

# VIRGINIA TECH

magazine

fall 2016

---

## Behind the Bling

Unveiling the Class of 2018 ring

---

## All Natural

Step by step, team measures AT

---

## The Catalyst

Entrepreneur fights cancer

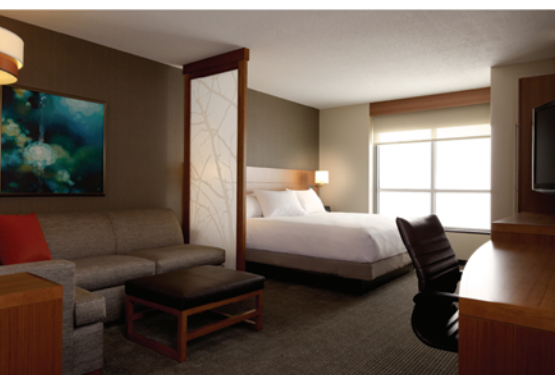
a long way home





Blacksburg's Preeminent,  
Luxury Condo-Hotel

Your season tickets are secured,  
What about your **place to stay?**



"Unlike any other property I  
have ever owned - just a great  
place and simple to own."

**The Place** Owner  
John Malone  
VT Alum, BSEE - 1983



"Our hotel-condo is something  
our entire family can enjoy for  
decades to come."

**The Place** Owner  
Marty Johnson



"I realized purchasing a  
hotel-condo not only gives me  
a place to stay during the busy  
football season but it's actually  
a solid investment too."

**The Place** Owner  
Ernita Thomas  
VT Alum, BS in Accounting - 1991

## YOUR HASSLE-FREE HAVEN

*The Place* at University Crossroads, a Luxury Condo-Hotel in the very heart of Blacksburg, is the ideal place for Virginia Tech fans who enjoy Blacksburg's unique style of rest and relaxation.

Owning at *The Place* means knowing you have a room for football games - and aren't wasting money renting one, but it also means no lawns to mow, utility bills to pay, maintenance to be done, - even the beds are made for you!

Find out what Hassle-Free ownership is all about at *The Place*, at University Crossroads - Blacksburg's New destination point.

[www.theplaceuc.com](http://www.theplaceuc.com)  
(571) 969-1328

*\*Ownership may include rental program opportunities*



## Ringin' true

by TIM SANDS

During last year's Ring Dance, Laura and I were honored to each receive a Virginia Tech class ring, a gift from the Class of 2016. Class rings are special because they represent the history and traditions of our university. They are also a tangible reminder of the knowledge, skills, and experiences we carry with us into the future. Apparently, Hokie rings sometimes take surprising journeys and turn up in unexpected places. Perhaps those treks have something to do with the adventurous spirit of our alumni.

In keeping with that spirit, we have an opportunity to break new ground in higher education. Last year, we embarked on an ambitious project, "Envisioning Virginia Tech—Beyond Boundaries." Thousands of faculty, students, staff, alumni, and partners participated in shaping a vision for Virginia Tech a generation into the future.

We began with our strengths and sought opportunities to build our national global leadership profile. These strengths have led us to form "Destination Areas," which are intended to be destinations that attract talent, partnerships, investment, and future-focused innovation. Our first five Destination Areas are Intelligent Infrastructure for Human-Centered Communities; Global Systems Science; Adaptive Brain and Behavior; Integrated Security; and Data Analytics and Decision Sciences. These destination areas do not replace our traditional fields of study; they are instead intended to connect our students and faculty with rapidly emerging issues and opportunities. Consider the swift development of drone technology. Earlier this year, the Virginia Tech Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership partnered with Google and Chipotle to test a drone delivery system (see page 9), an important step toward making automatic drone deliveries a convenient and safe part of the intelligent infrastructure of our daily lives.

All these new programs have extensive experiential components. They prepare students with both depth of discipline and breadth across multiple subject areas. In addition,

### president's message

learning and experience occur in the context of our motto, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve). Everything we know about the direction of our global economy tells us that our undergraduates must be able to reinvent themselves professionally more than a dozen times over the course of their careers. We need to start thinking about the college experience differently. How can we become more valuable to our graduates and do more good for society?

We have an opportunity to become leaders in higher education and define the future of a 21st-century university education. Provost Thanassis Rikakis and I are confident that we will attract the world's best faculty talent from across the globe to drive this transformation, and we will admit the best students from the state, the country, and around the globe. Our graduates will have the entrepreneurial skills to be resilient as the world around them changes. They will be at the forefront of research and discovery. We will create an intellectual environment that will open up the "Blue Oceans" to our explorers.

We envision a campus where faculty and students come together from many disciplines to work as a diverse team to address the complex issues of tomorrow—a dynamic organization that offers a vibrant living-learning environment and a collaborative experience that transcends the traditional college structure.

We will not leave our history and tradition behind. On the contrary, we will carry them forward with us. It is our heritage to be trailblazers and innovators. We're embarking on an adventurous new journey, Hokies; hold on to your rings! □

*Tim Sands is Virginia Tech's 16th president.*



# contents

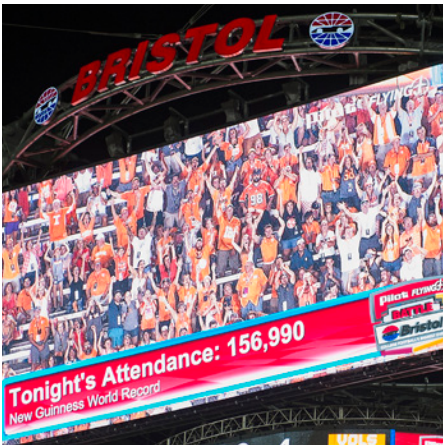
## features

- 18
- Unveiling the 2018 Ring**  
In How Tech Ticks, get an up-close look at each element of the newly revealed Class of 2018 ring, from the “flaming VT” to the class motto, *Mentes apertae, fines consociati*.
- 30
- All Natural on the AT**  
A team of Hokies is studying the Appalachian Trail to produce the first comprehensive dataset on the famed footpath’s condition and sustainability. And on page 36, read further about Global Systems Science, one of five Destination Areas that criss-cross the university’s colleges and position Virginia Tech for world-class leadership.
- 38
- A Long Way Home**  
Our beloved class rings sometimes slip away—but some of them return. Turn the pages to find a half-dozen truly remarkable tales of lost-and-found rings.
- 52
- The Catalyst**  
When three cancer-related deaths in Brian Slingerland’s family led the entrepreneurial alumnus to launch a biotechnology company, he didn’t know he’d end up a part of one of the largest biotech deals in history.

## departments

President’s Message	1
Letters	4
Around the Drillfield	5
What’s In It?	14
Corps	16
Moment	17
How Tech Ticks	18
Ology	20
Athletics	22
Class Notes	52
Retro	71
Alumni Commentary	72
Still Life	73

**On the cover:** If a lost class ring has a mind to find its way home, even the New River—and its fish—won’t stand in the way. Photo by Jim Stroup.



**Battle at Bristol:** Eighteen years in the making, an outrageous idea by Speedway Motorsports Inc. owner and CEO Bruton Smith roared to life on Sept. 10 at Bristol Motor Speedway in Bristol, Tennessee: a football game in the middle of the track. Despite the Hokies’ 45-24 loss to the University of Tennessee, the Battle at Bristol was one for the ages: A record-breaking crowd of 156,990 packed the historic speedway, surpassing the 115,109 in attendance at a 2013 game between the University of Michigan and Notre Dame in Michigan Stadium. The Corps of Cadets’ cannon, Skipper, made its first out-of-state trip, firing each time the Hokies scored. Photos by Jim Stroup.



EDITOR

Jesse Tuel

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Mason Adams

ART DIRECTOR

Robin Dowdy

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Shelley Cline, Tiffany Pruden,  
Amanda Robinson '17, David  
Stanley '95

CONTRIBUTORS

Kim Bassler '12, Charles Cox  
'73, Juliet Crichton, Shirley Fleet,  
Richard W. Frye, Katie Gehrt  
'97, '02, Sookhan Ho, Richard  
Lovegrove, Charlie Masencup  
'92, Jacqueline L. Nottingham '88,  
Allie Oberoi '10, Holly Paulette  
'13, Albert Raboteau, Erica Stacy,  
Laura Wedin '84, Sherrie Whaley,  
Larry Williams '70, Matthew M.  
Winston Jr. '90

COPY EDITORS

Juliet Crichton, Richard Love-  
grove

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Jim Stroup, Logan Wallace

WEBMASTER, DIGITAL EDITOR

Juliet Crichton

DIRECTOR OF DESIGN & DIGITAL  
STRATEGY

Brad Soucy

SENIOR ASSOCIATE VICE PRESI-  
DENT FOR ALUMNI RELATIONS

Matthew M. Winston Jr. '90

PUBLISHER

Tracy Vosburgh

CONTACTS

**Story ideas and letters to the editor:**  
Email: [vtmag@vt.edu](mailto:vtmag@vt.edu). Mail: Virginia Tech  
Magazine (0336), 902 Prices Fork Road,  
University Gateway Center, Suite 2100;  
Blacksburg, VA 24061.

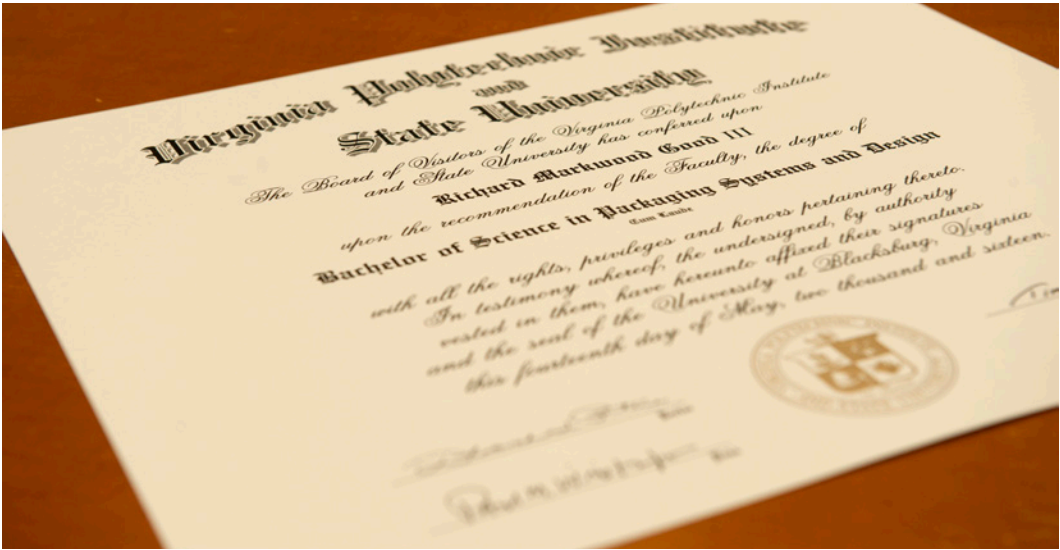
**Address changes:** Email: [alumniata@vt.edu](mailto:alumniata@vt.edu). Phone: 540-231-6285 between 8  
a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**Class Notes:** Email: [fleets@vt.edu](mailto:fleets@vt.edu).  
Mail: Class Notes, Alumni Association;  
Holtzman Alumni Center (0102), Virginia  
Tech; 901 Prices Fork Rd.; Blacksburg,  
VA 24061.

**Advertising:** Jeanne Coates '88; [coates@primeconsultingva.com](mailto:coates@primeconsultingva.com), 757-715-9676.

Virginia Tech does not discriminate against  
employees, students, or applicants on the  
basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender  
identity, gender expression, national origin,  
political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orienta-  
tion, genetic information, or veteran status;  
or otherwise discriminate against employees  
or applicants who inquire about, discuss, or  
disclose their compensation or the compensation  
of other employees, or applicants; or any other  
basis protected by law. For inquiries regarding  
nondiscrimination policies, contact the executive  
director for Equity and Access at 540-231-8771  
or Virginia Tech, North End Center, Suite 2300  
(0318), 300 Turner St. NW, Blacksburg, VA 24061.

letters to the editor



LOGAN WALLACE

Diplomas in the '40s and '50s

The summer edition article "Diplomatic," by Alison Matthiessen, interested me especially. During the time when I received my bachelor's and master's degrees in 1942 and 1943, the process of producing diplomas was quite different.

A classmate and I were students in architectural engineering. We were taught to draw and letter. He lettered the names and majors in Old English and dates in script on all diplomas in 1942 and most in 1943, including his master's degree. The following quarter, I took over the lettering job and lettered my own master's degree. Dean [John Edward] Williams died in the spring and could not sign any requiring his signature. As a result, I learned to write his signature, and his daughter said she could not tell which was real and which was the forgery.

During the 1950s, I was on the faculty of architectural engineering. By then, di-

plomas were ordered with names, majors, and dates in place. It was not possible to add "with honors" until grades came in. Consequently, Registrar Clarice Slusher had me come to Burruss Hall early on commencement day to add that.

In the 1950s, some graduates from the early 1900s would lose a diploma and ask for a duplicate. Some large blanks from then were available, so it was possible to honor the request. Back then, all the faculty signed the diplomas, so reproducing the signatures was a challenge!

When you stay around a long time, as I have, you do become a historian!

*Bertram Y. Kinzey Jr. '42, Blacksburg, Virginia*

Have something to say? Send  
us a letter at [vtmag@vt.edu](mailto:vtmag@vt.edu).

Around  
the **Drillfield**

What's In It? **14**

Corps **16**

Moment **17**

How Tech Ticks **18**

Ology **20**

Athletics **22**



Keeping bees healthy

Bee researcher Mark Williams checks a colony.

Pesticides used by beekeepers to improve honeybee health may actually harm the bees by damaging bacteria communities in their guts, according to research led by Mark Williams, an associate professor of horticulture in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and an affiliate of the Fralin Life Science Institute. The team's findings were published in the journal *Frontiers in Microbiology*.

For the project, Williams' team extracted genomic data from honeybees living in hives treated with pesticides, and then compared the data to that of bees living in pesticide-free hives. Honeybees from chlorothalanyl-treated hives showed the greatest change in gut microbiome, said Williams.

Because particular microbes are essential to honeybee health and the ability to stave off disease naturally, Williams plans to investigate specific changes in gut microbiota activities that affect honeybee survival.

Honeybee health has been declining since the 1980s, and the approximate rate of hive loss in Virginia is more than 30 percent annually. Continued loss is expected to drive up the cost of such crops as apples, melons, and squash, which honeybees make possible. □



Abuzz:

For a video of the project, go to [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).





RACHEL DEBUSK

Jeff '84 and Sheila Brown '86 visit with their son, Brendan. To read the full story, visit [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).

# A Hokie legacy

by HOLLY PAULETTE '13

More than 30 years have passed since Sheila and Jeff Brown were students at Virginia Tech, but they have seen their fair share of Blacksburg in the years since. Their children inherited the Hokie gene: Two sons have graduated from Virginia Tech and a third started his first year this fall. Blacksburg feels like a second home to the Browns.

The Browns are active and involved as alumni, as Hokie parents, and as donors. “We believe that sharing our time, as well as our resources, is essential to the environment of learning and strength of community,” said Sheila. “There is no place quite like Virginia Tech, as the Hokie Nation can attest, and we enjoy giving back.”

The Browns previously served on the Division of Student Affairs’ Alumni Advisory Board and currently are members of the Parent Committee. Both groups provide guidance, counsel, and resources to the division, which strives to offer students an environment in which they can thrive.

Sheila (biology '86) was a homecoming queen candidate, served as a member of and leader in Kappa Delta sorority, was a Student Alumni Associates member, and worked on the Bugle staff. Jeff (finance '84) fondly recalled “living on campus in Pritchard Hall for three years, dining in Dietrick Hall, playing intramural sports, and attending many a game with my hall-mates, all while receiving a top-notch education,” he said.

In the spring of 1984, when Jeff was a senior and Sheila was a sophomore, the couple met at a Virginia Tech Karate Club mixer.

Today, the family lives in White Stone, Virginia, where Jeff owns a marine construction firm and Sheila owns a women’s clothing boutique. They also own a real estate investment company.

## Hokie home

Ethan (A.S. agricultural technology '11, agribusiness management '14), a member of the National Agri-Marketing Association and Gamma Sigma Delta agricultural honor society while at Tech, is an account manager for Ruppert Landscaping in Alexandria, Virginia.

Austin (M.S. crop and soil environmental sciences '15), who was an officer in the Real Estate Club and manager of Campus Cookies while at Tech, is an electric power generation service advisor for Carter Machinery in Richmond, Virginia.

Brendan, the youngest, who enrolled at Virginia Tech this fall, plans to major in real estate and play club or intramural soccer.

The Browns are members of Virginia Tech’s 1872 Society, a philanthropic group that recognizes donors who make leadership annual gifts each year. They also generously support the Division of Student Affairs and the Hokie Parents Fund, an annual giving program that enriches the student experience and supports such areas as the Common Book Project, the Student Emergency Fund, various clubs and organizations, and family weekend events. □

*Holly Paulette (English '13) is a Division of Student Affairs writer and editor.*

# Interactive Thinkabit Lab launched in National Capital Region

Providing students and teachers with a dynamic, collaborative learning environment—equal parts lab, makerspace, and classroom—the Qualcomm Thinkabit Lab launched in early September at Virginia Tech’s Northern Virginia Center in Falls Church.

The lab, which marks a multiyear collaboration between Tech and Qualcomm Inc., introduces innovative science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning activities and future career opportunities to underserved students and those traditionally underrepresented in STEM fields.

Qualcomm’s sixth Thinkabit Lab and its first outside San Diego, the facility in Tech’s National Capital Region is led by the Department of Engineering Education in the College of Engineering and by the School of Education in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. Leveraging Tech’s academic depth in both disciplines, the lab will also prepare educators in the Washington, D.C., metro area to carry out Thinkabit-inspired STEM experiences in area schools and programs to foster critical skills necessary for the 21st century.

“Beyond being a space to inspire the next generation of inventors,” said Qualcomm CEO and Virginia Tech alumnus Steve Mollenkopf, the lab enables research and practical application that “will bring new advancements to STEM education at all levels.”

“We know that STEM skills can enhance every student’s future, regardless of students’ field of study,” Tech President Tim Sands said, “and we need to prepare both students and teachers to address the complex challenges of tomorrow. The Thinkabit collaboration with Qualcomm will allow us to join complementary strengths and work synergistically to create opportunities and to lower barriers.” □



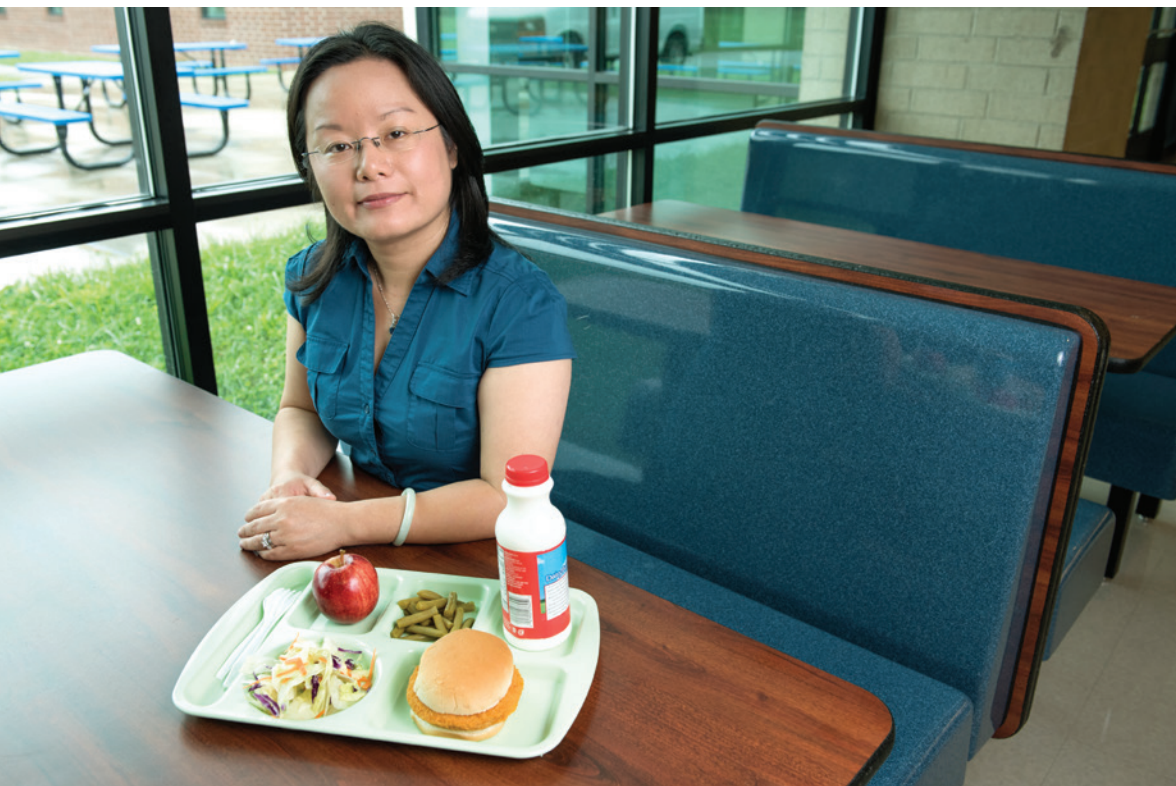
NATHAN HEIDT

## Thinkers:

For a video of the lab’s opening and its interactive activities, go to [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).

**Code for cool:** With imagination and creativity, participants from National Capital Region middle schools create, code, and collaborate to build a “Robo Craft” with electronic equipment, including laptop computers, Arduinos, servos, resistors, circuits, LEDs, breadboards, and solar panels.





## Students participating in government-funded school meal programs at higher risk of being overweight

Government-funded school meals are placing financially vulnerable children at higher risk of being overweight, according to research conducted by Wen You (above), an associate professor of agricultural and applied economics in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. You's findings were recently published in the journal *Health Economics*.

Collected from 1998 to 2007, nationally representative longitudinal data of 21,260 students revealed that the longer children were in school breakfast and lunch programs, the higher their risk of being overweight. Students from low-income families and those living in the Northeast, South, and rural America proved most susceptible to the problem.

"The question now is what to do in order to not just fill bellies, but to make sure those children consume healthy and nutritious food—or at least not contribute to the obesity epidemic," You said.

The study appears on the heels of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which raises school meals' nutrition-quality standards, and the Community Eligibility Provision, which allows schools in high-poverty areas to provide free meals to all students. The new legislation took effect in the 2014-15 school year.

"It's potentially troubling since even the nutritional targets of previous standards were not being met satisfactorily prior to this new legislation, and now there are potentially millions more kids who could be affected by accessing free school meals," said You, who did not have access to data to assess the impact of the newly adopted pieces of legislation in her study.

You believes that "it is important to have extra policy support that will allow funding for programs, such as chef-to-school and farm-to-school, as well as culinary training for cafeteria staff so kids actually enjoy eating what is ultimately prepared for them."

## University reveals plans for \$225 million Global Business and Analytics Complex

Virginia Tech is planning a more than \$225 million Global Business and Analytics Complex to galvanize people who share a passion for an analytic approach to problems.

The complex will include four new buildings, including two academic buildings and two living-learning residential communities for about 700 students on the Blacksburg campus. The academic buildings will house the Pamplin College of Business, faculty offices, classroom spaces, and open work spaces where faculty from all colleges will work on collaborative projects for teaching and conducting research focused in the Data Analytics and Decision Sciences Destination Area.

"There was a university-level desire to create a data and decision analytics lab and we were working on a replacement for Pamplin Hall and a new building for the business school—and this brings these two ideas together," said Robert Sumichrast, dean of the Pamplin College of Business.



## The flying burritos

**Lunch is served:** In the first research of its kind, Project Wing conducted flights with the Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership to explore food delivery by unmanned aerial vehicles.

In mid-September, Tech's reputation for outstanding dining literally reached new heights when unmanned aircraft delivered Chipotle burritos to waiting customers at a closed test site on campus.

Conducted by Project Wing—a division of X, an innovation lab formerly known as Google[x]—and Tech's Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership, the research flights were the first in a series of extended flight tests that will yield technical, safety, and user-experience data for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

As the FAA takes steps towards safely integrating unmanned aircraft deliveries into the airspace and into everyday life, from natural disaster relief to emergency medicine to shopping, Project Wing's research seeks to inform the fine-tuning of such deliveries, which could potentially lower costs, decrease delivery times, and prove more environmentally friendly than ground transportation.

"The commercial use of drones for package and food delivery in U.S. airspace is rapidly becoming a reality," said U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner of Virginia. "We are pleased to work with Project Wing and other great partners to leverage Virginia Tech's tremendous research capacity to capitalize on the business potential promised by unmanned aircraft systems technology."

The research is an integral part of Tech's commitment to create intelligent infrastructure for human-centered communities, a \$75

million initiative to provide experiential learning opportunities for students and to build infrastructure that supports sustainable communities.

"Last year while discussing the entrepreneurial spirit at Virginia Tech, I jokingly speculated we might one day have quadcopters delivering ramen noodles around campus. Apparently, I wasn't off by much," said Tech President Tim Sands. "This is what happens when great partners work together in a collaborative, innovative environment. We are continuously seeking new opportunities to support Virginia's economy and prepare our students for the future."

The Virginia Tech Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership was selected by the FAA in 2013 as one of six national test sites for unmanned aircraft. Since then, researchers have investigated medical supply delivery to remote locations, worked with NASA to research a traffic management research platform for unmanned aircraft, assisted in search and rescue missions, and enabled a range of unmanned aircraft applications.

However useful, none of that research included a bag of tortilla chips. □

### Heads up:

For a video of the test flights, go to [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu). To read more about intelligent infrastructure at Virginia Tech, visit [provost.vt.edu/destination-areas](http://provost.vt.edu/destination-areas).





LOGAN WALLACE



LOGAN WALLACE



HELEN ZHANG

## Facebook executive invigorates campus

During a late-August visit, Facebook executive Regina Dugan '84, '85 inspired Hokies, including (at upper left) Executive Vice President and Provost Thanassis Rikakis and President Tim Sands.

As part of Virginia Tech's inaugural Beyond Boundaries Presidential Lecture series, Regina Dugan (mechanical engineering '84, M.S. '85) returned to campus in late August to discuss rapid innovation, a topic in which she has sustained expertise.

Before joining Facebook to lead its new advanced research group, Dugan, who earned a Ph.D. at the California Institute of Technology, oversaw Google's Advanced Technology and Products Team and is the former head of DARPA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. In 2013, CNN named her to its top 10 list of thinkers in science and technology who are "changing the world with their insights and innovations."

Said President Tim Sands in his introduction of Dugan at the Moss Arts Center: "She's a scientist, a businesswoman, an inventor, and a leader in disruptive innovation. She knows Virginia Tech well because she's also a Hokie." Beyond Boundaries is President Sands' visioning initiative that challenges the university community to imagine Virginia Tech a generation into the future and to consider how to advance as a global land-grant university.

Dugan, who stressed that companies—and universities—need to be forward-thinking, said she often hears concerns that large

organizations like Virginia Tech are too bureaucratic to create an architecture and culture of innovation, an assessment she doesn't believe. "What we choose to endeavor to do," she told the audience of students, faculty, staff, and community members, "becomes the future."

Building a culture of innovation requires organizing work differently, Dugan said: "It's a way of life. It is something you can learn. It is something you can get better at. It is something you test, adapt, and change with the time. You treat it as a discipline, and you get better."

A member of the Virginia Tech College of Engineering's Academy of Engineering Excellence, Dugan said that innovation is a discipline requiring speed, agility, and the ability to change and adapt. "I've been fortunate to be part of many great organizations. I know that the best of them challenge the very notion that their past is what makes them great," she said. "Instead, they use their history of accomplishment to give them confidence to change and look forward to the future. They seem to focus, always, on a future that can be even greater than their past." □



### On the edge:

Read more about Dugan in "The Edge of Possibility" in the summer 2013 edition of Virginia Tech Magazine.



JUD FROELICH



### Hot spot:

Find the trucks on campus by following Dining Services on Twitter or Facebook—and visit [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu) for a video about the trucks.

**Good eats:** Gabe Petry, operations manager at Dietrick Hall; Randy Van Dyke, executive chef at Dietrick; Robert Obst, chef de cuisine; Ted Faulkner, director of Dining Services; and Bill Hess, associate director for Dining Services, helped make the food trucks a reality.

## Two food trucks now serving campus

On the first day of fall semester classes, two brand-new food trucks—The Grillfield and the Periodic Table—rolled in to feed underserved areas of campus.

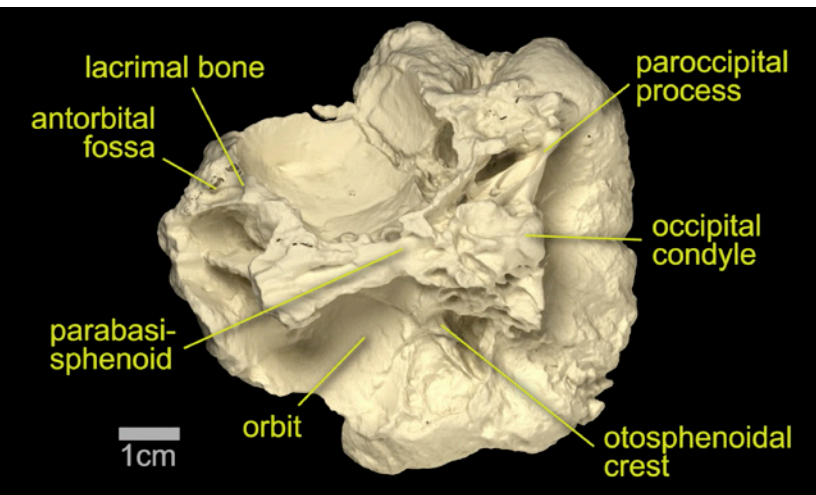
In line with years of research and planning by Dining Services and the Division of Student Affairs, as well as ample input and feedback from students, both trucks steer clear of predictable menus.

Along with chef specials, The Grillfield serves Latino-fusion meals, such as smoked pulled-pork tortas and beef barbacoa tortillas, while the Periodic Table serves Asian-fusion meals, such as Thai peanut pork rice bowl and lemongrass chicken yaki-ramen. Future plans are to vary each truck's menu by season.

Featuring graphics created by Virginia Tech designers, both trucks were custom-built to Dining Services' specifications, including a slide-out that allows face-to-face interactions, a video menu board, a portable point-of-sale system, a top-notch speaker system for music, and LED lighting.

The trucks will be parked in Hokie Village at multiple home football games, and future plans are to make the trucks available for special occasions and campus events. □





Unusual new species of extinct reptile shows dinosaurs copied body, skull shapes of distant relatives

A multi-institutional team of paleontologists that included Hokies identified, described, and named a new species of extinct reptile that predated dinosaurs by at least 100 million years but bore an iconic dinosaur head shape.

Published in September in Current Biology, the study introduces Triopticus primus, whose thickened skull roof looks just like the distantly related pachycephalosaur dinosaurs that lived much later. Many of the other extinct animals found with Triopticus also display structures that resemble later dinosaurs, such as the long snouts of Spinosaurus, the toothless beaks of ornithomimids, and the armor plates of ankylosaurs.

“What we thought were unique body shapes in many dinosaurs actually evolved millions of years before in the Triassic Period, about 225 million years ago,” said Virginia Tech College of Science researcher Michelle Stocker.



Students from the Hyperloop team show President Tim Sands the pod design.

Virginia Tech to build on-campus Hyperloop track

Virginia Tech will build a Hyperloop test track on the

Blacksburg campus, the first of its kind on the East Coast.

Hyperloop is a high-speed transportation system using a passenger-carrying pod in

a near-vacuum tube that is envisioned to reach speeds in excess of 700 mph. Earlier this year, a Virginia Tech team placed fourth among more

than 120 teams at an international competition at Texas A&M University to design a Hyperloop pod. The team unveiled its pod in September, and will test the pod at a 1-mile track in California.

“With the hands-on experience this test track will provide, our students will make technological breakthroughs the world has never seen before,” said Stefan Duma, the Harry Wyatt Professor of Engineering and interim director of the Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science. “It’s a physical manifestation of the university’s commitment to creating intelligent infrastructure for the 21st century.”

To read more about intelligent infrastructure for human-centered communities, visit [provost.vt.edu/destination-areas](http://provost.vt.edu/destination-areas).

MAI KHANH NGUYEN



In Newport News, the Tech Center at Oyster Point will offer business, research, retail, and living spaces. Renderings courtesy of Tech Center.

Expanding opportunities in Newport News

The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center (VTCRC), which has been widely recognized for its effectiveness in bringing highly skilled jobs to Blacksburg, is collaborating on a similar initiative in Newport News, Virginia. Tech Center at Oyster Point will offer not only business development and research space, but also retail and housing.

“The new paradigm of successful economic development is living, working, and playing in the same area,” said Corporate Research Center President and CEO Joe Meredith, who is managing the research-park portion of the location, which is being developed by the W.M. Jordan Co.

The first phase, which included 250,000 square feet of restaurant and retail space, is now open. It features businesses such as AT&T

and Zoe’s Kitchen. The second phase, a fitness center and apartments, is scheduled to open this fall. Construction of the first research-park building in phase three is on pace to begin by the end of the year.

“Our vision is to be a catalyst for using science from two major federal laboratories—the Thomas Jefferson National Laboratory and NASA/Langley—to create new companies and expand the capabilities of existing businesses,” said W.M. Jordan Co. President and CEO John R. Lawson (geophysics ’75). “There are world-class technologies and entrepreneurial skills available in our community. Virginia Tech will lead the way to increased collaboration and communication.”





# Two trees, three tables

by RICHARD LOVEGROVE

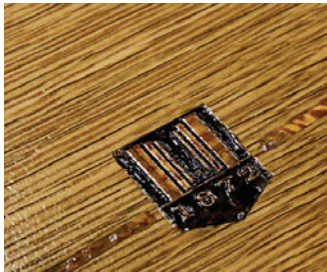
Students in the College of Natural Resources and Environment's Wood Enterprise Institute (WEI) have given new life to two historic campus trees felled by disease. Each year, the student-run, faculty-supported entrepreneurial organization designs, constructs, markets, and sells a wood product, and this year's team incorporating the salvaged wood of the trees into three unique tables. Proceeds from two of the tables benefited the university's urban/campus forest sustainability program and Smithfield Plantation. The third will be donated.

**The Grove white oak:** This giant tree has 314 rings, but it grew for years before it produced rings, so it easily predates 1700. For perspective, the original Drapers Meadow settlement in the area wasn't established until 1749.

**The Henderson Lawn sycamore:** In 2010-11, WEI students obtained the butt log (more than 4 feet in diameter) from this 140-year-old tree. Students used slabs of the darker sycamore to fill in where wood at the pith of the white oak had to be removed.



To showcase the wood, the students left a live or natural edge. The original table required about 250 combined student hours of work.



A laser-engraved sycamore inlay marks the ring denoting the year Virginia Tech was founded—1872.



A bow tie spline crafted out of sycamore was used to stabilize a large end split in the oak. The spline stops further splitting while adding unique aesthetic value. Detail images courtesy of Earl D. Kline.



**Woodworkers:**  
To learn about the team behind the tables, visit [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).

JIM STROUP

## New building provides state-of-the-art learning spaces

Nearly 10,000 students began taking classes this fall in the \$42 million, three-story, 73,400-square-foot Classroom Building, which contains 15 classrooms and four interdisciplinary teaching labs with seats for more than 1,450 students, as well as study rooms and group meeting space.

The new learning spaces are designed to support increasingly interactive and technology-driven learning experiences. “The demand for learning environments that support collaboration and deep engagement has grown steadily,” said Jill Sible, assistant provost for undergraduate education. “The realization of an entire building that supports this type of learning is a dream come true. This amazing building truly sets Virginia Tech apart.”

Classrooms features include moveable furnishings, wall-mounted writing spaces, and multiple screens for projecting shared material and student work. Some rooms were specifically designed to facilitate team-based, active learning as an alternative to lectures, even for large-enrollment classes.

The Classroom Building is an integral component of the planned future development of the North Academic Precinct, which is currently anchored by Goodwin Hall.



LOGAN WALLACE

## President shares State of the University address

Professor Laura Sands and President Tim Sands shared a laugh after the president's first State of the University address. On Sept. 30 at the Moss Arts Center, he outlined the university's history of bold moves and challenged the university to advance as a national and global leader. To read the speech and watch a video, visit [vt.edu/state-of-university](http://vt.edu/state-of-university).

## Researcher finds gene that reduces female mosquitoes

Virginia Tech researchers have found a gene that over time can reduce female mosquitoes, which are the prime carriers of the pathogens that cause malaria, Zika, and dengue fever.

Along with colleagues, Zhijian “Jake” Tu, a College of Agriculture and Life Sciences professor and Fralin Life Sci-

ence Institute Vector-borne Disease Research Group member, found that placing a particular Y chromosome gene on the autosomes of *Anopheles stephensi* killed off 100 percent of female embryos that inherited this gene.

The extra copy of this gene is passed on to both sexes, but only males, which do not bite, survive. The findings were published Sept. 20 in the journal eLife.

## Virginia Tech Daily



Want your Hokie news more often? Visit [vtnews.vt.edu](http://vtnews.vt.edu), where you can sign up for the Virginia Tech Daily email.



# Global history today

by CAPT. ALLIE OBEROI '10

**Remember:** (Left) Cadets and their instructors visited many sites in Normandy, France, including allied and German cemeteries. (Above) Cadet Kevin Byerly, far left, leads a discussion of Utah Beach.

**T**welve cadets who spent the spring semester becoming experts on the 1944 Allied invasion of Europe traveled to Normandy and Paris this summer to walk in the historic footsteps of soldiers who fought in the campaign.

“Analyzing something from the past and realizing that the lessons learned can be applied to today’s problems produces superior thinking and problem-solving,” said Peter Wilson, a senior finance major and a member of the Corps of Cadets’ Citizen-Leader Track, explaining the importance of the experiential study of history.

In the classroom, cadets examined specific battles and sites. “I realized very quickly during the student presentations on the actual sites in France that they became so much more real and alive to me,” said Judith Skinker, a senior civil engineering major and Naval ROTC member.

During the trip, bells began to ring, playing the American national anthem. “All around me, everyone stopped what they were doing and turned to face the flag of the United States of America, flying proudly above the bodies of the brave soldiers who gave their lives in defense of our nation,” said Matthew Watson, a senior international studies major and an Army ROTC member. “After the bells stopped, a recording of taps played. This somber moment truly struck home.”

The Hokies were humbled by a visit to the “winderstandsneest,” or “resistance nest,” assaulted by soldiers under the leadership of 1st Lt. Jimmie W. Monteith Jr., Class of 1941, who is one of Virginia

Tech’s seven Medal of Honor recipients. “I won’t forget what it felt like to visit his grave, looking out over the ocean,” said Matthew Mumbach, a junior international studies and Russian major and Air Force ROTC member.

Standing at the sites they had studied in detail, cadets gained a deeper understanding of history. “When [we’re] reading numbers in history books, it is very easy to forget how many men sacrificed everything to liberate the French people. Walking down the sidewalks through the cemetery puts everything in perspective,” said Lindsey Bittinger, a senior industrial and systems engineering major and Naval ROTC member.

As part of the experience, cadets related historic events to modern international relations. Christopher Selig, a junior mechanical engineering major and Army ROTC member, said, “The sheer magnitude of operations and logistics that occurred, not only for the initial invasion, but for the follow-up resupplying, still baffles me. To get multiple nations to work together and comingle units in order to accomplish the invasion is something that I could only hope would occur today.”

Instruction and travel were led by Lt. Col. Don Russell, Lt. Col. Chuck Payne, and Lt. Col. Gordon Rudd, all of whom said they look forward to guiding more cadets in the global study of tactical, operational, and strategic leadership challenges of the past. □

*Capt. Allie Oberoi (sociology '10) is the corps’ executive officer.*



COURTESY PHOTOS

## Moral imperative

by JULIET CRICHTON

**M**oney, sex, and power are typically at the root of business ethics violations, says Richard Wokutch, R.B. Pamplin Professor of Management in the Pamplin College of Business.

For some four decades, Wokutch has taught, researched, and written about business ethics and the regulation of corporate social responsibility and performance, having spent long stretches as a self-proclaimed “participant-observer” mingling among workers in international settings—and then sharing his insights.

Which begs the question: How did a Catholic school-educated kid from inner-city Pittsburgh land upon a line of work that has allowed him to travel the world and assess global management practices?

Fascinated by economics and finance as an undergraduate at the University of Pittsburgh, Wokutch didn’t exactly picture himself laboring among—and for—the people. “What really was my goal at that time,” he said, “was to be as successful and to make as much money as possible. My original thought was to get an MBA from a top-notch school and then work in the private sector.”

But caught up in the idealism of the 1960s, Wokutch soon realized that he wanted to help make the world a better place, perhaps working for the World Bank in international development efforts.

Stepping off an elevator in Pitt’s Cathedral of Learning to pick up an application to take the GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test), Wokutch saw a sign: “Get a Ph.D. in [what was then called] environmental influences on management.” He asked about the program and was whisked away to the program head’s office. “If you get a Ph.D. in business,” the professor told him, “you can do all sorts of things: consulting, teaching, running your own business.” Wokutch paused for a moment: “Okay, that’s what I’ll do.” All told, it was a 15-minute conversation.

As a graduate assistant for the business school’s associate dean, Wokutch—who still had designs on working for the World Bank—was advised to join academe and become tenured because he could move from teaching to industry much more easily than the reverse. After earning his doctorate at age 26 and tenure at Virginia Tech in his early 30s, Wokutch promptly checked on entering the World Bank’s Young Professionals Program. He



COURTESY PHOTO

On a Fulbright Fellowship in fall 1986, Wokutch conducted research on corporate social responsibility, focusing on worker safety and health in the Japanese auto industry. At Mazda Motor Corp.’s main plant in Hiroshima, Wokutch (in hat and glasses) joined employees in morning exercises that incorporated stretching and warming up while the company song played.

was told that he “wasn’t young enough anymore.” And thus his globe-trotting research began in earnest.

After two Fulbright fellowships and the publication of two books, Wokutch introduced Pamplin students to study abroad programs to Asia. “At that point, my research and teaching and the study abroad programs really merged,” he said.

The first recipient, in 2010, of Pamplin’s Award for Outstanding International Research, Wokutch also was recognized in 2011 with the Virginia Tech Alumni Association Award for Excellence in International Research and in 2015 with Pamplin’s Award for Excellence in International Programs.

And the moral of this story? The World Bank missed out on a good one. □



# BEHIND THE BLING

Unveiled in early October, the Class of 2018 ring—designed by students, just as it is every year—is packed with meaning.

### Mountains

The range that stretches across both sides evokes the little slice of heaven in the mountains.

### Torgersen Bridge

Spanning Alumni Mall, Torgersen Bridge serves as the gateway to Virginia Tech. The screaming eagle flying below it, the symbol of strength and freedom, has been a traditional element on the ring since 1911.

### University shield

Created in 1896.

### Skipper

Since 1964, “Skipper” has been a Corps of Cadets tradition at football games and corps and university events.

### Burruss Hall

### Lest we forget

Engraved into “The Rock” found on the Upper Quad, these words honor the VPI alumni lost in World War I.

### Flaming VT

The “flaming VT” rests between the corps crest and university shield, symbolizing the strong Hokie spirit shared by civilians and cadets.

### Corps of Cadets crest

### Ut Prosim

The motto, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), is the foundation of the university side of the ring, as well as the university itself. The motto is in the same location and style as on the 1969 class ring worn by the 2018 namesake, Frank Beamer.

### Hokie Stone

## BY THE NUMBERS

Find these elements in the rings!

### 7 stars

To honor Virginia Tech’s seven Medal of Honor recipients

### 2 crossed sabres

An element from the earliest class rings

### 1872

The year Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College opened

### MMXVIII

2018 in Roman numerals

### 8 Pylons

Brotherhood, Honor, Service, Loyalty, Sacrifice, Leadership, Duty, and Ut Prosim

### 2 trees

Two oak trees representing autumn and spring

### 2 trees

Two oak trees representing winter and summer

### 2018

The class logo incorporates Hokie tracks

### Snowman

The snowman represents special times students enjoyed on snow days, as well as the annual cadets-versus-civilians snowball fight.

### HokieBird

### President Sands in graduation cap

The silhouette of President Tim Sands wearing a graduation cap and standing under the summertime tree signifies that he began his time here with the Class of 2018 and will complete his “senior year” with them.

### Drillfield events

The ferris wheel welcomes students back to campus at GobblerFest. The ribbon celebrates the tradition of being the No. 1 collegiate Relay for Life. The tent symbolizes Hokies coming together to serve the community at the Big Event.

### Cassell Coliseum

### Commonwealth Cup

Held high by a student, this cherished cup is awarded to the winner of the annual Virginia Tech-UVA football game, which Tech has won for 12 consecutive years.

### Beamer Way

Beamer Way, formerly called Spring Road, is named in honor of Coach Frank Beamer ’69.

### Turbine in Goodwin Hall

The Rolls Royce turbine hanging in the lobby of Goodwin Hall represents Virginia Tech’s stellar academics and research.

### Moss Arts Center

### Class of 2018 motto

*Mentes apertae, fines consociati* (Minds open, aims united). The Class of 2018 embraces differences.

### Downtown Blacksburg

### Main Street celebration

On Sept. 6, 2014, Hokies flooded downtown Blacksburg after the football team beat an Ohio State team that would later win the national championship.



# Commanding attention

by JESSE TUEL  
photos by JIM STROUP  
illustrations by AMANDA ROBINSON '17

When Associate Professor Greg Justice isn't directing plays and teaching acting classes at Virginia Tech, he's engaged in an artistic form of outreach: showing Fortune 500 executives, teachers, professional speakers, interviewees, and others how to employ acting techniques to command audience attention. In the Alumni Association's 100 Days 'til Graduation program, Justice has shared tips with graduating seniors; this summer, he spoke at Nashville and Knoxville alumni chapter events.

## VOCALS

Because the English language often places key words at the end of sentences, maintain your vocal energy throughout your statements. Teens, in particular, will finish sentences with falling energy. Imagine the Shakespeare line, "what light through yonder window breaks," with a half-hearted delivery.



## CHANGE SCENES

Venture into the audience, and the frame around you shifts, like a video camera panning. Or break the audience into small groups for discussion, like a commercial break in television.



## ENERGY

Stand on the balls of your feet, in the "positive energy zone," to project your energy toward the audience. When you field a question, shift backward into your heels to share the floor—but to answer the question, retake the audience's attention by shifting your energy forward.



## WARM UP


According to survey after survey, not even the fear of death exceeds the fear of public speaking, Justice said. Nerves cause tension, and a tense throat will cause a shaky voice and restrict oxygen to the brain, leading you to lose your train of thought. Just like an athlete or actor, ease the tension with stretching and relaxation techniques.



Move from **STAGE RIGHT** to stage left, because the movement mimics how we read. **HEROES** enter from stage right.

Move to **DOWN CENTER** to underscore a main point, because you'll loom larger in the audience's eyes and subconsciously reinforce your words.

Move from **STAGE LEFT** to stage right, against the grain, to introduce tension. Villains enter from stage left.

 **Encore:**  
For a video of Justice sharing his wisdom, go to [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).



# Sky's the limit

by JULIET CRICHTON

**R**unning as fast as you can some 45 yards while hoisting a flexible pole nearly three times your height is difficult enough.

But use that pole to fling yourself, momentarily upside down, some 18 feet in the air over a horizontal bar and then cascade back down, without seeing your landing, into a pit that resembles a giant inflated bed: That's entering another realm.

Requiring some 36 distinct movements in the span of about a second, pole vaulting is a complex endeavor. With one wrong move or equipment malfunction, an athlete can overshoot the pit and plummet onto a less-forgiving surface.

Junior pole vaulter Torben Laidig has, of course, had that happen. And still he says, "Once you're over the bar and begin falling back to the pit, it's definitely the best feeling in the world." Indeed.

Pole vaulting may be the perfect event for an athlete who's not afraid to take chances. Laidig came to Virginia Tech, sight unseen, from his native Germany on the good word of fellow Germans and Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) champion pole vaulters Stephan Munz, now a doctoral student and a volunteer assistant coach at Tech, and Martina Schultze, Tech's record holder and a five-time ACC champion, only the second woman in conference history to win three straight outdoor titles.

Laidig, who arrived at Tech vaulting 5.20 meters (17'-1"), achieved a personal best and set a new program record at seemingly every meet during a remarkable 2016 season: 5.62 meters (18'-5.25") indoors, an ACC record; and 5.60 meters (18'-4.5") outdoors, breaking Tech's all-time record set in 2006.

In early June, carrying exceptional momentum into the NCAA track and field championships in Eugene, Oregon, Laidig delivered, clearing 5.55 meters (18'-2.5") to claim second.

Named to the ALL-ACC Academic Team, Laidig is pursuing a dual degree in biochemistry and biological sciences with a minor in chemistry, heady stuff for a nationally competitive athlete. "In Germany, an athlete can't combine school and sports," he said. "I'm grateful to be able to do that here."

## High-flying legacy

At the ACC outdoor track and field championships in mid-May in Tallahassee, Florida, Tech pole vaulters Chris Uhle, Torben Laidig, Deakin Volz, Jeffrey Linta, Jared Allison, James Stek, and 2015 ACC champion Brad Johnson claimed the top seven spots, respectively, for an unprecedented sweep in the field of 16 competitors.

"It felt like a team practice," said Laidig. "The focus was there, and it was a really good meet."

Following NCAA regionals, four vaulters advanced to the championship meet, Tech's largest-ever group in a single event to advance.

The team's success has been sustained in large part by the Hokies' volunteer pole vault coach, Bob Phillips (B.S. physical education '82, M.Acct. '84, Ph.D. accounting '89), a 1980 All-American and 1999 inductee into the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame. Phillips also happens to teach information technology at nearby Radford University.

Now in his 33rd season, Phillips has quietly built a powerhouse in Blacksburg: Tech holds 29 individual titles in pole vaulting, more than all other ACC schools combined; and since joining the conference for the 2005 season, Hokies have won nine of 12 men's outdoor gold medals, including the last three.

One accomplishment is missing, however. "Our coach has never had a [national] pole vault champion," said Laidig, who came very close this past season. "He sacrifices so much for us all. He deserves it." □

## Airborne:

To watch Laidig vault, go to [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).



# Alumna travels the **WORLD** for Virginia Tech

by JACQUELINE L. NOTTINGHAM '88

Traveling around the world to recruit prospective students and connect with fellow alumni might sound like a dream come true. And for me, it is.

As assistant director for admissions and recruitment at Virginia Tech's Language and Culture Institute, I roam the globe to attract the best and brightest international students, scholars, and professionals to the university.

Working in conjunction with Undergraduate Admissions and the Graduate School, I extol the benefits not only of the Language and Culture Institute, but also of the broader university. Plus, I've got my trusty companion, HokieBird, with me.

Bird in hand, I get to see places most people only read or hear about. On Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, the HokieBird can be seen at the pyramids of Egypt, the Kuwait Towers, high schools in China, and near the Red Sea.

While searching for new students and visiting countries near and far, I also email alumni and tell them I'd like to say hello. Almost immediately, I get a response: "Yes! Please, let's meet!"

In Saudi Arabia, I met up with Emet LaBoone (Ph.D. curriculum and instruction '06), who is now a senior learning and development specialist at the Islamic Development Bank. Before heading to Kuwait, I sent out a generic email to alumni living in the country. Within 24 hours, I'd heard back from Ahmed Alkandari (industrial systems engineering '01). While he couldn't meet with me, he gave me three other contacts. From there, I was able to schedule a meeting with alumni faculty members at

Kuwait University's College of Engineering and Petroleum and to have dinner with brothers Mijbel (computer engineering '04) and Bader Al Qattan (business information technology '05) and their cousin, Hamad Alsane (accounting and information systems '07).

What starts out as a meeting of strangers winds up being a homecoming of sorts. They treat me as a cherished friend. It's humbling. These members of our family value their memories of Blacksburg. With fondness and nostalgia, they reminisce about their favorite advisor, restaurant, apartment, friendships, and experiences.

They are proud alumni and a vital part of our community. And they want to assist and remain involved in any way they can. They help to identify alumni they know and spread the word to others about updating their records through the Alumni Association. In turn, we can call on them to speak with prospective students at fairs and high schools. They can engage with current students and provide guidance and support where needed. Meeting Hokie alumni can also go a long way to reassure families about the strength of our programs and the potential for student success.

As my journey continues, I will meet more members of my extended family and utilize their generosity to further build pathways to and from Virginia Tech. Meeting families, future students, and devoted alumni throughout the world is exciting, exotic, and exhausting. The HokieBird and I wouldn't have it any other way. □

*Jacqueline L. Nottingham (family and child development '88) is the assistant director for admissions and recruitment at the Language and Culture Institute. She can be reached at [ntnghm@vt.edu](mailto:ntnghm@vt.edu).*



Jacqueline L. Nottingham '88 travels the world to recruit Hokies—from (clockwise from left) the Red Sea; to Kuwait, where she met with (from left) Bader Al Qattan '05, Hamad Alsane '07, and Mijbel Al Qattan '04; to the Kuwaiti Towers. Photos courtesy of Nottingham.



# Advancing his alma mater

by ALBERT RABOTEAU

photo by JIM STROUP

After an eventful first year at the helm of Virginia Tech's Advancement Division, Charlie Phlegar '78, '87 was pleased to see the university break a record for annual fundraising.

Rather than putting his feet up on vacation, he took his family on an eight-day, seven-night paddling trip in the Grand Canyon.

"It was probably the most intense experience of our lives," said Phlegar. "No cell reception, no bathrooms, and a harsh climate. It required a lot of teamwork."

Phlegar, who has run, cycled, or exercised five days per week for nearly 40 years, is no fan of sitting still. It's a professional philosophy as well as a personal one, and it shapes his fast-moving approach with the university's advancement team, comprised of Alumni Relations, University Development, and University Relations.

Among others, new initiatives during Phlegar's first year have included relaunching the 1872 Society to recognize current-use donors, investing in the young alumni programs, and opening a studio so that faculty experts can give better interviews to national media. Priorities for the future include increasing awareness of Virginia Tech beyond its home state, topping fiscal year 2016's fundraising total of \$100.42 million, engaging young alumni to a greater degree, and encouraging more alumni to give back to the university.

"Surveys indicate we Hokies have great affinity for Virginia Tech," Phlegar said, "but there's no way to hide the truth that we lag well behind our peers in the percentage of alumni who actually donate."

"Hokies are naturally generous, but we must do more to educate them about the importance of philanthropy to our success," Phlegar said. "We're committed to at least doubling our alumni giving percentage to reach 22 percent by the time we celebrate Virginia Tech's 150th anniversary in 2022. Anyone can give back, and it always makes an impact. It's not just a matter of how much they give, but that they give what they can, when they can, and in the way that fulfills them."

As the son of a university administrator, Phlegar grew up in Blacksburg. His father, Archie '52, '74, '78, is one of nine Hokies in Phlegar's family, as is his wife, Karen '88.

Phlegar worked at Tech early in his career—first in the athletic department, later for the Alumni Association—before taking posts of increasing responsibility at East Carolina University, the University of South Carolina, The Johns Hopkins Institutions, and Cornell University, where he was vice president for alumni affairs and development. Phlegar admitted that his strong connection to Tech helped Virginia Tech President Tim Sands recruit him from Cornell, but he was quick to add that it wasn't fond memories alone that attracted him. Sands' vision for growth and change was inspiring, he said.

"Virginia Tech is a fantastic institution, and it has an ability to be better in all areas," Phlegar said. "Tim Sands has a vision of what higher education needs to be and our role in it. I believe to my core we are doing things that are very significant in higher education, but they cannot be done without the Advancement Division. We have to share our story more broadly. We have to engage our alumni and friends. And we have to provide the financial support it will take for Tech to achieve its major strategic objectives."

Phlegar said that today's competitive environment won't reward universities for being risk-averse. Rather, "Virginia Tech must dare to be bold and innovative," Phlegar said. "With President Sands' leadership, we will meet the challenge of our Beyond Boundaries envisioning project. We will evolve as an institution, in order to advance excellence and expand access to the Virginia Tech experience."

With those ambitions in mind and with such a deep love for Virginia Tech, Charlie Phlegar is unlikely to slow down anytime soon. □

*Albert Raboteau is the director of advancement communications.*

“

Virginia Tech must dare to be **bold and innovative.**”







To read the full story and watch a video on Ashley Taylor's work in Malawi, visit [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).



COURTESY PHOTOS

**Warmth:** Doctoral student Ashley Taylor led a team that developed a warming device for infants in Malawi.

In summer 2015, doctoral student Ashley Taylor was returning to the U.S. on a transatlantic flight. She was unable to rest, still thinking about what she had seen.

While touring the neonatal ward at Domasi Rural Hospital in southern Malawi, her group learned that doctors face a big problem in keeping infants alive—keeping them warm. Lack of reliable, consistent electricity means that some babies die during cold nights in the neonatal unit.

## LEARNING BY DOING

Taylor knew that mechanical engineering principles could underpin a solution to neonatal hypothermia. In the 2015-16 academic year, she led six undergraduates to develop a warming device they later called the “baby pod.”

## DIVING DEEP

A doctoral student in the Department of Engineering Education, Taylor holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and master's degrees in mechanical engineering and public health. In her studies, Taylor's mentors have encouraged her to apply engineering knowledge to other disciplines. Her work with maternal and child health and international development began while she was an undergraduate, when she helped design Global AIR, a breathing device for newborns.

## SPANNING DISCIPLINES

Taylor has partnered with the university's Office of International Research, Education, and Development in several initiatives, including a program that works to ensure women benefit from international research projects. An engineer with a focus on public health, Taylor said she has faced her share of detractors who don't believe she fits the mold of what an engineer “should” be. “I think that Virginia Tech is really working on expanding that definition and making sure we don't put a box around the definition of what people think engineers are.”

## LIVING TO SERVE

Taylor will carry that message back to Malawi this fall. She plans to work with a local university on the recruitment and retention of women in engineering, furthering her goals to reinforce the importance of STEM education. □

Four elements of Taylor's educational path—diving deep into an academic discipline, solving big problems with an interdisciplinary team, applying knowledge in real-world settings, and living to serve others—typify the Virginia Tech experience. **We call it being a VT-shaped student.**



LOGAN WALLACE





# All natural

by JESSE TUEL  
photos by JIM STROUP

**Minimalist:** Virginia Tech's Jeff Marion embodies the Leave No Trace principles of hiking (on which he, as a founding member of the organization, quite literally wrote the book, ) by hammock-amping to minimize his footprint. Seen here in July near the Appalachian Trail's southern terminus in Georgia, where a growing number of hikers are affecting the environment, Marion met his research team as they wrapped up their second summer of measuring trail conditions.





### Itching to hike:

Jeff Marion's project isn't the only AT adventure at Virginia Tech. Three faculty members—John Jelesko and David Haak in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and CNRE's Lynn Resler—are studying the hiker's arch nemesis: poison ivy. For more on the projects, visit [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).

the impact of millions of AT hikers on the trail tread, campsites, and shelters by assessing and evaluating the sustainability of trail alignments, camping locations, and management practices. Led by Jeff Marion, an adjunct professor in the College of Natural Resources and Environment since 1989 and a research ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, the team examined 1,050 transect lines within 21 randomly selected 5-kilometer stretches along the AT's northern third in 2015 and 21 stretches in the southern third this year, with plans to measure the middle third in 2017.

On June 2, the ninth day of the summer's work, Rosen—along with CNRE graduate student and team leader Johanna Arredondo (forestry, natural resources conservation '13) and field staff member Fletcher Meadema—tackled the sixth segment, located just north of Grayson Highlands State Park and just east of Mt. Rogers, the highest point in Virginia. Southbound from the Old Orchard shelter, when a Trimble GPS device buzzed to tell Meadema (architecture '12) that he had reached one of the segment's preprogrammed sites, he stopped to begin assessing trail conditions. At the spot, pooling rain runoff had caused a mud hole, effectively widening the trail as hikers step around it,

pulverizing leaves and vegetation outside of the original path.

At each and every point, the team collected specific data—on soil loss, watershed boundaries, slope, and more. “I find this project fascinating. I love it,” Fletcher said. “But there is an element of monotony.”

Of course, a hiker will tell you that's the beauty of hiking. Best yet, the team will end up with the first comprehensive dataset of the trail's conditions, along with statistical modeling and analyses that will improve the sustainability of the AT's tread and camping locations. □

## Walk in the woods

for long enough and the games will begin.

Along the Appalachian Trail (AT) this summer, thru-hikers—those hiking the entire 2,185 miles from Georgia to Maine or vice versa—might have encountered a trio of Virginia Tech researchers armed with stakes and measuring tape and various electronic gadgetry. Being long-distance hikers themselves, the researchers couldn't help but test the gullibility of hikers who encountered one of the transect lines placed across and above the trail tread.

The project was to measure average step height, the researchers would say. Or problem-solving abilities in the woods. Or smells. Yes, that's it: a hiker smell-o-meter.

“They're losing it right now,” said Mitchell Rosen, a senior in the College of Natural Resources and Environment (CNRE), of the thru-hiker mindset. He chuckled, and then paused. “So are we, maybe.”

In truth, the transect lines were measuring the trail itself. The research project is a three-year study funded by the National Park Service to characterize and help reduce

**One step forward:** As part of a three-year federal grant, team leader and graduate student Johanna Arredondo '13 and Fletcher Meadema '12 measure Appalachian Trail conditions north of Grayson Highlands State Park.



**High point:** At an elevation approaching 5,000 feet, CNRE senior Mitchell Rosen surveys a recreational site near Mt. Rogers, the highest point in Virginia at 5,729 feet.





# THE RIGHT CHOICE.

The Retreat has everything a Virginia Tech student wants, needs and more all—RIGHT HERE. Experience Blacksburg's first cottage-style community today.

Apply and sign your lease online.  
[RetreatAtBlacksburg.com](http://RetreatAtBlacksburg.com)



## Weddings at Doe Creek Farm

540.293.4521 [www.doe creek farm.com](http://www.doe creek farm.com)

Spectacular views, fine dining, and award-winning wines await you and your guests at this full service vintage 1930s venue just 20 minutes from Blacksburg and Virginia Tech.

Now booking 2017 and 2018 weddings! Call to schedule a tour to visit this scenic 400 acre farm and apple orchard.



Jacquelin Lluy  
1986 Virginia Tech Grad



**NICELY DONE**  
Kitchens and Baths

King's Park Shopping Center  
8934 Burke Lake Road, Springfield VA 22151  
703-764-3748 [www.nicelydonekitchens.com](http://www.nicelydonekitchens.com)



Find us on Houzz,  
Facebook, & Angie's List!



# Tackling nature's most wicked problems

by MASON ADAMS

Virginia Tech's new Global Systems Science Destination Area grows from roots that extend back to the university's founding as a land-grant college, to branches that include the globe's most urgent and complicated challenges.

One of five new Destination Areas—sites of interdisciplinary collaboration where experts are positioned to address the full complexities of pressing problems worldwide—Global Systems Science targets the interface between society and the environment.

"The heart of the Global Systems Science Destination Area is the intimate and complex relationship that we have with the environment," said William Hopkins, director of the Global Change Center at Virginia Tech and professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation. "For example, as the need to provide food, energy, and water to a growing human population continues to escalate, how do we prevent, halt, or reverse undesirable side effects like pollution and climate change?"

Global Systems Science targets what are known as "wicked problems," challenges considered difficult, if not impossible, to solve because of their complexity, size, economic effects, or continuously changing nature.

"They cannot be solved with our traditional research and training models," Hopkins said. "They require new science and technologies, advanced computational methods, and highly transdisciplining approaches, to include an integrated combination of collaborating scientists, engineers, and social scientists, as well as diverse non-academic stakeholders."

Fortunately, the same complexity that makes wicked problems so tough to tackle plays to Virginia Tech's strengths. Students, faculty, and staff from a variety of backgrounds and academic pursuits collaborate daily to tackle challenges in the spirit of Virginia Tech's land-grant mission and its motto of *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve).

Take, for instance, the groundbreaking work by the Flint Water Study research team led by Marc Edwards, the Charles Lunsford

Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, which exposed a public health crisis in the industrial Michigan city.

From the forest to the faucet, securing clean water is crucial to the future of the global population, and Virginia Tech is poised to play a key role in that endeavor.

"The demand and need for water are definitely expanding rapidly, but it's a finite resource," said Stephen Schoenholtz (seen at left), director of the Virginia Water Resources Research Center and professor in the Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation. "Fresh water is essential in every person's life every day. It's essential for energy and food, and there are no replacements. It's a major issue that affects everything."

Amy Pruden, the Thomas Rice Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and a member of the Flint Water Study team, has conducted important water-related research into the growing problem of antibiotic resistance. Pathogenic bacteria have evolved so that traditional antibiotics no longer control them. One study found that, by 2050, infections resistant to drugs—infections that now kill about 700,000 people a year—will grow to kill 10 million people annually, more than the current number killed by cancer.

"Antibiotic resistance is a major public health threat," Pruden said. "It's become apparent that we need an interdisciplinary approach to understand this growing resistance and to develop strategies to stop it. It's such an urgent problem; we need our antibiotics to keep working. When you have an urgent, interdisciplinary problem, you need people of different backgrounds to come together and work to find solutions."

Global Systems Science, along with the four other Destination Areas—Adaptive Brain and Behavior, Intelligent Infrastructure for Human-centered Communities, Data Analytics and Decision Sciences, and Integrated Security—aim to bring Hokies together in interdisciplinary collaborations to tackle these and other broad, societal-scale problems facing the world. □

Professor Stephen Schoenholtz (center) directs the Virginia Water Resources Research Center.

JIM STROUP

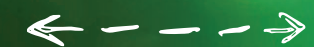


# a long way home

*incredible tales  
of lost-and-found  
class rings*

photos by JIM STROUP  
illustrations by ROBIN DOWDY

In all the excitement surrounding the Virginia Tech class ring tradition, there is a sad, seldom-spoken truth: Your ring may run away from home.



Some rings come back, though, bearing stories from the road.





# sounds fishy

by CHARLIE MASENCUP '92

It is interesting that when we are very young, or very old, that half-years count when telling one's age. So it was with my 102-and-a-half-year-old grandfather, T.J. Horne (agriculture '34), who died in April 2015. His funeral, far from a sad affair, was a celebration of his life. He had plenty of closure at his age, telling each of us for the past several years that it might be his last time seeing us. Inevitably, it would be true. The sad part is that you don't know what you don't know. Hours could be passed easily in silence. Utterly sharp until the very end but not talkative by nature, T.J. rarely offered conversation.

Because I was born two generations removed from the Greatest Generation, the gap between us was significant. I wondered what he must have thought of youth and the state of our country today, given what he was born into in 1912: a rural Southwest Virginia farming family with no plumbing, no car, and no TV, in a country still showing wounds from the Civil War and about to enter World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II, in which he would serve.

There are many fascinating stories begging to be told about my grandfather's life that will never be heard, save for this story about a ring. Not one ring, but three generations of Virginia Tech class rings.

Once, in a conversation around the kitchen table while we admired what is left of my grandfather's well-worn Virginia Polytechnic Institute (today's Virginia Tech) Class of 1934 ring, he revealed that he had lost the ring for several years. During his tenure from 1949 to 1969 as a professor and later associate dean at the College of Agriculture, T.J. raised his family on Draper Road, where his house

was bordered by a large, open field that he cultivated with orchards and gardens, as was his passion. While gardening, T.J. somehow lost his ring. A few years later, he was again digging in his garden and heard a metallic "tink" as the shovel struck something: He had found his ring, and he ran inside to enthusiastically share the news with his family.

My father, Wallace Masencup (business administration '64), met my mother, Margaret Horne, T.J.'s daughter, on a blind date. After being married in the Blacksburg United Methodist Church, my parents moved to Amherst, Virginia, and started a family.

It came as a surprise to no one that I would attend Virginia Tech, even if some may have been surprised that I actually graduated from the Pamplin College of Business in 1992. As various jobs took me to different locales, I landed for a while in Worcester, Massachusetts. I lived in a little lake house, one that required extensive renovations. I did much of the work myself and wouldn't wear my ring while working. Over a period of several months, multiple work crews also helped out. Before the renovations were complete, I took a job in South Carolina. And while I didn't necessarily suspect foul play—more blaming my own absent-mindedness—I found myself dispossessed of my ring.

Four years later, my home phone in Charleston, South Carolina, rang. Verifying my identity, a Worcester police detective asked if I was missing a class ring—one that had been found on a "crackhead," he said, and the police had suspected that the ring didn't belong to him. A few days later, I received a small, square, brown box, one that I shook to hear the sound of a heavy

"clink" from inside. I was grateful to be reunited with my missing ring, which I promptly washed thoroughly.

I saved the best, the most incredulous story for last.

Before moving to Amherst, my father was horsing around in the New River one summer day when he lost his Class of 1964 ring. He knew it right away, but he had no luck in recovering it. As was the custom, his name and hometown, "Wallace Edwin Masencup III, Amherst, VA," were engraved inside the ring.

You may know that the New River is one of the few rivers that flows north. Just like me, my dad received his ring some years later in the mail—from a West Virginia address. At the time, all you needed was the name and town, and a piece of mail could be delivered. A note accompanying the ring explained the unbelievable story. While fishing in the New River near his West Virginia home, a man had caught a large fish (some variety of bass, I think). While cleaning it, his knife slit down the belly of the fish and yielded that same metallic "tink" sound. Out came my father's ring.

I'm guessing that he washed it like I did. The ring's formerly sharp features now have the same well-worn blur that my grandfather's ring exhibits, but I'm unsure how much of the polishing occurred while the ring tumbled—or swam—100 or so miles downstream.

To her credit, my sister, Kristi Masencup (English '96), maintains a tight hold on her ring.

*Charlie Masencup (management '92) lives in Charleston, South Carolina.*







# up for sale

by LAURA WEDIN '84

My colleague Shirley Fleet sent me an email from someone who had found a stolen 1968 class ring on propertyroom.com, an auction site that sells property that police confiscate. I found a picture of the ring on the site and could see a portion of a last name, "...attingly," and a portion of the hometown, "...nd, Va." I checked our alumni database and found Paul Mattingly (biological sciences '68). I emailed and called him, leaving a message. I then emailed the website, and a customer service representative responded and asked to have Paul contact them.

Meanwhile, I hadn't heard back from Paul. I had nearly given up hope and saw that the ring was going to be sold. With an hour and 15 minutes left in the auction, Paul called. His hometown had been Richmond. The auction representative soon agreed that the ring was probably Paul's, and the item was pulled from the auction. He had lost the ring about 18 months earlier and had it replaced with a new one. He was thrilled to know he was going to get the original back.

*Laura Wedin (M.F.A. theatre arts '84) is the Alumni Association's director of alumni/student programs.*

## Gold rush

About 2,200 members of the Class of 2015 purchased rings, while 6,166 bachelor's degrees were conferred at the May 2015 commencement, meaning that about 36 percent of graduates bought rings.



## Replacing your ring

Dating back to the Class of 1923, most rings can be replaced in their original design. If you need to purchase, replace, or have your class ring repaired or resized, please send the following, required information to **Shirley Fleet** at [fleets@vt.edu](mailto:fleets@vt.edu), or fax to 540-231-3039: Full name, birthdate, mailing address, class ring year, major, email address, daytime phone number, and advisor name and email address (for graduate students only).

## Calling all brochures

View past class rings and ordering brochures at [alumni.vt.edu/classrings/pastrings.html](http://alumni.vt.edu/classrings/pastrings.html). The Alumni Association is looking for more historic ring brochures and order forms—especially those from the '50s, '60s, '70s, and '80s. If you have an old brochure or form, contact **Laura Wedin** at [lwedin@vt.edu](mailto:lwedin@vt.edu) or 540-231-6285.



# a horticulturist, naturally

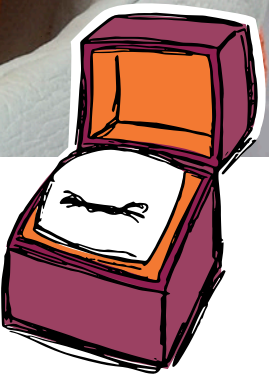
by RICHARD W. FRYE

In the late '80s, I purchased a plant from a dealer in North Carolina. When I removed the plant from its plastic pot, a ring fell out of the dirt at the bottom of the plant. I washed the ring off and saw that it was from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. The name engraved inside was Charles Lawrence Legg Jr., Class of 1982. I called the school, but the lady I spoke to courteously but firmly said that the records of past students could not be given out and she could not help me locate Charles. I tossed

the ring into a jewelry box and went back to work.

I have been divorced and remarried and have moved four times. In 2005, I was cleaning out some old junk and came across the ring. I had not seen it in years. Since I was forced into learning about computers to continue my real estate business, I decided to see what information the computer would give. I found that the university home page had a lost-and-found link.

*Richard W. Frye, a resident of Pinehurst, North Carolina, spoke with the Alumni Association's Shirley Fleet, who located and called Charles Lawrence Legg Jr. (horticulture '82). After much laughter, Legg asked if his ring had been found in North Carolina. The summer after he graduated from Tech, while working in landscaping, Legg had lost the ring that his grandmother had purchased for him. This tale is excerpted from a 2005 email received by the Alumni Association.*







## surf's up

by LARRY WILLIAMS '70

In July 1973, as a struggling young couple who had not been able to take a real honeymoon, my wife and I drove to Cape Cod for a week of vacation. While we were there, we visited Marconi Beach to swim and picnic. After discovering that I wasn't hardy enough to swim very long in the 54-degree water, we decided to take a walk along the beach. Since the shoreline was rocky, I began picking up stones and skipping them in the surf. I was wearing my class ring (like a dummy), oblivious to the fact that the cool water had shrunk my fingers. You get the picture. Yes, the next experience was the sensation of a weight, other than the stone, leaving my

hand and heading into the surf. In a panic, I dove toward where the ring plopped into the water, groping and trying in vain to see through the pounding surf, hoping to catch a glimpse of the ring. After 10 minutes of bone-numbing chill as I thrashed in the water, I gave up. The ring was gone, and all I could do was hope to replace it one day.

I was crushed because, as all Virginia Tech graduates know, the rings are a symbol of the sweat equity we invested in our degrees, as well as a visible, lasting reminder of our experiences at Tech. I languished without the ring for three years before contacting

the ring manufacturer and having a new ring made. The new ring matched the original order, except it was a half-size smaller to prevent a recurrence of the ring-tossing event. I wore the replacement ring proudly, retelling the story of my stupid rock-and-ring tossing many times, never once thinking I'd see my original ring again.

In early September 2005, Shirley Fleet at the Alumni Association wrote to say that someone had emailed the association claiming to have found my 1970 ring. I was so amazed that I read the letter several

times to make sure I hadn't misunderstood it. I phoned Shirley the next day, and she gave me an email address for Les Hegyi, a Canadian.

The next day on the phone with Les, I learned that he had found my ring in the surf on that Cape Cod beach the same summer I had lost it, in 1973—when he was three years old. He was on vacation with his parents, who went to Cape Cod each summer because it was near their home outside Montreal. Les had seen something sparkly in the pebbly surf as he walked along the shore with his parents. He picked up my ring and took it home, where he played with it as a young boy. As he grew up, he forgot about it—until a couple of years ago when he was looking in a shoebox of childhood things that his parents had kept. Inside the ring, he saw my name and hometown, and he contacted the university. He was unable to find anyone to help him locate the owner, so he put the ring away. This summer [in the mid-2000s], he came across the ring again and tried to contact Tech again. On the website, he found several articles about the return of lost rings, and so he contacted the Alumni Association. His persistence finally put him in touch with Shirley.

After we talked, Les sent the ring to me. Thanks to his unselfishness, honesty, and persistence, I now have my 1970 class ring to wear. He wanted nothing in return, other than the satisfaction of seeing the ring back in the possession of its rightful owner. I can't thank Les enough for what he did to return my ring, but I certainly can share the story with other Tech graduates who may have misplaced or lost their class ring and think there is no way they'll ever see it again. I'm proof that neither international boundaries nor the span of more than 30 years are enough to keep a Tech ring from finding its way back to its owner.

*Larry Williams (statistics '70) wrote this account of his lost-and-found class ring in 2006.*



## “where have you been?”

The late Paul Brantley Jr. (agricultural engineering '51) was so proud of his class ring that he wore it even before the Ring Dance. After graduation, he wore the garnet ring to Germany, where he was stationed until 1954. When Brantley returned and went into farming in Ivor, Virginia, he began wearing the ring only on special occasions.

In 1957, the ring disappeared. He and Frances, his wife, searched everywhere, including a vacation spot on the James River. No luck.

In 1997, 40 years later, Brantley received a surprising phone call. Michelle Mutter, of Deep Creek, Virginia, had found the ring while tilling her garden. Deep Creek is about 40 miles away and not connected to Ivor by any waterway. Brantley's name and hometown of Ivor were still barely visible on the inside.

How his class ring ended up in a town where Brantley had never set foot will probably remain a mystery. Brantley didn't wear the ring much after recovering it because it fit only on his pinkie.

During the years the ring was missing, Brantley told himself, “It's just a material thing. I graduated, so it doesn't make any difference. I have the diploma to prove it.” But Brantley was glad to have the ring back. In the late '90s, he said, “I keep it on top of my chest of drawers where I can see it once in a while and ask, ‘Where have you been?’”

*This story is excerpted from the spring 1998 edition of Virginia Tech Magazine.*





# far-flung

by CHARLES "CHUCK" COX '73

A couple of years after graduation, I was at a picnic at the Peaks of Otter picnic area. Before lunch, several of us began throwing a frisbee around. I decided to try a long throw and flung the disk as hard as I could. The disk flew out of my hands, along with my class ring. The disk went several hundred feet. When I felt the ring leave my finger, I listened intently to hear any sound of it hitting a tree, limb, or leaves that covered the ground. Nothing! I immediately informed my friends of my plight, and we scoured the area for over an hour. No luck.

I felt horrible, but we continued the picnic and eventually returned home to Lynchburg. I told my dad about it the next day. After all, he had paid for the ring. He said, "Let's take a metal detector back to the picnic area and see if we can find it." The next day, my dad and I returned to the picnic area and began searching for the ring. After no luck for about an hour, we noticed a car approach. It was a park ranger; and while he sympathized with my loss, he informed us that metal detectors were not allowed on park property. We packed up our gear and headed home. Over the years, my family and I would occasionally return to the picnic site for an outing. Each time, I would look for the ring, but never with any luck.

About 25 years later, the telephone rang at home. I picked it up and a woman's voice on the other end asked if I was Charles Cox. I said yes. She said, "Did you go to Virginia Tech?" I was beginning to think she was a telemarketer, but decided to answer, "Yes." She asked if I had lost my Tech ring. I said, "Yes, almost 25 years ago." She asked if I could describe it. I identified the ring by the stone color and the college I had graduated in. Sure enough, she had found it!

While she and her husband were walking a trail near the picnic area after a very hard rain, she noticed a shiny spot on the ground. After some digging, the entire ring was extracted completely intact, albeit a little dirty and slightly dulled. She took the ring home, cleaned it up, and was able to read my name and city inscribed inside. I met this woman the next day and gave her a small reward, which she only reluctantly accepted, and after nearly 25 years, I had my Tech ring back.

This was an amazing story, as I had given up hope of ever seeing my ring again! I'll always be appreciative of that woman's fortune in finding my ring and her honesty in returning it. □

Charles "Chuck" Cox (economics, science '73) lives in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Share your stories

... of lost-and-found class rings by using the hashtag #foundVTrings on Twitter and Instagram. And to find more epic tales of lost-and-found rings, visit [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu).

#foundVTrings



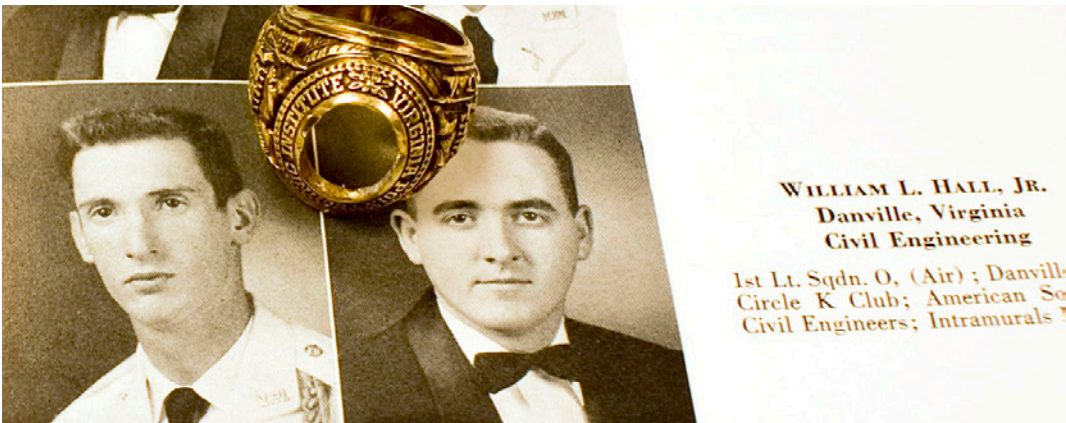
## The Ring Dance

The Virginia Tech Ring Dance tradition (above and at left) symbolizing a Hokie's transition from junior to senior started in 1934. Upon entering the dance, each couple receives a pair of ribbons in the class colors. The young woman wears her date's ring on her wrist with the darker ribbon, and the young man wears his date's ring on his wrist with the lighter ribbon. For the ring exchange, cadets walk into the ballroom and stand in the shape of the class numerals. As couples exchange rings, "Moonlight and VPI," written specifically for the Ring Dance by composer Fred Waring and lyricist Charles Gaynor, is played. As the clock strikes midnight, the evening ends with an elaborate fireworks display on the Drillfield and the playing of Silvertaps.



## Hokie Gold Legacy Program

In the Hokie Gold Legacy Program (at right and below), alumni donate their class rings so that the gold can be melted and used in new rings. This summer, student members of the Class of 2018 Ring Design Committee partnered with Jim Flynn '66 and other alumni and friends—William Beach '43, Norma Vollmer Beach, David Sandifer Scott '60, Louis Rittweger '67, Richard Leroy Martin, '51, W.L. Hall '57, Gordan B. Asher Jr. '62, and Jeanine Matte '71—to melt down the Hokie Gold. Photos courtesy of Lee Ann Ellis.





# We know I.T.



## ONLINE MASTER OF I.T.

*"Not only were the instructors knowledgeable, but the students came from all over with experiences that were very helpful during class discussions."*

*—Flex Vaughn, 2013 Graduate, Manager Information Security and Compliance, Virginia Tech*

Marketing manager, U.S. naval officer, network engineer, technical writer, business analyst, graphic designer, volunteer, web applications specialist, third-grade teacher. While their backgrounds may be different, students in the online master of information technology program at Virginia Tech are pursuing a common passion, technology.

Back in the late 1990s, the VT-MIT program was created at the direction of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to serve the future needs of the Commonwealth of Virginia, with the specific goal of bringing non-IT professionals into the IT arena. Seventeen years later, not only is the program teaching working professionals in the commonwealth to take on tomorrow's IT challenges, it's also educating out-of-state students, who make up 60 percent of the student body.

With the unique partnership between the College of Engineering and the Pamplin College of Business, students are able to customize a plan of study to include module completion in such areas as big data, software development, decision support systems, and healthcare IT. For working professionals, the flexible format and interdisciplinary design allow students to reasonably manage professional, personal, and academic priorities. U.S. News & World Report agrees, ranking the VT-MIT program #2 in "Best Online Graduate Information Technology Programs" for the past three years.

Interested in learning more?  
Check out our website: [vtmit.vt.edu](http://vtmit.vt.edu).



# fine fall favorites



official bookstores of virginia tech // INTRODUCING OUR PRESTIGIOUS FALL COLLECTION



under armour  
HYBRID JACKET



under armour  
ACCELERATE VEST



under armour  
WOMEN'S HOODED JACKET



under armour  
WOMEN'S PUFFER VEST

SHOP TODAY  
[bookstore.vt.edu](http://bookstore.vt.edu)



brooks brothers  
V-NECK WOOL SWEATER &  
WOOL 1/4 ZIP SWEATER



columbia  
VT FLASH FORWARD JACKET



cutter + buck  
VT SWEATER VEST

university bookstore  
540.231.5991 • on campus by newman library

volume two bookstore  
540.231.9674 • off campus in university mall

hokie centric  
540.231.6114 • off campus in north end center

find us online  
at [bookstore.vt.edu](http://bookstore.vt.edu)



under armour  
WOMEN'S SUMMIT PARKA

under armour  
ELEMENTAL PARKA





# 2017 alumni travel tours

**Southern Culture and Civil War** | June 3- 12  
This unique Mississippi River cruise aboard the grand American Queen brings Southern culture and the American Civil War to life. Take in historic sites from Memphis to New Orleans, visiting Shiloh National Military Park, Greenville, Vicksburg, Natchez, St. Francisville, Baton Rouge, and Nottoway. The trip is hosted by James I. “Bud” Robertson, Jr., Virginia Tech Alumni Distinguished Professor Emeritus.

For more than 40 years, the Virginia Tech Alumni Association has offered quality group travel to alumni and their families and friends. Embark on the journey of a lifetime with other Hokies, and enjoy adventures filled with beauty, intellectual stimulation, and unforgettable moments!

- Baja & the Riviera | Jan. 7-17
- Mystique of the Maya | Jan. 11-22
- Pure Polynesia | Feb. 4-16
- Antarctica | Feb. 9-22
- Grand Cuban Voyage | March 13-27
- Outrageous Outback | April 7-23
- Palms in Paradise | April 24-May 10
- Dutch Waterways | April 24-May 2

- Ancient Traditions of the Inland Sea of Japan | April 30-May 10
- Virginia Tech Grad Trip – Essential Europe | May 21-June 7
- Vineyards and Vignettes | May 23-June
- European Collage | May 27-June 4
- Southern Culture & Civil War | June 3-12
- Riches of the Emerald Isle | June 27-July 8
- The Majestic Great Lakes | July 8-17
- Cruise the Rhine River | July 10-18

- Awe-Inspiring Alaska | July 14-21
- Baltic & Scandinavian Treasures | Aug. 22-Sept. 2
- Great Pacific Northwest | Sept. 17-25
- Barcelona Immersion | Sept. 15-23
- Island Life Ancient Greece | Sept. 18-26
- Great Trains & Grand Canyons | Oct. 1-7
- Medieval Masterpiece | Nov. 5-14
- South African Explorer | Dec. 5-21

*\*Dates, prices, and itineraries are subject to change.*



**Great Trains and Grand Canyons** | Oct. 1-7  
Experience the majesty of the Grand Canyon and other stunning sights across Arizona on this six-day, once-in-a-lifetime journey. Six million years in the making, the Grand Canyon's dynamic colors and textures inspire reflection on nature's power and beauty.

 [www.alumni.vt.edu/travel](http://www.alumni.vt.edu/travel)



# The catalyst

by SOOKHAN HO  
photos by JAY WATSON

alumnus profile



Brian Slingerland '00 (above), with research scientist Scott Dylla (in photo at right), founded Stemcentrx, which has five cancer drugs now in human clinical trials.

**B**rian Slingerland (finance '00) co-founded Stemcentrx, a biotechnology company in San Francisco developing new types of cancer treatments.

With five cancer drugs in human clinical trials, Stemcentrx was acquired in June by AbbVie Inc. in a deal valued up to \$10.2 billion, one of the biggest biotechnology deals in history.

After launching his career in investment banking, Slingerland resigned from Goldman Sachs as a managing director in 2008 to co-found two companies: tech-focused investment bank Qatalyst Partners; and Stemcentrx, with research scientist Scott Dylla.

Slingerland was eager to “be an entrepreneur rather than just service entrepreneurs,” he said. And the cancer-related deaths of three relatives, including a beloved aunt, brought new clarity to his focus. “After three of these in succession, frankly I hated cancer. And nobody had any good answers for how we were going to cure it.”

That is, he said, until he met Dylla and learned about the stem-cell approach that seeks to identify and kill “the root cells that initiate cancer and perpetuate it.”



Speaking at the Pamplin College of Business commencement in May 2016, Slingerland offered graduates three points to keep in mind:

“You have what it takes to be the catalyst to start innovative businesses that change the world. The best ventures have a sound balance of technical and business skill. And most ventures will not get off the ground without a business mind like yours.”

“Make your avocation your vocation. I encourage you to align your passion and personal mission with your job. And if you do, you’ll have a sustainable career that you’ll love. It’ll be very tempting over the years to maintain the status quo and choose the less risky path. But I cannot emphasize to you enough how amazing it is to work every day on something that inspires you, instead of just working for a paycheck.”

“Choose a life partner, and surround yourself with friends who will give you honest advice and encourage you to pursue your dreams and reach your potential. While I was pitching to investors the idea of starting Stemcentrx and recruiting our first employees, behind the scenes, it was my wife, Emily, and my parents and my close friends who encouraged me and gave me the confidence to start Stemcentrx.”

## First-person

***When did you first think about being an entrepreneur?***

“When I operated my own lawnmowing business starting at age 10 and captured strong market share in my neighborhood in Syracuse, New York. It was very exciting.”

***Why did you want to be one?***

“I admired people who have built, from the groundup, great companies, cultures, and products—especially ones that change the world for the better.”

***What was it about the stem cell approach to cancer that had you persisting for six years to start Stemcentrx?***

“This was a new approach to treating cancer that had massive potential to be revolutionary and needed to have a chance to be tested in cancer patients.” □

*Sookhan Ho is the Pamplin College of Business communications director. Portions of this article are excerpted from the college magazine’s story on Slingerland.*

## Booming biotech:

Read more about Slingerland in the cover story for Virginia Tech Business, the magazine of the Pamplin College of Business, at [magazine.pamplin.vt.edu](http://magazine.pamplin.vt.edu).





# The Mother Teresa of Puerto Plata

by SHERRIE WHALEY

For one Virginia Tech alumna, a student organization she co-founded in 2006 has turned into her life's work and resulted in her being compared to Mother Teresa.

Caitlin McHale (interdisciplinary studies: leadership and social change '06), and sophomore Kristin Preve (English '07) established a student organization called Project Esperanza after a 2005 volunteer trip to the Dominican Republic.

While there, they visited an orphanage and nearby "bateys," areas where the poorest of the poor (primarily Haitians who came to the Dominican Republic to work on sugar cane plantations) lived under metal roofs, on dirt floors, and without regular access to electricity or water. After returning to Blacksburg, they set about raising awareness and funds for both.

After graduation, McHale left her comfortable hometown of Winchester, Virginia, to move outside Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic. She saw that Haitian immigrant youths were treated as second-class citizens, and many were living on the street, with no access to education.

Despite what seemed to be insurmountable odds, McHale was determined to provide the vulnerable Haitian children and youth with food, shelter, and an education.



Ten years later, Project Esperanza is a registered nonprofit organization that has helped Haitian youths find a better life in the Dominican Republic. Its two grassroots schools educate nearly 200 students annually (ages 5 to 18), some who have no family, some who live in the bateys, and others who live in a group home operated by Project Esperanza. Although education is its largest program, social aid and community development programs are also important areas for the organization.

McHale serves as director, and she and a board of directors lead the organization with additional support from faculty advisor Reed Kennedy from the Pamplin College of Business. Day-to-day programs and summer camps are carried out by approximately two dozen employees and a host of volunteers.

In 2016, Project Esperanza completed two crowdsourcing campaigns, revitalized its connections with the Virginia Tech community (including uniting with the student organization Hokies for Haiti), and secured a loan to purchase a 4,367-square-foot building for a permanent school. In addition, the education program is on track to become the first in the country to be accredited with a bilingual Haitian Creole-Spanish curriculum.

McHale (now Floreal) spends most of her time in the Dominican Republic, where she lives with her husband and two children. She

Caitlin McHale Floreal '06 (left) directs Project Esperanza, helping Haitian immigrant youths in the Dominican Republic.



returned to Blacksburg in 2012 to deliver a TEDx talk, in which she said, "It was a fearless love that led me to do this without looking back." She hopes more graduates will apply their world-class U.S. educations in places where people need it most.

"Caitlin just has a heart of gold. She works to provide housing and education for these children," said Kennedy, director of international programs in Pamplin. "She is the Mother Teresa of Puerto Plata."

Floreal has made a real difference in the lives of the poor and disadvantaged, helping them while living among them. Street census results show fewer children and adolescents are working on the street shining shoes or selling eggs than in 2006, and fewer of them are Haitian. The number of Haitian children enrolled in school rose from zero in 2006 to 42 percent in 2015.

The word "esperanza" means hope—and Project Esperanza has provided hope and more to the Haitian children and youth in the Dominican Republic. □

*Sherrie Whaley was a communications specialist with University Relations.*

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 (0102), 901 Prices Fork Rd., Blacksburg, VA 24061; email the news to [fleets@vt.edu](mailto:fleets@vt.edu); or submit the news online at [vtmag.vt.edu/submit-classnote.php](http://vtmag.vt.edu/submit-classnote.php), where photos may also be uploaded for consideration.

Alumni mailing addresses may be viewed online at [www.alumni.vt.edu/directory](http://www.alumni.vt.edu/directory) by logging in with your Virginia Tech PID and password. For assistance, call 540-231-6285.

- career accomplishments
- weddings
- births and adoptions
- deceased

- '35

Mary Robeson Pendleton (BIOL), Blacksburg, Va., 6/23/16.
- '40

James R. Cosby (PHYS), Myrtle Beach S.C., 5/12/16.
- '41

William C. Bennett (EE), Bristol, Tenn., 6/5/16.  
Robert H. Schenker (CHE), Burlington, N.C., 12/31/15.
- '43

Bernard "Buck" C. Cook (ASE), Roanoke, Va., 6/19/16.  
Clifton C. Garvin Jr. (CHE, CHE '47), Easton, Md., 4/17/16.
- '44

R.H. "Hall" Ballard (IE), Suffolk, Va., 5/7/16.  
Walter E. Haynes (EE '47), New Smyrna Beach, Fla., 12/28/15.  
Albert F. Lane Jr. (CHE), Calabash, N.C., 9/12/15.  
Mary H. Hawks Steinhardt (GHEC), Roanoke, Va., 6/24/16.  
Hugh D. Via Jr. (PHYS), Virginia Beach, Va., 3/2/16.
- '45

Frances "Arlene" Gray Hudgins (BIOL), Christiansburg, Va., 5/16/16.
- '46

William S. Budington (EE), Colorado Springs, Colo., 4/19/16.  
Stephen H. Ferguson Jr. (ARE), Farmville, Va., 5/15/16.  
V.H. Marshall (BIOL), Charlottesville, Va., 5/21/16.  
William M. Noyes (CE), Washington, N.C., 2/19/16.  
Charles F. Shuler (AGED '47), Elkton, Va., 5/28/16.  
Richard D. Tyree (GSC), Lynchburg, Va., 5/1/16.
- '48

James D. Ashley (HORT), Hampton, Va., 6/9/16.  
Charles B. Moore (BAD), Bristol, Tenn., 6/6/16.  
Sinclair C. Preston (BAD), Kingsport, Tenn., 3/21/16.  
Giles B. Trimble (CE), Staunton, Va., 6/30/16.
- '49

Charles P. Brewer Jr. (ASE), Wilder, Ky., 4/26/16.  
Charles S. Carlton (EDBS '58, AGED '58), Bluefield, Va., 4/4/16.  
Charles W. Moss (ME), Louisville, Ky., 6/4/16.  
Paul H. O'Dell (CE), Raleigh, N.C., 5/18/16.
- '50

Herbert E. Agnor Jr. (IE), Willoughby, Ohio, 3/20/16.  
J. Mark Funderburg (AGE), Lake Havasu City, Ariz., 5/29/16.  
Horace "Bill" George Jr. (ME), West Point, Va., 5/3/16.  
Kelvin E. Handy (AGRN), Roanoke, Va., 7/4/16.  
Richard H. Lemmon (ME), Corona del Mar, Calif., 1/4/16.
- '51

William E. Atkinson (ANSC), Farmville, Va., 3/25/16.  
Edward G. Frye III (BC), Alpharetta, Ga., 6/25/16.  
Edwin "Argyle" Haley (BAD), Doswell, Va., 6/12/16.  
Henry "Hank" G. Parker Jr. (IE), Hampton, Va., 6/9/16.  
Philip Pollak Jr. (ME), Westport, Conn., 6/12/16.  
J. McDougal Rice (SOC), Manassas, Va., 6/4/16.  
William L. Stevens (EE), Arroyo Seco, N.M., 5/10/16.  
Samuel W. Weaver III (BAD '52), Knoxville, Tenn., 6/21/16.  
Richard L. White (IAED), Springfield, Va., 4/23/16.
- '52

RC. Edward Carrigan (IE '57), Ocala, Fla., 3/26/16.  
Curtis "Buck" A. Clayton (BAD), Pawleys Island, S.C., 4/4/16.  
Donald S. Haga (ME), Roanoke, Va., 6/12/16.  
Bobby G. Hudson (CE, CE '58), Roanoke, Va., 4/5/16.  
Leon M. Kline (DASC), Manassas, Va., 6/11/16.  
Najah C. Taylor Jr. (GAG), Tappahannock, Va., 6/18/16.  
Richard J. Vanderbilt (ME), Bloomington, Ind., 5/30/16.



**'53** 🧠 **W. Earl Calohan Jr.** (GAG '54), Rustburg, Va., 6/10/16.  
**John M. Fulmer** (BAD), Upper Marlboro, Md., 5/8/16.  
**John P. Gordon** (EE '59, EE '59), Chesterfield, Va., 6/24/16.  
**Joyce Connelly Kirks** (RS), Petersburg, Va., 6/24/16.  
**Ralph "Mc" E. McDonald** (EE), Fairfax, Va., 6/11/16.  
**Lloyd "Sonny" R. Sorenson Jr.** (BAD '58), Newport News, Va., 6/5/16.

**'54** 🧠 **Godfrey R. Baldwin** (IAED), Virginia Beach, Va., 7/2/16.  
**Hugh E. Brown Jr.** (BED, BAD), Roanoke, Va., 6/20/16.  
**Walter H. Gordon Jr.** (EE), Ashboro, N.C., 6/2/16.  
**Hugh H. Ingram Jr.** (BAD), Powhatan, Va., 6/22/16.  
**Robbie F. Owen** (GAG), Wakefield, Va., 6/15/16.  
**John J. Payette Jr.** (ANSC), Culpeper, Va., 6/14/16.  
**George A. Pearson** (GAG), Richmond, Va., 5/7/16.

**'55** 🧠 **James W. Gill** (BIOC, BION '57), Staunton, Va., 4/23/16.  
**R. Burke Johnson** (BAD '56), West Point, Va., 6/14/16.  
**Betty S. Mintz** (EDBS), Spartanburg, S.C., 6/13/16.  
**F. Donald Taylor** (AGED), Clear Brook, Va., 5/5/16.

**'56** 🧠 **Gordon "Sonny" D. Bowman II** (HORT), Mount Jackson, Va., 5/28/16.  
**R.L. "Ray" Cilimberg** (METE), Montgomery Village, Md., 9/9/15.  
**W. Paul Higgins Jr.** (IE), Huntington, W.Va., 4/16/16.  
**Hunter P. Mabry** (SOC), Roanoke, Va., 7/9/16.  
**Ann Wiltsee Phillips** (GHEC), Vienna, Va., 12/31/15.  
**Allen H. Rakes** (DASC, DASC '57), Raleigh, N.C., 5/30/16.

**'57** 🧠 **Harry G. Saufley** (AGED), Hagerstown, Md., 3/20/16.  
**Robert W. Walls** (METE '61), Gulf Shores, Ala., 5/26/16.  
**Leroy F. White Jr.** (ME '58), Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., 5/16/16.

**'58** 🧠 **Charles W. Hall** (ACCT), Harrisonburg, Va., 5/30/16.  
**James L. Hamner Jr.** (ANSC), Amelia Court House, Va., 4/13/16.  
**James L. McGlothlin** (ACCT), Cedar Bluff, Va., 3/31/16.  
**Alan D. Rex** (BIOL '60, BIOL '60), Colorado Springs, Colo., 4/10/16.  
**Robert L. Stallard** (MATH), Carlisle, Ky., 6/23/16.  
**Claud C. Wright** (ME), Birmingham, Ala., 6/15/16.

**John Moody** (business administration '58), a Virginia Tech athletics fundraiser for more than 40 years, died Aug. 8 at the age of 83. A former football player and U.S. Army veteran, Moody retired in 2013 from his role with the Virginia Tech Athletic Fund, also known as the Hokie Club. He was inducted into the Richmond Hokie Club Hall of Fame and the Virginia Tech Sports Hall of Fame. The John Moody Scholarship Fund was endowed in his honor, and the John S. Moody Award recognizes the person who signs up the most Hokie Club members annually.

**'59** 🧠 **Harry T. Aycock III** (EE), Largo, Fla., 12/19/15.  
**Angelo J. Garcia** (CE), DeBary, Fla., 6/10/16.  
**Ronald S. Johnson** (BAD '58), Indian Wells, Calif., 3/12/16.  
**Larry G. Pendleton Jr.** (BAD '60), Wilmington, N.C., 3/15/16.  
**Glenn "Robbie" Robinson** (EE), Pearisburg, Va., 3/10/16.  
**John H. Stratton** (ME), Fairfax, Va., 3/17/16.  
**Kenneth E. Wright** (CE), Durham, N.C., 7/1/16.

**'60** 🧠 **William L. Baker** (EE), Charleston, W.Va., 6/13/16.  
**F. Stuart "Tool" King** (BC '62), Danville, Va., 3/24/16.  
**William McAinsh III** (BAD), Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 5/24/16.  
**James "Tim" Peeler** (STAT '64, CHE '64), Oakton, Va., 2/4/16.

**'61** 🧠 **Larry R. Beamer** (IE), Dublin, Va., 5/7/16.  
**George R. Costis** (IE), Norfolk, Va., 3/20/16.  
**William P. Hodges Jr.** (ME), Newport News, Va., 5/31/16.  
**Michael R. Mariniak** (ME), Yorktown, Va., 4/4/16.  
**Nathan E. Novack** (EE), Wallops Island, Va., 5/18/16.  
**Thomas C. West** (ASE), Haymarket, Va., 5/31/16.

**'62** 🍷 **William D. Weaver Jr.** (POUL, POUL '66), Gloucester, Va., received the 2016 Poultry Science Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Penn State Department of Animal Science.

🧠 **Franklin "Mack" Halsey Sr.** (AGEC, AGECE '64), Charlottesville, Va., 4/14/16.  
**Sherman A. Jones** (ME), Roanoke, Va., 5/24/16.  
**John F. Reiley** (BAD '69, ME '69), Strasburg, Va., 4/12/16.  
**William R. Reytar Jr.** (EE), Laurel, Md., 6/4/16.  
**J. Herbert Williams** (PHYS '63), Stevens, Pa., 3/18/16.

**'63** 🍷 **Robert F. Sawallesh** (MKED), Valrico, Fla., an 18-year volunteer at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, has recorded more than 5,000 hours of service.

🧠 **JFrederick "Bill" Lantz** (RS), Mt Pleasant, S.C., 6/1/16.

**'64** 🍷 **Ben J. Davenport Jr.** (BAD), Chatham, Va., received Virginia Tech's 2016 William H. Ruffner Medal for notable and distinguished service to the university.

🧠 **Michael C. Boomer Jr.** (DE '65), Fairfax, Va., 5/12/16.  
William F. Irving (EM), Lexington, Ky., 6/17/16.

**'65** 🍷 **SS.R. "Butch" Barringer** (ME), Newport News, Va., authored a book that received the Military Order of the Stars and Bars' prestigious Douglas Southall Freeman History Award for 2016.

🧠 **Joseph C. Gurley Jr.** (MATH '66), Fairfax, Va., 6/4/16.  
**Robert P. Lakin** (AGE '65), Milford, Va., 5/7/16.  
**James S. Rawlings** (CE '65), Steilacoom, Wash., 4/23/16.  
**William L. Smith** (AGED '65), Saint Paul, Va., 5/28/16.

**'66** 🍷 **Preston L. Durrill** (CHE), Blacksburg, Va., received Virginia Tech's 2016 William E. Wine Award for teaching excellence.  
**James E. Smith** (CHEM), Williamsburg, Va., received Virginia Tech's 2016 Alumni Distinguished Service Award.

**'67** 🧠 **Johnny R. Barr** (HIST), Marion, Va., 4/19/16.  
**Jeff W. Daniell** (PLPP), Buford, Ga., 6/14/16.  
**Kenneth E. Elder** (BAD), Chesapeake, Va., 5/9/16.

**K.W. "Ken" Gallier** (MATH), Export, Pa., 3/21/16.  
**Emmett "Jay" B. Kitchen Jr.** (EE '68), Alexandria, Va., 12/13/15.

**'68** 🍷 **J. Jefferies "John" Miles** (ECON, BAD), Alexandria, Va., was ranked among the top leaders in his field in the 2016 edition of "Chambers USA" and recognized in the 2016 edition of "Washington D.C. Super Lawyers."

🧠 **Rita Waldron Charnock** (ENGL), West Palm Beach, Fla., 3/12/16.  
**Jack S. Moody** (BAD), Chapel Hill, N.C., 5/7/16.

**'69** 🍷 **Joe W. Meredith** (ASE, ISE '97), Blacksburg, Va., was inducted into the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council's Technology Hall of Fame.  
**Richard D. Sisson Jr.** (METE), Worcester, Mass., received the Worcester Polytechnic Institute's Board of Trustees' Award for Outstanding Research and Creative Scholarship.

🧠 **J. Albert Arbuckle** (IE, IE '70), Max Meadows, Va., 4/24/16.  
**Barry W. Beard** (ASE), Alexandria, Va., 4/26/16.  
**Mark W. Holman** (ARCH), Cape Coral, Fla., 6/2/16.

**'70** 🧠 **Sidney J. Brandon Jr.** (AGEC), Dundas, Va., 7/5/16.  
**Frances Moschler Heard** (ENGL '71), Chapel Hill, N.C., 6/21/16.  
**H. Andrew Lester Jr.** (PSCI, URPL '79), Keeling, Va., 5/23/16.  
**James F. Tobey Jr.** (BIOL, MICR '77), Salem, Va., 12/2/15.  
**Wistar H. Trent** (HIST), Henrico, Va., 4/13/16.

**'71** 🧠 **Harris "Rick" Dunaway Jr.** (GBUS '73), Elizabeth City, N.C., 5/30/16.  
**Joseph M. Greene Jr.** (BIOL), Mount Sidney, Va., 4/11/16.  
**Roger E. Hanes** (AGRN), Cordova, Tenn., 4/4/16.  
**Martin F. Hayduk** (EDAD, EDAD '75), Harrisonburg, Va., 7/7/16.  
**James A. Kirby** (VIED, EDVT '75), Martinsville, Va., 6/29/16.  
**P. Jeryl Vest** (ECON), Roanoke, Va., 4/8/16.

**'72** 🧠 **Robert H. English III** (ACCT '73, HORT '75), Smyrna, Del., 6/24/16.

**'73** 🧠 **Edward W. Alexander III** (GBUS '74), Front Royal, Va., 4/27/16.



KATIE GEHRT

# Staying power

by KATIE GEHRT '97, '02

Maria De Los Angeles Adames Rivera's 15-year journey to earn a doctorate in environmental design and planning from the College of Architecture and Urban Studies took her from Santiago, Veraguas, Panama, to Michigan State University, to Blacksburg, and back again to Panama.

Hooded in May, Adames (above) regards the achievement with pride, and not just because of her determination and perseverance: Master's degrees are usually the highest degrees earned by those in developing countries.

"There have been times I think I'm going to give up, because with the work and being a mother and a professional, trying to fit all of these things in hasn't been easy," said Adames, who teaches urban geography and economical geography at the University of Panama.

Adames earned bachelor's degrees in geography and history from the University of Panama and then received a Fulbright Scholarship to study at Michigan State University, where she earned a master's in geography with an emphasis in economic and urban geography. She then received a Fulbright-Laspau scholarship in 2001 to pursue her doctorate at Virginia Tech.

She studied in Blacksburg from 2001 to 2004 before returning to Panama, where she juggled doctoral work, personal responsibilities, teaching a full course load, organizing conferences, and assisting students from other universities conducting research in Panama.

Professor Emeritus of Geography Joseph Scarpaci was her original mentor in the early 2000s and continued to encourage her. "Her tenacity has paid off," Scarpaci said. "She has become one of the few Panamanian women with a doctoral degree in the field of planning, and is positioned to make significant contributions to rent-gap theory and the process of gentrification and revitalization in the global south."

As she continues teaching at the University of Panama and writing articles for magazines and journals, Adames is pleased to set an example for her children, her students, and others in Panama who may want to pursue higher education.

"Perseverance is very important. It's something I hope to transmit to other generations," Adames said. "Things get hard in life, and if you persevere, you can accomplish what you want. The support of my family and people who care about me has been very important in finishing my degree. It doesn't matter how old you are. I am 53 years old. I may be close to retiring soon, but I think it's important that when you start something you're able to finish it." □

*Katie Gehrt (psychology '97, art '02) was the College of Architecture and Urban Studies communications director.*





## Alumni **welcome parties**

The Virginia Tech Alumni Association hosted its inaugural “Welcome New Alumni” events on Aug. 25 to welcome the Class of 2016 to the Hokie Nation. On the same night at the same time, the events were held in five locations, in the Charlotte, Richmond, Tidewater, National Capital Region, and New River Valley chapter areas. Hokies from all classes came out to celebrate, enjoy complimentary appetizers and Hokie swag, and mingle with other local alumni.

### **Find your home:**

Find your local chapter at [alumni.vt.edu](http://alumni.vt.edu) and check out their upcoming events. You'll find programs that provide opportunities to network, socialize, and even compete in local sports leagues. We encourage you to join in and take advantage of all the resources your local chapter has to offer.



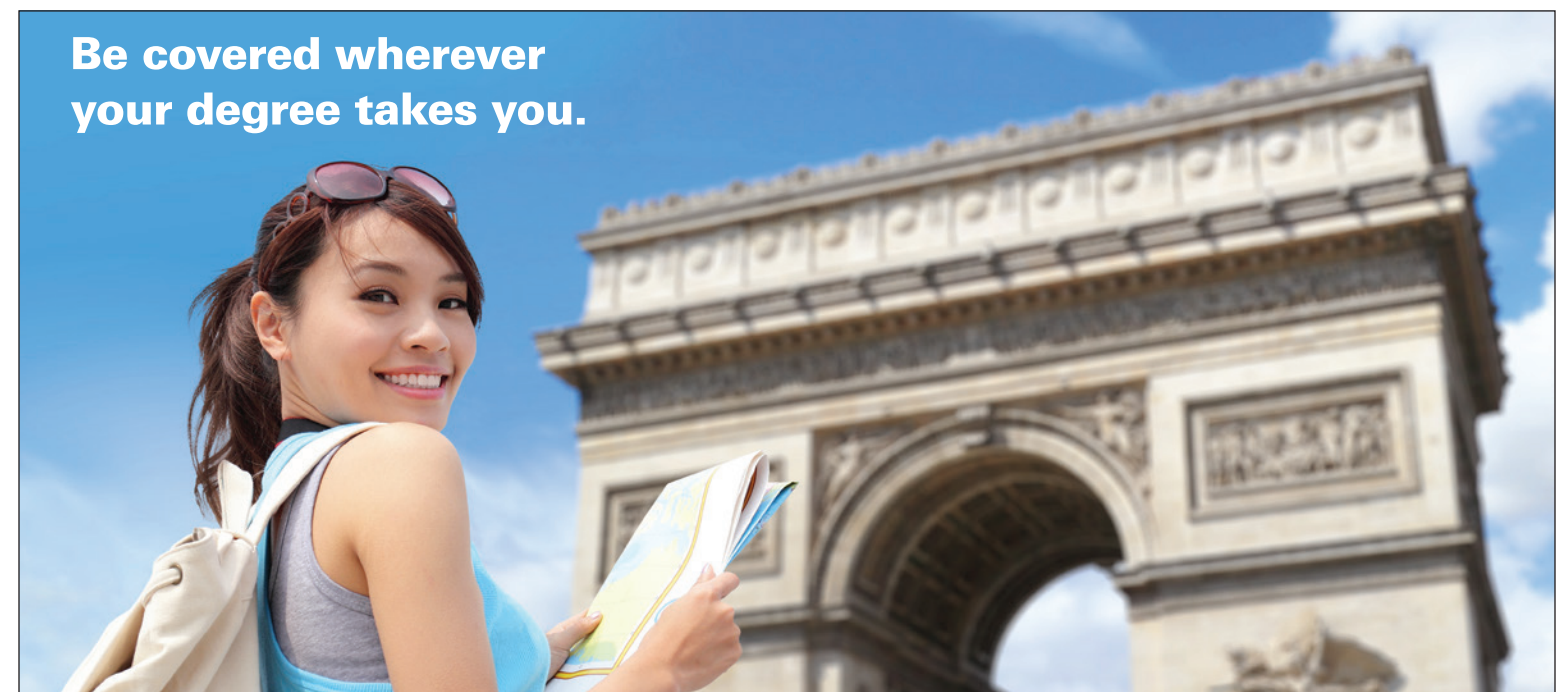
To see how our team worked together to help Maryah reach her goal, visit [CarilionClinic.org/Goals](http://CarilionClinic.org/Goals).

**Common ground.  
Common goal.**

Institute for Orthopaedics  
and Neurosciences

CARILIONCLINIC 

**Be covered wherever  
your degree takes you.**



The **Alumni**  
Insurance  
Program®


Through The Alumni Insurance Program®, Hokies can take advantage of insurance plans that stay with you when you need them most, unlike many employer plans.

Call **1-800-922-1245** today or visit [www.TheAIP.com/VT](http://www.TheAIP.com/VT) for a full list of products including Life, Health, Auto, Home, and Travel.


An Official Program of the:






**'74**  **Robert "Nick" Glenn** (FIN), Pulaski, Va., was elected mayor of the Town of Pulaski.

**Steven F. Iobst** (CE), Yellowstone National Park, Wyo., received the Department of Interior's Meritorious Service Award from the National Park Service.


 **Clement I. Irons** (EDBS), Sterling, Va., 4/1/16.

**Robert E. Overman** (MKTG), Portsmouth, Va., 3/22/16.


**Mary Louise Spann** (AGRN), Alpine, Texas, 3/15/16.

**'75**  **Larry A. Bowers** (URBA), Rockville, Md., retired from Montgomery County Public Schools after 38 years of service.


**Jeanne Centracchio DaDamio** (FR, EDBS '76), Vienna, Va., received Virginia Tech's 2016 Alumni Distinguished Service Award.

 **Roy "LaMance" Joyce** (BIOL), White Stone, Va., 6/20/16.


**Lisa Ellis Von Colln** (PSYC), Fredericksburg, Va., 6/13/16.


**'76**  **Robert A. Rapaport** (PSCI), Virginia Beach, Va., was named once again to the Virginia Super Lawyers and was elected president of the Virginia Workers' Compensation American Inn of Court for 2016.

 **Boyd J. Overstreet** (CS), Salem, Va., 4/26/16.

**'77**  **William W. Copenhaver** (ME, ME '79), Beaver Creek, Ohio, is a visiting scientist at Virginia Tech studying with propulsion experts and developing a technology called StreamVane.


**Diane Ragone** (HORT), Kilauea, Hawaii, received the 2016 Medal of Honor from the Garden Club of America.

 **Janice M. Howery Witt** (EDCI), Ashburn, Va., 4/6/16.

**'78**  **James K. Lowe Jr.** (CE), Roanoke, Va., was inducted into the Charles E. Via Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Academy of Distinguished Alumni.

**Christopher E. Mandel** (MGT), San Antonio, Texas, was awarded the RIMS Fellow designation by the Risk Management Society.


**James K. Lowe Jr.** (CE), Roanoke, Va., was inducted into the Charles E. Via Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Academy of Distinguished Alumni.

 **Ken E. Glover** (MHFD), West Jefferson, N.C., 5/31/16.

**Cynthia Fleming Lamb** (MHFD), Mannboro, Va., 5/10/16.

**M. Stephen Robbins** (PSYC), Portsmouth, Va., 6/25/16.

**Raymond M. See** (PLPP), Littleton, N.C., 3/31/16.

**'79**  **John M. Anderson Jr.** (CE), Charlottesville, Va., 6/25/16.


**Charles W. Flink II** (CSA), Yadkinville, N.C., 5/1/16.

**Bennett K. Hatfield** (MINE), Charleston, W.V., 5/22/16.


**Eric J. Shaw** (PSYC), Newport, R.I., 3/29/16.

**Jean A. Russe Skiles** (CHEM, MESOC '87), Gibsonia, Pa., 7/2/16.


**Vivian N. Williamson** (EDSP), Petersburg, Va., 4/4/16.

**'80**  **Stephen P. Prisley** (FW, FOR '82, FOR '89), Roanoke, Va., earned the Forest Resources Association Inc. Southwestern Region's first-place award for technical writing for a paper entitled "Assessment of Virginia's Commercial Wood Supply."

**Bryce A. Turner** (ARCH), Baltimore, Md., was elevated to the College of Fellows by the American Institute of Architects.


 **Kathy Ogburn Laughlin** (EDCI), Troutville, Va., 5/26/16.

**David W. Pohlman** (CS), Malvern, Penn., 6/27/16.

**'81**  **Robert A. Bryant** (REC), Clinton, S.C., received the 2016 Professor of the Year Award at Presbyterian College, and a earned the South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities' 2016 Excellence in Teaching Award.

**Alexander X. Niemiera** (HORT, HORT '85), Blacksburg, Va., received Virginia Tech's 2016 William E. Wine Award for teaching excellence.


**Bevlee A. Watford** (MINE, IEOR '83, IEOR '86), Blacksburg, Va., received Virginia Tech's 2016 Presidential Principles of Community Award.

 **Richard D. Albright** (CE, BAD '83), Ashburn, Va., 4/12/16.


**Mary L. Broderick Burgess** (HNF), Clifton, Va., 4/26/16.

**Elizabeth A. Messier** (PSYC '82), Bedford, Va., 3/13/16.

**W. Keith Strang** (CS), Dumfries, Va., 7/3/16.

**'82**  **John R. Craynon** (MINE, MINE '85, GSCR '11, MINE '11), Shawsville, Va., is the senior mining engineer at the Export-Import Bank of the United States.


**Letitia A. Long** (EE), Arlington, Va., has joined the advisory board of Virginia Tech's Ted and Karyn Hume Center for National Security and Technology.

 **Elizabeth M. Crawford** (FIN '83), Hampton, Va., 5/14/16.

**Harold "Hal" A. Glovier** (BAD), Sterling, Va., 1/10/15.

**Robert M. Hendrickson** (FCD), Radford, Va., 3/11/16.


**John L. Moran** (SYSE), Austin, Texas, 5/11/16.

**'83**  **B. Wayne Adams** (MKTG), Raleigh, N.C., is senior vice president and enterprise risk and compliance manager for North State Bank in Raleigh, N.C.

**Victor B. Calaman Jr.** (MKTG), Richmond, Va., is vice president of corporate relations at Cobb Technologies Inc.

**Ronnie D. Green** (ANSC '84), Lincoln, Neb., is chancellor for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.


**Andrew C. Klages** (IEOR), Broomfield, Colo., is a consulting engineer at Avaya Inc.

 **Gregg A. Austin** (AGE), Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 4/19/16.

**Edmund R. Greene** (MGT), Centerville, Va., 4/3/16.

**Mark C. Lee** (HIST '85), Brownsville, Pa., 6/3/16.

**Scott D. Lockard** (ME), San Jose, Calif., 2/15/16.


**'84**  **Douglas J. Austen** (FIW), Enola, Pa., received the Gerald H. Cross Alumni Leadership Award from the College of Natural Resources and Environment's Leadership Institute and the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation.

**Thomas R. Fox** (FOR), Christiansburg, Va., was named a 2016 Distinguished Alumnus by the University of Maine School of Forest Resources.

**Chester M. Mummau** (AGED), Shippensburg, Pa., was appointed superintendent of the Shippensburg Area School District.


**Mark A. Rieves** (IAED), Dallas, Texas, was appointed to the Dallas City Plan Commission.


**V. Randall Tinsley** (FIW), Sumnerfield, N.C., was ranked in the 2016 edition of "Chambers USA."

 **Karen K. Kessenich Adamo** (COMM), Ashburn, Va., 5/8/16.

**Betty G. Gibbs Holmes** (EDAD), Virginia Beach, Va., 5/2/16.


**Edwin "Ned" C. Pryor** (CE), Port Matilda, Pa., 6/30/16.

**'85**  **Tony O. Pierson** (PSYC), Blacksburg, Va., started two clean energy companies, UPowerUSA and UPowerGlobal, with his son, **Nicholas J. Pierson** (MKTG '14).

 **Thomas W. Barrett** (FIN), Winston-Salem, N.C., 4/22/16.

**Karen A. Lerardi** (PHED), Midlothian, Va., 5/11/16.

**Russell V. Ottwell** (CE), Haymarket, Va., 11/4/15.


**'86**  **C. Scott Acey** (CE), Virginia Beach, Va., was appointed to MSA's Board of Directors.

**Joseph R. Jones** (PHED), Suffolk, Va., was named head football coach at Ocean Lakes High School in Virginia Beach.

**V. Hunter Pittman** (ARCH, ARCH '95), Blacksburg, Va., was appointed interim director of the School of Architecture + Design at Virginia Tech.

 **Charles T. Bland** (VM), Lowell, Mass., 2/25/16.

**Todd H. Greenwood** (CE, CE '88), Winston-Salem, N.C., 4/12/16.

**'87**  **Peter S. Bettinger** (FW, FOR '89), Athens, Ga., received the University of Georgia Creative Research Medal.

**Virginia A. Buechner-Maxwell** (VM, VMSC '91), Fairlawn, Va., was appointed director of CENTAUR, the Center for Animal Human Relationships at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine.

**Richard "Chip" L. Godine Jr.** (VM), Ruckersville, Va., received the 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine.

# Outstanding Chapter Awards 2015-16

## Bronze

Chattanooga  
Chicago  
East Tennessee  
Fauquier  
Minnesota  
San Diego  
Shenandoah  
Tampa Bay

## Gold

Alleghany Highlands  
Atlanta  
Baltimore  
Central Florida  
Charleston  
Charlotte  
Dallas/Fort Worth  
Denver  
First State  
Fredericksburg  
Jacksonville  
Middle Tennessee  
National Capital Region  
NC Triad  
New River Valley  
Palmetto  
Richmond  
San Antonio  
Southwest Virginia  
Tidewater  
Williamsburg

## Superlative Awards

### Outstanding Chapter Event:

Triangle Chapter,  
Sides of the South  
Competition and  
Fundraiser

### Outstanding Community Service Project:

- First State Chapter,  
Special Olympics  
Delaware Events
- Charleston Chapter,  
Palmetto Pride Adopt-a-Highway

### Outstanding Golf Tournament:

Prince William Chapter,  
9th Annual Virginia Tech  
Alumni Golf Tournament

### Outstanding Fundraising Event:

National Capital Region  
Chapter, 25th Annual  
Job Fair

### Outstanding Chapter Marketing Program:

Fauquier Chapter

### Innovation Award:

National Capital Region  
Chapter, Class of 2015  
Happy Hour

### Outstanding Alumni Engagement Event:

National Capital  
Region Chapter,  
Women Empowering  
Women

### Most Improved Chapter:

Dallas/Fort Worth  
Chapter

### Outstanding Chapter Volunteer:

- Traci DeShazor '08,  
National Capital Region  
Chapter
- Ross Ritchie '11,  
Charleston Chapter

### Outstanding Chapter Officer:

Chris Jennings '96,  
Tidewater Chapter

[alumni.vt.edu/chapters](http://alumni.vt.edu/chapters)

**Revisit life at Tech**—from 1990 onward—in the pages of Virginia Tech Magazine.

Browse the archives at [vtmag.vt.edu/archives](http://vtmag.vt.edu/archives).



**Ralph O. Mueller** (EDRE), West Hartford, Conn., is vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost for Purdue University Northwest.

**Elizabeth Canevari Sprouse** (IS), Palmyra, Va., is associate director and senior career advisor for alumni career services at the University of Virginia.

**W. Bruce Robertson** (IEOR), Bradenton, Fla., 4/30/16.

**'88 Basil I. Gooden** (PSCI '90), Richmond, Va., was appointed the secretary of agriculture and forestry by Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe.

**Steven B. Hopkins** (AGED), Louisa, Va., received Virginia Tech's Alumni Award for Excellence in Extension.

**Claudia A. Huddleston** (EDPE), Roanoke, Va., 6/21/16.

**Dana M. Rodda** (EDSC), Santa Fe, N.M., 4/6/16.

**'89 Karen B. Pattakos** (HRIM), Red Bank, N.J., 5/23/16.

**'90 Matthew M. Winston Jr.** (MKTG), Blacksburg, Va., received the Distinguished Service Award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education's District III.

**Kelly J. Meyer** (FIW), Pinetop, Ariz., 11/4/15.

**Danniella M. Muheim** (EM), Columbia, Md., 10/16/15.

**'91 Jeanne B. Backofen Craig** (MUS), Forest, Va., advanced to the semifinals of the Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition.

**Marc E. Ekstrand** (MATE), Mystic, Conn., was ordained as a rabbi at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati.

**Robyn A. Puffenbarger** (BIOL), Bridgewater, Va., received the 2016 Ben and Janice Wade Outstanding Teaching Award from Bridgewater College and was named the biology department chair.

**'92 Scott W. Case** (ESM, EM '93, EM '96), Blacksburg, Va., was awarded the Reynolds Metals Professorship by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors.

**George M. Filz** (CE), Blacksburg, Va., was reappointed the Charles E. Via Jr. Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

**Dennis P. Wilkerson** (HIDM), Suffolk, Va., was named vice president, operations, for the NEXCOM food service program.

**Michelle C. Cash Johnson** (MKTG), Charlottesville, Va., 7/6/16.

**'93 Jason S. Gagnon** (CE, CE '96), Anchorage, Alaska, a construction manager with Kiewit, helped build the longest bridge in Alaska and the tallest bridge in Minnesota.

**Andy S. Flitcroft** (PHYS), Midlothian, Va., 5/27/16.

**Rex A. Gearheart** (ENGL, EDCI '95), Bristol, Va., 5/26/16.

**Jean R. Kendall** (CHEM), Norfolk, Va., 3/21/16.

**William "Mike" Parrish** (EDCI), Salem, Va., 6/30/16.

**Lucas W. Powell** (AGEC), Rocky Mount, Va., 3/29/16.

**'94 Jennifer P. Bierly** (UA), Port Matilda, Pa., was appointed to the Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

**Jason P. Livingston** (ACCT), Midlothian, Va., was appointed as general counsel of the United Network for Organ Sharing.

**John A. Peterson** (FOR), Christiansburg, Va., received Virginia Tech's 2016 President's Award for Excellence.

**Thomas R. Warburton IV** (LASC), Norfolk, Va., was promoted to senior vice president marketing and communications at Beacon Health Options.

**John B. Hope** (ECAS, ECAS '97), Roanoke, Va., 6/8/16.

**Audrey Shaffer Pitcher** (EDCI), Amissville, Va., 6/8/16.

**John P. Simeroth** (PSYC), Summerville, S.C., 4/26/16.

**'95 Christopher P. Ham** (FW), Hot Springs, Ark., is the program manager for the U.S. Forest Service's southern region.

**Peter B. Pickett** (ME, MUS '96, ME '98), Lexington, Ky., makes his own brand of custom mouthpieces for trumpets.

**Robert J. Lynch** (HIST), Fairfax, Va., 6/21/16.

**Myrna R. Seper** (EDAD), Cheverly, Md., 5/2/16.

**'96 Joshua R. Lorenz** (PSCI), Murrys ville, Pa. was named to the list of top attorneys in the 2016 edition of "Pennsylvania Super Lawyers."

**Brian K. Diefenderfer** (CE, CE '98, CE '02) and **Stacey Reubush Diefenderfer** (CE '97, CE '99, CE '09), Charlottesville, Va., a son, 10/3/15.

**'97 Gregorio A. Febbraro** (PSYC '93), West Des Moines, Iowa, 5/18/16.

**Troy S. Leckliter** (MGT), Washington, D.C., 6/19/16.

**'98 Susan Jackson Liebes** (FW '98), Fallbrook, Calif., was elected to the Fallbrook Land Conservancy's Board of Directors.

**Vernon R. Hayes** (PAPA), Pulaski, Va., 6/16/16.

**'99 Joseph M. Smiley** (ART '00), Arlington, Va., launched Craavings, a search, ratings, and recommendation web app for food and drink menu items.

**John R. Talbert** (FW), Bristol, Va., was named the regional forester for the Virginia Department of Forestry's central region.

**Jeffrey M. Scattergood** (PSCI), Fairfax, Va., a daughter, 7/5/16.

**Laurie A. Alloway** (CE, CE '03), Virginia Beach, Va., 5/15/16.

**'00 Harry A. Brizee** (ENGL, ENGL '03), Baltimore, Md., an associate professor of writing at Loyola University Maryland, has co-authored a book, "Partners in Literacy: A Writing Center Model for Civic Engagement."

**Alexander J. Salenikovich** (FPR), Sainte-Foy, Quebec, Canada, was named chairman of the ASTM International Committee D07 on Wood.

**Brian Slingerland** (FIN), South San Francisco, Calif., gave the keynote address at Virginia Tech's Pamplin College of Business commencement ceremony.

**Stephen P. Webb** (EE), Durham, N.C., was promoted to senior associate at Dewberry in Raleigh, N.C.

**Kelly Tucker Davis** (TA '01) and Adam T. Davis (BC '07), Virginia Beach, Va., a son, 4/27/16.

**Valerie A. Brammer Mollet** (WSCl), Highland, Ill., a daughter, 3/5/16.

**Jason M. Beddow** (AAEC), Saint Paul, Minn., 4/14/16.

**Nicholas P. Dillon** (MSCI), Charlotte, N.C., 4/20/16.

**'01 Scott D. Beman** (SOC), Mount Pleasant, S.C., is vice president for development for High-Ty Tighty Alumni Inc., an organization founded in 1975 to support the band.

**Terrance J. Lasher** (FORS), Warrenton, Va., was named the regional forester for the Virginia Department of Forestry's eastern region.

**Allison E. Hunt** (CHE), Orlando, Fla., a son, 4/27/16.

**'02 Megan L. Shepherd** (BIOL, VM '06, BMVS '12), Christiansburg, Va., received the 2016 Outstanding Recent Alumni Award from the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine.

**Stephanie Osborne Findley** (APSC) and **John M. Findley II** (AAEC '03), Harrisonburg, Va., adopted a daughter, 8/24/15.

**Sarah Carlson Gilbert** (HTM), Sulzbachtal, Germany, a daughter, 3/11/16.

**Julia S. Wolff Hatmaker** (COMM), Catonsville, Md., a daughter, 4/20/16.

**Joseph D. McGinley** (GEOL), Towson, Md., a daughter, 4/20/16.

**Addy O'Brien Hodges Miller** (FIN), Hayes, Va., a daughter, 12/5/15.

**Philip A. Rogers** (MATH, EDCI '06) and Emily Rogers (BIOL '05), Ellicott City, Md., a daughter, 5/3/16.

**Joseph L. Ware** (BIT), Lawrenceville, N.J., a son, 5/1/16.

**'03 Caprice Swan Atwell** (PSCI), Indialantic, Fla., is managing broker for Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Realty.

**Jeremy R. Moss** (PSCI, SOC), Chesapeake, Va., is counsel with the law firm of Vandeventer Black.

**'04 Adam K. Ernest** (MKTG), Blacksburg, Va., is CEO of a software program for crowdfunding campaigns.

**Elizabeth Townes Poole** (MKTG) and Dan Poole, Pennington, N.J., 5/18/16.

**Michael A. Perry Jr.** (ME, ME '07), San Diego, Calif., a son, 6/3/16.

**Ashleigh Gardner Volker** (EE, EE '06) and **Daniel P. Volker** (EE), Kenesaw, Ga., a daughter, 1/14/16.

**'05 Melissa T. Eatherly** (AHRM) and **Chase J. Eatherly** (ARCH '06), Arlington, Va., a son, 7/7/16.

**Kristin L. Maglia McKernan** (ISE), Simpsonville, S.C., a daughter, 4/28/16.

**'06 Laura E. DeNardis** (STS), Washington, D.C., received the Virginia Tech Graduate School's 2016 Alumni Achievement Award.

**George B. Mickum IV** (BAD), Bethesda, Md., is general counsel of an energy startup company, ERP Compliance Fuels LLC.

**Natasha L. Oliver Smith** (BIT, GSCR '08, BAD '08), Newport, Va., received Virginia Tech's 2016 Provost's Award for Excellence in Advising.

**Traci Tate Bricker** (APSC) and Jesse Bricker, Maple Hill, N.C., 3/26/16.

**Hoyt C. Bonner** (MKTG), Alexandria, Va., a daughter, 2/28/16.

**Ethan A. Lavery** (MSE), Chantilly, Va., a son, 5/27/16.

**Lauren E. Murphy** (PUA), Stephens City, Va., a son, 11/3/15.

**Christopher L. Day** (ISE, ISE '10), Norfolk, Va., 4/10/16.



# 2016 Homecomings and Reunions

**Nov. 12 – Georgia Tech**  
Pamplin College of Business  
College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences

**Nov. 26 – University of Virginia**  
Division of Student Affairs – former student leaders  
Graduate School alumni

**Nov. 12 – Georgia Tech**  
Class of 1991 – 25th reunion

**Nov. 26 – University of Virginia**  
Class of 1981 – 35th reunion  
Class of 1986 – 30th reunion

[alumni.vt.edu/reunion](http://alumni.vt.edu/reunion)



## hokie business showcase

Advertise your business in Class Notes! Contact us at [vtmag@vt.edu](mailto:vtmag@vt.edu) for rates and more information. Restricted to alumni-owned businesses.



**Why Move? Improve.**

homes additions remodels

**WE OFFER**



540.951.0358 [shelteralternatives.com](http://shelteralternatives.com)

Luxury Condominiums in Downtown Blacksburg: 601 S. Main Street

**Now Accepting Reservations**



Mike Snyder '91  
Keith Switzer '97

STS Development, LLC presents

**The Alexander**


[alexanderblacksburg.com](http://alexanderblacksburg.com)  
540.443.6046


*Main Street Inn*




205 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA 24060  
540.552.6246


LOCATED IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN BLACKSBURG  
[WWW.MAINSTREETINNBLACKSBURG.COM](http://WWW.MAINSTREETINNBLACKSBURG.COM)

**'07**  **Christopher R. Vidler** (MKTG), Glen Allen, Va., is a financial advisor and co-founder of V Financial Group.


 **Jonathan W. Biggers III** (HNFE) and **Whitney Hawkins Biggers** (ACIS, ACIS '08), Henrico, Va., a son, 4/19/16.

**Kathryn Taran McMenamin** (COMM), Portsmouth, Va., a daughter, 3/12/16.

**'08**  **Ashley Colbassani Brammer** (CE, CE '09), Germantown, Md., is a senior project engineer for Structura Inc.

 **Megan W. Beavers** (CS) and **Geoffrey Underwood**, Atlanta, Ga., 4/30/16.


**Bonnie E. Hamilton** (ACIS, ACIS '09) and **Quentin C. Penn Hollar** (COMM '09, HIST '09), Richmond, Va., 6/20/15.

 **Colin L. Goddard** (IS), Silver Spring, Md., a daughter, 6/28/16.

**Kristin D. Clarke Marshaleck** (FIN), Moseley, Va., a son, 10/25/15.


**Tiffany Francis Reaves** (MKTG), Williamsburg, Va., a son, 3/2/16.

**Gilda Q. Woods** (ELPS), Ferrum, Va., 6/26/16.

**'09**  **Yusuf Abugideiri** (FIN), Fairfax, Va., was named to Investment News' 40 Under 40 list for 2016.


**Matthew C. Pillow** (CE), Lynchburg, Va., recently earned his professional engineer license.

**Kimberly S. Smith** (ELPS), Christiansburg, Va., earned a Region 2 Outstanding Advising Award in the advising administrator category from the National Academic Advising Association.

 **Anthony J. Christian** (CE) and **Brielle J. Christian** (ENGL '10), Rensselaer, N.Y., twin boys, 5/13/16.


**Richard A. Fraenkel** (STAT) and **Victoria Grehl Fraenkel** (GEOG), Ballston Lake, N.Y., a son, 5/2/16.


**Luke A. Shrader** (ME, BAD '11) and **Sarah Waddill Shrader** (MGT '10), Glen Allen, Va., a daughter, 5/2/16.

**'10**  **David "Stephan" Bieri** (PGG), Blacksburg, Va., was awarded the Program in Real Estate Junior Faculty Fellowship by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors.

**Amanda L. Phelps** (PSCI), Norfolk, Va., was named the Tidewater Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors' Outstanding Auditing Student for 2015-16.


**Thomas W. Vance** (GEOS), Portland, Ore., is a park ranger for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

 **James R. McLaughlin** (GEOG '10), Sterling, Va., 5/22/16.


**'11**  **Kathryn A. Prociw** (GEOG, GEOG '12), Atlanta, Ga., received the Outstanding Recent Alumni Award-Graduate Degree from the College of Natural Resources and Environment.

**Steven E. Rich** (COMM), Washington, D.C., was a member of the Washington Post team that was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting.


 **Christopher J. Gehman** (VM '11), McAlisterville, Pa., 2/14/16.


**'12**  **Benjamin P. King** (GEOG), Charlottesville, Va., won stage two at the Tour of California cycling event.

**Connie Tran** (IDS), Glen Allen, Va., received the International Design Excellence Award from the Industrial Designers Society of America.

 **Kyle T. Brashear** (MINE, MINE '14) and **Angelina T. Poe Brashear** (EPP '13), Raleigh, N.C., 5/7/16.


**Andrea Burcham Harris** (ENGL) and **Matthew D. Harris** (CE '13), Arlington, Va., 4/9/16.

 **Brandy Wyatt Preisendanz** (CE) and **Eric C. Preisendanz** (CE), Hamilton, Va., a son, 6/1/16.

**'13**  **Kelly A. Barford** (BCHM), Charlottesville, Va., received the University of Virginia's "Double Hoo" grant, which helps a graduate and undergraduate student pursue a common research project.

**Christopher G. DeMasi** (HSE), Stamford, Conn., along with several other Hokies, climbed Kala Patthar, a mountain near Mount Everest.

**Andrew Marinik** (ISE), Blacksburg, Va., was named assistant director of emergency management at Virginia Tech.

**'14**  **Kisha M. Gresham** (PSYC, BCHM), Blacksburg, Va., was elected as director of events for the 2016-17 Virginia Tech Graduate Student Assembly.

**William J. Long III** (MKTG), Harrisonburg, Va., is the marketing manager for a startup, Follow My Vote Inc.

**Nicholas J. Pierson** (MKTG), Blacksburg, Va., started two clean energy companies, UPowerUSA and UPowerGlobal, with his father, **Tony O. Pierson** (PSYC '14).



COURTESY PHOTOS



## Two alumni join Board of Visitors

Alumni Greta Harris (architecture '83) and Jeff Veatch (finance '93) joined Virginia Tech's Board of Visitors after being named to three-year terms by Gov. Terry McAuliffe this summer.

Harris (above left), of Richmond, Virginia, is president and CEO of the Better Housing Coalition, the Richmond region's largest nonprofit community development corporation. Previously, she was vice president for Local Initiatives Support Corp., a national nonprofit community and economic development corporation. Before serving in that role, Harris was the organization's senior program director for Virginia. The Virginia unit supported local organizations in developing more than \$250 million in real estate in central Virginia.

She was appointed to the Virginia Tech Foundation board in 2016. She also serves on the Virginia Housing Alliance board and has served on the boards of the City of Richmond's Economic Development Authority, the Federal Reserve Bank's Board of Governors' Consumer Advisory Council, the Virginia Housing Coalition, the Richmond Community Development Alliance, and Seven Hills School.

Harris is a member of Leadership Metro Richmond's Class of 1995. She was named the Virginia Tech Black Alumni Association's 2016 Philanthropist of the Year and was recognized as a 2014 Outstanding Virginian by Equality Virginia. In addition

to her Virginia Tech degree, she has a master's in architecture and urban design from Columbia University.

Veatch (above right), of Alexandria, is a successful entrepreneur, businessman, community leader, and philanthropist. He co-founded Apex Systems, which is now a billion-dollar business operating primarily in the field of information-technology staff augmentation.

Apex Systems has more than 1,200 full time employees, more than 60 offices, and employs close to 30,000 consultants a year. Apex Systems is now a division of the largest publicly traded information-technology staffing and services firm in America.

Over the course of his career, Veatch has been recognized as Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst and Young and selected to the Philanthropic 50 by Washington Life magazine. He is a member of the board for On Assignment, has served as a founding member of an effort to bring the Olympics to the Washington, D.C., region, and holds board and leadership positions with Inova Health System and other organizations.

An active philanthropic investor, he formed the Veatch Charitable Fund, which focuses on education, health care, and the community. Veatch, along with other Apex Systems founders, named the Apex Systems Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship based in Virginia Tech's Pamplin College of Business. □

## Virginia Tech in hand

Download Virginia Tech Magazine's free app—available on the Mac App Store and Google Play—and experience every feature story, every class note, and all the news, along with video and audio extras.





LANI NOELLE PHOTOGRAPHY

"Matthew and I wed on April 9 in the snow and wind. But like true Hokies, we didn't let the unpredictable Blacksburg weather stop the fun."  
—Andrea Harris '12

Andrea Harris '12 and Matthew Harris '13, Arlington, Va., 04/09/16.



RACHEL CHRISTIANSON

"I used the Virginia Tech slippers to tell my husband we were pregnant. When we found out we were having twins, we ordered another pair."  
—Brielle Christian '10

Tony Christian '09 and Brielle Christian '10, Rensselaer, N.Y., twin boys, Oliver Wayne and Declan Thomas, 05/13/16.



ELIZABETH ALLISON PHOTOGRAPHY

*little Hokie*  
"The hat was a gift from my best friend, Kelly Loyer Madison (ISE '05)."  
—Kristin McKernan '05

Kristin McKernan '05, Simpsonville, S.C., a daughter, Adrienne Lily, 4/28/16.



SKYBIRD PHOTOGRAPHY + DESIGN

"Growing up in Charlottesville, it's important to provide the proper influence. Levi is already becoming a big Hokie fan."  
—Stacey Diefenderfer '97, '99, '09

Brian Diefenderfer '96, '98, '02 and Stacey Diefenderfer '97, '99, '09, Charlottesville, Va., a son, Levi Edward, 10/3/2015.



KATHLEEN ORRINGTON

"Kevin was nicknamed 'Speedy Gonzales' for coming so quickly that the doctor didn't even have time to walk down the hall for his arrival!"  
—Victoria Fraenkel '09

Richard Fraenkel '09 and Victoria Fraenkel '09, Saratoga Springs, N.Y., a son, Kevin Anthony, 05/02/16.

# SHOW YOUR COLORS

Shop this ad at  
[shopVTtailgate.com](http://shopVTtailgate.com)



From left to right: Molly Cole (future Hokie), Chris Bryan (computer science '87), LaTron Brown (biological sciences, psychology '08), Sam Chanesman '19, (public and urban affairs '19), Chris Jennings (environmental science '96), Clare Cline (animal and poultry science '17), Stella Thai (mechanical engineering '17), Paul Louie (business management '90), Allison Elkins (business management '98).

## LOGO BRANDS

[logobrands.com](http://logobrands.com)

1. Virginia Tech All Weather Blanket - \$44.99
2. Virginia Tech Toddler Tailgating Chair - \$19.99
3. Virginia Tech Elite Chair - \$34.99
4. Virginia Tech Hokies Tent - \$289.99

## VICTORY TAILGATE

[victorytailgate.com](http://victorytailgate.com)

5. Virginia Tech Cornhole Boards Hokie Stone COMING SOON!

## PICNIC TIME

[picnictime.com](http://picnictime.com)

6. Virginia Tech Mega Can Cooler - \$144.95
7. Virginia Tech X-Grill - \$79.95
8. Virginia Tech BBQ Apron Tote Pro & Utensils - \$58.95
9. Virginia Tech Picnic Table Sport - \$155.95

## NIKE

[bookstore.vt.edu](http://bookstore.vt.edu)

[campusemporium.com](http://campusemporium.com)

10. Virginia Tech Women's Veer Raglan T-Shirt - \$36.00
11. Virginia Tech Dri-FIT Football Icon T-Shirt - \$30.00
12. Virginia Tech Dri-FIT True Sideline Adjustable Hat - \$35.00
13. Virginia Tech Legend Jersey - \$80.00

## LILLYBEE

[lillybee.com](http://lillybee.com)

14. Virginia Tech Wedges & Bow - \$98.00
15. Virginia Tech Flip Flop - \$48.00

## EMERSON STREET

[emersonstreetclothing.com](http://emersonstreetclothing.com)

16. Virginia Tech Bangle - \$25.00
17. Virginia Tech Heathered Football Jersey - \$37.50

## YETI

[yeti.com](http://yeti.com)

18. Virginia Tech Tundra 45 - \$349.99
19. Virginia Tech Colster - \$39.99
20. Virginia Tech Ramblers (20 oz) \$39.99, (30 oz) \$49.99

## BIG SPORT GIFTS

[bigsportgifts.com](http://bigsportgifts.com)

21. Virginia Tech Big Sport Party Bowl with Party Pack - \$49.90

## ZOOZATZ

[alumnihall.com](http://alumnihall.com)

22. Virginia Tech Tartan Logo Scarf - \$20.00

## WESTRICK PAPER

[westrickpaper.com](http://westrickpaper.com)

23. Virginia Tech Plates, Cups, Napkins To order, call 904-737-2122

## ROCK 'EM

[store.rockemapparel.com](http://store.rockemapparel.com)

24. Virginia Tech HokieBird Socks - \$18.00

## '47

[bookstore.vt.edu](http://bookstore.vt.edu)

[campusemporium.com](http://campusemporium.com)

25. NEW VPI Fightin' Gobbler Gear
  - VPI Maroon Clean Up Cap - \$22.00
  - VPI Maroon Fieldhouse Tee - \$38.00
  - VPI Grey Munson MVP Cap - \$22.00
  - VPI Maroon Flanker Tee - \$34.00
  - VPI Maroon Scoop Fieldhouse Tee - \$38.00

## VERA BRADLEY

[verabradley.com](http://verabradley.com)

26. Virginia Tech Throw Blanket - \$88.00



Office of Licensing  
and Trademarks



# 5 things about leaders

As vice chairman of Heidrick & Struggles’ global CEO and board of directors practice, John Thompson (economics, business ’70, M.B.A. ’72) has become one of the nation’s most respected CEO and board consultants. Over the last 30 years, he’s completed more than 200 CEO searches and more than 300 board searches, assisting companies like Google, Apple, and FAO Schwarz in hiring chief executives. Finding the right fit for each company takes a lot more than just reviewing résumés, though. Here, Thompson describes what qualities he looks for in leaders:

**1 Hurdle-rate qualities, or what it takes to clear the first bar:** “Most leadership jobs take a certain level of intellect. You don’t need to be a Nobel Prize-winning candidate to be a leader for sure, but there’s a certain level of intellect that’s required. I always look for integrity. I also look for authenticity, a person who’s genuine.”

**2 Emotional quotient:** “I look for a person who lives in the here and now, and is willing to experiment, to challenge assumptions, and really be a critical thinker. Sometimes you can get fooled into believing the words coming out of your mouth, and it’s really important to challenge that.”

**3 The person, not their style:** “By and large, there’s really no set formula. There are so many styles that can be effective. When I was in school, it was, ‘You want to be like this person or that person.’ The reality is that style per se doesn’t matter, as long as it’s not abusive or abrasive—and even that can work in fast-growth times, but as soon as growth starts to slow, people leave because they’re not going to put up with it.”



John Thompson ’70, ’72, and HP Enterprise board chair Pat Russo.

**4 The particular skills and personality needed to helm a particular organization:** “There are certain skill sets you need for a board or company. That could be experience in an industry or global experience. Probably the most important things in an interview aren’t on the résumé; the most important component is the person, what defines a person, and whether they fit with that company or organization’s culture. Does it fit with where that organization is in its lifecycle, whether turnaround, growth, or maintenance?”

**5 Pattern recognition:** “I have a hypothesis that the biggest contributor to success in leaders is pattern recognition. From all my experience, that is the key, driving factor. Leaders need to make decisions very quickly today. They have to be able to pull the trigger on big decisions, sometimes massive financial commitments, with very little information. That would have been scary to people 20 or 30 years ago, but people today have to make decisions very quickly. I prefer working with executives who are good at pattern recognition and can see things coming. Overall, leaders do make an enormous difference in any organization.”



## Rouse gives back to Friendship Village

Former Green Bay Packer and New York Giant Aaron Rouse (sociology ’07) is giving back to the community he grew up in. Raised in Virginia Beach’s Friendship Village, Rouse just held his first annual Back-to-School Supply Giveaway for children in the low-income housing community.

Rouse also founded SMART2 (Smart Squared), an organization that promotes education and being the best you can be. He hopes that SMART2 is a constant, positive message to remind students and others to perceive, plan, pursue, and make progress toward their goals.

As a professional athlete, Rouse said he came across all walks of life. Those who were successful, he noted, had one thing in common—a strong foundation in education. “I wanted to have an organization that is built on education,” he said. “SMART2 wants to be that constant reminder” of the importance of education.

**Rousing success:**  
Visit [vtmag.vt.edu](http://vtmag.vt.edu) to watch a video of Rouse discussing his school supply giveaway and Smart2.





Jeff Beck '85 (right) and former Hokie pitcher Brad Clontz (left), who pitched in the 1995 World Series and now works with Proformance, posed with the Los Angeles Dodgers' Yasiel Puig at spring training earlier this year.

Jeff Beck (marketing '85) knew he was having fun again when he found himself in a St. Louis hotel ironing the shirt of Atlanta Braves starting pitcher Roberto Hernández.

It wasn't the ironing that gave Beck a boost but rather the fact that he was ironing for Hernández—a client (for the second time) of Beck and former Hokie baseball player Bean Stringfellow's Proformance baseball agency. Hernandez was about to make his first start for the Atlanta Braves following his return to the Big Leagues in August 2016.

The moment was made even sweeter by the fact that Hernández was a critical part of the reason, back in 2012, that Beck and Stringfellow were forced to re-evaluate their business. After a great 2011, Proformance faced enormous adversity when Hernandez was suspended from the game for pitching for the Cleveland Indians under the false identity of Fausto Carmona. He also left the agency, leading to some economic woes for Proformance.

Stringfellow and Beck had studied the book "Blue Ocean Strategy," which argues that success comes not from battling rivals toe-to-toe in a bloody red ocean of competitiveness, but from creating untapped market spaces—blue oceans. They looked at how player salaries had exploded since they had started their business in 1992 and realized that the 5 percent fee of the 1990s is equal to less than 1.5 percent today. As a result, they could reduce their fees.

"We knew that was something the competition couldn't replicate," Beck said. "We just reorganized ourselves ... This is not a gimmick." In fact, Beck said, one other agency has since adopted the same model. Players have been slow to gravitate to the new model, but are beginning to come around—including Hernández. □



I had the impression that we are placed into a fixed universe... [But] my grandmother talks about the power of positive thinking. Thoughts are very powerful energy currents that attract like energy. If you think negative thoughts, which we all do, you will manifest negative experiences. I realized I had some power to actually create the world I wanted to make."

—Traci Medford-Rosow (PSCI, SPAN '77), Mahopac, New York, who wrote "Inflection Point: War and Sacrifice in Corporate America" about her experience as a lawyer with Pfizer during its long legal battle over the drug Lipitor, reflected on the lessons she learned.



**23** years ago, agriculture and forestry students challenged each other to a log-cutting contest.

**33** years ago, members of the Old Guard Class of 1933 reunited at a homecoming football game.

**80** years ago, 2,115 students were enrolled at Virginia Tech. This fall, Virginia Tech will welcome more than 31,000 new and returning students.

**120** years ago, the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute needed new colors. A committee selected Chicago maroon and burnt orange after discovering no other college used this combination of colors.

BY KIM BASSLER '12, UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR. IMAGES COURTESY OF LIBRARIES' SPECIAL COLLECTIONS; MORE CAN BE FOUND AT IMAGEBASE.LIB.VT.EDU.

**'15** 🍷 **Omchand Mahdu** (AAEC), Blacksburg, Va., was elected as director of finance for the 2016-17 Virginia Tech Graduate Student Assembly.  
**Brett R. Netto** (PIA), Roanoke, Va., was elected vice president for the 2016-17 Virginia Tech Graduate Student Assembly.  
**Sky A. Van Iderstine** (ME), Davidsonville, Md., is launching a Kickstarter campaign for his company, FormyGrips.

**'16** 🍷 **Patrick M. Acker** (ISE), Midlothian, Va., is co-founder of Yard Mapper, a software company that tracks trailers and shipping containers at distribution centers.

## obituaries

### faculty/staff

**Bill Dooley**, the former Hokies football coach who guided the program to its first bowl victory, died Aug. 9 in Wilmington, North Carolina. He was 82. Dooley served as both the head coach and athletics director at Tech from 1978-86, posting a record of 63-38-1 as a coach. When he left Tech, he was the program's all-time winningest coach. Dooley served 11 seasons as head coach at North Carolina and six seasons as head coach at Wake Forest. During his 26 seasons as a head coach, he won 161 games.

**Robert Alan Russell**, a 31-year employee of Virginia Tech who managed and supervised freshman chemistry laboratories, died July 20. Russell was active with the Boy Scouts of America, working with Troop 44 and Pack 44 Scouts, as well as Eagle Scout candidates in the New River District.

**James Tucker**, a member of Virginia Tech's economics faculty from 1970-74 and the Board of Visitors from 1974-82, died July 6. Tucker was awarded several Bronze Star medals for his service in World War II. He served as president of what is now Virginia

State University and as an officer of the Richmond Federal Reserve Bank. At Tech, Tucker directed the Center for Economic Education. He authored seven books and many publications related to personal finance.

**Alan Yousten**, a professor emeritus of microbiology, died Aug. 24. Coming to Virginia Tech in 1971, Yousten focused his research on the microbiological control of insect pests. He contributed more than 75 book chapters and research articles. Before joining Virginia Tech, he worked as a research microbiologist at International Minerals & Chemical Corp. and served in the U.S. Army.





# A year to remember

by MATTHEW M. WINSTON JR. '90

By the time you read this, I will be concluding my first year as Virginia Tech's chief alumni officer, and oh, the things I have seen.

I watched as more than 7,000 students and their families celebrated earning their degrees and officially joining the alumni ranks.

During these past 11 months, I saw some of Virginia Tech's most amazing students reaching new heights of community service by raising more than \$500,000 to battle cancer through Relay for Life and volunteering by the thousands on a cold, snowy winter's day during The Big Event. I watched as more than half of the Class of 2017 continued the grand tradition of exchanging class rings at Ring Dance last spring and enjoyed being with the Class of 2018 this fall as their ring design was revealed.

I have observed the powers of discovery and service as Professor Marc Edwards and his team of students and researchers saved the town of Flint, Michigan, from water contamination.

I have enjoyed sharing with others Virginia Tech's rise in rankings designating our campus community as among the most healthy, the most beautiful, the best buys, having the best food, giving students the best opportunities for jobs, and being the most committed to effective diversity programs.

I have watched the university celebrate the legacy of a legend in former head football coach and fellow alumnus, Frank Beamer, and embrace the new head coach, Justin Fuente.

I have seen the construction of phenomenal facilities, like the Corps of Cadets' Pearson Hall and the new academic facility across from the Holtzman Alumni Center. These buildings will continue to transform the way Virginia Tech students live and learn.

Best of all, I have watched Hokie alumni, young and old, demonstrate success in every endeavor imaginable. Hokies have rung the bell at the New York Stock Exchange, climbed the peaks of the world's highest mountains, and earned Olympic medals.

Our students, faculty, staff, and graduates are capable of doing extraordinary things, and they have an unwavering love for their alma mater.

Now more than ever, Virginia Tech will depend on you to serve her. My wish for you is that you get the chance to nurture or rekindle your relationship with your university and the fellow members of your Hokie family in your communities and around the globe. Remain connected, remain involved, remain engaged. The world will reward you for it; your heart will thank you for it. □

*Matthew M. Winston Jr. (marketing management '90) is senior associate vice president for alumni relations.*



**"Arboria":** Gothic cathedrals, Islamic architecture, and Archimedean solids combined in a huge interactive walk-in luminarium on the Drillfield that bedazzled kids and adults alike during Hokie Hi, a series of events that welcomes students to campus each year. The installation, designed by Architects of Air, was presented by the Moss Arts Center.



# MORE TO GIVE

Hokies are a rare breed.  
We always find more to give—  
in the classroom, on the job,  
and in the community.



**Tim Bell '17** gives his all. He transferred in as a junior and is making the most of his two years studying environmental horticulture and viticulture. Interning at the Hahn Horticulture Garden this past summer let him “put what I’ve learned into practice.” Tim’s grateful that current-use donations made this hands-on learning experience possible, because “if I hadn’t had that help, I would have had to get a different job over the summer, and the internship wouldn’t have been available.”

Students like Tim graduate ready to give more, thanks to those who give back to Virginia Tech.

Learn more about the power of philanthropy, and make a gift that will have an immediate impact, by visiting [givingto.vt.edu](https://givingto.vt.edu) today.

