

Spring 2018 Issue



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This newsletter is dedicated to the graduating class of May 2018 in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University.

### CONGRATULATIONS

In addressing the graduates' mothers, "Each of you played an intrinsic role in the success of these scholars. For that, we thank you."

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President

"Our students and the outstanding things they are doing truly represent the transformative experience that they obtained at Virginia State University. The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business transforms and builds leaders. Thank you for all you do."

Dr. Donald Palm, Provost

"The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business is immensely proud of you and please know that no matter where you go and what you achieve this is always your home."

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

## 2018: THE SPRING SEMESTER IN PICTURES



Destiny Hodges, Destini Woods, Marcus Lowery, Ai'Jalon McGhee, and Chanel Brown formed the business team Solidarity.



Unique Lotman takes a seat at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond after a luncheon.



Myia Jones studies abroad in China.



President Abdullah and Gary Armstrong join Chrisana and Emmanuel.

Denny Morris gives advice to Ty-Li.

The ladies show off their Honor's Awards.



Students and alumna embrace.

The College affords students countless networking opportunities.



Shantel plants a kiss on Terrill.



Students visited IBM, attended scores of networking events, hosted industry professionals, and represented the College at events like the Freedom Classic.



Kabria Allen and Victor Branch (Market President of Bank of America) embrace.

## Securities and Exchange Commission

Few undergraduates have an opportunity to interface with a Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) member but that is precisely what Guy DeWeever (Marketing major) and Sadonia Sylvester (Accounting major) did this semester when they visited with Michael Piwovar first appointed by President Barack Obama. Sadonia said of the visit, *“I really enjoyed learning about the markets and regulation thereof.”*



## Active at Recruiting

It is probably a safe assumption that no other business school in Virginia recruits with the kind of fervor as the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business. Between students, faculty, and staff this semester alone the College participated in nearly ninety K-12 events. From attending Decision Day announcements, to guest teaching, to mentoring elementary children, to attending college fairs; the College of Business is developing a reputation in central Virginia. Never too early to plant the seed the College is starting early but particular emphasis is put on of course juniors and seniors in high school. What is more is that it is paying off with students recognizing the brand, even developing familiarity with the College's ambassadors, and scheduling visits to campus. In a highly competitive marketplace with so many options for college it is more imperative than ever that the College of Business practice what it preaches as it relates to understanding top of the shelf brand awareness.



## More Pictures



## Alumni, Return to Serve

Every semester the College hosts scores of alumni who return to campus often to guest teach but this semester one day in particular was designated Return to Serve. A large group of graduates led hands-on experiential exercises for over two hundred students. A big thanks to Linda Melton, Thomas Victory, Robin Byrd, Adairius Curry, Denise Fields, George Grandy, Bakari Haley, Franklin Johnson, Julius Turner, Stephanie Williams-Hayes, Raishan Peterson, Atiya Leach, Sam Kelly, Jason Hawkins, Tiffany Gullins, Chelsea Jackson, and Sean Miller. Of the experience, Tiffany said, *"I love giving back to my alma mater."* Atiya added, *"I am really proud of the students. They are very accomplished."* Michelle said, *"It was my pleasure to serve. Thanks for the opportunity and the investment you are making in to the students of VSU!!"* For everything that our alumni do for our students, we owe them a deep debt of gratitude that surely cannot adequately be repaid.

## Graduation, In their own words

On May 13<sup>th</sup> on the campus of Virginia State University graduates of the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business celebrated the culmination of a lot of hard work and determination. Said Kapri Armstead (Management/HR major) *“I cannot believe it is all over.”* Aiyana Glover (Marketing major) added, *“I accomplished a lot but I am ready to start my next chapter.* Dennis McRae (Accounting major) contributed *“It is indeed a little anxious but I am excited to begin my tax job in Richmond.”* Bobby Harper (MISY major) shared *“I really look forward to starting my position in cyber security at Thomson Reuters.”* Ibukun Jimoh (Accounting major) who married this semester said, *“I cannot wait to come back and guest teach!”* Also married this semester, L’Niquemone Freeman added, *“My husband I are relocating to Philadelphia and look forward to starting our family.”* To all of our graduates, we miss you already!



### Around the world

Students continue to log long miles around the world studying abroad. This semester Myia Jones (Marketing major) and Tajaiana Menchion (Management major) studied in China and Myia is about to depart next month for Germany. Recipient of a Fellows Scholarship by The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) in partnership with the Penn Center for Minority Serving Institutions (CMSI), Myia is excited to study in Berlin. Also of note, O’Rane McLean is off for Dubai!



### Congratulations

It was a banner year for scholastic achievement in the College with over two hundred students earning Honor’s recognition. Of them, about a dozen were inducted in to the highly selective Beta Gamma Sigma honor society. Congratulations to each of you on your outstanding accomplishments!!

### Student Organizations

To learn about the College’s student organizations; click here: <http://business.vsu.edu/resources/clubs-and-organizations.php>

### Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

April 15<sup>th</sup> arrived again this semester and of course for the College that meant that students volunteered preparing tax returns for persons in the community. Long led by Professor Lester Reynolds the program has for years contributed countless hours in giving back.

### Awarded best in the Commonwealth

In partnership with Virginia21, the College led the University’s efforts pertinent to registering voters. Specifically, Kyla Frank (Management major) was a rock-star in securing new voters. For her efforts the College along with the University was awarded the Virginia21 Student Voice Award for demonstrating exemplary leadership in advancing the mission and goals of Virginia21 in the campus community. Still, it didn’t stop there! Kyla secured



an opportunity for her peers including Jevon Eason (Management major) and Kanya Reid (Management major) to sit down with Governor Ralph Northam for dinner. Passionate about public service, Kyla said of the recognition, *“I just want more young people to be engaged and active civically. If I can help in that than I am compensated with the acknowledgment that they are no one’s pawn.”*

## Brilliant but Beautiful

Who said that you cannot be both brilliant and beautiful? In the College of Business students are both. Not only are the College’s students leading the University in regards to academic achievements but they are also consistently recognized for their leadership in on campus modeling agencies so when central Virginia celebrated RVA Fashion Week it was hardly surprising that the College was represented on the runways including at venues like Maymont, Broad Street, the Jefferson Hotel, and Stony Point Fashion Park. Said Tamairah Marshall (Accounting major), I am brilliant but beautiful! Yes you are!!



## An Interview with a Student



Jasmine Johnson graduated in May with an Accounting degree; she is from D.C. and has the best comeback story at Virginia State University.

Jasmine has accepted a position working for Allmond & Company in MD.

**Regarding your future, what are you most excited for?** Show my family what VSU trained me to accomplish and that if you set your mind on something you can achieve it. Additionally, showcasing the investment VSU put in me. Lastly, perhaps one day coming back to support the Financial Aid Office.

## An Interview with Faculty/Staff



B. Rae Morgan is the Administrative Assistant for the Department of Accounting and Finance

Place of origin: Ford, Virginia

Education: Bachelor’s Degree from Virginia State University

**What do you like most about working with students?** Taking students under my wing like they are my own and leading them in the right direction; identifying their needs and finding resources like for example scholarships and tutors for them.

**What has been your most memorable experience here?** Earning my degree in 2003 after having put my daughter through Virginia State University.

## An Interview with an Alumnus



Deshauna Barber is a 2011 Management graduate

Employment: Motivational Speaker/Miss USA 2016/Army Reserve Captain

On film: <http://business.vsu.edu/resources/alumni.php>

**What is confidently beautiful?** "To me confidently beautiful means understanding it's not always about your appearance. It's not always about who you are around and how they feel you look, where they feel you come from or your economic background. Serving in the military has taught me that being confidently beautiful is about being able to earn respect from people regardless of what you look like." Answer as provided at Miss USA 2016 competition.

## An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Chris Hairston-White, Vice President of External Affairs for the Better Housing Coalition

Education: Bachelor's from Virginia Commonwealth University

Volunteer Experience: Board Director, Treasurer for ART180, Henrico Business Council Member for ChamberRVA, Board Member for Joint Hospital at Bon Secours, Board Member and Director of Media Relations for Commercial Real Estate for Women

**What causes do you care about?** A mother of two daughters, I'm deliberate about carving out time to support, mentor, and nurture women at whatever stage they are in their life.

**What recommendation would you share with a freshman?** It's important to dream, because dreams give you goals. Also, allowing yourself to fail is just as important as achieving your goals.

## An Interview with a Student



Erica Pickens is a Management Information Systems major and a mother of three boys.

Erica works forty+ hours a week, raises three boys, and is an Honor's student.

**What are you most proud of?** Myself for nearing attainment of a bachelor's degree; it has been my personal goal. I am not afraid to be different; a nontraditional student with three boys, I am showing them that you can utilize your talents at any age. It took a while but once started I made it possible

despite a hectic schedule.

**What recommendation would you share with a freshman?** As a parent of a soon to be freshman, for him there will be an extraordinary amount of change as you transition from high school. Put yourself out there and meet as many freshmen as possible. Make time for your studies first and get plenty of rest. Always push yourself to do your best.

## Who you know

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business has developed a reputation for providing undergraduates what Jonathan Young (Director of Corporate Relations) calls “*premium access to industry*” because as he regularly reminds students, “*it’s not just what you know but who you know.*” It is why in a semester the College hosts on average over two hundred and fifty companies on campus and why in a term scores of students depart the grounds to participate in networking events. From dinners to conferences to breakfasts, the College’s students are interfacing with thousands of professionals in the region.

The results are rather striking and students along with the College are the beneficiaries. First, young professionals are developing relationships that materialize in internships and jobs but second, the College is always augmenting its brand. Most frequently at events, Virginia State University is the only academic institution represented and certainly the sole school represented by students.

Stories conveying how this works and why it’s successful are voluminous enough to now write a thousand page book but for the purpose of this newsletter but one has been selected to share. It regards Jhadee Gordon (Accounting graduate, class of 2017). Specifically, Jhadee along with her colleague Monet Graves (Marketing graduate, class of 2017) participated in a networking event in Richmond in 2016 attended by about two dozen business owners. One said owner was Vaughan Long (Owner of Tax Solutions Alliance). Jhadee and Vaughan hit off a terrific conversation with Jhadee impressing him as she does everyone she meets. Jhadee and Vaughan stayed in contact with each other and because of it Vaughan thought so highly of accounting majors at VSU that he asked Jhadee for referrals for job opportunities. What materialized was Jonathan Young providing Vaughan access to Malaika Lillard (Accounting major) and Bashirah Bostic (Accounting graduate, class of 2017) who were hired for positions with Tax Solutions Alliance. But wait, the story doesn’t stop there. Fast forward, Malaika and Bashirah would eventually go on to new companies, i.e. Malaika at Willbros T&D Services East and Bashirah at Capital One. So, who did Long contact about securing new accountants, you guessed it; the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business. It’s why Dennis McRae (Accounting major) has been hired at Tax Solutions Alliance.

In the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business perhaps more than any other school in the region undergraduates understand that it’s not just what you know but who you know!

*In a semester the College hosts on average over two hundred and fifty companies on campus and in a term scores of students depart the grounds to participate in networking events. From dinners to conferences to breakfasts, the College’s students are interfacing with thousands of professionals in the region.*

## NFL bound?

Some would have said that Cordelral Cook (Accounting major) and his ambition to play professional football was a bit unrealistic considering the level of competition, i.e. VSU is a Division II institution but after his teammate and backfield partner Trenton Cannon was the first Trojan drafted in the NFL in over two decades folks are beginning to reevaluate Cook’s chances. A star on and off the field, perhaps he is NFL bound! to teach. This semester Lashrecse Aird taught a class in Singleton.





## Enhanced Partnership

For a long time the College of Business has partnered with the Virginia Credit Union but this semester in collaboration with Institutional Advancement new efforts were made at enhancing the partnership. Effective this spring, the College will regularly host the Virginia Credit Union (VACU) to convene workshops, increase financial literacy, augment awareness about VACU, and perhaps even adopt a train the trainer model. Arguably the most exciting component of what has been discussed regards partnering with a school like e.g. Ettrick Elementary to regularly offer instruction to children. The exciting part regards that it would be undergraduates doing the training. Already the College's students are mentoring at schools like Ettrick and Walnut Hill in Petersburg so stay tuned for what's next!



## College wins leadership award

On stage with Governor Ralph Northam to celebrate the Metropolitan Business League's 50th anniversary Friday evening at the historic Hotel John Marshall downtown Richmond, the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business was recognized for "sustained contributions" to leadership. Specifically, Virginia State University's College of Business was presented by the Governor of Virginia the Metropolitan Business League (MBL) Chairman's Leadership Award for the College's sustained work in building leaders. The College's tireless work in providing students premium access to industry, to cultivating young professionals, and to being innovative in affording undergraduates experiential learning opportunities were celebrated. Additionally, the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business was championed for giving back to the community and for partnering with business and industry. At the awards show attended by 300 business leaders, the College took center stage subsequent a film was played wherein the College's student/faculty/staff/alumni accomplishments were touted. At the end of the film, the College's Director of Corporate Relations Jonathan Young attempted to sum up both the inviting culture in the College along with its approach to building student leaders when he said, "No one cares what you know until they know that you care". Perhaps fitting, Young credited that adage's use to VSU industry partner Dominion Energy and specifically to Earnest Greene.



## Sadonia's Scholarships

Undergraduates in the College regularly earn scholarships but rarely do they accrue four in a year yet that is precisely what Sadonia Sylvester (Accounting major) did!

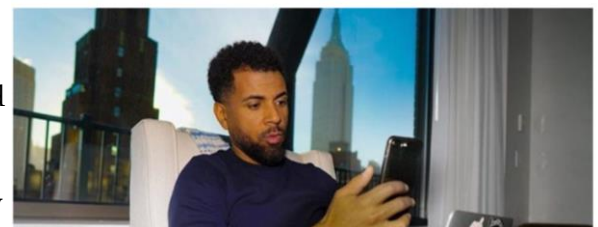
## Blogging

When Kelsey Evans was in school in Singleton Hall she was a rockstar passionate about all things business, international travel, the community, etc. Now a graduate and successful businesswoman she has started her own company and blog called THE ROEW. An online destination comprised of compelling articles, which discuss social issues that move us, music that compels us to groove, and art that makes us stop and think, its mission is to curate and share quality digital content and build the careers of creative entrepreneurs. This semester, Shanice "Neecee" Allonce (Marketing minor) interned for Kelsey regularly authoring cutting edge blogs. A rockstar in her own right, Shanice is on her way to stardom herself working with labels like e.g. Def Jam.

THE ROEW MUSIC CULTURE EVENTS MUZE ABOUT CONTACT

### #MUZEVET: MEET THE G.O.A.T, MUSIC MANAGER KEVIN WEBB

4 MINUTE READ APRIL 15, 2018 BY SHANICE "NEECE" ALLONCE



## Another entrepreneur

If going to school full-time while working a full-time job wasn't enough Marquai Randolph (Management Information Systems major) decided to open his own business. Siriously Driven, Marquai's business is an iPhone repairs shop. Marquai is just the latest student to launch his business while in school. Previous editions of this newsletter have profiled students including Jasmine Aden, Ahmad Alnigrish, Justin Camp, Aiyana Glover, L'Nique Freeman, and Jeremy Stokes. On a relevant note, the College's entrepreneurship curriculum continues to be built out as more and more students sign up for the minor. To learn more, click here:

<http://business.vsu.edu/centers-institutes/index.php>

## Research and Writing, faculty led

From access to capital markets to online rating effects for consumer product evaluations to sustainable healthcare models to minority entrepreneurship, faculty in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business are researching and writing. An expectation relevant to the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), publishing journal articles and presentation thereof at conferences is a mainstay for College of Business faculty. A teaching institution, the priority is always interfacing with students but that doesn't mean that the faculty love research and writing any the less!

## More Pictures



## Beating the Best

In April, a team of fourteen students participated in the Virginia Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda (FBLA-PBL) State Leadership Conference and Business Competition in Richmond. The largest career student business organization in the world with more than 230,000 members, FBLA seeks to inspire and prepare students to become community-minded business leaders in a global society through relevant career preparation and leadership experiences. The College's team competed against teams from around Virginia and accrued multiple awards. All of the students placed in second place or higher in at least one of their competitions and will next compete in the National Leadership Conference to be held in Baltimore in June. The team is co-advised by Dr. Aurelia Donald and Professor Louis Dabney. Dr(s) Yun Lee and Mark Kunze along with Professors Alex Weimer, Sara Reese, and Steve Holeman provided additional coaching support. Professor Alicia Morris in Mass Communications also helped coach the students. Go Team!!!



## Tom Tom Founders Festival

The College's commitment to entrepreneurship most recently materialized in a team being assembled to pitch a business idea at the Tom Tom Founders Festival in Charlottesville. Of forty-four teams from around the state that submitted a business idea only fifteen were selected to compete. Comprised of Kiera Anthony, Chanel Brown, Marcus Lowery, Destiny Hodges, and Ai'Jalon McGhee (all Marketing majors) along with Destini Woods (Management major) the team founded the company Solidarity. A reversible college paraphernalia line, Solidarity is for fans for whom one college just isn't enough.

Upon arriving in Charlottesville, the team spent the first part of the day participating in workshops and attending seminars like for example, "Can a Machine be Racist and Sexist" or "Fake News and Internet Regulation" but by the afternoon it was all prep for taking the stage.

Up against the very best from the University of Virginia, The College of William and Mary, Virginia Tech, Virginia Commonwealth University, etc. the College's team wowed the judges and was even singled out by one of the judges, i.e. billionaire co-founder of Reddit Mr. Steve Huffman. Specifically, Huffman remarked before the sold-out standing-room only crowd that "the team from VSU could sell anything!" What the team didn't do was win but considering the competition included a new way to transport babies on helicopters, the students could hardly be disappointed. Besides, they will be back next year!!



## Student Accomplishments

Check out our students' spring 2018 semester accomplishments at <http://business.vsu.edu/news/2018/05/spring-2018-student-accomplishments.php>

## Alumni Advisory Board

The College's Alumni Advisory Board continues to regularly invest their time, treasure, and talent. Past editions of this newsletter have profiled the work done by the group as it relates to curriculum review, hiring of students, coaching and mentorship, and financial contributions. One invaluable job for the Board that the group has gladly assumed regards cheerleading! Brand awareness and top of the shelf identification of the College is invaluable in today's ever increasingly competitive market for talent not just for students but also for faculty and staff. A lot has been written of the College's efforts pertinent to recruiting undergraduates but how does the College develop a talent acquisition pipeline for teaching? Of course like any governmental agency positions are advertised but the Alumni Advisory Board has been invaluable in disseminating notice of said advertisements along with encouraging qualified candidates to apply.

### An Interview with the Co-Chair of the Alumni Advisory Board



Beverly Everson Jones is a proud 1982 accounting graduate

Place of Origin: Prince George, Virginia

#### What has the Alumni Advisory Board accomplished to date?

We have provided students with seminars that deliver important information for transition into the work world as well as those that help students develop strategies for success while in school. Members have participated in curriculum reviews, created job opportunities, and funded an operational account to support student activities and an endowment fund as well as many other funding opportunities on individual levels.

#### What do you foresee the Board working on in the future?

We will expand our efforts to include focus on leadership skills and other soft skills that are so important for success in business. Additionally, we will call upon College of Business alum to support student efforts to experience outside training and competitions at expanded levels.

## Other acknowledgements

A big congratulations to Dr.(s) Yun Lee and Patrice Perry-Rivers on their recent promotions! Both teach in the Department of Management and Marketing. Lee promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure and Perry-Rivers promoted to Associate Professor remarked on how excited they are for the opportunity to continue to work with students and with their colleagues. Also meriting special acknowledgement as it relates to in the classroom regard a guest instructor in Dr. Mark Kunze's Bargaining class. Specifically, Mr. Larry Doggette (Business Manager for LiUNA local 572) for a decade has been leading instruction relevant to bargaining simulation. For anyone to volunteer for a decade merits a big thank you! One particularly deserving acknowledgment regards Dr. Aurelia Donald (Professor in Management Information Systems). Donald was awarded the University's Advisor of the Year. Donald said of the acknowledgment, *"I think supporting students in academic activities is important because it enhances what we teach as it provides real-life experience leading to them paying more attention in the classroom."*



Last but not least, congrats to Dr.(s) Arinola Adebayo and Adeyemi Adekoya on being admitted to the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program.

## Profiled

Michaela Nelson (Marketing major) in her tenure at VSU was profiled on NBC, in social media, on the VSU website, and now in the University's Annual Report on Gifts and Contributions for her leadership.

## Message from the Dean

It is hard to believe but yet another semester has come and gone and with it we celebrate another graduating class and another record year. First, allow me to congratulate our graduates on all of their accomplishments. I am particularly proud for success in securing jobs. From IBM to Deloitte to Allmond & Company to KPMG to Enterprise Rent-a-Car to Thomson Reuters to Tax Solutions Alliance our graduates are well positioned. Second, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge and thank our terrific faculty and staff. They contributed so much and like our graduates about to depart we also will miss Sara Reese who is retiring from teaching accounting and Lynn Singleton who is retiring from helping manage the Department of Management and Marketing Office. Third, we surely would be unable to do anything absent the support of our alumni and industry stakeholders who give so very much. Fourth, our university leadership including President Makola Abdullah and Provost Donald Palm have been unwavering in their support of our AACSB accreditation.



It was an exciting semester for the College. For one, we won a Metropolitan Business League award for leadership for our contributions to student and community development. Our own Kyla Frank's efforts led to the University being awarded the Student Voice Award by Virginia21 for registering voters. Countless hours invested by our faculty contributed in a successful SACS reaffirmation of accreditation visit. Our students won intercollegiate competitions for FBLA and placed highly in others relevant to the Tom Tom Founders Festival and UFSC speech competition. Faculty exemplified scholarship in their published journal articles and students volunteered hundreds of hours at places like the foodbank, schools, Big Brothers Big Sisters, etc. Our team kicked off efforts in regards to exploring the feasibility of a M.B.A. program and our students accrued thousands of dollars in scholarship money. Students traveled abroad to study in places like China while other trips to places like Germany, United Arab Emirates, and Mexico were announced. The College participated in dozens of K-12 events and accounting majors prepared scores of tax returns for persons in the community at no cost whatsoever to the filer. Our alumni achieved in every way both professionally and personally and continued to make us proud. From promotions at work to marriage announcements to arrival of baby boys and girls our alumni share news of their accomplishments with us literally every day. Over two hundred students were recognized as an Honor's student and/or Beta Gamma Sigma inductee and our young professionals earned all kinds of internships and jobs.

I don't like to boast but because it is not about me I am proud to proclaim from the rooftop that in every regard, the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business faculty, staff and students performed so well.

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun (Dean) awards students the prestigious Beta Gamma Sigma medallion in the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business

