE HOLDEN PHOTOGRAPHY



COURTESY KACY MCALLISTER



COURTESY ASHLEY GOODROE WINSTEAD



SKRYDER PHOTOGRAPHY



CHELSEA WOODING PHOTOGRAPHY



THE OBERPORTS

1 “Thank you for sharing in our joy.”—Sarah Busch ’18, M.S. ’19 and Patrick Brew ’17, M.S. ’18, Arlington, Virginia, who were married 5/28/22.

2 “Benjamin Baldwin and I joined our lives together in marriage in the spring.”—Elizabeth Mullins Baldwin ’19, Luray, Virginia, who married Benjamin Baldwin ’20, 5/14/22.

3 “At 10:14 a.m. on Sept. 20, Silas McAllister made his debut.”—Kacy McAllister ’06, Blacksburg, Virginia, who along with William Lattea ’06, welcomed a son, 9/20/22.

4 “We welcomed our third little Hokie last spring. Leighton Elise Winstead joins her older siblings, Waverly and Brooks.”—Ashley Goodroe Winstead ’08, who along with John Winstead ’04, welcomed a daughter, 4/22/21.

5 “Meet our new little Hokie, Owen Alton White.”—Emily Mawyer White ’13, Christiansburg, Virginia, who welcomed a son, 5/12/22.

6 “My husband, Joseph; big sister, Caroline; and I are overjoyed to introduce Hannah Estelle Walker.”—Patricia Ricketts Walker ’06, Alton, Virginia, who welcomed a daughter, 5/5/22.

7 “The Boston Public Garden was the perfect setting for our wedding ceremony.”—Mark Vitello ’07, Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, who married Lindsay Elkins ’06, 5/15/21.

IN MEMORIAM

Listing includes notices shared with the university from Jan. 16 through May 15, 2022.

'45

Paul Alexander Tanner Jr., Winter Haven, Fla., 9/8/21.

'46

Henry Waverly "Hank" Jarrett Jr., Virginia Beach, Va., 3/15/22.

'47

John "William" Goslee, Newport News, Va., 3/28/21.

'49

Frederick Hampton Alvey, Columbia, S.C., 2/25/22.

Joseph W. Lipscomb, Daytona Beach, Fla., 1/17/22.

John A. McCoy, Carlisle, Pa., 3/2/22.

Robert Merrick Parker, Portsmouth, Va., 2/12/22.

Gerhard C. Zekert, Suffolk, Va., 2/5/22.

'50

William E. Blottner, Cleveland, Ohio., 4/16/22.

William Graham Brandt Jr., Weems, Va., 1/13/22.

Jack K. Brashear, Glencoe, Mo., 2/10/22.

Forrest "F.H." Cathey, Suffolk, Va., 1/3/22.

William C. Foster, Atlanta, Ga., 12/3/21.

James E.T. Laningham, Southern Pines, N.C., 2/2/22.

'51

Charles P. Fletcher, Virginia Beach, Va., 2/9/22.

James R. Forrest Jr., Buckeye, Ariz., 10/25/21.

William Thomas Gay, Midlothian, Va., 1/12/22.

Alexander C. Manson Jr., Smithfield, Va., 2/15/22.

Arthur Lee Mitchell Jr., Blue Grass, Va., 12/17/21.

'52

Bernard L. Bryant Jr., Chapel Hill, N.C., 2/28/22.

Jack E. Fincham, Culpeper, Va., 4/11/22.

John Crombie Glenn, Marion, Va., 1/24/22.

Harry Llewellyn Mapp Jr., Halifax, Va., 3/18/22.

Alvin J. Schulze Sr., Rockville, Va., 1/13/22.

Jim F. Short, Richmond, Va., 1/29/22.

Earl S. Swensson, Franklin, Tenn., 1/20/22.

'53

John Reagan Deacon, Montpelier, Va., 2/13/22.

John N. Ellison, Palos Verdes Peninsula, Calif., 3/6/20.

Stanley David Garthoff, Stow, Ohio, 4/21/22.

Louis Reams Hundley, Williamsburg, Va., 3/26/22.

Marvin Duke Lowe Jr., Norfolk, Va., 2/16/22.

H. Lynn Moore Jr., Staunton, Va., 4/22/22.

Austin Linwood Shepherd, Monterey, Va., 2/24/22.

Murry Jackson Spangler, Catonsville, Md., 5/6/22.

'54

Frank M. Jordan, Conway, Ark., 4/11/22.

Lawrence B. Knowles, East Hampton, N.Y., 3/6/22.

Norman Wallace Patrick, Katy, Texas, 1/18/22.

Paul Massie Saunders Sr., Piney River, Va., 3/11/22.

'55

William John Hayduk, White Plains, N.Y., 1/3/22.

Paul Moorman Howell, Check, Va., 1/15/22.

Edward A. "Ned" Marshall Jr., Bedford, Va., 4/12/22.

Bruce P. Schrader, Petersburg, W. Va., 2/26/22.

Gordon W. Smith, Dunwoody, Ga., 2/5/22.

James T. Tussing, Hampton, Va., 12/4/21.

Ashton Errington Violette, Midlothian, Va., 3/3/22.

'56

Robert L. Francis, Louisville, Ky., 2/15/22.

William Robert Ricketts Jr., Roanoke, Va., 3/14/22.

Harold "Les" Simmons, Colonial Heights, Va., 1/13/22.

'57

R. Eugene Church, Albuquerque, N.M., 1/1/22.

James A. Clarke Sr., Louisa, Va., 1/14/22.

Thomas Dorsey Ficklin, Lancaster, Va., 1/9/22.

Ralph T. Henry, Roanoke, Va., 10/13/21.

Wayne Ray Moore, Manassas, Va., 1/5/22.

Alan Peabody Sturges, Park Forest, Ill., 2/18/22.

'58

Paul Thomas Burnett, Livingston, Texas, 1/5/22.

Albert Hugh Cheely, Dunbar, W. Va., 1/13/22.

Paul Eugene Cunningham, Fredericksburg, Va., 4/26/22.

Wilbur R. Franklin, West Point, Va., 2/25/22.

Donald A. Hobbs, Farmington, N.M., 1/3/22.

Sinclair S. Hui, Frisco, Texas, 1/27/22.

Jack McCoy, Punta Gorda, Fla., 1/5/22.

Lester Wayne Roane, Perryville, Md., 4/12/22.

Walter Lawrence "W.L." Salmon Jr., Oak Ridge, N.C., 1/27/22.

Robert George Silk, Newport News, Va., 1/30/22.

Louis Heuser Watson, Max Meadows, Va., 12/6/20.

'59

Ronald Grant Eyestone, Madison, Ala., 1/31/22.

Kenneth B. Gentry, Novi, Mich., 4/27/21.

George "G.T." Graham, Henrico, Va., 2/9/22.

James Ronald Grove, Crozet, Va., 3/20/22.

Kenneth Gardner Pankey, Richmond, Va., 3/4/22.

Don Keith Hereford, Whitehouse, Texas, 1/22/22.

Betty "June" Hoffman Schmidt, Ashburn, Va., 4/8/22.

Mary Knight Kimzey, Houston, Texas, 2/21/22.

Curtis Gene Morris, Williamston, S.C., 1/26/22.

James A. Sizemore, Fredericksburg, Va., 2/2/22.

'60

Richard Lewis Bryant Jr., Ashland, Va., 3/24/22.

William J. Carty, Laurel Bloomery, Tenn., 1/14/22.

Ronald E. Daugherty, Vinton, Va., 2/7/22.

Charles Hunter Green Jr., Castle Rock, Colo., 2/26/22.

Robert B. Mattingly, Port Charlotte, Fla., 1/7/22.

Frederick Carl Miller II, Morgan-
ton, N.C., 3/24/22.

George T. Owen, Nashville, Tenn.,
1/25/22.

Woodrow Snelson Jr., Crofton,
Md., 2/8/22.

Ellis Johnson Stearns III, Bluffton,
S.C., 6/10/21.

James Lawrence Sykes, Big Stone
Gap, Va., 3/24/22.

'61

Shirley Smith Campbell, Raleigh,
N.C., 1/14/22.

Harper Edward Cole Jr., Cary,
N.C., 1/14/22.

Harold T. Cothran Jr., Moneta, Va.,
1/16/22.

Johnny A. Harris, Greensboro,
N.C., 4/21/22.

Richard Arlen Wolfe, Banner Elk,
N.C., 3/5/22.

'62

William Eugene Davis Sr., Win-
chester, Va., 2/1/22.

James Morton Handlan, Selins-
grove, Pa., 3/1/22.

James F. Higgs Jr., Berkeley Springs,
W.Va., 12/23/21.

William E. Jones, Poquoson, Va.,
3/15/22.

Delbert E. O'Meara, Windsor, Va.,
1/30/22.

Robert Holland Painter, The Vil-
lages, Fla., 2/7/22.

Lawrence F. "Nick" Smith,
Staunton, Va., 1/16/22.

J. Phillip Underwood, Oakwood,
Ga., 4/22/22.

'63

William Nelson Fitch, Fairfax, Va.,
1/16/22.

Donald Ray Manuel, Herndon, Va.,
1/19/22.

Thomas David Smith, Lutherville
Timonium, Md., 9/23/21.

David T. Thomas II, Christiansburg,
Va., 2/19/22.

Bane Hunter Tyler, New Palestine,
Ind., 1/15/22.

'64

John William Blount, Winston-Sa-
lem, N.C., 3/7/22.

William Scott Horne, Easton, Md.,
4/3/22.

Fredrick Curtis Johnson, Lynch-
burg, Va., 2/8/22.

William P. Landon Jr., Virginia
Beach, Va., 2/1/22.

Melvin Augustine Lofurno,
Grundau-Rothenbergen, Germany,
3/11/22.

David Walter McClenon, Cerritos,
Calif., 10/26/21.

Henry Clay "Hank" Pruner Jr.,
Triangle, Va., 3/15/22.

R. Mac Reeves, Lancaster, Pa.,
3/2/22.

Brian Edward Thomas, Pamplin,
Va., 3/12/22.

'65

Robert Tracy Barrett, New Port
Richey, Fla., 2/1/22.

Robert Patrick Bowe, Cumberland,
Va., 2/25/22.

Joseph Stephen Burris, Ames,
Iowa, 1/1/22.

John Lloyd Gillum, Crystal Beach,
Fla., 12/31/21.

Felix Thomas Kelley, Peachtree
City, Ga., 7/26/21.

Floyd Lee Massey, Harrison, Tenn.,
4/2/22.

Fleetwood Mitchell, Norfolk, Va.,
3/16/22.

Stuart William Nesbitt, Hendricks,
W.Va., 3/15/22.

Richard Butch Robertson, Okatie,
S.C., 9/13/21.

'66

William Howard Edwards, Mari-
etta, Ga., 1/29/22.

William Arthur Roop, Poway,
Calif., 10/21/21.

Robert Edward Whittemore,
Johnson City, Tenn., 2/13/22.

'67

Roland Edwin Duckett, Glen Allen,
Va., 9/6/21.

Bob Harris Simmons, Floyd, Va.,
11/5/21.

Lonnie Kent White, Keeling, Va.,
5/14/21.

'68

Charles Richmond Dykes, Dan-
ville, Va., 1/6/22.

James Ronald Gates, Augusta, Ga.,
3/8/22.

Edward Robinson Madill, New
Kent, Va., 1/7/22.

Michael E. Newhouse, Dutton, Va.,
1/4/22.

Meade Gregory Pratali III, South
Hill, Va., 1/26/22.

James B. Richards Jr., Virginia
Beach, Va., 3/8/22.

Roger "William" Russin, Coral
Gables, Fla., 3/3/22.

Robert Hinton Williams Jr., Vir-
ginia Beach, Va., 2/22/22.

'69

Richard Brian Adams, Timberville,
Va., 4/7/22.

Robert Boyd Allen, Scottsdale,
Ariz., 12/31/21.

Michael Joseph Harrison, Peters-
burg, Va., 2/13/22.

Sandy R. Lush, Amelia Court House,
Va., 1/9/22.

Kenneth Wayne Mason, Colonial
Heights, Va., 1/11/22.

William Ray Phillips, Waverly,
Va., 2/7/22.

Joseph G. "Jerry" Wallmeyer,
Mayo, Fla., 2/7/22.

Powell Oliver Wenger Jr., Harri-
sonburg, Va., 3/12/22.

'70

Glen E. Coulson Jr., San Antonio,
Texas, 2/22/22.

Robert W. Dellinger, Vienna, Va.,
2/1/22.

Charles N. Garber, McGaheysville,
Va., 3/26/22.

Bruce Fredrick Jenny, Baton
Rouge, La., 2/12/22.

Allen Henry Ladd Jr., Mechanics-
ville, Va., 3/9/22.

Robert G. Wickline, Glen Allen,
Va., 3/16/22.

'71

William Cecil Dunn Jr., Knoxville,
Tenn., 2/11/22.

Stuart Phillip Jenkins, Little River,
S.C., 3/4/20.

Randell Neal Luckado, Suffolk, Va.,
1/26/22.

Manfred Austin Lynch Jr., Lexing-
ton, Va., 3/2/22.

Mark Douglas Todd, Savannah, Ga.,
1/10/22.

'72

Charles Philip Justice Sr.,
Hopewell, Va., 1/11/22.

James Archie Rich III, Danville,
Va., 1/25/22.

Millard Albert Rice, Phenix, Va.,
10/16/21.

Robert David Rogalski, Annapolis,
Md., 2/9/22.

'73

John Franklin Fedder III, York-
town, Va., 1/10/22.

Robert Lynn Womack, Salem, Va.,
3/4/22.

'74

Robert Kent Browning, Lyndhurst,
Va., 8/18/21.

Deborah Liming Burton, Reston,
Va., 12/23/21.

Charles "Andy" Fisher, Midlothian,
Va., 12/30/21.

Archer Rene Gravely III, Asheville,
N.C., 4/9/22.

Clyde Ivory Hicks, Raleigh, N.C.,
7/15/21.

Emmett Booth Holdren, Forest,
Va., 2/28/22.

Dee S. Huffman, Harrisonburg, Va.,
2/7/22.

Robert Richards Ross, Hampton,
Va., 1/24/22.

Robert Derwood Spence Jr., John-
son City, Tenn., 2/13/22.

John Howard Tucker, Lewisville,
Texas, 1/2/22.

Eric Joseph Zabel, Falls Church,
Va., 2/5/22.

'75

Steven Parrish Douty, Buena Vista,
Va., 2/10/22.

David C. Fede, Manassas, Va.,
1/25/22.

Edmund Randolph Hevener,
Afton, Va., 2/9/22.

George Kwascha, Mebane, N.C.,
8/16/21.



Philip Bevard Reid, West Lafayette, Ind., 2/7/22.

Margaret Buck Saunders, Chesapeake, Va., 2/9/22.

'76

John Joseph Callahan, Lakeland, Fla., 2/15/22.

Eleanor Johnson Cuthrell, Danville, Va., 2/6/22.

Gerald Claude Eastridge, Radford, Va., 12/17/21.

Thomas Milton Mishoe Jr., Midlothian, Va., 1/8/22.

Kenneth Howard Neagle Jr., Chilmass., 1/13/22.

Carol Christine Schimmer, Avon, Colo., 1/15/22.

Craig Paul Smith, Bound Brook, N.J., 1/29/22.

'77

Judy Newbill Burns, Gulf Breeze, Fla., 3/1/22.

Bernard Royce Freeman, Albuquerque, N.M., 2/16/22.

William James Jones, Fletcher, N.C., 2/1/22.

Clifford Fry Lindsay, Frankford, W.Va., 1/10/22.

David Bryan McCoy, Chester, Va., 1/24/22.

'78

Ralph Elton Booth II, Wirtz, Va., 2/11/22.

John Robert Johnson, Summer-ville, S.C., 1/22/22.

Jennifer Oppenheimer Rosti, Salem, Va., 3/18/22.

'79

Gerardo Antonio Bianco, Lynch- burg, Va., 2/20/22.

Nadine Arden Brewer-Selph, Saluda, Va., 1/23/22.

Robert Wayne Greer, Little River, S.C., 1/26/22.

Roger Neil Hollandsworth, Floyd, Va., 1/27/22.

James Patrick O'Hara Jr., Herndon, Va., 1/20/22.

Carl Fredrick Pelzner, Cairo, Egypt, 2/24/22.

David Malcolm Porta, Sacramento, Calif., 12/18/21.

Andrew Milton Watts, Fairfax, Va., 1/6/22.

'80

Gary Charles Hileman, Annapolis, Md., 4/15/22.

William Morgan Miller Jr., South Boston, Va., 2/20/22.

Steven Arnold Striegl, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1/17/22.

'81

Christopher Walton Chamberlain, Pickerington, Ohio., 3/9/22.

Richard Shaw Gates, Springfield, Va., 1/3/22.

Sandra Lynn Rohr Shamansky, Waynesboro, Va., 3/13/22.

'82

Susan Harrington Beard, Merritt Island, Fla., 1/19/22.

Michael Warren Cole, Win- ston-Salem, N.C., 2/13/22.

Richard Andrew Mullikin Jr., Lexington, Ky., 5/31/21.

Lee Edward New, Lynchburg, Va., 1/21/22.

'83

Willie Richard Gilman Jr., Glen Allen, Va., 1/31/22.

Martin Douglas Holbrook, Rich- mond, Va., 2/19/22.

William Claud Johnson III, King- sport, Tenn., 1/30/22.

Joyce F. Williams-Green, Kerners- ville, N.C., 1/8/22.

'84

Pamela Anne Montague Duggan, Clemmons, N.C., 3/24/22.

'85

Donald C. Klika Jr., Chaptico, Md., 1/10/22.

Christopher Ray Morris, Martins- ville, Va., 1/27/22.

'86

Alan Greg Brame, Arlington, Va., 12/12/21.

Lilli Patrice Katz Thorsell, Oak Hill, Va., 2/3/22.

'87

Sandra L. Griffith, Shawsville, Va., 9/7/21.

Arnold Wayne Jones Sr., Duncan, S.C., 3/2/22.

David Richard Luukkonen, East Lansing, Mich., 12/23/21.

Katherine Anne Whitehead Stanco, Jamestown, N.C., 1/26/22.

Barbara Honaker Witten, Rich- lands, Va., 2/4/22.

'88

Frank Elbert Anderson III, Gaith- ersburg, Md., 12/18/21.

James Alfred Bryan, Charlottes- ville, Va., 12/25/21.

Sherry Schaller Marshall, Leon- ardtown, Md., 10/12/21.

Mark Byron Raab, Shenandoah, Va., 3/19/22.

'89

John David Bischof, Garner, N.C., 2/20/22.

'90

Diane Caldwell Bailey, Richmond Hill, Ga., 1/31/22.

Maynard Kenneth Bean, Midlo- thian, Va., 3/2/22.

Judy Young Morris, Fincastle, Va., 2/25/22.

Wayne Payton Pruett Jr., Louis- ville, Tenn., 3/3/22.

John William Shirley Jr., Roa- noke, Va., 3/15/22.

Scott Edward Signori, Hector, N.Y., 12/26/21.

'91

Evelyn Morris Childs, Ruther Glen, Va., 1/20/22.

Randolph Fravil Smith Jr., Pulaski, Va., 3/17/22.

Jeffrey John Wood, Staunton, Va., 2/7/22.

'92

Jay Franklin Bumgardner, North Tazewell, Va., 1/13/22.

Todd Peter Ege, Schenectady, N.Y., 1/20/22.

'93

Lisa Renee Nelson Jones, Ivor, Va., 12/31/21.

'94

Brent Ryan Ellison, Kingsport, Tenn., 12/27/21.

'95

Jennifer Anne McFadden Gregory, Greensboro, N.C., 1/7/22.

Theresa Louise Hoffmann, Middle- town, Del., 1/18/22.

Stephanie Finley McAllister, Indian Trail, N.C., 1/22/22.

'96

Paul Allen Alfieri, Alexandria, Va., 1/6/22.

James D. Carroll, Falls Church, Va., 12/21/21.

Carla Maria Dempewolf, Haymar- ket, Va., 1/31/22.

Carol Ann Stacey, Londonderry, N.H., 2/11/22.

'00

Jonathan Hamilton White, Lo- thian, Md., 3/25/22.

'01

Amanda J. Pagans Hubbard, Salem, Va., 1/30/22.

'02

Debra S. Haas, Winchester, Va., 1/1/22.

'03

Michelle Lynn Porti, Sedley, Va., 2/16/22.

'12

Curtis Thomas Beverley, Saluda, Va., 3/1/22.

'16

Andrew Christopher Bemus, Catharpin, Va., 2/17/22.

Cory Wayne Sayers, Roanoke, Va., 12/31/21.

'21

Jacob Peter Berman, Chesapeake, Va., 2/20/22.



OBITUARIES

FACULTY/STAFF

Harold Burkhart, University Distinguished Professor and dedicated researcher, teacher, and mentor in the College of Natural Resources and Environment, died Oct. 20. Burkhart, a professor in the Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation, was recognized in 2019 for 50 years of service to Virginia Tech. He had been a member of the faculty since 1969. As a scholar, Burkhart's research interests and expertise were in modeling forest stand dynamics, growth, and yield. His work led many to regard him as a pioneer in sustainable forest management, as his modeling methods were adopted not only in Virginia and on the East Coast, but also across the nation and around the globe.

Sue Duncan, a professor and researcher in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences for more than 32 years, died Oct. 12. Duncan started her career at Virginia Tech in 1990, when she was the first woman hired as an assistant professor in the Department of Food Science and Technology. After her promotion to professor, she was named the associate director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station. She also served as the director of the Center for Advanced Innovation in Agriculture. Duncan focused her research on the sensory and chemical characterization of food and beverages. She founded the Virginia Tech Sensory Evaluation Laboratory.

Dayton Eugene "Gene" Egger, the Patrick and Nancy Lathrop Professor of Architecture Emeritus in what is now the College of Architecture, Arts, and Design, died May 21. A member of the Virginia Tech community since 1969, Egger contributed to the teaching mission of the architecture studio at the Steger Center for

International Scholarship in Riva San Vitale, Switzerland. He also aided in the advancement of the international education abroad program as director of special programs for the college. Egger was awarded the Alumni Award for Excellence in International Programs and named international president of the Phi Beta Delta honor society for international scholars.

Daniel Hodge, who served as the head of the Bradley Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering from 1981-89, died July 20. During Hodge's tenure, the upper three floors of Whittemore Hall were completed and the Virginia Power Electronics Center and the Fiber and Electro-Optics Research Center were established as statewide Technology Development Centers. Hodge and his wife, Lorraine, contributed generously to the department by creating the Hodge Department Head Discretionary Fund, which annually supports the department's students who participate in regional and national team competitions.

James Richard Sochinski, professor emeritus, died Jan. 10. A member of the Virginia Tech community since 1977, Sochinski made significant contributions to music at Virginia Tech as a composer. A professor of music, Sochinski served as director of the Marching Virginians from 1978-81, and his arrangements for the marching band, including "The Hokie Pokie," have been heard by millions. "Uncle Jim," as he was affectionately called by the band members, later served as music director and arranger during the 1981-89 and 1991-93 seasons. Sochinski also performed as the bass trombonist with the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra for 33 years.



A man with a beard and tattoos is working with plants in a greenhouse. He is wearing a grey t-shirt and is focused on a small plant in his hands. The background is filled with various green plants, some in pots and some in trays. The lighting is bright and natural, suggesting a sunny day. The overall mood is one of scientific research and care for the environment.

STILL LIFE

IN THE WEEDS: U.S. Army veteran Tim Shively, a Ph.D. student in plant pathology, physiology, and weed science in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, is currently studying a biological control agent for an invasive tree. To watch a video about Shively, visit vtx.vt.edu/videos.






LEARN MORE



COME HOME THIS SUMMER

Return to Blacksburg June 8-11 for our four-day reunion with activities for all Hokies.

-  Dinner and fireworks on the Drillfield
-  Campus tours and exploration
-  Happy hours with friends

Registration includes all events, meals, and drinks.

VIRGINIA TECH

**ALUMNI
WEEKEND**



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END NOTE

VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OFFERS NEW PATH TO SERVE

MY PATH TO *UT PROSIM* BEGINS WITH me holding a box of my Star Wars figurines in a small, cramped apartment in the inner city of Columbus, Ohio.

The year was 1986. My dad, despite his best efforts of working 80 hours a week to provide for my brother, mom, and me, lost one of his two jobs. We could no longer afford our home, so we were forced to move into a small apartment. Downsizing meant I had to get rid of some of my collections, including the Star Wars and Star Trek books I'd outgrown. Dad was eventually able to find supplemental jobs in fast food restaurants and retail stores, but that day that we moved to a downsized home and parted ways with our meager worldly possessions was the day I knew our station had shifted.

You'd never know how little we had by looking at Mom or my grandmother, who gave so much to others. My grandmother would take me to the local nursing home to help her volunteer as an occupational therapist (despite the fact that she had no formal training—she was just passionate

about it). Mom never saw someone who needed a hand she couldn't help.

When I became the first person in my family to go to a four-year college, studying behavioral economics was a natural choice. Over the course of my studies through graduate school, I got to examine issues I saw play out in my small Ohio home. How do some people get ahead and some get left behind in the economy? How do society and sociology affect economic decisions? What policies can we create to make a better standard of living for all?

Working in Cooperative Extension was a natural progression after finishing my Ph.D. Through the mission of sharing knowledge with all, I was able to work in Extension to support businesses, improve public health, collaborate with partner organizations, and address the most pressing social and economic issues in my communities.

The notion of service and improving the well-being of my communities—that was what drew me to both Virginia Tech and Virginia Cooperative Extension. This is what Virginia Tech and

Extension are doing every day in every corner of the commonwealth.

Extension agents are working in Southwest Virginia to curb the opioid epidemic. 4-H leaders are working in urban cities to empower youth. We are partnering with the university to engage with businesses that drive economic prosperity. And our specialists are collaborating with our agricultural industry to help it thrive and continue to be the largest private sector in the commonwealth.

If you had asked me all those years ago as I stood in my Columbus apartment if this was the path I wanted to my life, I would have undoubtedly said no.

But now, as I embark on a new chapter as a proud new Hokie, living a life of service like so many around me, I wouldn't have it any other way. ■

Mike Gutter is the new director of Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), a partnership between Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. Extension operates out of 107 offices, 11 Agricultural Research and Extension Centers, and six 4-H Centers across the commonwealth.

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HATS ARE HERE!



In honor of Giving Tuesday, we'll send a pair of socks or a knit hat to anyone who gives \$15 or more to their favorite Virginia Tech college, department, program, or team from Nov. 28 to Dec. 2!

give.vt.edu/vtstyle

SOCKS ARE BACK!



LIMITED TIME ONLY!

As comfortable as they are stylish, these socks and knit hat featuring student-created designs are great for any occasion and make the perfect gift for the enthusiastic Hokie in your life.

