ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT
DEBORAH WATERS ’85 CLEARS GENDER HURDLES IN MARITIME LAW
The university, and especially ODU basketball, got a boost from national news coverage early this spring after junior Trey Freeman banked in a l-o-n-g three-pointer at the buzzer to give the Monarchs a 72-69 victory over Murray State and a spot in the National Invitation Tournament final four in New York City. The stakes of the March 25 game and the incredible finish earned ODU a wealth of national publicity, with video of the winning basket being shown on a slew of news and sports websites. ESPN deemed Freeman’s running heave its No. 1 Highlight of the Day. Freeman was mobbed after the shot – he’s shown here being hugged by teammate Ambrose Mosley – and the Ted Constant Convocation Center crowd of more than 8,000 erupted into 15 minutes of raucous celebration. A few days later at Madison Square Garden, the Monarchs put up a valiant effort, but fell to Stanford 67-60 in the NIT semifinals. Coach Jeff Jones’ ODU team finished the season with a most respectable record of 27-8.
Editorial Note

This issue of Monarch magazine is the product of a group effort. Former Monarch editor Jim Raper retired in January, but agreed to help shepherd this issue through to publication while the search proceeded for his successor. We expect to have completed that search by the time you read this note and to have the new editor on board to direct work on the next issue.

The theme of this issue is “entrepreneurial spirit,” and much of the content touches on the enhanced entrepreneurship culture that is developing at Old Dominion with the support of the $11 million gift of alumnus Mark Strome and his wife Tammy. The centerpiece of our news coverage of this topic is a collection of articles and comments focusing on the dedication last fall of the Strome Entrepreneurial Center, the induction of the inaugural class of ODU’s Entrepreneurial Hall of Fame and the hiring of administrators who will lead this effort.

But many other articles you will see here also reveal the breadth and depth of entrepreneurial enterprise you find on our campus and among our alumni. Our cover story describes the bootstrap rise of Deborah Waters ’85 to head her own maritime law firm. Freelance writer Michael Knepler explains how rare it is for a woman to succeed in this field.

Other “entrepreneurial spirit” articles include one about Tamela Rich ’84, and how she recast her career astride a motorcycle. Students in computer science are subjects in an article about a new, commercial payment system called Qwyvr. In Sports, there is story about Corey Evans ’11, who has taken to the entrepreneurial track by starting his own basketball scouting service. And our Alumni Profile offerings feature two young women who clearly have entrepreneurial spirit.

I hope you enjoy this issue, and that you find the content as entrepreneurially inspiring as I do.

–Giovanna Genard
Acting Assistant Vice President for Strategic Communication and Marketing
Thank you
Strome Family!

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Thanks for Great Story

Thank you so much for the great story (“Moving Beyond Tolerance: David McFarland ’84 Works for Acceptance of LGBT Community”) in Monarch magazine (Fall 2014). I just read it via an online copy. We have begun to post the story to social media and have included Martina (Navratilova), Jason (Collins), Caitlin (Cahow) and Daniel (Radcliffe) in our notifications. I’m starting to get good feedback.

David McFarland ’84
West Hollywood, CA

Remembering Dynamic Professors

It was a great deal of gratitude and appreciation that I was reminded of while reading Monarch (Fall 2014). I just read it via an online copy. We have begun to post the story to social media and have included Martina (Navratilova), Jason (Collins), Caitlin (Cahow) and Daniel (Radcliffe) in our notifications. I’m starting to get good feedback.

David McFarland ’84
West Hollywood, CA

One Additional Fact

We were very pleased by your article on our “Star Teacher” program, which ODU developed at P.B. Young Elementary School in Norfolk (Monarch, Fall 2014). This program resulted from a United for Children partnership involving the United Way of South Hampton Roads, a detail which I failed to mention when I was being interviewed for your article. Linda Irwin-DeVitis, the former dean of the Darden College of Education and current professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning, heads up the United for Children work at ODU.

Sueanne McKinney
ODU Associate Professor of Elementary Education

To send a letter to the editor, you may contact us via email, ggenard@odu.edu; fax, 757-683-5501; or by regular mail, Editor, Monarch magazine, 1000 Koch Hall, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA 23529.

You may reach us by phone at:
Alumni Association and Alumni Relations Office: 757-683-3097 or 888-ODU-3435
Monarch magazine: 757-683-5585

I Remember Those People

In the Monarch (Fall 2014) column Then & Now: “So many faces and places. So few names,” I recognized two of the students in the top right photo on page 9. I, too, was a freshman in 1968. I frequented the Newman House regularly and ended up dating the young man in the V-neck sweater. His name, Patrick Tobin, class of ’71. Unfortunately, he passed away a few years ago. Also, the young lady on the far right is Mary Jane Kusiak.

During Homecoming, I marched in the parade with the Faculty Staff Alumni Association and remembered about the photo in the 1969 yearbook, in which I am featured on page 40, as a freshman during orientation. Families were invited on the tour of Webb Center during orientation and both my younger brother and sister are also in the photo. I am on the right, with the short dark hair, my brother is in shadow, looking down and my sister, 14 at the time, is on the far left, listening to the tour guide.

I just thought you might find these tidbits interesting.

Deborah S. Kinney ’99
Coordinator for Undergraduate Student Services
ODU Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Entrepreneurs are everywhere these days, it seems. And all eyes are on them to conjure new ideas that will better our lives and support a thriving economy. But these innovators may not be who you think. Traditionally, the view of an entrepreneur is one of a well-tailored businessperson. But that imagery is fading quickly along with dated ideas and approaches toward business development. The economy is transitioning to one where fresh ideas are developed by less-established sources at a rapid rate.

Today, a glimpse into any startup boardroom – not just Google or Facebook – affirms this point.

Our changing economy is fueled by a new power-class of entrepreneurs, who break away from traditional models and vision.

At Old Dominion, we are growing an inclusive ecosystem that not only fosters meaningful collaborative connections among entrepreneurs, but provides an environment where students from any academic discipline receive the expert help they need to turn passion into enterprise.

The Strome Entrepreneurial Center, which was made possible by an $11 million gift from Mark and Tammy Strome, is the nucleus of ODU’s entrepreneur development program for students. Under the leadership of Nancy Grden, this effort now spans multiple disciplines within each of the University’s academic colleges.

In addition to the Strome Entrepreneurial Center, ODU’s Center for Enterprise and Innovation is also growing entrepreneurship in our region. Led by Marty Kaszubowski, the center houses programs including the Technology Applications Center, the Women’s Business Center, the Procurement Assistance Center and the Hampton Roads Veterans Business Outreach Center. Through this initiative, the University is in negotiations to partner with three Hampton Roads communities in creating a network of business accelerators.

Old Dominion’s efforts in fostering entrepreneurship and growing Virginia’s economy are gaining notice. Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, an entrepreneur himself, was on hand for the dedication of the Strome College of Business. During one of several visits to campus, Gov. McAuliffe participated in a discussion with some of the University’s military-affiliated students and local residents whose entrepreneurial initiatives have sprouted with ODU’s help.

The Governor and the General Assembly have expressed their collective desire to diversify the commonwealth’s economy beyond direct federal spending related to defense contracts, to attract greater investments in high-tech, education and trade.

Old Dominion hears the call. It is our mission to ensure that bright innovators, with substantive skills and ideas, view Hampton Roads and Virginia as a desirable alternative to Washington, D.C., or other states, for launching and growing their businesses.

During the spring semester, author Guy Kawasaki drew 600 people to Old Dominion’s Ted Constant Convocation Center for an inspiring President’s Lecture on “The Power of Enchantment” and “The Power of Innovation.”

Apple’s former chief evangelist told the audience he hopes the next great high-tech startup is being developed in an Old Dominion University residence hall right now.

We do too.

-John R. Broderick, President
Old Dominion University
When ODU alum Beth Polson ’73 was invited to address her alma mater’s graduates in December 1995, the Emmy award-winning writer and producer for television and made-for-TV movies polled her friends and associates to see how many of them remembered their graduation speakers. She found that not one of them could recall who their speaker was, much less what he or she said.

Memories, of course, fade with the passage of time. Perhaps the best we can reasonably expect of a commencement speaker is that he or she inspires us at that particular moment in time before we take those first steps on the road to the real world.

Many ODU commencement speakers have certainly delivered on that expectation, whether the venue was the old Center Theatre, Scope, Foreman Field or the Ted Constant Convocation Center.

Speaking at the Ted to students from the College of Arts and Letters and the Frank Batten College of Engineering and Technology on May 7, 2011, ODU graduate Adriane M. Brown ’80, president and COO of Intellectual Ventures, exhorted them to prepare to let go of “comfort zones” that “breed conventional thinking and business-as-usual actions.” She concluded her remarks: “The truth is that it’s only when we’re willing to think the unthinkable, to take unorthodox action, to set aside our comfort, it’s only when we are willing to sacrifice what we are for what we can become, that we can truly unleash the unlimited power of our minds and the endless force of our creative spirit.” Inspirational words, indeed!

While many commencement speakers encourage members of their captive audience to go forth and make their mark in the world, others entreat them to leave the world a better place than they found it. That was the message imparted by Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children’s Defense Fund, who spoke to degree candidates from the colleges of Arts and Letters, Engineering and Technology and Health Sciences the morning of May 5, 2007, at the Ted. She told the students to ask, “not how much can I get, but how much can I give. ...” She urged those graduating that day to take family life seriously and to be careful of working just for money, noting, “Don’t confuse wealth or fame with character.”

ODU’s May 6, 2000, speaker was a familiar face to virtually all of the students seated that day at Foreman Field. “It’s certainly a beautiful day in this neighborhood,” proclaimed the late Fred McFeely Rogers, host of PBS’s long-running “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood.” With his down-to-earth style and measured delivery, so familiar to the many students who had grown up watching him on television, Rogers offered much for them to ponder at this new stage in their lives.
“We will all discover sooner or later that what is essential has very little to do with IQs and honors and titles and fame,” he told the students, who welcomed him with a standing ovation. “It has very little to do with the fancy outsides of life. What ultimately nourishes our souls is knowing that we can be trusted; that we never have to fear the truth; that the foundation of our very being is good stuff.”

One year earlier, it was Sam Donaldson, then a 30-year news veteran and chief White House correspondent for ABC News, who addressed more than 2,400 degree candidates at the university’s 90th commencement at Scope. In addition to offering the traditional words of advice, Donaldson shared what he said was his No. 1 rule for life: “Get your mouth in gear, and hope the brain follows.”

The late Norfolk Division alum and Portsmouth native Tommy Newsom ’48, longtime assistant conductor of Johnny Carson’s “Tonight Show” orchestra, punctuated his May 9, 1987, address with humor and candor, dispensing counsel from what he called Poor Thomas’ Almanac. Among the nuggets he shared that morning: “Of all the qualities one must have, attitude is the most important — after ability.” And: “Don’t be too critical of yourself in front of others — there will always be somebody who will agree with you.” For his final piece of advice to those seated before him on Foreman Field, he proffered a simple lesson in humility, repeating something legendary Dallas Cowboys football coach Tom Landry was known for telling his players: “When you get in the end zone, act like you’ve been there before.”

One of the most memorable commencement speakers of recent years, as evidenced by the rousing standing ovation he received at the end of his address, was Barry C. Black, chaplain of the United States Senate, who spoke to degree candidates from the Darden College of Education and the College of Business and Public Administration the afternoon of May 11, 2013. A retired rear admiral, Black was a commanding presence on the Constant Center stage, delivering his message in a clear and powerful voice.

“When you leave here, there will be opportunities for you to do the minimum, to refuse to go the extra mile, but if you are going to maximize your possibilities, refuse to give less than your best. You have untapped potential; you have untapped capacities,” he said.

One of the world’s most notable figures gave the address at ODU’s Dec. 14, 2003, commencement — but not in person. Due to a snowstorm in the Northeast, Holocaust survivor, Nobel Peace Prize winner, writer and teacher Elie Wiesel was not able to get a flight to Norfolk. He did, however, forward his remarks to the university, which were read to ODU’s graduating class by Lawrence A. Forman, Rabbi emeritus of Ohef Sholom Temple in Norfolk. Forman served as director of the university’s Institute for Jewish Studies and Interfaith Understanding, at the time.

The inspirational address was quintessential Wiesel: “When I was your age, students, I had many questions. I still have them. But I will not allow them to become a wall between us. I favor doors and windows. Walls are for prisons. I celebrate freedom. To be free is essential, but to help others gain freedom is even more rewarding. That applies to all intellectual endeavors endowed with ethical resolve. Both ethos and logos imply the existence of ‘the other.’ Remember, God alone is alone. Human beings are not alone and must never be. And to the prisoner in his prison, to the patient in her hospital bed, to the hungry mother in Africa who cannot feed her emaciated child, we must say in
our own words: ‘You are not alone.’ The key word remains: ‘Remem-
ber.’ Again with my profound gratitude, I wish you a future filled with
learning, peace, fervor and hope.”

The first formal commencement exercises conducted by ODU’s
predecessor institution, the two-year Norfolk Division of William &
Mary, took place in June 1945 at the new Larchmont School audito-
rium, where 17 students were awarded Associate of Arts degrees. In
1956, the Norfolk Division awarded its first four-year baccalaureate
diplomas to 15 students. A.E.S. Stephens, Virginia’s lieutenant gov-
ernor, gave the historic commencement address that evening in the
administration building (now Rollins Hall). Among his remarks that
day: “You have enjoyed the priceless advantage of higher education –
a gift which can never be purloined from you. More will be expected
of you, therefore, than of those who have not had your opportunities.”

Virginia Beach resident W. Frank Latham Jr., a member of the
’56 graduating class and a former Alumni Association president, was
invited to return to his alma mater 50 years later to congratulate the
university’s 100,000th graduate, Jacqueline Honaker, as she walked
across the stage to receive a bachelor’s degree in nuclear medicine
technology.

For the past eight years, Karen Meier, assistant vice president for
community engagement, university events and licensing, and her staff
have been tasked with coordinating ODU’s commencements – with
responsibility for everything leading up to the ceremonies themselves,
including all details involving the speakers, honorary degree recipients
and other members of the platform party. Meier and her crew are
credited with fully automating the commencement process, making use
of technology to register participating students, send them emails in the
weeks leading up to graduation, generate their guest tickets and provide
their name cards, complete with phonetic spellings, for the readers.

Meier took over when the university recently had begun the
two-ceremony format in May so that then-President Roseann Runte
could shake the hand of every graduate who walked across the stage,
a tradition current President John R. Broderick has continued. Since
2012, ODU has expanded to three May ceremonies in addition to the
two in December.

Hosting so many commencements involves countless hours of
work, not only by Meier and her staff, but also by many other offices
and individuals throughout the campus that play supporting roles.
Attention to detail is vital, as evidenced by the seemingly endless
checklist Meier and her crew must complete in preparation for each
event.

She, in fact, learned a valuable lesson at her first commencement on
Dec. 17, 2006, when John Casteen, then-president of the University of
Virginia, was the scheduled speaker. With the step-off for the ceremo-
ny only minutes away, Casteen was nowhere to be found. Turns out
he had wandered off to McDonald’s on Hampton Boulevard, in full
regalia, to grab a cup of coffee. No one had his cell phone number,
which Meier says has since become required information of all plat-
form party members. Fortunately, Casteen made it to the Ted in time
for the start of the ceremony.

As one might imagine, Meier has lots of good stories about past
commencements and speakers. One snafu, she recalls, occurred at the
morning ceremony on Dec. 13, 2008, when then-Gov. Tim Kaine
was the speaker. After opening his remarks, Kaine’s microphone went
out. Fortunately, the original cordless microphone was replaced with
a wired version, and his address went off without any further hitches.
That near-disaster might have derailed other, less-experienced speak-
ers, Meier said, but Kaine took it all in stride and with good humor.
Since then, however, a policy was established to use only wired micro-
phones at the Ted, no matter what the event.

Meier also remembers other notable commencement happenings,
including: a marriage proposal to a surprised graduate as she walked
off the stage (she said “yes”); longtime university marshal Gary Cross-
man staying on in that role two years after his retirement so he could
have a front-row seat to watch a grandson and granddaughter receive
When you leave here, there will be opportunities for you to do the minimum, to refuse to go the extra mile, but if you are going to maximize your possibilities, refuse to give less than your best. You have untapped potential; you have untapped capacities.”

BARRY C. BLACK, CHAPLAIN OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE, OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER, MAY 2013

their degrees in May and December, 2010, respectively; a ceremony where former Alumni Association president Jeff Ainslie reached out to catch a falling graduate who had trouble negotiating the steps in her high-heeled shoes; and the time after the morning ceremony on Dec. 19, 2009, when honorary degree recipient Blythe McGarvie, CEO and founder of Leadership for International Finance, had to be rescued from her flooded car on Hampton Boulevard, near Taste, following a torrential downpour.

A framed photo of Meier's favorite commencement speaker, Fred Rogers, hangs on her office wall in Koch Hall. It was not just the moving address he gave, but the events that led up to his appearance that she will always remember. After the media picked up on the complaints of a few students who didn’t think the host of a children’s TV show was the best choice to give a commencement address to a now post-college-age crowd, Meier said Rogers called her and offered to withdraw, saying that he wouldn’t want to be a disruptive presence on such a special day and would not be hurt if another speaker was enlisted.

“IT was really an isolated case – just a few students who had very little knowledge of what Fred Rogers and his entire family had done for education,” said Meier, whose office was responsible for the platform party at that time. “All they saw was 'Mister Rogers' Neighborhood.’” In addition to his role as TV host, Rogers was known in many circles as a tireless advocate for children’s education, an author and songwriter, she noted.

After Meier assured him that everything would be fine (with fingers and toes crossed), Rogers agreed to make the trip to Norfolk, and asked to meet with the students who had complained. “They went behind closed doors and had a conversation prior to the ceremony,” Meier recalls, “and those students came out of the room with tears in their eyes. They were so apologetic for their behavior because they had no idea who he was and what he stood for. They had seen him only through a very narrow lens.”

Meier said you could have heard a pin drop on Foreman Field during the moment of silence Rogers asked for preceding his address so the students could pause and reflect on their parents and others who had helped make this day possible for them. The students hung on his every word that day, giving him a standing ovation at the end of his address. “After all that had happened, it was incredible and gratifying to see the respect he so deserved extended to him,” Meier said.

Before heading off to the airport to return home, Rogers thanked Meier for her handling of the ceremony and presented her with a signed copy of his commencement address.

The tradition of processing across Kaufman Mall to the Constant Center, begun in 2006, was enhanced three years ago when Meier arranged to have the students filmed as they walked, danced and cavorted across the bronze university seal (an ODU tradition itself: students are not supposed to step on the seal until they graduate). The live-action footage appears on the jumbotron scoreboard screens inside the Ted, watched by family members and friends awaiting the start of the ceremony. “Processing across Kaufman Mall and the seal has become one of our most cherished traditions,” Meier said. “Students have really embraced that experience. Until a few years ago, no one got to see them go across the seal. Now there are all kinds of shenanigans.”

Meier says overseeing ODU’s commencement ceremonies “is probably one of the most rewarding and cherished things I do at the University. Every time I hear ‘Pomp and Circumstance,’ I tear up. It’s why we’re all here.” ✡
James L. Bugg Jr., who served as Old Dominion University’s second president between 1969 and 1976, died Jan. 15, 2015, in Norfolk. He was 94.

Bugg is remembered as a dedicated scholar and devoted supporter of ODU who, during his presidency, helped the institution begin its transformation from parochial college to research university.

Said current ODU President John R. Broderick, “Dr. Bugg was always so positive and excited about the university and where it was going. We all know he had much to do with our academic growth and the shared governance spirit, which is still alive and well today. Both he and his late wife, Anne, were always committed to making ODU the best place it could be for faculty, staff and students.”

Bugg was born in Farmville, Va., receiving his B.A., Summa Cum Laude, from Hampden-Sydney College in 1941. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, in 1942 and 1950 respectively, serving between these years in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. He worked as a professor of history in Missouri for two decades and was chairman of the Department of History at the University of Missouri from 1959-62. Bugg was chancellor at the University of Missouri at St. Louis when appointed president of ODU in 1969.

ODU had recently shed its “college” title when Bugg arrived in Norfolk. His goal was to make Old Dominion a university in fact, as well as in name, by increasing academic rigor, adding new four-year degree programs and updating existing ones. By the time he left the presidency, Old Dominion offered bachelor’s degrees in 47 areas of specialization, master’s degrees in 27, and the University’s first doctoral programs in engineering and oceanography. He also created the University Senate, a University-wide governance structure in which faculty, administrators and students were represented.

After retiring from the presidency in 1976, Bugg returned to teaching and research as the Constance & Colgate Darden Professor of History and Education. He retired from the faculty in 1991.

Bugg leaves a son, James L. Bugg III, and daughter, Anne Bugg Payne; their spouses Ann Stuart Bugg and George Payne; and four grandchildren. Bugg’s wife of 58 years, Anne Hunter Bugg, died Dec. 30, 2013, in Norfolk.

“Dr. James L. Bugg Jr. was a loving husband, father and educator,” his children said, in a statement to the University.

“His everyday actions and the supportive environment he provided instilled in his family and his students the importance of education, integrity and the highest morality,” they continued. “He was the patriarch of the family and a brilliant orator who enthralled all around him regularly with his detailed historical accounts of personal and family events as well as the history of America that he adored. His dedication to God and his church set the tone for a positive upbringing and taught us beautiful life lessons and shaped us to be the people we are today.”

Memorial donations may be made to The James L. Bugg Jr. Scholarship at Old Dominion University or Christ and St. Luke’s Episcopal Church. Online condolences may be sent to the family at hdoliver.com.
A Tribute to James L. Bugg Jr. by Charles O. Burgess

The recent death of Jim Bugg should remind us of his importance to Old Dominion University and to the region. In many ways, his was the pivotal presidency in the history of the University, and it is sad that he is not better remembered and given more credit for the monumental task he accomplished in turning a small local college into a credible university. Despite huge challenges, he instituted many needed changes in university mission, academic programs and faculty and student culture that later administrations could build on.

The institution had been founded in 1930 as a two-year branch of the College of William & Mary. Public higher education in Virginia then and for decades to come consisted of “the University” (in Charlottesville), “the College” (in Williamsburg), Tech (in Blacksburg), VMI, and a few “normal schools,” which prepared teachers. For its first 25 years, “the Division,” as the Norfolk branch of William & Mary came to be called, had a strictly limited function of offering freshman and sophomore classes to Norfolk citizens who couldn’t afford or were otherwise unable to attend four-year colleges. It also came to offer vocational training, even establishing a satellite center during World War II to train shipyard workers.

Finally, in 1955, under the leadership of then-provost Lewis Webb, it was authorized to award bachelor’s degrees in a few fields. The first baccalaureates graduated in the spring of 1956. Finally, Webb mobilized enough local business and political support and, against the opposition of William & Mary, got the state to approve independent status in 1962, under the name Old Dominion College. Webb became the first president. In the next seven years, ODC gained a few master’s programs, almost entirely part-time, but still remained essentially an undergraduate institution with an almost completely local clientele. It also had very inadequate state funding, even for an undergraduate college, and a faculty with a heavy teaching load and no expectations of research. Most of the faculty lacked doctoral degrees, though by the late 1960s, that was changing.

What Frank Batten (the late Landmark Communications founder/chairman and ODU benefactor) and his colleagues on the Board of Visitors realized was that in one of the state’s largest population areas, with a major seaport and military presence, an institution was needed to serve as the intellectual focus of the region and to develop advanced degree programs and research that would be appropriate. The need for change was made clearer by the fact that the institution’s original mission was no longer as relevant as it had been; the establishment of the state community college system (Tidewater Community College opened in 1968) would ultimately satisfy the need for vocational training and, to some extent, for freshman-sophomore classes for local students planning to transfer elsewhere for their bachelor’s degrees.

So (perhaps with more hope than reality) the board renamed Old Dominion College to Old Dominion University in 1969 as it was seeking a president who could turn the new name into a reality. The board settled on Jim Bugg. In recruiting him, Batten emphasized that Bugg’s mission, above everything else, was to build a genuine university in Hampton Roads. This meant clearly defining a mission appropriate to Hampton Roads that distinguished it from other universities in the state; strengthening the undergraduate programs to meet national standards, and especially developing graduate programs through the doctoral level that could be recognized nationally for their quality; strengthening the teaching and research capabilities of present faculty and recruiting new ones needed to meet the new research and graduate mission; and attracting a stronger and more diverse student body from across the state, as well as nationally and internationally, and especially in graduate programs.

In the seven years of his presidency, Jim went a huge distance toward accomplishing these goals, and the university in 1976 was radically different from what it had been in 1969. Under Jim’s guidance ODU developed a focus on its urban mission, one it could claim since all other established graduate institutions were in non-urban regions, and ODU’s location in a major international port gave it opportunities as well. Ultimately, under his leadership, fine and performing arts, urban education, health-related studies, international studies and marine and environmental studies became the foci around which programs and research were to be built. Existing programs in engineering and business were also to be strengthened, with consideration particularly to the kinds of enterprise existing in the region.

Jim’s leadership in setting a mission was crucial to the development of ODU, especially in the early years. As the university’s national reputation grew and it became an established part of the education scene in Virginia, the strictly urban emphasis has become less overriding, but it continues to be a factor in the teaching and research ODU emphasizes. Jim was the president who did the heavy lifting in elevating the school from a college to a university and giving a direction that others could follow and build upon. His contributions need to be recognized, and I hope the current board will find a way to suitably honor Jim Bugg’s place in university history.
Moskov Amaryan resembles Albert Einstein. “People do comment on this,” he says, “even when I am pumping gas. I do not object.” This resemblance comes sharper into focus when you know that Amaryan is a nuclear physicist, originally from Armenia, professor of physics for the past 11 years at Old Dominion University and physicist of international repute who, for 10 years prior to coming to ODU, held senior scientists positions in Rome, Amsterdam and Hamburg. For several years, he led a large international collaboration of more than 30 universities from all over the world. Currently, he is doing research at Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility in Newport News.

Amaryan’s Kurdish ethnicity comes up regularly in his conversations these days because of the turmoil and fighting resulting from the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Not only is Amaryan a Kurd – he was raised and educated in Armenia, when it was part of the Soviet Union – but he is also a member of the religious group known as the Yazidis, who in recent months were targets of some of ISIS’s deadliest attacks on civilians.

Anyone who follows the spread of ISIS knows of its incursions into the territory that has come to be known as Kurdistan. This region, which has a majority Kurdish population, but has no formal recognition as an independent state, includes parts of northern Syria, northern Iraq, western Iran and southeastern Turkey. In the past year, Kurdish fighters have engaged ISIS armies and, in many encounters, have been able to drive back the insurgents.

“I am not an expert in the history or politics of the Middle East and Asia Minor, but I am from that region and have a genetic link to that region, and over time have absorbed the history and politics,” Amaryan says. In numerous ways, he believes, Western countries have, since the end of World War I, made missteps in drawing national borders in the region and have aggravated tensions between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. ISIS has been able to take advantage of this strife, and of dissatisfaction with despotic leaders, he adds.

The Kurds have long been allies of the United States. “Not one U.S. soldier has been killed in Kurdistan,” Amaryan says. “Kurds were doing all they could to protect them.”

He says if he could offer advice to President Obama, he would make three suggestions.

One is to press for a global military pushback against ISIS. “In order to relieve the burden of responsibility on the American people, it must be declared a world crisis, and no one should remain silent or indifferent,” Amaryan says.

Two, the U.S. should recognize Kurdish fighters as “boots on the ground” in the region fighting on behalf of their own and U.S. interests and send them heavy arms directly and not via Baghdad. “Kurds are not asking for boots on the ground support from the U.S. military, only for arms.”

Finally, Amaryan would put in a request for some sort of recognition of a Kurdish state, either as an autonomy or part of a federation or even as an independent state. Many Kurdish nationalists want a formal Kurdish nation to be created in the vicinity of what is now called Kurdistan. “To be honest, I would be happy with a situation such as exists between Scotland and England, or Catalonia and Spain, but it doesn’t work in that region. Kurds need a state of their own. This will cool down the entire region,” he says.

But he says his overarching goal would be to promote peace, to relieve suffering in territories now affected by ISIS and also to give science an opportunity to flourish.

Nearly a decade ago he helped to arrange a memorandum of understanding promoting faculty and student exchanges between Old Dominion University and Salahaddin University in the Kurdish portion of northern Iraq. Since then, only one student from Iraq has come to study physics at ODU, and no one from ODU has ventured to Iraq.

“There has always been war and dangers. I would like to spend time there, but no one recommends this. Not colleagues; not my family. Security questions are not settled. My dream is for peace for all people in that region. Maybe stability will come if a new country is established for the Kurds, but, of course, this is difficult and I understand the problems. I mainly want people to be civilized and not kill each other. Especially for science, you need a peaceful environment.”
The Culture of Entrepreneurship

Students, faculty, alumni at ODU and government officials from Norfolk and the state of Virginia came together last fall for the dedication of the Strome Entrepreneurial Center. This event on the Norfolk campus was the ceremonial launch of a new initiative — a culture of entrepreneurship initiative — that already can boast of a sturdy foundation.

These “Entrepreneurial Spirit” pages will explore the assets that will propel the initiative. Mark Strome, who with his wife, Tammy, and their Strome Family Foundation, gave $11 million to ODU to promote entrepreneurship, topped the guest list at the Entrepreneurial Center dedication, along with U.S. Sen. Mark Warner and Gov. Terry McAuliffe.

Strome, who now lives in Southern California, earned an engineering degree from ODU in 1978 and is now chief investment officer for the Strome Group and Strome Investment Management. His support of entrepreneurship at ODU prompted the university’s Board of Visitors to change the name of ODU’s Business school to the Strome College of Business.

Since the dedication, the university has appointed a new dean of the Strome College of Business, John F. (Jeff) Tanner, who brings to the job extensive experience in business collaboration and entrepreneurship. He formerly served at Baylor University, where he was professor of marketing and founder of the Baylor Business Collaboratory.

The university also has tapped Nancy Grden, a business executive who has launched and helped to launch several companies, as the first permanent executive director of the Strome Entrepreneurial Center.

Finally, the center’s dedication coincided with the induction of the first class of the Old Dominion University Entrepreneurial Hall of Fame, which showcased the business success attained in recent decades by graduates and friends of the university, and the support these inductees have provided to ODU.

More about ODU’s entrepreneurial assets follows.

Brendan O’Hallam, Jon Cawley, Chuck Thomas and Jim Raper contributed to this Entrepreneurial Spirit content.
Mark Strome’s Comments: Entrepreneur Hall of Fame Induction

A wise man once said, entrepreneurs empower others by creating companies, which create jobs, which create more in lower-cost goods and services, which create a higher standard of living for society, which creates more empowered citizens with more purchasing power, which creates wealth, which funds more companies, etc., etc., etc.

Entrepreneurs are the secret sauce solving today’s problems. It’s no secret, the U.S. leads the world in entrepreneurial activity, and because of it we enjoy the highest standard of living. It is a solution to bad government, eradicating poverty and other social ills, solving our budget deficit, curing diseases, extending our life span, solving environmental problems like global warming, creating comfort and time for us to think, to educate ourselves to become more conscious so we understand ourselves and learn, among other things, of why we kill each other.

Government will tell you that it creates jobs. It does not. Entrepreneurs create jobs. When a person has a job, he’s empowered, he feels dignified, and he’s able to support himself and his family. This is all part of a vast virtuous circle that is instigated and fed by entrepreneurial activity. When I meet young people today, they all have a common thread that runs through them. They all want to save the world and make the world a better place.

Who is an entrepreneur? First of all, entrepreneurs are a very rare breed. Not everybody is an entrepreneur. While I’m sure there are no typical entrepreneurs, they have several traits in common. They are rebels. They are driven by instinct and not numbers. They sleep well at night even though they may not know where their next meal may come from. They are very, very, very creative. They’re impatient. They will be bored at meetings. They lack in attention span (guilty of that). They will not wait until things are analyzed and are clear. By the time that happens, they will be on to doing the next thing. They are paranoid about what they don’t know and what can hurt them. They are very self-responsible and will learn from their mistakes. They are bad planners and are guided by their experience. They are zoned when they are stressed and strained. From my perspective, they are driven by fear.

Confidence breeds hubris, which is kryptonite to an entrepreneur. Fear is God’s magic motivator. If you are terrified of failure, you will do whatever it takes to avoid it. If it happens, you will be terrified of being branded a failure and do whatever you can. But I’m confident that if you have some of the elements that I have just described, you will be compelled to act. Then fear will be your driver. There are questions if entrepreneurs are born, or if they are made. This is much harder to sort out. Don’t let the noise of other people’s opinions drown out your inner voice (which) somehow already knows what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.
Appointment of New Leaders Set the Stage

Jeff Tanner Bridges Academia and Private Business as New Strome College of Business Dean while Nancy Grden Takes Helm of Strome Entrepreneurial Center

Nancy Grden, who began work early this year as the first permanent executive director of the Strome Entrepreneurial Center at Old Dominion University, proposes a broad definition of “entrepreneur.” She has founded companies and created jobs, which is most people’s idea of what makes an entrepreneur. But there’s more to the label than that, she says.

To her, an entrepreneur could be a theater major who wants to better promote her productions. Or, it could be a future teacher who wants to instill adaptability and problem-solving skills in his students. Perhaps the label would define students who want to innovatively solve social and public policy problems.

“I think many people don’t even realize when they’re being entrepreneurial,” Grden said. “Not everyone has to be (Apple founder) Steve Jobs. But we can all do entrepreneurial activity wherever we are.”

For that reason, Grden is excited to be the first executive director of the Strome Entrepreneurial Center. She wants to help build on the startup culture that has existed at ODU since its inception; helping provide the tools necessary to use entrepreneurial activity on the university’s campus.

“If you look at the demographic interests of these students, they want to work on their own. They don’t want to go to work for somebody else. We offer the tools, skills and encouragement to help them do that,” she said.

Backed by an $11 million gift from the Strome Family Foundation, ODU’s Strome Entrepreneurial Center features an innovative program designed to empower ODU students from any academic discipline to create economic and social value in Hampton Roads, and beyond.

The center’s mission is to help students navigate the entire life cycle of the entrepreneurial process—from “pre-idea” to idea and through the planning, research, analysis, startup and initial operations stages.

Grden, who grew up in Pittsburgh, had entrepreneurial impulses at the University of North Carolina, while she was a master’s student in urban planning. (Her bachelor’s degree in economics is from Bucknell University.) Grden approached UNC administrators with the suggestion and funding to start a student-run urban planning journal. She was the first editor of Carolina Planning, an academic journal that still flourishes today.

“I was being an entrepreneur, and I didn’t realize it,” she said.

The ongoing process of building, adapting, growing and rebuilding has followed Grden throughout her career as she earned an M.B.A. at the University of South Carolina and, then, working in banking and in health care-related industries during periods of significant market change. Work with Bank of America brought her to Hampton Roads, where she experienced firsthand the importance of innovation and new product development “intrapreneurship,” or acting like an entrepreneur while working inside a large organization.

Grden also worked with and experienced startup opportunities with dynamic entrepreneurs like Dr. Ronald Dozoretz, who started national mental health company ValueOptions; and Jeff McWaters, who founded health insurance firm Amerigroup.

“They are truly visionary in how they can see opportunities, not only on the horizon, but over the horizon,” she said.

Grden relied on her own vision when she was instrumental in the formation and launch of Genomind, a personalized medicine biotech company for neuropsychiatry, where she was responsible for development, commercialization and strategy. She is also founder and president of Avenir LLC, an entrepreneurship and innovation-focused firm that directly advises new and emerging companies.

She is a strong supporter of Old Dominion University and its efforts to create a campus-wide entrepreneurial culture. She previously served as chair of the Executive Advisory Council for Old Dominion’s Strome College of Business and was appointed to the ODU Educational Foundation board.
J ohn F. (Jeff) Tanner, who brings extensive experience in business collaboration and entrepreneurship, joined Old Dominion University this spring as dean of the Strome College of Business. Tanner comes to the new post from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where he was professor of marketing and founder of the Baylor Business Collaboratory. He succeeds Vinod Agarwal, who was appointed as interim dean on July 1, 2014, to replace retiring Dean Gil Yochum.

At the Baylor Business Collaboratory, Tanner was responsible for securing funds and research opportunities for collaborative research with area businesses, yielding both actionable business results and high quality research publications.

“Dr. Tanner brings extensive leadership experience in business higher education,” said Provost Carol Simpson. “Prior to founding the Baylor Business Collaboratory, he served as associate dean for faculty development and research and as acting executive director of the Center for Professional Selling. He has also served as associate dean for undergraduate programs and as interim chair of the marketing department at Baylor.”

Tanner said he is “truly honored” to join ODU and lead the Strome College of Business. “There’s an excitement here that’s just palpable. It’s not just what the Stromes’ gift does to fuel entrepreneurship and innovation among students - it’s also about how the faculty and staff are ready to innovate in how we serve the community. The faculty and staff are making such a strong impact on the lives of ODU students and the economy; I can’t think of a more exciting opportunity or a more vibrant group of people to work with,” Tanner said.

He holds a Ph.D. in business administration from the University of Georgia as well as master’s and bachelor’s degrees in marketing from the University of North Texas.

Board positions Tanner holds include director of Korcett Holdings, an Internet services backbone provider; partnership in JK Tanner Inc., a research and marketing consultancy and investment company; and partnership in BPT Partners LLC, a CRM training consultancy.

2014 Class of the ODU Entrepreneurial Hall of Fame

William E. Lobeck Jr. ’63 He earned a degree in financial management and began his career in the 1960s at Norfolk Pontiac and Chevrolet dealerships. Within two decades Lobeck was one of the owners who turned the struggling Thrifty Car Rental into a thriving business. Subsequently, he has had successful stints as an executive associated with a who’s who of car rental companies, including Dollar Rent-A-Car, Snappy Car Rental, General Rent-A-Car, National Car Rental and Alamo Rent-A-Car. He sold his interests in the Alamo and National brands in 2007 to Enterprise Rent-A-Car.

“I’m very proud of this award. I’m Norfolk born and bred. …I’ve never purchased a profitable company. Every company I’ve ever bought has been in deep yogurt.”

Jamie Grooms ’84 He has 17 years of experience as a successful entrepreneur and has been involved with several startup companies specializing in advanced medical techniques and materials. Three years ago, he was appointed chief executive officer of the Florida Institute for the Commercialization of Public Research in Gainesville. His bachelor’s degree from ODU is in biology.

“Old Dominion University has to take a leadership role in this innovation economy. The university is the economic engine of the Hampton Roads community and it can help transform the community. You need to bring in the Chamber of Commerce, the cities, the business community. Then the university’s intellectual property and research become the fourth leg, the fourth driver to transformation. In Gainesville, Fla., where I live and work, I’ve actually been part of an innovation economy transformation, and it is a beautiful place to be.”

Ting Xu ’88 (M.S. ’89) With assistance from her husband, Frank Qiu, and brother, James Xu, both ODU graduates, she grew a decorative flag-making business into the Richmond, Va.-based Evergreen Enterprises Inc., one of the largest home and garden décor wholesalers in North America. Five years ago her enterprises expanded to include Plow & Hearth. Her degrees from ODU are in computer science.

“It is here at ODU that I saw snow for the first time. It is here that I had a professor help us secure a caption machine so that Frank and I could learn English. It was here that I was asked to join a professor at their home for the first time for Thanksgiving dinner. It was the wonderful experience we had at ODU that prepared us well to enter the real world, to get jobs, to get a green card, to start a company, buy a house, start a family.”

John R. Lawson II Under his leadership, the Hampton Roads-based W.M. Jordan Co. has become one of the largest construction managers in Virginia, with annual revenues of $500 million, and a ranking in Engineering News Record’s Top 400 Contractors in the United States for the past 29 years. Beneficiaries of his extensive volunteer work include Children’s Hospital of The King’s Daughters, Christopher Newport University’s $42 million Comprehensive Campaign, and the Virginia Tech Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon.

“What an entrepreneur is, from my viewpoint, is how you empower and how you get people to do so much more than they ever dreamed that they could do, because you give them a chance, you mentor, you teach them the joy of embracing change and lifelong learning. You’ve got to inspire people, you’ve got to create a vision, be a cheerleader, you’ve got to provide a great work environment, and that’s the way you can create a good company.”
As it is phasing in an enhanced focus on entrepreneurship, Old Dominion University can count on one expert in this field who is no newcomer to campus: James V. Koch, the Board of Visitors Professor of Economics and President Emeritus (1990-2001).

Among the dozen books Koch has published are two with co-author James L. Fisher, “The Entrepreneurial College President” (2004) and “Born, Not Made” (2008). The latter, especially, provides guidance to a university that is trying to develop a broad-based education program for entrepreneurs-to-be.

Obvious questions arise: Is entrepreneurship a path everyone can and should take? Can entrepreneurship really be taught?

Here is commentary from Koch:

“My reading of the available reputable, rigorous research on entrepreneurship indicates that both heredity and environment influence both the original appearance and the subsequent success of entrepreneurs. A fair reading of the research is that the hereditary loading is larger in importance than the environmental loading, but the two influences interact.

One’s genes are whatever they are, but sometimes a gene can be turned on or off by a person’s environment. In my book (‘Born, Not Made’), I cite some of this research.

Nevertheless, the conclusion is that it is difficult to select a random individual or student and turn him/her into an entrepreneur. Some individuals simply are not so inclined genetically. Others are. They certainly differ in terms of their willingness and ability to tolerate risk. Individuals self-select their occupations and risk-taking to some large extent.

“What the Strome College and Strome program can do is to make more successful those who have entrepreneurial inclinations. Frankly, it would be a waste of resources to attempt to do this for all students. One can, however, look at a combination of factors to identify the best prospects. The place to start is with students who say they want to be entrepreneurs; leaven the selection by examining their life and work experiences; their grades in certain classes (entrepreneurs need not be geniuses, but very few are dumb); and, their responses to a set of questions that examine an individual’s willingness to tolerate risks by confronting them with a series of choices. (Jim Fisher and I did this with a very large set of college presidents in ‘The Entrepreneurial College President’ to very good effect.)

“At the end of the day, we can make entrepreneurially-inclined individuals better entrepreneurs and more successful by teaching them accounting, economics, statistics, etc.; connecting them with other entrepreneurs; giving them real-life experiences; and exposing them to funding angels. There is lots of evidence in favor of this approach.”

Koch’s scholarship also points out two factors that may promote ODU’s culture of entrepreneurship: The campus has students from more than 100 countries, and the University is a military-friendly institution located in a military-intensive region.

In “Born, Not Made,” Koch notes research arguing that voluntary immigrants to the United States reflect entrepreneurial self-selection and are “disproportionately entrepreneurial.” Because they have left their home countries for an uncertain future in the United States, these people demonstrate entrepreneurial personality traits such as optimism and confidence, a preference for the new and a willingness to assume risk.

Koch also cited research by the Kauffman Foundation (which has been a sponsor of his scholarship) showing that 45 percent of military veterans start their own businesses after they exit the military.

“We need to foster entrepreneurship, risk taking, innovation, creativity. Mark and Tammy’s gift is allowing us to take it to the next level.”

–Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe
The hustle of Activity Hour adds to the Webb University Center lunchtime traffic jam. Passers-by glance at booths staffed by service volunteers and Old Dominion University sororities, while other students sprawl out on chairs, eating lunch or talking above the din.

Even within the maelstrom of activity in the Webb Center lobby, one corner stands out with its intensity of energy and noise. A crowd of students surround the pingpong table, roaring with approval as a furious rally is underway.

It seems like one of the participants shouldn’t fit in, at more than twice the age of anyone else around the table. But with sleeves rolled up and two buttons unfastened on his tailored shirt, Andrew Cohen is “schooling” the young students at table tennis.

An hour later, his business clothing back in place, Cohen resumes his day job — actually schooling students in the Gregory A. Lumsden Trading Room and Research Lab in Constant Hall.

“A U.S. investor was in the Japanese market. (He) would not have done as well this year, because the yen has depreciated versus the dollar,” Cohen says, as students follow along on Bloomberg Terminals in the Wall Street 101 class that he created for the Strome College of Business.

Cohen brings the same frenetic energy to the classroom, running students rapid-fire through company valuations, offering advice from a more than 15-year career on Wall Street.

His journey to the classroom has been filled with unique and challenging experiences, but Cohen says those twists and turns in his career have helped him find his passion. “I really love what I’m doing now,” he said.

Teaching financial literacy and Wall Street 101 to ODU students is also worlds away from where Cohen was 15 years ago. For almost a decade, Cohen, 50, was one of the top traders for Bernie Madoff’s firm in New York.

“The legal one,” he said with a wry smile.

Cohen had retired from the frenetic energy of Wall Street in 2000 and was living in Virginia Beach when he learned that his retirement and his family’s future. He thought about how much he enjoyed his semester teaching at ODU. As plans for the creation of a trading room at ODU advanced, Cohen was approached to manage the facility. Naturally, questions arose about his connection with Madoff. “Someone told me I was the most vetted employee in the history of the college,” Cohen said.

The Gregory A. Lumsden Trading Room and Research Lab opened in 2013 and contains 24 Bloomberg Terminals, which are portals to all of the real-time information that Bloomberg and other news and financial services collect and analyze.

Kiran Karande, associate dean and director of the Strome College M.B.A. program, said the facility is a tremendous benefit to students from across the ODU campus.

“The lab enables our students to experience how to use real-life data to make sound investment decisions. It is even more valuable to students who have taken the basic courses in finance,” Karande said.

The Trading Room itself is a significant asset, not just to the Strome College, but to all of Hampton Roads, said Interim Dean Vinod Agarwal. “What we are trying to do is let the community know that we have this facility, which can be of real benefit to financial analysts, supply chain managers. We want to provide this service to the community.”

In December, ODU hosted an event for financial professionals, introducing them to the power of the Bloomberg Terminals. Naturally, the seminar was led by Cohen. “He’s an asset to the college because of his knowledge and enthusiasm for teaching,” Agarwal said.

For Cohen, it’s an opportunity to continue his lifelong love of financial analysis, marrying that passion with his newfound one — imparting financial lessons to the next generation of investors.

“I want to teach them how to avoid some of the same mistakes I did,” Cohen said.
Remember that name, “Qwyvr” which is pronounced as quiver. It just may be the next big thing in mobile payment systems that use smartphones as “wallets.”

“It could be another PayPal,” says Bryan Sory, the Navy F-18 pilot who founded and leads Qwyvr LLC.

“This is the future,” says Ajay Gupta, pointing to the Qwyvr app on his smartphone. Gupta is an Old Dominion University computer science faculty member who also has an M.B.A., and a background himself in entrepreneurial activities. “The Qwyvr project is just one example of entrepreneurial projects in computer science at this university. We are not just dealing with theory. We’re into applications.”

In the spring of 2014, Sory and his main partner, Dave Whitmer, another Navy F-18 pilot, brought their partially realized idea for Qwyvr to Gupta and asked for software development help. “We had been involved (on the West Coast) with a third-party developer and we had overspent,” Sory explains. “We realized we didn’t have enough runway left to get this thing to market.” That is Sory’s jet-pilot way of saying that the startup company’s money would have run out if he relied upon “high burn rate” developers to make Qwyvr a reality.

Enter Gupta and an eager band of eight ODU computer science graduate students who took to the Qwyvr challenge with a dedication and speed that Sory calls “incredible.” Gupta and the students are affiliated with ODU’s Department of Computer Science Software Development Lab. Qwyvr has given Gupta and the lab research grants to pay for the software development.

After eight months of work with the ODU team, the spring of 2015 finds Sory confident enough to label Qwyvr as complete in its alpha version and nearing beta-minus status that will allow the system to reach a limited marketplace. “We need it in the App Store, and at that point we can get solid feedback – what users love about it, what they hate, suggestions they have. From there we can move to true beta status.”

Sory’s tells his story during an interview in an ODU computer science conference room where he sits beside Gupta and across the table from the grad students who have worked on Qwyvr. All of the students have their smartphones out, experimenting with the Qwyvr app and clearly wanting to move on to a demonstration that reveals what they have accomplished.

Their accomplishment, according to Sory, is unique. Qwyvr Pay, which is the core product of the company, is what the ODU computer scientists have developed. It is different from other digital wallets such as Apple Pay or Venmo in that it is a cash-based digital payment system that does not use credit card networks. It is also one of only a few platforms that use Bluetooth Low Energy wireless technology in a consumer-to-business context for no interaction—or “invisible”—payments.

“The card brands have bet heavily on Near Field Communications or NFC to pair mobile devices to a merchant’s terminal,” said Sory. “That’s like the ApplePay model, tap-to-pay. It’s okay but, really, was that faster throughput? The difference between ‘swipe’ and ‘tap’ is pretty negligible. We know we’re up against it, competing with big card brands, so we’re giving consumers and merchants what they really want: Faster, more secure, lower cost.”

It fell to the ODU computer scientists to make Qwyvr Pay user-friendly, which Gupta says was no small task. The software
had to be multi-platform in range, integrated with Google’s Android as well as Apple’s iOS operating systems. The “onboarding” process also had to cover two imperatives: to be seamless and secure. The process starts with a phone number, scanned ID and random questions (pulled from the user’s credit history) that must be answered. Later comes verification of the bank account from which Qwyvr Pay will pull a user’s cash. From there, the user can use his or her smartphone, via the app, like a prepaid debit card for transactions with other Qwyvr users or Qwyvr-ready businesses.

“The work involved a lot of late nights,” Gupta says, “and lots of battles with the entrepreneurs.” This quip is followed by a smile directed at Sory, who nods his agreement, and the ODU computer scientist adds, “Entrepreneurs think they know what they want, but they don’t always know. They allowed us to use creativity. Otherwise, it would have been no fun for us.”

This entrepreneurial idea came to Sory and Whitmer after they had been part of a Bitcoin pod on the West Coast that merged computer resources of its members to mine for Bitcoins. The two came to appreciate some aspects of Bitcoins — rapid throughput transactions and inflation-proof money, for example. But they also decided that Americans are not ready to adopt digital currency en masse.

“So we asked,” Sory explains, “How could we eliminate financial friction and give people and businesses a transactional platform that did for both sides — consumer and businesses — what current systems can’t do?” His thinking was influenced by his personal disaffection for easy credit and by the resentment he sees building among merchants about the cost of credit card transactions.

He believes credit cards are the villain, and, in the end, bad for the economy because of runaway consumer debt and the inequities of richer people with credit cards actually being subsidized in the marketplace by those less fortunate using cash. Those subsidies come from merchants raising prices to accommodate the money they have to pay credit card companies for each swipe of the card.

Typically, the merchant loses 3 percent per transaction, but it can be much more. Sory offers an example based on his partner Whitmer’s doughnut habit. “He’s got a local doughnut place he likes and they pay 3 percent per transaction, plus 50 cents per swipe. So their loss rate on a $6.14 tab is 11.14 percent. Obviously, the smaller the transaction, the deeper the cut, but think about all the low-margin businesses out there with an average sale of less than $10. They’re getting stabbed pretty deep by using cards.”

That same transaction with Qwyvr, according to Sory, would work like this: “Let’s say the merchant gives a 1 percent discount to Qwyvr users and pays Qwyvr 1 percent only when they withdraw their funds to their linked bank account. That’s at worst a 2 percent loss rate for the merchant and 6.14 cents back in the customer’s wallet. If that merchant finds a way to conduct her whole life in Qwyvr, less incentives to their customers, they just got a free payment system. The real critical difference to understand here is that unlike cards, we don’t monetize the transaction itself. We call it ‘Pay for the Product, Not the Transaction.’”

The typical American consumer uses credit cards because swiping is a painless way — and sometimes reckless way, according to Sory — to get the goods they want. As much as they object to credit card fees, merchants feel they must honor credit cards to bolster sales, and, besides, cash transactions carry “fees” of their own. Merchants spend a lot of time and money guarding against counterfeiting, theft and incompetent accounting, among other cash management issues. From the merchant’s perspective, Sory thinks of card acceptance like “The Prisoner’s Dilemma”: They would like to stop taking them but only if everyone else does as well.

It is with these arguments that Sory builds his case for Qwyvr. He is convinced that merchants are simply not going to tolerate the current credit card system much longer. In addition to the per swipe cost savings, Qwyvr cuts down on the customer payment account information that merchants need to store, thereby lessening the chance that hackers could steal sensitive customer information.

The Bitcoin buzz early in 2014 led Sory to ask ODU for help. A Hampton Roads entrepreneur who had invested in Bitcoins — and met Sory in the process — suggested that he get together with Gupta.

“A lot of folks say that you can’t start a tech company in Hampton Roads,” Sory says. “My answer is, ‘Why not? Have you seen how many bright, young, hungry developers there are at ODU? I’ve dealt with a lot of software companies and I have never been part of a faster, leaner bunch than Professor Gupta has assembled at Dragas Hall.’”

This spring, Sory reports that he has inked deals with several Hampton Roads food trucks, a major e-commerce player and four retail outlets in Pittsburgh (“of all places”) to allow payment via Qwyvr. “I do think we’re well-positioned to compete in the barren wasteland that is almost exclusively held by PayPal. And this platform will be known as one born in Hampton Roads.”
Only a few hours after arriving in Greece last summer, a group of 10 Old Dominion University students had already climbed the Pnyx, a hill in central Athens, and were taking in the city below. Nearby, Stavros Oikonomidis, a guide and faculty member at Arcadia University’s College of Global Studies, directed them to observe the visible landmarks below: The Acropolis. The Parthenon.
A HEAD START IN GREECE

New Study Abroad Program Offers Freshmen Travel Opportunities

BY MARY WESTBROOK
Going to Greece hadn’t been an easy decision for the students. They had worked part-time jobs to pay for the journey, juggled responsibilities to make time for the trip and overcome fears of being together nonstop with strangers in a foreign country — far from family and close friends, and from familiar food and rituals.

But standing on the hill, clustered in the small group, the students listened to Oikonomidis describe Athens as the birthplace of democracy and the Pnyx itself as one of the most important sites for those early gatherings, and they felt stirrings that are the hallmark of any great study abroad experience: Wonder. Connection. Humility. Suddenly, “instead of imagining these places in my mind, I knew how they looked,” said Alec Mang (Modeling & Simulation Engineering, 2018) of Yorktown, Va. He could see the landscape — touch it.

The trip to Greece last summer represented an important milestone for the students, but it also signified the start of something special for ODU. Mang and his fellow travelers weren’t typical study abroad students — juniors or seniors setting their sights on post-college life. Instead, they were incoming freshmen who jumped into an international study experience before spending a single semester as full-time students on the ODU campus.

By launching the First-Year Experience (FYE) Program, ODU became one of a very select number of U.S. universities — and the only school in Virginia — to develop a study abroad program specifically for first-year students. In doing so, ODU positioned itself on the leading edge of a new kind of study abroad experience, one that reimagines how and when students can best use their time in foreign countries to grow, learn and dream.

AN IDEA TAKES FLIGHT

If the birthplace of democracy can be traced to Athens, the birthplace of ODU’s FYE program can be found in a slightly less idyllic place: the Subway eatery in Webb University Center. There, after a serendipitous meeting during the summer of 2013, Terri Mathews, an associate dean of the College of Sciences, and Robert Wojtowicz, professor of art history and associate vice provost for graduate studies, came up with a wild idea: a study abroad trip that crossed disciplines, allowing students to study art history and geology simultaneously.

The duo was uniquely suited to guiding students to explore things beautiful and curious above and below ground. Mathews, who also directs the College of Sciences’ Math and Science Resource Center, holds an undergraduate degree in geology and a master’s degree in geophysical sciences. Wojtowicz, professor of art history, has a master’s in art history and archaeology and a doctorate in the history of art. Both have extensive classroom experience and already had led student groups on successful field exercises and study abroad trips around the American Southwest and to Europe, among other destinations.

Imagining all kinds of possibilities, Mathews and Wojtowicz took the idea to ODU Study Abroad Director Steve Bell — who needed a bit of convincing. “To me, the disciplines didn’t go together,” Bell admitted.
“At least, not at first. When I look at art history, I think that’s what happens after civilization has been formed. Geology is what happens before.”

But Mathews and Wojtowicz quickly changed Bell’s mind, painting a vivid picture that placed geology and art history not only on the same large continuum, but also within the same curriculum. More than that, as Bell listened to the pair passionately share their ideas and thoughtfully engage with each other, he realized they’d be the perfect faculty members for a project he was eager to get off the ground: the first-year experience.

GETTING STUDENTS ABROAD FASTER
The FYE idea had first percolated around 2011 when Marcelo Siles, executive director of ODU’s Office of International Programs, told Bell about a similar effort at the University of Northern Michigan. To Bell, FYE provided a solution to a challenge that plagues all study abroad offices: students’ limited time.

“When students apply to ODU and first arrive on campus, the vast majority tell us that they want to study abroad,” Bell explained. “But, traditionally, it’s been a junior- or senior-level experience. By the time most students get to that point in their academic career, they have other commitments: friends, jobs, sports, clubs, demanding coursework. So they end up not go-
ing. In a sense, we’re taking all that ambition we see in our freshmen and asking them to bottle it up for two years. We’re wasting it.”

From there, it was Bell’s turn to convince Mathews and Wojtowicz, who had originally envisioned their trip taking place in Italy with upperclassmen. After all, it’s one thing to lead a group of rising college seniors through a bustling foreign city, and another thing to be in charge of recent high school graduates.

“Students away from their parents for the first time?” Wojtowicz said. “It concerned me a bit in the beginning.”

Still, as Mathews reasoned, what better time to introduce students to a new culture — when are they more open to new ideas or all of the possibilities their own futures hold? “Students going away to college want to be seen as adults,” she said. “They want to reinvent themselves,” and be taken seriously.

Greece became the obvious destination early in the planning stages: It offered opportunities for geology and art history and, thanks to generous support from longtime ODU supporters, the Dragas family, and the Hellenic Studies Endowment, the trip would be more affordable for those promising students ready to get an early start on college life. (And a jump-start on their academic pursuits: The trip fulfilled seven general education hours of ODU academic credit; three hours from their Greece and the Visual Art coursework with Wojtowicz and four from Experiencing Geology in Greece coursework with Mathews.)

The final step? Track down those ambitious young students.

“We were looking for maturity, connection with this experience, people who had been leaders in the past,” said Bell, who worked closely with ODU’s Office of Undergraduate Admissions to promote the program and identify prospective candidates. “They had to have a sense of adventure and be ready for the rigors of the curriculum. We were looking for people who really stood out.”

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

Once the group arrived in Greece, after a short orientation on campus in Norfolk, it didn’t take long for Bell, Mathews and Wojtowicz to see they’d assembled the right students.

Shortly after their 10-hour plane trip, the group got lost in Athens, victims of the city’s expansive (and sometimes chaotic) mass transit system. The mix-up was an accident — but it was also reminiscent of an old study abroad trick for quickly orienting students (and sometimes purposefully disorienting them), said Bell: “Drop them in and let them figure it out. It doesn’t happen that way today because there’s so much more structure, but there’s something to that immediate immersion in a new culture.”

Instead of complaining or relying on their professors for advice, the students divided tasks among themselves and rose to the challenge.

“Two kids took out maps, others went to check street signs and others rummaged in their bags for addresses,” Wojtowicz said. “They were astonishingly poised and mature.” Ultimately, overcoming the mini crisis set the tone for the entire trip and sent a strong message to the students over the next 10 days: Be alert, prepared, open-minded and ready for adventure.

The itinerary included visits to ancient sites and landmarks in and around Athens — including the Acropolis, Temple of Olympian Zeus, the Ancient Athenian Agora and the historic city of Corinth — along with museums, churches, villages and natural wonders. Students spent time in ancient quarries and silver mines, at archaeological sites, castles and marketplaces and also hiked around gorges, caves and volcanoes and climbed down hillsides to isolated coves and beaches along a breathtaking coastline.

Much of their classroom work, including intensive labs, had been completed before the trip, during their orientation in Norfolk, where the students spent time at the Earth Science Laboratory on campus, toured local museums and participated in guided tours of some of the city’s Greek revival architecture.

While in Greece, the students’ education was ongoing and at times self-directed, but it all moved toward a central theme, set forward by Mathews and Wojtowicz: The land shapes people, and people shape the land — art history and geology, together on that long continuum.

Every visit to a natural site was a chance to talk about color and tex-
ture. Every stop at an ancient building was an opportunity to closely examine materials hoisted by man from the natural world.

MEMORIES, LARGE AND SMALL

For all the grand sights, many of the students said smaller, unplanned moments turned out to be the ones that stayed with them: rousing renditions of The Proclaimers’ “I’m Gonna Be (500 Miles)” on long bus rides, card games, Stavros regaling them with stories and their professors’ delight at seeing long-studied treasures firsthand. (A story all of the students recounted included Mathews holding up the bus and encouraging the students to “Wait! Wait! Just look at one more rock formation over here...”)

For Mang, another highlight came when the group made an unexpected detour at the base of a volcano and ended up squeezing in a swim in a nearby lake. “Walking around, exploring, that’s what I liked most of all,” he said.

The trip gave shape to Greece, the country and its people, said Hope Wager (Communication, 2018) of Bristow, Va., who remembers one particularly engaging evening when, while dining with some of her classmates, a flurry of waiters surrounded them, delivering trays of artfully arranged food, overwhelming the girls with compliments and attentive service.

“They were calling us beautiful angels, while we were feasting on watermelon,” she said.

The experience “opened my mind to new ways of thinking and seeing things,” said Addy Hawkins (Mathematics, 2018) of Chesapeake, Va., who had already traveled extensively in Central America before the trip. “I think travel does that for you — helps you become more open-minded.”

BACK HOME, STILL REFLECTING

By the end of the trip, Mang said he’d learned as much about himself as he did about Greece; he even discovered a “hidden” talent.

“I learned that I’m really good with maps,” he said with a laugh. “Before the trip, my parents always handled that kind of thing. On this trip, I realized I could do that, too.”

For some students, the start of the fall semester only strengthened lessons learned. In her world literature course, Christina Jagoe (Computer Science, 2018) of Falls Church, Va., perked up when a Greek author was mentioned.

“Knowing where those authors come from, what the text means within the context of the country, that’s been exciting for me,” she said. “I can say, ‘I was there! I understand what this means.’ It’s harder for people who have never left the country to have that kind of perspective.”

And of course, that’s what Bell, Mathews and Wojtowicz wanted most for their students — a sense of confidence and purpose, curiosity about the world and their place in it.

“The trip was an odyssey for them,” Wojtowicz said. “It captured their imagination.”

Peru is the destination of the First-Year Experience Program that will be offered to incoming freshmen in the summer of 2015. Faculty members Michael Allen, in environmental geography, and Lee Slater, in world literature, will lead this multi-discipline study abroad trip. For information, call 757-683-5378 or send an email inquiry to studyabroad@odu.edu.
Skwirot's New Novel Weaves Twain Into Murder Mystery on the Mississippi

When Monarch last reported (Fall 2012) on the fiction of Rick Skwirot (M.F.A. ’02), he was channeling Ernest Hemingway in the novel “Key West Story.” His latest book, “Fail” (Blank Slate Press), which is set in and near St. Louis on the Mississippi River, takes inspiration from Mark Twain.

Weaving Twain and his characters, such as Huckleberry Finn and Pudd’nhead Wilson, into a modern murder mystery may seem like a stretch, but Skwirot skillfully borrows Twainian devices having to do with mistaken identity, faked death and racial prejudice for this fast-moving tale. More importantly, Skwirot taps into Twain’s skepticism about politicians and bureaucrats to develop the main theme of his story: the way our schools and society fail poor youngsters – especially minorities – and relegate them to second-class citizenship or lives of crime.

The book’s opening epigram is from Twain: “Every time you stop a school, you will have to build a jail.”

Although Skwirot came up with the idea for “Fail” years ago when he was teaching remedial grammar to college students in his hometown of St. Louis, the storyline has current relevance because of the police shooting last year of young Michael Brown in suburban Ferguson, Mo., just north of St. Louis.

Author Terry Baker Mulligan, in a review of “Fail,” wrote: “Art imitates life in this prescient novel. Both crime fiction and a clarion call to rescue America’s underserved schools, ‘Fail’ is also proof positive that the Ferguson, Mo., uprising was inevitable.”

The book’s central character is Carlo Gabriel, a police lieutenant of Mexican and African American heritage who tries to rehabilitate his reputation by taking on a discreet investigation into the disappearance of a college English instructor who is married to the press secretary for the mayor of St. Louis. Suffice it to say that the plot has more twists than a mountain road, and along the way you learn that a faked suicide can mean two different things.

Skwirot is the author of four novels and two nonfiction books. He also works as a freelance and feature writer, ghostwriter and editor. He has taught creative writing at Washington University in St. Louis and served as the 2004 Distinguished Visiting Writer at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

He is the co-founder and director of the nonprofit Key West Writers Lab, and he now lives in Key West, Fla.

“Ode to the Heart Smaller than a Pencil Eraser” By Luisa Igloria

Igloria, professor and director of the M.F.A. program in fine arts at Old Dominion University, won the Swenson Poetry Prize (Utah State University) for her latest collection even before the book was officially published last summer.

The poem from which the title comes is an ode to small birds, especially hummingbirds, whose tiny hearts beat “ten times a second, hammering faster than we could hear” as they live life at full bore. By comparison, the artist confesses, “I’ve lived mostly alone in the bricked-up house of my heart, but a wind teeters at the door, smelling of skin and apple breath.”

Mark Doty, judge for the 2014 Swenson Award, wrote: “When Luisa Igloria cites Epictetus’ – as soon as a thing has been seen, it is carried away, and another comes in its place’—he introduces the crowded and contradictory world her poems portray: a realm of transience, yes, where the vulnerable come to harm and everything disappears, but also a scene of tremendous, unpredictable bounty, the gloriously hued density this poet loves to detail.”

“Ode” is Igloria’s 15th full book of poetry.
Professor Yetiv Casts a Critical Eye On America’s Recent Oil Boom


A two-time winner of the Choice Outstanding Academic Book award, Yetiv sheds light on a subject at the core of American and global security. The last decade has seen a far-reaching revolution in the oil industry, both in the United States and globally. By some measures, America is on pace to become the world’s biggest oil producer – an outcome that was inconceivable just a few years ago. But what does this massive oil boom mean for American and global security?

In this book, which is the first to analyze the American oil boom comprehensively, Yetiv finds that the boom has enhanced American and global oil security in some important ways, but that its benefits are overestimated. He argues that this is vital to understand if we are to produce sensible and sustainable energy policies.

The book demonstrates that raising the level of domestic oil production will never solve America’s energy problems, without a serious national (and global) strategy to decrease oil consumption. Producing more oil is not the same as using less oil when it comes to American and global security.

In its conclusion, the book develops such a sustainable strategy which is called “Synergy,” and shows how a synergy of the American oil boom and sustainable energy practices can produce significant security results.

While Yetiv takes stock of our new era of heightened petroleum production, the book also offers a panoramic view of the global geopolitics of oil, America’s energy future, and core security issues of our age. As such, the book should appeal to scholars and students of energy, security and American foreign policy as well as to the interested lay reader.

Joseph S. Nye Jr., Harvard University Distinguished Service Professor and author of “Is the American Century Over?”, wrote in an endorsement of the book: “Oil remains vital to global security. In this very readable book, Steve Yetiv dispels myths and provides a fascinating account both for analysts and for the general public.”


His high standing as a scholar and a teacher brought him a 2012 Outstanding Faculty Award, which is sponsored by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). Yetiv was recognized by SCHEV for his “superior performance in teaching, research and service.”

“Myths of the Oil Boom” is a book for the interested lay reader. In this very readable book, Yetiv dispels myths and provides a fascinating account both for analysts and for the general public. The book demonstrates that raising the level of domestic oil production will never solve America’s energy problems, without a serious national (and global) strategy to decrease oil consumption. Producing more oil is not the same as using less oil when it comes to American and global security.

Devotees of detective fiction are a tight-knit family worldwide, and since the mid-1970s Greene has been feeding their passion by providing commentary and criticism to boost recognition, as well as the respectability, of the genre.

In 2001 he won the Ellery Queen Award given by the Mystery Writers of America to “outstanding people in the mystery publishing industry.” Five years later, the organizers of Malice Domestic, the traditional mystery story fan convention, gave Greene their Point Award honoring “individuals… who have made outstanding contributions to the Malice Domestic genre.”

Greene is perhaps best known for his definitive biography of John Dickson Carr, an American (1906-77) who lived for much of his writing life in England and has been called one of the greatest writers of the complex, puzzle-centered Golden Age mysteries. Carr’s “The Hollow Man” (1935) is often cited as his masterpiece.

Through tireless editing chores and the writing of introductions and magazine articles, Greene has helped to introduce new audiences to the work of writers with Golden Age or Victorian-era credentials, such as Carr, A.A. Milne (who wrote “The Red House Mystery” as well as books about Winnie-the-Pooh), Ngaio Marsh, Mary Roberts Rinehart and Sax Rohmer.

“Mythologies Unlocked” offers 25 essays, including “The Reader Is Warned: Discovering John Dickson Carr and the Words of Douglas G. Greene” by Michael Dirda, the Washington Post book critic and winner of the Pulitzer Prize; “The Secret Life of Eric the Skull: Dorothy L. Sayers and the Detection Club” by Peter Lovesey, a premier British crime fiction author who received the Cartier Diamond Dagger for Lifetime Achievement from the Crime Writers Association; “The Incandescent Claptrap of Hamilton Cleek” by William Rueloffmann, page columnist for The Virginian-Pilot as well as a detective fiction writer; and “The Amateur Detective Just Won’t Do: Raymond Chandler and British Detective Fiction” by Curtis Evans, the detective fiction critic who is the collection’s editor.

Greene, whose Ph.D. in British history is from the University of Chicago, joined ODU as an instructor in 1971 and achieved the rank of professor in 1985. Between 1983 and 1999, he was director of the university’s Institute of Humanities. He became chair of the history department in 2010 and professor emeritus in 2012.
From teacher’s aide to secretary to paralegal, and then becoming one of the few women attorneys to specialize in maritime law, Deborah C. Waters ’85 has sailed an uncharted course in a legal career that spanned the United States and carried her to several foreign countries.

And she’s still forging into new directions as the only and perhaps first maritime lawyer serving on the Virginia Port Authority’s Board of Commissioners.

“From being the granddaughter of a farmer in Chesapeake to being one of 13 members of the board, this is probably the biggest accomplishment I’ve had,” Waters said. “The whole region depends on our port. You can’t go over a bridge without seeing the ships and tugboats and barges and Navy ships going through our rivers, in and out of our harbor. I want to do a really good job.”

From the big windows in her sixth-floor office in the Town Point Center building in downtown Norfolk, Waters enjoys a daily parade of vessels plying the Elizabeth River. A shared conference room on a higher floor allows an even better view that includes the rows of towering container cranes at the port’s Norfolk International Terminals facility.

“When I realized that I can see the marine terminal,” Waters said, “I knew this is where I wanted to be.”

But getting there from a rural corner of Chesapeake to ODU to eventually starting her own law firm, Waters Law, in March 2011 has been a rare journey.

Deborah Culpepper Waters grew up on family farmland in what is now the suburbanized Western Branch section of Chesapeake. Graduating from Western Branch High School, she left for Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond but, in 1972, dropped out to marry her high school sweetheart, Louis M. Waters, who was attending Virginia Tech.

“After our first year of college, we couldn’t stand being apart,” said Waters, who was 19 at the time.

The couple started a family but also decided that Louis would return to college first, attending ODU. He received a bachelor’s in 1982 while working part time at an iron foundry in Norfolk.
By Michael Knepler

VIRGINIA PORT AUTHORITY’S BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS IS LATEST STOP FOR DEBORAH WATERS ’85
Deborah also worked, first as a teacher’s aide for her aunt at Western Branch Junior High School, but then discovering that she needed to earn more money to help support the family.

The realization led to Deborah Waters’ first step to becoming a lawyer. She took a secretarial job with her husband’s brother-in-law, David W. Bouchard, who had just opened his law practice.

“I just loved it so much,” Waters recalled. “It was so interesting and fun, but it also was such a challenge that I thought it was just really, really great. That was my introduction to the law that I love so much to this very day.”

Soon it was her turn to go back to college, and Waters now interested in law school enrolled at ODU as a political science major as a way to prepare. John Ramsey, now retired, was her favorite professor because, she said, “he didn’t mollycoddle us at all. He made us think, made us analyze, made us pay attention, and I just loved him.”

Ramsey also directed ODU’s new at the time paralegal studies program, which would award a certificate in addition to the bachelor’s degree. Waters, then 30, was selected to be among the program’s first 20 students and was quoted in The ODU Courier as saying: “Working as a paralegal will be a point in my favor when I apply to law school. It shows that I am interested, that I have the drive and that this is the field I want to stay in.”

Waters, said Ramsey, helped set up parts of the paralegal studies program and “gave me a lot of good advice” based on her practical experience working for lawyers. The retired professor still remembers Waters as hardworking, a first-rate student, ambitious, motivated, outspoken and straightforward.

“I guarantee you, she could hold her own but was not obtrusive about it. She told it like it was and didn’t back off,” Ramsey said.

Waters also proved her determination by landing a 30-hour-a-week paralegal job with a Norfolk law firm while still enrolled at ODU and raising two small children. “The firm let me work a flex schedule,” she said. “I
would take as many 8 o’clock classes as I possibly could, which almost killed me, and then as many night classes as I could. But they also let me work around my college schedule.”

Waters typed real estate closings at home, but she also got her first taste of maritime personal injury cases and began meeting leaders of the International Longshoremen’s Association. She was hooked, and she became focused on maritime law as she entered William & Mary’s Marshall-Wythe School of Law in 1985.

“Maritime law. That’s absolutely what I wanted to do from then on,” Waters said. “It’s a very romantic kind of law. It’s the law of the sea that goes all the way back to the Phoenicians, not just hundreds of years ago but thousands.”

Not every member of the law school faculty shared her enthusiasm.

“Let’s just say I was discouraged about going into maritime law because, some people would say, ‘It’s a man’s world’ and ‘a rough world, my dear,’” Waters recounted. “But, of course, I’m pretty hard-headed.”

Over the years, Waters has mentored other female attorneys and has been involved in several gender-equity lawsuits, including a federal case that resulted in the Virginia High School League changing its rules to enhance equality for girls playing sports.

After graduating Marshall-Wythe in 1988, Waters worked for several law firms and accumulated more experience in maritime and labor law specialties, as well as in other fields. She also has received many honors and recognitions, including being admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court, becoming a Board of Governors member of the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association, becoming the first woman to chair the male-dominated Admiralty and Maritime Law Section of the American Association for Justice (formerly the Association of Trial Lawyers of America) and receiving a Most Influential Women of Virginia Award in 2014 from Virginia Lawyer’s Weekly and Virginia Medical Weekly.

In addition, Waters has been assisting the plaintiffs in the disastrous 2010 BP oil spill as one of seven members – and the only woman – on the special Limitation and Maritime Law Committee.

“She has made quite a reputation for herself,” said James S. Mathews, an ODU adjunct professor of criminal justice and a retired Norfolk General District Court judge, who previously practiced admiralty law.

Waters also combines her maritime law specialty with her strong interest in labor law as general counsel to the International Longshoremen’s Association in Virginia and counts the late union leader Edward L. Brown Sr. among her mentors. “He set the tone of labor relations for the ports in Virginia,” she said. “He went from being adversarial to cooperative. He believed and I agree with him a thousand percent that if the port thrives, the union and its members will thrive…. His saying was to ‘Try to end up in the middle of the couch.’”

Her practice also includes representing men and women who get hurt working aboard ships, from barges and tugboats to huge transoceanic vessels. “It’s a whole other world, and it’s global,” Waters said. “And that’s what really makes it fun.”

Despite her connections with labor, Waters has insisted that she doesn’t represent any group or organization as a Virginia Port Authority commissioner.

“I really care about our port and I want it to thrive and succeed, and I think we are positioned for an explosion in business at the port,” she said. “And all of this is good for the overall economy of Virginia.”

She’s also fascinated by the workings of the port, especially the critical timing issues that involve the arrival and departure of vessels and cargo transfers with trucks. “It’s a complex business with a lot of moving parts, which makes it fun but also makes it challenging,” Waters said. “The port has to work well for all of us. It’s the crown jewel of our commonwealth.”
Tamela Rich ’84 explores new horizons on a motorcycle

Photo by Neale Bayly
Tamela Rich ’84 has felt the motorcyclist’s thrill of leaning one way, then the other, through all 318 of the curves in the 11-mile stretch of Great Smoky Mountain roadway known as the Tail of the Dragon. But this ride along the border of Tennessee and North Carolina holds more significance for her than mere thrill-seeking can explain.

The zigs and the zags pretty well sum up the philosophy Rich lives by; which, simply put, is this: Straightaways are overrated.

Consider the startling fact that this 53-year-old, middle-class wife and mother of two grown sons is riding a motorcycle at all, mostly on solo jaunts through the United States and Canada. Until five years ago she was clueless about motorized two-wheelers. Now she has racked up 60,000 miles on her BMW G 650 GS, visiting 47 states and five provinces.

Along the byways, she recovered from a devastating business experience that made her contemplate suicide. And her entrepreneurial spirit has forged for her a new career that just may be the bright light she was destined to find at the end of all those zigs and zags.

Want to know more? Hold on for the ride.
An Ohio native, Tamela Rich started college up North in predictable manner, but after her freshman year she grew weary of the cold and wanted to transfer to a school in the South. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was her target, but when she visited there she didn’t get the right vibes. A chance stop in Norfolk on her return trip to Ohio turned up another school that suited her, Old Dominion University, and three years later she graduated with a degree in finance. That was in 1984.

During her college days she had fallen in love with Matt Rich ’84, an ODU mechanical engineering student from Richmond, and after they collected their diplomas and were married they set out on the only portion of their life together that might be described as a straightaway.

Tamela chose a career in insurance, and Matt set out on a path that has led him today to an executive position with a prominent engineering firm in the Carolinas. They eventually settled to raise their sons (Carter, now 26, and Tristan, 23) in a comfortable suburb of Charlotte, a city where they still live, but in somewhat different digs.

As we have already established, the straightaway didn’t proffer enough nuance to satisfy Tamela.

The new century found her ready for something else. “I had the corporate career, but I wanted to try the entrepreneur thing,” she says.

She pooled her own money and found investors among family and friends, allowing her in 2003 to buy a North Carolina company that specialized in industrial cleansups. But about the time she was getting the hang of being a hard-charging businesswoman, the competition for jobs cleaning up industrial sites and equipment got really tight. And then, about the time of the 2008 economic slump, her company failed.

“I had lost my money and the money of my family and friends,” Tamela says. She remembers

“There was something about putting on the helmet and riding, my head inside the helmet and me alone with my thoughts. I liked it.”

—Tamela Rich
Tamela Rich in Charlotte, N.C., and visiting ODU campus with husband, Matt.

wheel of life,” she says. “I took to the open road in an effort to put the shambles of my life behind me somehow, never thinking that travel would be at the center of my new career.”

Her motorcycle travels have given her material for all sorts of story content, besides the award-winning book (which has had robust distribution to hospitals and even women’s prisons around the country). She has become a popular speaker, sharing her adventures with conventioneers and, most notably, with a TEDx audience in Charlotte. Her blog at TamelaRich.com is full of travel tips: how anyone, but especially women, can travel alone; how to find inexpensive overnight rooms and camping facilities; how to best meet locals; strategies for finding off-the-beaten-path attractions; and how to pack efficiently.

She also waxes eloquent when describing the motorcyclist stereotype. “I enjoy shaking that up a bit,” she exclaims. “I sort of think of motorcyclists as the ‘tribe’ I belong to. My ‘clan’ is probably dual-sport riders and long-distance tourers. My ‘family’ is BMW riders, because I know so many of them and we tend to do similar things with our bikes.

“But let’s be clear,” she adds, “when a member of the tribe is in trouble – flat tire, crash, out of gas – everyone rises to the occasion, no matter the clan or family. Sometimes there’s some joshing between families about the way we dress, or don’t dress, and how much time we put into polishing the chrome, but it’s all in good fun.”

She has become a popular interviewee for television talk shows, as well as for newspaper and magazine reporters. Everyone, it seems, wants to know how to pack in one overnight bag for a month of traveling. “Three pairs of underwear, and make sure every top can be worn with every bottom,” she interjects, giving a rote delivery of a line she has shared with dozens of reporters.

The “editing of stuff” that started with her motorcycle travels led her and her husband to sell their suburban home and move into a smaller urban townhouse, so “down-sizing,” in general, has become one of her go-to topics. Even her younger son, Tristan, who lives with his parents, has settled comfortably into the smaller home. “As long as he has a bedroom, Internet connection and food to eat, he’s content,” she says.

Tamela also is full of advice about healthy eating on the road: One of her headlines promotes dining at grocery stores. Most modern groceries, she has found, put out salads and soups and warm foods from which a careful person can put together nutritious meals. Plus, most of these stores have clean, safe clusters of tables where a woman traveling alone can enjoy a meal.

Yet another avenue Tamela has explored is editing/ghostwriting. And coming soon, she says, will be her subscription “armchair traveler” program on the Internet. “It’s for folks who would like to get to know more North American history, geography, culture, cuisine and so forth,” she says. “As Mark Twain said, ‘Travel is fatal to prejudice.’ My goal is for people to continually expand their horizons.

“You can see,” she adds, “my contribution to entrepreneurship is ‘Try, try again.’”

The 30th wedding anniversary of Tamela and Matt fell during September 2014 while she was on a motorcycle trip through the Northeast and Canada. As he usually does during her extended trips, Matt booked a flight to meet up with her in a place he’s never visited. This time it was Providence, R.I., where they spent four days celebrating their anniversary and seeing the sights.

Tamela and Matt came to Norfolk in February (using a car for transportation) for the 50th anniversary celebration of ODU’s chapter of Pi Beta Phi, which she joined during her college days, and to give him a chance to see Sigma Nu brothers he hadn’t seen in 30 years.

During an interview, Matt, who says he prefers bicycles, said he’s used to the stares he gets when he hops on the BMW “behind” his wife. “And people ask me, ‘Don’t you fear for her safety when she’s out there alone?’ The truth is, that motorcycle saved her.”

Tamela admits that her husband “wishes I did something more conventional and closer to home. But in a marriage that’s lasted 30 years, we’ve both learned to give each other the room we need to be our true selves.”
A year ago, Bryoney Hayes ’10, M.A. ’12 wrote the commentary below about the year she had just spent teaching English in South Korea. After her second year in the country ended early in 2015 and she started the trek home to the United States, she added a postscript.

It is 11 p.m. where I am, which makes it 9 a.m. in Virginia. It also makes it too late to call the director of the English language academy where I work and ask him for help.

I can’t light this pilot light, I tell myself. I am an American, and I don’t want to do anything that I could be held liable for in the case of an accident. Let someone who’s certified in stove-pilot-lighting handle this one.

This phrase, “I am an American, so…” has crept into my thought pattern since I moved to Korea a year ago in February 2013. It has become an integral part of my identity. “I’m an American, so I need to have multiple lemon (really lime!) slices with my Mexican food.”

Sometimes it’s used as a way to navigate differences between my work experiences in Korea and my work experiences at home. “Yeah, but I’m American, so I expect to work an 8-hour day like my contract states” (I eventually agreed to work two 10-hour days per week).

Sometimes it’s used as I’m using it now, tonight, as an excuse. “Yeah, I’m an American, so I can’t light this pilot light. I’m used to being able to call someone whose specific job is to light pilot lights so I’m not at risk of blowing myself up.”

Nearly all questions regarding behavior can be answered with “I’m an American” or “because Korea,” especially after spending a year battling in the cultural and language melee that comes with teaching English in rural Korea.

When everything is an uphill battle, it’s easy to not sort through the hard stuff. But I am entering my second year in Korea now, and I can see how important it is to be able to let go of what you think constitutes your identity, in order to embrace life in a different culture.

Which is not to say that the transformation hasn’t already begun. Yesterday, I was riding on the subway in Seoul with my boyfriend Nemanja and his friend Dacha, who are both Serbian.

Westerners have a bad reputation on public transit in Korea, you see, because many Koreans consider us unbearably loud. From what I’ve observed, most Koreans — but certainly not all — prefer to sleep, or sit silently and stare at their phones while being shuttled from city to city, and it is considered inconsiderate to talk and laugh with your friends in public spaces.

I have been shushed over and over for talking with my friends on the bus in the middle of the afternoon.

The first time I was shushed, I thought it was inconsiderate of them to try to police the decibel level of a public place. If you want to sleep, bring earplugs. Don’t expect everyone around you to be quiet for you, I thought. Over time, though, I have begun to understand and assimilate into the silent bus ride expectation by simply bringing a book to keep myself occupied.

But that day I was riding the subway with Nemanja and Dacha, and they are both Serbian. In the best of cases — say...
when Nemanja is Skyping with his mom — if they are speaking Serbian, I find myself looking up sharply multiple times in the conversation as his voice rises with seeming emotion. He is loud; we are loud. Nemanja’s team has just won its first soccer game of the season; Dacha and I have been drinking beers throughout the game (I actually taught him the phrase, “You’re babysitting” in reference to the fact that he was drinking too slow), and it is Dacha’s last day in Korea. We are all talking and laughing and taking selfies. And in between this, I am somewhat self-consciously glancing around, aware of the fact that pretty much every Korean person on this train is silently glued to their device of choice.

Then, a Korean woman dressed in hiking gear approaches us.

“Excuse me,” she says. “You all are being too loud. This is a public place and you need to be quiet.”

And despite the fact that just a moment ago I too was thinking we were a bit too loud, my stomach drops and immediately irritation flares.

“OK, thank you, but you have to understand that Koreans are sometimes loud too,” Nemanja tells her.

Completely ignoring this statement, the woman simply repeats that we are in public and need to be quiet. I resolve to show her that she is not an auxiliary member of the Subway Noise Patrol by ignoring her entirely.

Moments like these remind me that no matter how much I think I have adjusted, I will always be an outsider in Korea. I have been told that this is not malevolent on the part of Koreans; that since their experience with Japanese imperialism, they are simply protective of their culture, and that speaking the language is the price of admission for entry into the Korean circle of trust.

I try to understand this in an American context — try to remember that ODU English Language Center students even commented that it is difficult to make friends with American students, to feel accepted by Americans. I remember talking to a student from Saudi Arabia who was thinking of transferring to Chicago because of the lack of acceptance he felt in Norfolk, and I resolve to be more kind.

Korea does have its charms. There is at least one cultural difference that I really like here. To be perfectly frank, if you want to know what’s keeping me here after my first year contract ended, it’s love; and this act — this act of changing my plan, of reconsidering what’s “best for me” based on my relationship with someone else — is something that I don’t have to justify or explain to anyone I meet in Korea. They get it.

In Korea, there is a separate and distinct couple culture that is completely adorable, yet acknowledged on a mainstream level. My middle-schoolers couldn’t wait to show me their matching couple shoes; two months later, one of my foreign teacher friends who is dating a Korean man posts selfies of their couple shoes on Facebook.

In the U.S., we have Valentine’s Day, but in Korea there is V-day, White Day, Black Day, Pepero Day, and I’m sure others that I’ve missed. There are matching couple’s shoes, shirts, and even undies, if that’s what you’re into. Out here, they love love, and I love loving love.

For sure, living and functioning in another country, culture and language has had its moments of difficulty. But since moving here a year ago, I have also experienced a multitude of moments so pure that they make me utterly grateful to be alive, and as a bonus I have slept in a temple, been trapped in Singapore, seen the Batu Caves of Malaysia, and cliff dived off of one of the prettiest beaches in the world (Boracay, Philippines).

I have learned that my humor is nearly as dry as my British friends’, but that there is still a little princess inside who wants to get a pillowcase made with her and her boyfriend’s picture (they have that too). I have had to be brave countless times, but I have also seen that most people are good, and all people are the same.

I eventually texted my very American friend Nate about my stove-lighter problem and asked him if I would die if I attempted to light the pilot. With his help, I pushed aside my excuses, got up, and did it myself. It’s not because I’m American, it’s because I’m Bryoney, and even the tiniest steps are small victories in the fight to figuring out what that truly means.

Fear of the unknown. And I guess after two years away, even your home country can become a bit unknown.
2014 Alumni Award Winners
Distinguished Graduates and Other High Achievers Are Honored

Six graduates of Old Dominion University were named Distinguished Alumni at the 2014 Alumni Honors Dinner, and the Alumni Service Award, Outstanding Achievement Award and Honorary Alumni Awards were also presented.

Members of the 2014 class of Distinguished Alumni are:

Tony Brothers ’86 business administration
– Brothers is in his 21st season as a National Basketball Association official, having officiated more than 1,200 regular-season games and 85 playoff games, including the 2012, 2013 and 2014 NBA finals. He also officiated in the 1999 McDonald’s Championship in Milan, Italy, the 2008 NBA China Games, and the 2009 NBA All-Star Game.

To honor his late mother, Dorothy Brothers, a former Bank of America executive, and to give back to his community, Brothers and his wife, Monica, co-founded Still Hope Foundation Inc. The organization assists single mothers by offering quality resources and supportive relationships.

Brothers lives in Hampton Roads.

Lance Bush M.S. ‘92, mechanical engineering
– He is president and chief executive officer for Challenger Center for Space Science Education, the education nonprofit organization created as a tribute to the seven members lost in the Challenger shuttle tragedy. The center engages students and teachers in dynamic, hands-on exploration and discovery opportunities to strengthen students’ affinity for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Bush began his career at NASA as one of the chief engineers designing the next-generation space transportation vehicles. Later, he managed the International Space Station commercial development program. He received his bachelor’s in aerospace engineering and Ph.D. in technology policy and management, both from Penn State. He lives in Washington, D.C.

Jeremy M. Coleman ’88 business management
– Now senior vice president of Howard Stern Channels, he previously was senior vice president of Talk and Entertainment Channels for SiriusXM, North America’s satellite radio company with more than 25 million subscribers. Coleman also spent 11 years at Infinity Broadcasting/CBS Radio, overseeing programming for its talk station in Washington, D.C., and then in New York.

As a student at ODU, Coleman was the WODU Radio program director and then launched his professional career in Norfolk at FM99 WNOR. Coleman returned to ODU in 2002 for the WODU reunion and again in March 2014 as the keynote speaker for the station’s first Media Week.

The son of an international journalist, Coleman was born in London, England, where he spent his childhood. He now lives in New York City.

Elaine Howard ’72 psychology
– She is president and chief executive officer of Gannett Government Media Corp. headquartered in Springfield, Va. The company employs more than 200 people and targets military, defense and government markets worldwide with such notable periodicals as Military Times, Armed Forces Journal, Defense News, Federal Times, and Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Networks magazine.

Howard took the helm of the company in September 1997, and expanded the print publishing company to include an event and conference business and a digital business. In 2008, she launched a Sunday morning talk television program. Within three years, the American Forces network syndicated the show, to reach more than 1.2 million U.S. service members and their families in 175 countries. She has won Gannett’s President’s Ring award three times.

She now lives in Washington, D.C.

James D. Luketich, M.D., ’76 environmental health
– He is the Henry T. Bahnson Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery, cardiothoracic surgery department chair, and director of the UPMC (University of Pittsburgh Medical Center) Esophageal and Lung Surgery Institute.

Luketich is a pioneer of minimally invasive surgical procedures, most notably the esophagectomy. He has authored more than 400 papers and book chapters related to esophageal and lung disorders, is associate editor of Diseases of the Esophagus, and is an editor of Pearson’s Thoracic and Esophageal Surgery and editor of the new textbook, Master Techniques in Surgery: Esophageal Surgery.

Luketich earned a master’s in biochemistry from Vanderbilt University and a medical degree from the Medical College of Pennsylvania.
Patricia B. Strait ’83 (Ph.D. ’93) ’05 – She is dean of the National Defense University’s Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, an institution that offers graduate degrees to national security professionals. She has more than 27 years of university experience, educating international, military and nontraditional students.

Strait has authored numerous articles and served as associate editor of prestigious journals. She is also a frequent speaker – in both English and Spanish – at presentations in Athens, London, Brussels, Cambridge, Berne, Madrid, Quebec, Barcelona and Vancouver.

She began her career as a U.S. Navy air traffic controller and has held faculty positions at several universities in Virginia. She received the University of Richmond’s Distinguished Educator Award and ODU’s Faculty Appreciation Award for the live televised Ships at Sea MBA program. Strait earned three degrees from ODU: a bachelor’s in English, a Ph.D. in urban management, and a bachelor’s in Spanish. She lives in Hampton Roads.

Other awards presented were:

Lee D. Entsminger ’74 – Alumni Service Award – He is now president of Entsminger Consulting LLC, he spent 34 years as a geoscientist, manager and executive with Mobil and Exxon/Mobil. Since retirement, he has joined a select group of business executives who are Ford Scholars within the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

Heavily involved with ODU, Entsminger created an endowed scholarship in coastal geology and, since 2006, has been a member of the ODU College of Sciences Advisory Board. He is a member of the MonarchTeach advisory board, vice chair of the Strome College of Business Executive Advisory Council, and chair of its entrepreneurship subcommittee. He also serves on the Entrepreneurship Advisory Council, which fosters entrepreneurship among the ODU student body through curriculum development, clubs and competitions. He sponsors the Entsminger Entrepreneurship Fellows, a faculty network that supports transdisciplinary entrepreneurship at ODU.

Entsminger received a bachelor’s degree in geology from ODU and a master’s in geology from Florida State University. He lives in Virginia Beach.

Nancy Kirkpatrick ’80 – Outstanding Achievement Award – She was president and CEO of DLS Engineering, a company she established in 1995 to manage government contracts for the U.S. Coast Guard and other government agencies. Altogether, Fischer has 40 years of experience in the analysis, design development and implementation of integrated engineering and logistics services. She is a certified professional engineer, a member of the Society of Women Engineers and a past president of the American Society of Naval Engineers.

An advocate for the advancement of professional engineering, Fisher is recognized as an entrepreneurial leader in Hampton Roads. She is an ardent supporter of ODU, mentoring students and encouraging young women, especially, to pursue higher education and careers in science and technology. She has endowed student engineering projects and competitions in ODU’s Frank Batten College of Engineering and Technology, serves on its advisory board and is part of the Batten College’s Development and Communications Committee.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Fischer earned a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Penn State University. She lives in Norfolk.

Maurice Slaughter – Honorary Alumni Award – He is chair and chief executive officer of MS Family Enterprises Inc., and president of FNO Inc., a real estate management company specializing in restoration and management of historical properties in New Orleans. Currently, he is rehabilitating an apartment complex damaged by Hurricane Katrina and restoring a mixed-use property to feature a gallery for local artists.

Slaughter now owns three Harley-Davidson® dealerships in Portsmouth, Va.; Harbinger, N.C.; and Nags Head, N.C. He has received 11 Bar and Shield awards, Harley-Davidson’s highest recognition. Bayside Harley-Davidson, which received the Portsmouth Small Business of the Year award in 2010, is currently rated as the best service department in North America.

A Baton Rouge, La., native, Slaughter received a bachelor’s degree in computer science from Southern University and a master’s degree in finance from Atlanta University. He and his business partner, Cynthia, who is also his wife, live in Hampton Roads.
'Dream Vision' Artist

Kimie Porter ’91 Has an Abstract Gift

If you’ve ever wondered what sort of vibes you give off, Kimie Porter ’91 may have answers for you.

Yes, her degree was in psychology. And she does ask probing questions of her clients. But psychology isn’t exactly what she applies to her craft, certainly not formal clinical psychology.

Fifteen years ago she stumbled upon a process she now calls Dream Vision, which centers on her artistic interpretation of a person’s “energetic intention.” She tries to reveal through a collage of images what really motivates a person; what their core drivers are.

At ODU, the Norfolk native says, “I was always fascinated with the abstract and loved learning the various psychological aspects of how we function.”

She channeled her interests after graduation into the business world, and soon found herself as director of human resources for Jackson Hewitt Tax Service, which is based in Hampton Roads.

Then, around the turn of the century, while studying for a Feng Shui certification, she was instructed to design a “vision board” to help her create harmony in her life and enhance passion. That soon led her to produce a collage called “Reconstruction” as a gift for a physician who had removed most of a hemangioma birthmark from her face. The physician hung the art piece in his office, and thereafter she started getting calls from people who wanted their own Dream Vision analysis and artwork.

It was time for her to quit the 9-to-5 job and “focus on my art and raising my family,” she says.

Porter does in-depth interviews with clients, and also has them fill out a questionnaire she created. From information she receives, she intuits an array of images and arranges them in a particular order within the artwork. With each collage comes a symbolism key that helps to explain her vision.

Her sales in the last few years have been brisk enough, and her show at Harbor Gallery in Norfolk in December was successful enough, to leave her excited about her future as a Dream Vision artist. Next up, she hopes, will be a program in which new clients reveal their inner thoughts to her by interpreting one of her collages. “As a Rorschach type of exercise, only prettier and more complex,” she says.
William E. Harrison ’75, of Chesapeake, graduated in May 2014 with a Master of Divinity in practical theology at Regent University. He retired from the Army in July 2000 and currently works for the Christian Broadcasting Network.

Cliff Myers ’76 is the first-ever chemist named as vice chair of the Armed Forces Pest Management Board (AFPMB), which advises the Department of Defense on all pest management matters. The board’s mission is to prevent pests and vectors from adversely affecting DOD operations. Previous chairs have been entomologists or zoologists who study insects. Myers has worked in the Defense Logistics Agency’s aviation supplier operations since 1985, ensuring troops get pest repellent and equipment whether it’s being shipped to Afghanistan, Iraq or stateside. His initial two-year term began in 2013 and can be extended for two more years.

Tom Sittnick ’76 was promoted to deputy director of the Operations, Planning and Training Division for the Georgia Department of Corrections in December. He began working for the department in 2006 after retiring as a colonel with 30 years in the U.S. Army infantry. Most recently, Sittnick was director of health services for the corrections department.

Ed Coyle ’78 reports that he is still working as a supervisor for the U.S. Navy Regional Operations Center at NAS Jacksonville. Ed lives in Fleming Island, Fla.

James L. Taylor Jr. ’78, with more than 30 years’ experience in federal financial management, joined Grant Thornton LLP’s Global Public Sector practice in June 2014 as a managing director for its financial management and assurance services. Prior to this job, he was a senior adviser to the Internal Revenue Service commissioner, responsible for integrating Affordable Care Act changes into IRS practices. Taylor previously was the U.S. Department of Labor’s chief financial officer, overseeing accounting and financial management for an agency with 16,000 employees and a budget of $120 billion.

Yvonne Wilson Boone ’79 received third place in the Peninsula Watermedia Society Exhibition in Hampton in September for her watercolor, “Walls of Zion.” This fall, she exhibited her work in the 31st Annual North American Miniature Art Exhibition in Baltimore, Md., as well as in the 81st annual international exhibition of the Miniature Painters, Sculptors and Gravers Society of Washington, D.C.

Tim Sweeney ’74 (M.S. Ed. ’77) was promoted to dean of The College of The Albemarle’s Dare County campus in August. He has worked at the community college since 2011. “I’m looking forward to working with our students on career opportunities, and at the same time, providing an excellent academic pathway for students who will transfer to a four-year university,” said Sweeney, who now lives in Southern Shores, N.C.

Richard D. White Jr. ’69, a native of Williamsburg, Va., and ODU political science graduate, became the eighth dean of the E. J. Ourso College of Business at Louisiana State University in April 2014. While filling the post as interim dean, White was the Marjory B. Ourso Professor and associate dean, and taught in the public administration and MBA programs. White has published dozens of scholarly articles in prominent journals and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for “Will Rogers: A Political Life.” He also is author of “Kingfish: The Reign of Huey P. Long” and “Roosevelt the Reformer: Theodore Roosevelt as Civil Service Commissioner, 1889-1895.” White earned a Ph.D. in public administration from Pennsylvania State University, a master’s degree at Purdue University and was a research fellow at Harvard. He came to LSU in 1998 after a career in the U.S. Coast Guard.
Robert M. Tata (M.B.A. ’86), a member of the Old Dominion University Board of Visitors since July 1, 2013, was appointed managing partner of the Norfolk office of Hunton & Williams in May 2014. Tata is a Norfolk native and has worked with the law firm since 1989. He focuses on commercial litigation and intellectual property law, construction, employee benefits, and maritime law. His numerous civic service efforts include chairing a local judicial evaluation committee and he has received a number of professional accolades.

Ken Frohlich ‘84 can be found in Kingsport, Tenn., where he is the president and CEO of Pristine Springs. The company supplies bottled spring water, water filtration systems and coffee service in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

Thomas Spoth ‘84, vice president and sector manager for the bridge and tunnel division at Parsons, received the Frank Batten College of Engineering and Technology Outstanding Alumni & Friends Humanitarian Award in May. The honor cited his contributions to enhanced safety in structural engineering and experience in bridge design, inspection and management of major bridge projects. Spoth’s career includes award-winning work on the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge in Washington, the Autoroute 25 bridge in Montreal and ongoing work on the new Goethals Bridge in New York City.

Jerry Busone (M.S. Ed. ’83), an assistant women’s basketball coach at ODU during the championship years 1979-80 under Coach Marianne Stanley, has written his first book, “Off the Bench Leadership,” to share his leadership development success from the athletic arena and the corporate world. He has worked at ADP for 20 years in sales and development. Busone also was head coach at the University of Hawaii and an associate coach at University of Nevada - Las Vegas. His resume includes coaching multiple Olympians, such as ODU stellar athletes Nancy Lieberman and Ann Donovan, “maybe the two greatest players and people I know in the game.” Read more at http://offthebenchleadership.com

Terry Burgess ‘79 sadly informs her classmates of the unexpected passing of her husband, Bob, who died in June. Terry is a senior general ledger accountant at Chesapeake General Hospital. She writes, “He will always be missed by his family.”

1980s

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Jami Taylor ‘90 (M.P.A. ’01) writes that she received promotion and tenure to associate professor of political science and public administration at the University of Toledo in April. Her first book, “Transgender Rights and Politics: Groups, Issue Framing and Policy Adoption” (co-edited), was published by the University of Michigan Press in the fall of 2014.

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Scott R. Armstrong ‘87 has been hired by Parsons as vice president and alternative project delivery (APD) business development director for its transportation business unit. Based in Columbia, S.C., Armstrong will manage APD procurements in all transportation modes throughout the eastern region of North America. His background is in civil engineering and construction.

Caroline Schloss ‘88 is co-author of a new ebook, “Celestial Torrent.” She writes, “a fictional drama written in modern Shakespearean, (it) carries the reader through a kaleidoscope of events involving four humans caught up in the battle of angels and demons fighting for souls and territory on earth.”

Thomas F. Cherry ‘90 was promoted to president of West Point (Va.)-based C&F Financial Corp. and C&F Bank in December. He had been the bank’s chief financial officer and executive vice president since 2004. Cherry is a certified public accountant and has been with C&F (formerly known as Citizens and Farmers) for 18 years.

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Eric Elliott ‘93 in February announced plans to release his book, “Onward to Manhood; Establishing Godly Masculinity,” a look at the barriers confronting men in the process of “helping them to form patterns of dependability, unlock boundless creativity and unleash relentless productivity” on their path to self-development.

Michael J. Fowler ’94 is first vice president for wealth management with the Fowler Creep Anders Group in Norfolk, available to assist alums with investment needs.

Richard Bywater ‘95 is a partner with Opmanet, an international open source network management software company. He also owns Sky Holdings Group, which develops single family and commercial properties in Charlotte, N.C.
Lauryn Johnson ’10 Develops Community Leaders

Lauryn Johnson, a 2010 communication graduate of Old Dominion University, helped T.R.U.S.T. get started when she was a student at the University and she has been the chief banner carrier for this community service organization ever since. No one was prouder than she was when T.R.U.S.T. celebrated its 10th anniversary in Norfolk last December.

T o Respect, Unite, Support & Teach Inc. is the full name of the organization which, although founded as a student group on campus, has now become an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Johnson wears several T.R.U.S.T. hats, including president and chief executive officer.

“This is such an exciting and humbling milestone for our organization to celebrate,” Johnson said of the December fete. “The organization has grown from a few members to more than 500 members,” and along the way “has facilitated partnerships through community service activities with organizations such as Norfolk Public Schools, For Kids Inc., Urban League of Hampton Roads Inc., ACCESS AIDS Care, Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore and many others.” The organization has also given more than $12,000 in scholarships to young people who are the first generation in their families to go to college.

Johnson earned a master’s degree in public administration from Kennesaw State University after graduating from ODU, and, as you might expect, she established a campus chapter of T.R.U.S.T. there, as well.

A native of Boston who spent most of her childhood in Northern Virginia, Johnson now serves as an adjunct instructor at Tidewater Community College in Hampton Roads and as coordinator of TCC’s Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement Program. She says her dedication to community service can be traced to her parents and her Christian upbringing. Her favorite quote is from Mahatma Gandhi: “Be the change (we) wish to see in the world.”
Scholarship Golfers—Zeta Pi chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity sponsored its annual golf tournament in November, coinciding with homecoming weekend. Harold Winer shared this photo of (from left) Denny Kendall, Jeff Goodman, Rich Werber, Sam Mayo and Joe Kendall, just a few of the 132 golfers who participated and raised $5,000 for the Scholarship Fund at ODU.

Allyson Monsour ’07 has been named a 2015 Rising Star by the American Council of Engineering Companies of Virginia. The award recognizes an outstanding professional with less than 15 years of experience who is making significant contributions to her company. Monsour is a civil engineer at Clark Nexsen, a member of the firm’s land development team and a team leader for Geographic Information Systems (GIS) projects.

2000s

Stephen Murphy ’00 was selected for the 2014 class of LEAD Hampton Roads, a Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce development program for top leaders. He is a project manager for Spacemakers Inc. and a board member of the Zeta Pi Alumni Corp.

Thomas Sontag ’04 is a chiropractic sports physician at Back in Action health resource center in Richmond, Va., which has been ranked at the top of an RVA Style Weekly readers’ poll for three years running. Sontag reports that he married his wife, Rebecca, in May, and is a proud father to Prudence, 9, who “is growing like a weed.”

Alan Caswell ’05 works for the City of Lynchburg (Va.) Water Resources Department. He acquired his instructor license for the U.S. Soccer Federation referee program and was engaged to marry Brittanı Chamblee on Aug. 23, 2014.

Ashlynn Baker ’06, a nurse in the Neonatal ICU at Children’s Hospital of The King’s Daughters, was named manager of the King’s Daughters Milk Bank, the first and only milk bank in Virginia. Baker led the effort to offer pasteurized donor human milk treatments to at-risk babies (e.g., pre-term, low birth weight, or critically ill) whose mothers’ own milk is unavailable. The service to medically fragile babies began in 2012 and led to the comprehensive milk bank, which opened in June 2014.

Harvey L. Johnson (M.S. ’06) has been elected a partner for PBMares, LLP, a regional financial consulting firm serving clients throughout the mid-Atlantic. Johnson, CPA, CGMA, is a senior assurance manager based in the Norfolk office. A recognized authority in the financial institutions industry, he is frequently asked to speak at conferences on topics related to internal controls and risk assessment.

Derrick Bates ’07 won a place in the Richmond Teacher Residency program at Virginia Commonwealth University and will graduate from VCU with an M.Ed. in May. Bates currently co-teaches special education at George Mason Elementary School in Richmond as part of his four-year service agreement with the program.

Patrick J. Austin ’09, adjunct professor at George Mason University School of Law and an associate with Shapiro, Appleton & Duffan, P.C., recently had scholarly articles published in two law journals. The Chicago-Kent Journal of International and Comparative Law article is online; his article in the Appalachian Journal of Law is only available in print form.

Occasio Gee ’09 has created The Anonymous Group public relations and marketing firm, located in Portsmouth. He is both owner and president. Gee said, “We look forward to assisting small businesses develop a stronger brand.”

Alfred A. Roberts (Ph.D. ’09) became the president of Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC) in August 2014. Roberts joined the Virginia Community College System in 1995 in student support services administration, and most recently was provost of SVCC’s Christanna campus in Alberta. He was named an Alumni Fellow for the Darden College of Education in 2011.

2010s

Kevin Engelmann ’10 was promoted to a management and program analyst with the Department of Veterans Affairs. He relocated to the Arlington, Va., area in April 2014.

Beth Norton Jamison ’11 joined Kaufman & Canoles law firm’s Norfolk office in September as an attorney and president. Gee said, “We look forward to assisting small businesses develop a stronger brand.”

Chrisy L. Murphy ’01 joined Kaufman & Canoles, P.C., in January in the law firm’s Norfolk office. Her professional focus is in complex commercial litigation for banks, credit unions and other lenders as well as managing trust and estate litigation. Murphy received her J.D. from Regent University School of Law.

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Justin Hunt ’08 has been hired as a mechanical engineer in Burgess & Niple’s Virginia Beach office to manage mechanical design tasks for federal, private, public sector and other key clients. Hunt has seven years of mechanical design experience including LEED certified buildings with particular expertise in life cycle cost analyses, energy models, energy conservation measures and building automation systems.
Denise W. Streeter (Ph.D. ’13) joined the business faculty at Penn State York in August as a full-time instructor in business administration. A participant in The PhD Project, an award-winning program to create a more diverse corporate America, Streeter is one of only 29 female, African-American, finance business school professors in the U.S. Her corporate experience in certified public accounting complements teaching stints at Old Dominion, Johns Hopkins University and University of Maryland’s University College.

Lindsey Patto ’11 proudly cut the ribbon on her Lindsey Patto State Farm office on Nov. 15. The new business is located in the Western Branch section of Chesapeake. She and her husband, John, live in the city with their three sons.

Stepheno Zollos ’11 works in Atlanta for Power Home Remodeling Group as a sales consultant and has one of the highest sales percentages in the company. His volunteer work took him on his seventh humanitarian trip to Mexico last summer to build homes for homeless families through Project Mexico. Sponsors assist with funding the homes, which cost about $3,000 each. Reach him at stephenozollos@gmail.com

Elizabeth Ferguson ’12 received a master’s degree in psychology from the University of Wyoming in Laramie, Wyo., in May 2014.

Michael MacTaggart ’12 is a nuclear engineer at Huntington Ingalls – Newport News Shipyard. He has settled in to his first home in north Suffolk.

Love is in the air!

ODU alumni T’Nora Green ’11 and Joshua Davis ’11 were married Aug. 30, 2014, at The Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk and came back to campus for some special wedding photos. The couple first crossed paths in Constant Hall while taking Operations Management class in 2009. While at ODU they were both members of several student organizations, including the National Pan-Hellenic Council, where they served on its executive board. The couple now resides in Prince William County, Va. T’Nora works as an information technology consultant and Joshua is a marketing research analyst.

Eric Northedge ’96 and Jerri Love Arnold Northedge ’96, along with twin daughters Cate and Carly, announce the birth of a third daughter, Neve Renée Northedge. Neve was born Nov. 26, 2014, in Reston, Va.; the family lives in Hamilton, Va.

NEW MONARCHS

David Williams ’90 is proud to announce the birth of his first grandchild, a baby boy, Ezekiel Paul Christopher Williams. He was born May 28, 2014, in Harrison County Hospital.

Thomas “Lee” Huss ’98 and his family celebrated the birth of their son, Thomas James Huss, in 2014.

Roy Buni ’99 and Josie Buni ’96 (M.S. Ed. ’05) are overjoyed to share with alumni the birth of their “miracle baby,” Vivian. She was born Dec. 28, 2013, in Virginia Beach. Mom Josie writes, “This little Monarch is loved and adored by her family, especially her doting aunt, Tammy Dail Hindle ’93 (M.S. Ed. ’97).”

Derrick Francis ’10 and his wife, Christina, welcomed their first child, Emory Michelle Francis, into the family on Jan. 3, 2015, in New Orleans.

Love is in the air!
IN MEMORIAM

Albert G. Doumar '42 of Norfolk, 5/14/14
Myrtle Brown Fields '44 of Chesapeake, 9/4/14
Miriam G. Burgess '45 of Norfolk, 9/20/14
John T. Curran '46 of Portsmouth, 8/6/14
Estelle B. Gillikin '46 of Virginia Beach, 8/17/14
Capt. W. Nelson Hodges Sr., USAR (Ret) '46 of Virginia Beach, 5/17/14
Douglas A. Leard '46 of Norfolk, 4/29/14
Thomas "Buddy" A. Lance '47 of Chesapeake, 5/24/14
David W. Woodson II '47 of Suffolk, 6/24/14
Robert T. Stuart '48 of Portsmouth, 9/20/14
Edward V. Power '49 of Norfolk, 7/7/14
George R. Stillman Jr. '49 of Chesapeake, 9/17/14
John Crockett Henry Jr. '50 of Virginia Beach, 7/23/14
Joseph P. Towell '50 of Norfolk, 5/4/14
Margaret C. Hopewell '52 of Suffolk, 6/21/14
Jeanette Cuthrell Ridge '52 (M.S. Ed.) '79 of Virginia Beach, 9/1/14
John W. Robbins Jr. '52 of Virginia Beach, 9/18/14
Berdie E. Crawley '55 of Hampton, 7/11/14
Ann Justice Self '55 of Virginia Beach, 7/29/14
Edice Aron Schloss '56 of Norfolk, 9/15/14
Vance P. Pittman Jr. '57 of Portsmouth, 8/10/14
Leland J. Bussard '58 of Norfolk, 7/6/14
James A. Fellers Sr. '61 of Virginia Beach, 9/1/14
Harold A. Bridger '62 of Suffolk, 5/1/14
Adelaide Carroll Crute '62 (M.S. Ed.) '67 of Richmond, Va., 6/25/14
Joyce Whitehurst Salmons '64 of Virginia Beach, 7/31/14
J. Edward Woolwine '64 of Edenton, N.C., 8/27/14
Anastasia Giannoutsos '65 (M.S. Ed.) '73 of Virginia Beach, 8/20/14
JoAnn S. Hall '65 of Atlanta, Ga., 6/13/14
Vivan Ansell Harris '65 of Chesapeake, 7/31/14
John A. Parker Jr. '65 of Norfolk, 5/11/14
Elizabeth C. Crowling '66 of Norfolk, 9/1/14
Elizabeth C. Garrett '66 of Norfolk, 8/14/14
Cdr. W. Harold Hofert, USN (Ret) '66 of Fletcher, N.C., 8/4/14
Jesse W. Kochersperger Jr. '66 of Hampton, 9/20/14
Marvin G. Barnes '67 of Virginia Beach, 7/4/14
Marvin Biberman '67 of Norfolk, 5/30/14
Jean Webb Mitchell '68 of Virginia Beach, 5/18/14
William B. Hoover Jr. '69 of Norfolk, 7/7/14
Wayne R. Powell '69 (M.E.) '71 of Poquoson City, Md., 9/6/14
Joseph A. Benson Jr. '70 of Virginia Beach, 6/21/14
Sheryl Brooks Fox '70 of Richmond, Va., 7/11/14
Florence Mahone Palmer '70 of York County, Va., 9/26/14
Jean L. Doyle '71 (M.A.) '82 of Virginia Beach, 6/10/14
Marguerite Edmans Grier '71 of Silver Spring, Md., 6/7/14
H. Marie Asbell Hollowell '71 of Portsmouth, 9/9/14
Arthur Kanakis '71 of Springfield, Va., 6/16/14
Edith Lawson Tanner (M.S. Ed.) '71 of Virginia Beach, 6/20/14
H. Ray Berry Jr. '73 of Hoover, Ala., 6/9/14
John W. Brown '73 of McGuireville, Va., 7/15/14
Myrna Nelson Matthews (M.S. Ed.) '73 of Chesapeake, 9/24/14
Ramona Hill Sleeper '73 of Hampton, 5/3/14
Joseph N. Weller (M.B.A.) '73 of Virginia Beach, 6/14/14
Robert L. Weaver '74 of Virginia Beach, 6/19/14
Opal H. Little '74 of Newport News, 5/29/14
CWO Leon D. Bailey, USN (Ret) '75 of Virginia Beach, 6/20/14
Linda Farrier Daughtrey (M.S. Ed.) '75 of Virginia Beach, 8/30/14
B. Joseph Sutton III '75 of Norfolk, 7/22/14
James K. Elliott '76 of Roanoke Rapids, N.C., 9/18/14
Kendall Westbrook Rhodes (M.S. Ed.) '76 of Portsmouth, 6/26/14
Sarah Lewis Robertson (M.S. Ed.) '76 of Chesapeake, 6/15/14
Paul O. Dunlap II '77 of New Braunfels, Texas, 5/27/14
Audrey S. Perry (M.A.) '77 of Virginia Beach, 8/14/14
Donna L. Peterson (M.S. Ed.) '77 of Chesapeake, 7/4/14
Lt. Cmdr. Edward D. Johnson, USN (Ret) '78 (M.S. '84) of Virginia Beach, 6/15/14
Etta Miller Lind '78 of Virginia Beach, 7/2/14
M. Neale Mayo (M.S.) '78 of Portsmouth, 5/19/14
Peter D. Pettit (M.E.) '78 of Pottsville, Va., 9/21/14
Betty F. Braswell (M.S. Ed.) '79 of Norfolk, 9/14/14
John P. Vest '79 of Norfolk, 7/5/14
Allen E. Plocher '80 (Phi. D.) '93 of Urbana, Ill., 6/9/14
Darlene L. Waddle '80 of Miami, Fla., 7/23/14
Master Chief Petty Officer David A. Martin, USN (Ret) '81 of Virginia Beach and Fort Wayne, Ind., 9/17/14
Arlene M. Frye (M.S. Ed.) '82 of Chesapeake, 7/5/14
Peggy Tuck Middleton (M.S. Ed.) '82 of Virginia Beach, 7/29/14
M. Regis Fitzpatrick Williams '82 of Norfolk, 5/28/14
Claire Callahan Duckett (M.S. Ed.) '83 of Virginia Beach, 4/29/14
Jeanne Hubbard Ablett '84 of Chesapeake, 9/4/14
Darryl L. Whitmore (M.S.) '84 of Lake Wylie, S.C., 6/11/14
Barbara Stearns Eaton '88 of Virginia Beach, 8/13/14
Gary R. Brown '89 (M.A.) '91 of Norfolk, 5/26/14
David M. Parker '89 of Norfolk, 9/16/14
Patricia Howells Stolle '89 of Virginia Beach, 7/12/14
Edward C. Brakob Jr. '90 (M.S. Ed.) '94 of Virginia Beach, 9/24/14
Alene P. Hudson '90 of Virginia Beach, 5/4/14
David H. Pulliam '90 of Virginia, Va., 8/28/14
Helene Forbes DeBerry '92 of Raleigh, N.C., 8/14/14
Sandra B. Gallard (M.S. Ed.) '92 of Virginia Beach, 5/17/14
Donna Oakley Hitt (M.S. Ed.) '92 of Chesapeake, 6/10/14
Lori J. McCarter Liles '92 of Suffolk, 5/6/14
Scott M. Brich '94 of Chesapeake, 5/14/14
Ellen M. Lundevald '94 of Lanexa, Va., 6/18/14
Master Chief Harold W. Seigle, USN (Ret) '94 (M.S. Ed. '95) of Norfolk, 8/16/14
Richard B. Brooks '96 of Newport News, 5/11/14
Lt. Cmdr. Teresa M. Valasek, USN (Ret) (M.S.N. '96) of Chesapeake, 9/10/14
Betty H. Yarborough '96 of Portsmouth, 8/6/14
Joseph L. Rayman (M.S. Ed.) '97 of Ludowici, Ga., 7/9/14
Col. George J.C. Fries, USAF (Ret) (M.S. Ed.) '99 of Yorktown, Va., 8/7/14
Patricia Pfeiffer Gerdenman (M.S. Ed. '99) of Jacksonville, Fla., 9/18/14
Sharon D. Hollins '99 of Suffolk, 5/11/14
Linda S. Sigler '99 of Charlotteville, Va., 7/27/14
Cristy G. Reynolds '02 (M.S. Ed.) '05 of Martinville, Va., 8/15/14
Tammy M. Crossoe (M.S. Ed.) '04 of Portsmouth, 8/12/14
Frederick H. Hutchins (M.S.) '04 of Kitty Hawk, N.C., 6/17/14
Ray C. McDonald, USAF (Ret) '04 of Suffolk, 7/18/14
Lawrence C. Schick, USN (Ret) (M.P.A. '05) of Virginia Beach, 8/13/14
Master Gunnery Sgt. James E. Vascherault Sr., USMC (Ret) '07 of Chesapeake, 7/8/14
Eugene B. Dougherty (M.E. '08) of Virginia Beach, 6/26/14
Peter J. Loehr '10 of Chesapeake, 8/3/14
Michele D. Lunde (M.S.N. '10) of Virginia Beach, 8/25/14
Sara M. Blacketer (M.S. Ed.) '11 of Virginia Beach, 5/3/14
A. Jay Tennison (enrolled) (B.S. Ed.) '11 of Bremerton, Wash., 8/23/14
Andrew B. Tuck (enrolled) of Roanoke, Va., 6/3/14
IN REMEMBRANCE

Michele Leonardi Darby

Michele Leonardi Darby, who retired in 2013 as an Old Dominion University Eminent Scholar, professor and former chair of the University’s Gene W. Hirschfeld School of Dental Hygiene, died Feb. 5, 2015, after an extended illness.

Near the time of her retirement, Darby was awarded the Dimensions of Dental Hygiene’s Esther Wilkins Lifetime Achievement Award, which is sponsored by Colgate.

Darby, who lived in Virginia Beach, was 64. She is survived by her husband, Dennis, ODU Professor Emeritus of Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences; daughter, Devan; and son, Blake. (See “A ‘Formidable Team’ We Will Greatly Miss; Darby Retire after Four Decades at ODU,” in Monarch Fall 2013.)

“It is with great sadness that the College of Health Sciences, the School of Dental Hygiene and I mourn the passing of Michele Darby,” said Shelley Mishoe, dean of ODU’s College of Health Sciences. “She has been an inspiration to so many people throughout her life in her many roles as dental hygienist, professor, department chair, Eminent Scholar, author, researcher and mentor. Michele flourished in all of these roles, but none as much as her cherished role as wife to Dennis and mother of Devan and Blake. Our hearts go out to the entire Darby family during this time of tremendous loss of someone so special that has left a remarkable legacy of accomplishment and caring.”

Darby received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Columbia University in New York. She arrived at ODU in 1974 as an assistant professor at the School for Dental Hygiene, and in 1982, Darby became chair for the school. Due to her exemplary merit and service to ODU, Darby was named an Eminent Scholar in 1989 and graduate program director for dental hygiene.

In addition to the lifetime achievement award, Darby received numerous accolades during her career, including: the Rufus Alan Tonelson Distinguished Faculty Award in 1991; the Outstanding Faculty Award in 1993, given by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; and the Excellence in Teaching Award from the ODU College of Health Sciences in 2007.

Darby was known for her attention to detail in classroom instruction, her scholarship and mentoring. She wrote three major textbooks, and more than 50 peer-reviewed publications. She also emphasized the responsibilities that dental hygiene professionals have globally and she led by example.

In 1981, she visited the People’s Republic of China as part of a pioneering delegation of visiting professionals who shared dental hygiene concepts and techniques with Chinese dentists. As a Fulbright Scholar in 2010, she spent six months in Irbid, Jordan, at the Jordan University of Science and Technology, working to improve standards of education and practice.

Darby’s work in Jordan earned her the 2011 Distinguished Alumni Award in Dental Hygiene from the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine — the same year she received ODU’s Shining Star Award, which is given to faculty members for helping students succeed academically, professionally and personally inside and outside the classroom.

In 2014, Michele and Dennis Darby established the Michele Leonardi Darby Global Oral Health Award with a $25,000 leadership contribution. The award focuses “on preparing dental hygienists and dental hygiene faculty to be competent in cross-cultural environments whether around the globe or around the corner.”

Anyone interested in making a gift to the award fund may contact Manisha Harrell, major gift officer, at 757-683-3090 or at m1sharma@odu.edu.

Theodore N. Bacalis

Theodore N. Bacalis, 90, a legendary basketball coach in Hampton Roads who was inducted into the Old Dominion University Sports Hall of Fame in 2000 because of his performance in baseball as well as basketball, passed away peacefully at home in Norfolk on Dec. 18, 2014.

He was born in Norfolk, graduated from Maury High School in 1943 and served in the Army Air Force during World War II. After the war, he attended college at the Norfolk Division of William & Mary (which became Old Dominion) and finished at Virginia Tech. He was basketball team captain at both institutions and also baseball team captain at Norfolk Division.

He held the Maury basketball coaching job from 1958 to 1976, compiling a record of 297-95.

“He’s the one that put Maury on the map,” Norfolk native Lefly Driesell told The Virginian-Pilot. Driesell, the former University of Maryland basketball coach and member of the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame, began his coaching career with high schools in southeastern Virginia. He coached against Bacalis in the 1950s.

“I’ve coached against Mike Krzyzewski, Dean Smith, John Wooden and Denny Crum,” Driesell said. “I tell you what, Ted Bacalis was as hard to beat, if not harder, than those guys.”

Bacalis is survived by his wife, Mary Jane Bacalis; two sons, Tommy (Tammy) and Teddy (Judy) Bacalis and four grandchildren, who affectionately called him Papou.

Betty Jane Diener

Betty Jane Diener, who became the first female dean in the history of Old Dominion University when she was tapped to lead the College of Business in 1979, died at a clinic in Weston, Fla., on Jan. 22, 2015. She was 74.

Diener was assistant dean and professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland when she was hired by ODU Provost Charles O. Burgess to be ODU’s business dean. In 1982, then-Virginia Gov. Charles Robb appointed Diener as Virginia’s secretary of commerce, which led to her departure from the university.

Diener served as Virginia’s secretary of commerce from 1982 to 1986, presiding over 22 state agencies, 52 boards and commissions, 4,000 employees and an annual budget of $945 million, with responsibilities for labor, industry, agriculture, tourism and the environment.

Born Sept. 15, 1940, Diener grew up in Arlington County, Va. She graduated in 1962 from Wellesley College in Massachusetts. At Harvard Business School, she earned an M.B.A. in 1964 and a doctorate in business administration in 1974. She was one of the first women to earn these graduate degrees from Harvard.

Diener, who became an internationally recognized expert on environmental management, was twice a Fulbright scholar. She conducted sustainability research and training programs in China and India. She also published in academic journals and served on several corporate and nonprofit boards.

Russell Theodore Stanger

Russell T. Stanger, the founding conductor of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, and namesake of Old Dominion University’s Russell Stanger String Quartet, died Jan. 7, 2015, in Norfolk.

Stanger was an internationally noted composer and conductor. His career accomplishments included conducting the Boston Pops and serving as a guest conductor with some of the leading North American and European orchestras.

Stanger came to Virginia in 1966 to conduct the Norfolk Symphony (now the Virginia Symphony), a post he held until 1980, when he became conductor laureate.

At ODU, Stanger was named an advisor to the F. Ludwig Diehn Fund under the purview of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation. Stanger generously donated his archives of photographs, recordings, music notations, original scores and other memorabilia, including letters from Leonard Bernstein, to ODU’s F. Ludwig Diehn Composers Room in 2009. He was awarded an honorary doctorate degree from Old Dominion and the university named the string quartet in his honor.

Memorial donations may be made to Old Dominion University, earmarked for the Russell Stanger String Quartet, addressed to the Department of Music, 2123 Diehn Center for the Performing Arts, 4810 Elkhorn Ave., Norfolk, VA 23529.
It’s a great time to be a Monarch!

We continue to be impressed with the academic achievements of our student-athletes, as 32 percent of our 497 athletes achieved Dean’s List honors for the fall semester, with 3.4 grade point averages or higher. It was our highest percentage of Dean’s List student-athletes since we started football in 2009. Thirteen of our 18 athletic teams posted combined GPAs of a 3.0 or higher, and 52 percent of all of our athletes had a 3.0 or higher. The top majors for our student-athletes are currently physical education, including exercise science, health and physical education and sport management; biology; criminal justice and communications. Our student-athletes, coaches and academic counselors are to be commended for their outstanding academic performances.

Our No. 1 goal is to graduate student-athletes and assist them in finding jobs after graduation. Please let us know if you have any opportunities for employment for these outstanding young men and women.

This past fall, in just their first full Conference USA season, the football Monarchs finished 6-6 and became bowl-eligible. Thanks to our loyal fans and donors, we were sold out every game for the sixth consecutive year - 41 consecutive games - and continue to be the only Division I program in the nation to have sold out every game since adding or starting football. We also own the longest FBS sellout streak in the commonwealth of Virginia.

Monarch wrestlers put ODU on the national map with Chris Mecate and Lenny Richardson earning All American honors at the NCAA Championships in St. Louis, while senior Tristan Warner earned the NCAA’s Elite 89 award for the second straight year having the highest GPA of all the wrestling competitors at the championship. The team was ranked in the nation’s Top 20 all season and finished second at the MAC tournament, behind No. 1-ranked Missouri.

By Camden Wood Selig
Director of Athletics

C-USA teams went 4-1 in bowl games in December, and Monarch fans can take pride that ODU topped two bowl winners - Louisiana Tech and Rice - with thrilling, last-second victories during the regular season. Coach Bobby Wilder and his staff concluded a highly successful recruiting campaign in early February and we look forward to a seven-home game schedule in 2015, featuring N.C. State, Appalachian State, Norfolk State and our C-USA opponents.
Football season tickets are on sale now for new buyers and the renewal campaign for current ticketholders began in mid-March. Fans who have never purchased tickets can improve their opportunity to get seats by joining the Old Dominion Athletic Foundation and making a donation to our student-athlete scholarship fund. Since the start of football in 2009, every ODAF donor has been able to purchase football tickets based on his or her giving level. I encourage ODU alumni to go to www.ynottix.com and learn more about the football ticket process. 2015 ODU Football season tickets are available, featuring seven home games for only $216. Purchase now at www.ynottix.com or call 757-683-7087.

Head coach Alan Dawson and the soccer Monarchs became the first ODU team to capture a C-USA crown, when they topped South Carolina on Nov. 16 for the title. Old Dominion hosted the C-USA tournament, with the finals televised nationally on Fox Sports. Our team advanced to the second round of the NCAA tournament, only to drop a heartbreaker to Georgetown in the final seven seconds of double overtime.

Coach Jeff Jones and the Monarch basketball team took a 27-7 record into the semifinals of the NIT tournament in New York City in early April, after winning three home NIT games that will not be soon forgotten. Monarch fans rose to the occasion to create incredible atmosphere, accentuated on March 25 when junior guard Trey Freeman hit a three-point shot at the buzzer to defeat Murray State and advance to New York. The Monarchs completed the home season with a 24-home win streak and were ranked in the AP Top 25 for the first time in school history.

The Lady Monarchs, led by C-USA Newcomer of the Year Jenni Simms, won 21 games and finished the season with strong performances. The team advanced to the semifinals of the C-USA tournament, and defeated the University of Virginia in the opening round of the WNIT tournament.

Not to be outdone, our spring sports made big headlines as well, led by the baseball team’s 14-5 win over then No. 1-ranked UVA and two wins over No. 8-ranked Rice. The Monarchs hosted UVA at Harbor Park on April 28 (and won 3-1) and then were set to compete in the C-USA championship at Southern Miss, May 20-23. The men’s and women’s tennis teams were en route for record-breaking seasons as well. ODU hosted the men’s C-USA tennis tournament in April, after hosting the women’s tournament last year. Women’s lacrosse was enjoying a successful first season in the Atlantic Sun, while sailing, men’s and women’s golf and rowing were all posting significant team and individual performances.
Three and a half years ago, teenager Carlos Lopez Villa decided to leave his family and home in Madrid, Spain, for an opportunity to become a student-athlete at Old Dominion University. Today he is one of the greatest tennis players ever to wear a Monarch uniform.

Lopez Villa, who concluded his collegiate career in mid-April, was the No. 1 player on a team that is thoroughly international and led by fourth-year coach Aljosa Piric, a native of Bosnia. (See roster.)

“When I finished high school in Spain,” Lopez Villa says, “I could’ve either come here to the United States to attend college and play tennis or pretty much just quit tennis and work on my degree in Spain. Back at home, I didn’t have the opportunity that this country and university allowed to be a student and an athlete at the same time, and I am forever thankful for that.”

The 6-foot-4 right-hander had an opportunity in 2015 to add to his long list of collegiate achievements, which included being a four-time All-Conference player (CAA and C-USA). Carlos finished his senior season with a 15-3 record which means he compiled an astonishing 53-5 singles record over the past three seasons. He climbed as high as No. 30 in the national rankings and became only the second male in school history to capture the coveted United States Tennis Association/Intercollegiate Tennis Association regional singles crown.

“Carlos put in a tremendous amount of work through his drive, dedication and willingness to be successful,” says Piric. “He was able to see the fruits of it on the tennis court and in the business school. He was one of the best students out there and one of the best tennis players that ODU has ever had.”

The young Spaniard’s combination of attributes helped him garner the prestigious Arthur Ashe Jr. Leadership and Sportsmanship Award from the ITA, which is the national governing body for college tennis. The award recognizes student-athletes who exhibit outstanding sportsmanship and leadership, as well as scholastic, extracurricular and tennis achievements.

“My experience and what I learned at ODU not only helped me in tennis but life in general,” says Lopez Villa. “I think I have improved tremendously as a person on and off the court.”

As a double major in economics and finance, Carlos possessed a 3.78 cumulative GPA on his way to three consecutive All-Conference USA Academic Team appearances. He also received two Conference USA Academic Medals and CAA Commissioner’s Academic Award.

Still, Lopez Villa admits it was not always easy. “My toughest semester at ODU was freshman year when I was trying to learn a new language while balancing academics and playing tennis at a high level. On top of all of that, I was away from my family for the first time. With time, I kind of got used to it all.”

Piric saw Lopez Villa as a catalyst for the program he is trying to build at ODU. “He has meant a great deal to this program and what we are trying to build here at Old Dominion, and he certainly left this program better than it was when he first got here. That is exactly how I want all players to leave the program – better than it was when they got here.”

Lopez Villa says, “These past four years have been extremely special for me. In the future if I have to advise someone on whether or not they should attend Old Dominion University, I will definitely tell them to become a Monarch. This school has helped me in so many positive ways. I’ll forever cherish my time in Norfolk, Virginia.”

The Old Dominion men’s tennis team has nine student-athletes on its roster represent-
ing eight countries, and is, according to Piric, “a microcosm of what today’s modern world is looking like.” Because of globalization, he adds, “Our team is an example of how our culture could look and potentially what companies are going to mirror. It makes it easier for our guys to be comfortable with who they are and where they come from, but at the same time be receptive, accepting and respectful of others’ diversities, cultures and origins.”

Recruiting overseas is nothing new for the ODU tennis program. However, the way in which coaches recruit international kids has definitely changed over the years, especially with the emergence of technology and the Internet. Piric’s recruitment of Lopez Villa in 2011 is an example of how young athletes can be vetted in a few weeks, even if they live thousands of miles away.

“I came here in July, and had to recruit a player for September,” Piric remembers. “With Carlos it all happened very quickly. Fortunately, through my previous contacts with several Spanish recruiting agencies, I had heard that Carlos was looking for a school as a last-minute decision. My contacts and friends there told me that Carlos would be a great worker and appreciate and know how to best take advantage of this opportunity.”

Piric augments his online networks by taking as many overseas recruiting trips as he can fit into his schedule. “Sometimes I have to be in a different country for three or four weeks at a time recruiting, which means I am away from the team and my family, but that is one of those things that comes with the territory and is part of the job.”

The coach began his globetrotting more than two decades ago because of tennis. He was a promising 14-year-old player in Bosnia-Herzegovina when war broke out there in 1992.

Six months after fighting started, Piric’s father got a note from the country’s Olympic committee. “(The committee) was working on getting the best athletes out of the country to a safe zone. I ended up being one of six tennis players that was fortunate enough to get out of Bosnia during the war.

“After bouncing around Europe for a little bit, one thing led to another and through a very fortunate set of circumstances I received a scholarship from the Olympic committee to attend a tennis academy down in Florida. I was in Florida for about a year before a family

ly in Richmond, Va., heard the story about me and decided to take me into their home and help me out. I ended up going to high school in Richmond for two years before attending the University of Richmond,” where he played No. 1 singles and doubles for the Spiders.

Piric has not lost touch with his homeland, however. In recent years he has lent his expertise to preparing young tennis players in Bosnia-Herzegovina for international competition, and he is now one of the coaches of the country’s Davis Cup team.

Tennis is one of the most global of all sports. The top 100 pros hail from all over the world and roughly 70 percent of the top collegiate players in the United States are from another country.

Piric will tell you it does not matter to him where the potential student-athlete comes from. “We try to get the best recruit that we can get and if that means we are going to go overseas, then that is what we will do. It definitely does not mean we are not looking for American kids. As a matter of fact, we are. It just so happens that the best kids that we found for our program happened to be from all over the place.”

Spain is particularly known for top-notch tennis, and Piric remembers when he was much younger following the exploits of Spanish players such as Albert Costa and Juan Carlos Ferrerro. And today, Rafael Nadal has put Spanish tennis at the pinnacle of the game. Among the players from last season’s roster, Lopez Villa and freshman Javier Jover Maestre hail from Madrid.

Piric thinks the common denominators for the members of his global team are their love for tennis and their desire to assimilate in a country that most had never visited before they were recruited. “They are all in the same boat. These players are their own fraternity and it really is quite amazing to see how it all works.”

2014-15 ODU Men’s Tennis Roster
• David Botti (Fr./Merano, Italy)
• Darragh Glavin (Jr./Newbridge, Kildare, Ireland)
• Javier Jover Maestre (Fr./Madrid, Spain)
• Theophile Lanthiez (Villepreux, France)
• Carlos Lopez Villa (Sr./Madrid, Spain)
• Adam Moundir (Fr./Lucerne, Switzerland)
• Samuel Perelman (Fr./Gainesville, Fla.)
• Zvonimir Podvinski (Jr./Zagreb, Croatia)
• Michael Weindl (Fr./Neuching, Germany)

Coach Aljosa Piric and No. 1 player Carlos Lopez Villa started their careers together in 2011 at Old Dominion together. Since then, the team has had winning records each season:

2011-12: 13-10
2012-13: 14-7
2013-14: 12-9
2014-15: 16-3

Individually, Carlos has compiled a 66-13 record over his four-year collegiate career.

Freshman season: 13-8
Sophomore season: 18-1
Junior season: 20-1
Senior season: 15-3
Find Me a Point Guard

Alum Takes Entrepreneurial Path as a Scout

By Brendan O'Hallarn

Corey Evans was just settling into a Washington, D.C., gym for a long day of watching basketball prospects when his cell phone rang. It was an assistant coach from Canisius University in Buffalo, N.Y. One of his team’s top recruiting targets, a point guard, was looking seriously at another school. So the instructions from Canisius to Evans were clear:

Find us a point guard who would like to come and play in Buffalo. Quickly.

Evans ’11, an Old Dominion University graduate in sport management and creator of the scouting service Roundball Rundown Report, went into his database of players he had scouted all over the East Coast. By day’s end, he had sent the Canisius coach the names of high school players from as far away as Georgia.

“If I’m a middleman, I guess you could say,” said Evans, 25. “It’s a matter of finding the player who’s the right fit for the right team. In this case, it was a player who was at the low-major level, and wouldn’t mind moving to Buffalo.”

His work done, Evans resumed his work of watching high school-age basketball players, and compiling information to provide to college teams. The endless travel and long days on uncomfortable high school gymnasium benches means it’s not a job for everyone. But for Evans, a basketball enthusiast since his boyhood in Pittsburgh, there is no place he would rather be.

“If you live out your passion, you never work a day in your life, and that’s how I feel right now,” he said.

ODU students choose to study in Norfolk for various reasons, but few students who don’t actually play basketball make that as their reason for attending.
Evans was at Xavier University in Cincinnati for his freshman year, but returned home to Pittsburgh because it became too expensive. Determined to go back to a university to chase his passion of working in basketball in some capacity, Evans chose ODU as a school that offered a sport management degree, and a mid-major basketball program on the rise.

“I’ve always been kind of an underdog kind of guy,” Evans said, explaining why he chose ODU over a traditional basketball power school. He had also reached out to Jim Corrigan, then associate head coach on the ODU men’s team, about opportunities to work with the team in some capacity.

“They remembered my persistence, so when I enrolled mid-year, I had an opportunity to join the team right away as a manager,” he said.

“He’s an amazing kid, very driven and determined. He had a capacity for work that is beyond measure. Always gave you way more than you asked for,” said Corrigan, now an assistant coach with the ODU women’s team.

With the basketball program, Evans and his fellow managers did the sometimes thankless work of gathering laundry, fetching balls and doing whatever unglamorous chore was needed by coaches and players of the ODU men’s team. However, Evans said he always felt like a full part of the team, and recalled star center Frank Hassell making the NCAA Tournament both seasons, defeating Notre Dame in the first round of the 2010 tournament.

While he was finishing his degree in a year and a half, and working as a manager, Evans was also planning his next step toward making basketball a career. Helpful inspiration came in the form of a roommate who was motivated to work in basketball himself.

“Kent Bazemore and I were roommates. I looked at him and saw his work ethic and drive. I wanted to make sure my lifetime was all about living out my passion,” Evans said.

Bazemore is living out his passion as a guard for the Atlanta Hawks in the NBA. Evans finished his degree early so he could take a job on the coaching staff of Duquesne University in his home town of Pittsburgh. He had a great season of growth and learning, but after Duquesne coach Ron Everhart was fired following a mediocre season on the court, Evans decided to take his own path.

In the bottom line-driven business of college basketball, success on the court is essential for a program’s survival. The key to that is finding the right players. With 350 college teams searching for talent, and with the high school basketball season coinciding with the college season, it’s impossible for Division I coaching staffs to evaluate everyone they need to.

“A program like Kentucky or Duke can recruit by just showing up to watch the top players play. It’s a lot harder for the smaller programs,” Evans said.

Building on his love of watching hoops and evaluating talent, Evans decided to make a business of it.

Nearly three years later, Evans spends most of the year traveling to basketball tournaments from Florida to New England, looking for the next hidden-gem recruit. From his bird-dog work, Evans compiles and writes The Roundball Rundown Report, a subscription newsletter for college basketball programs. More than 90 teams currently subscribe to his service, including ODU. “It’s nice to be your own boss,” he said.

Evans said he talks with ODU assistant coach John Richardson, a holdover from his time with the program, almost every week.

“Guys like Corey are just so valuable, because he’s a basketball junkie. He eats, sleeps and drinks basketball, 24/7. His eye for talent is just phenomenal,” said Richardson, now tasked with helping find and recruit players for new ODU coach Jeff Jones.

A player like Andrew Wiggins, the best prospect Evans has seen in person, is going to recruit himself. It’s the hidden gems that Evans loves to find, like Chris Clarke, a rangy shooting guard from Cape Henry Collegiate in Virginia Beach.

“He wasn’t getting recruited much at all, and I think he’s a great player. Nonstop worker. I thought he would be perfect for (former Marquette and new Virginia Tech coach) Buzz Williams. He’s a Buzz Williams kind of player,” Evans said.

That is the thrust of the reports that Evans produces. In addition to on-court measurable attributes, Evans is looking for things like basketball IQ and effort, attributes that can only be discovered by watching hours and hours of basketball.

After convincing Williams that Clarke was a perfect fit for his program, Virginia Tech began recruiting him last season. A stellar summer in AAU basketball made Clarke’s recruiting profile blow up nationally, into a top 100 player in the country. But the early start Williams made recruiting Clarke convinced the star guard to sign a letter of intent to play for Virginia Tech, starting next season. “It feels so great when you match the right kid to the right program. He’s going to be a fantastic player in that system,” Evans said.

The Roundball Rundown Report has experienced an explosion of its own in the past year. Other recruiting services so value Evans’ input that he’s now being paid to travel to tournaments, instead of footing the bill himself for long car rides and hotels. Eventually, Evans would love to create an experienced an explosion of its own in the past year. Other recruiting services so value Evans’ input that he’s now being paid to travel to tournaments, instead of footing the bill himself for long car rides and hotels. Eventually, Evans would love to create The Roundball Rundown Report as the home office for The Roundball Rundown Report since it was founded.

“I’m from Pittsburgh. It’s a blue-collar town. My grandfathers worked in the steel mills. What I want to do is make a better life, not just for the people I love, but also myself,” Evans said.
In the college athletics realm, Old Dominion University is known as a member of Conference USA in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). But to a group of 85 other institutions across the country, ODU is acknowledged as the cornerstone of a budding athletic association that specializes in serving the needs of small colleges.

The United States Collegiate Athletic Association (USCAA) helps to fill a void in intercollegiate athletics, and the fact that it is thriving today is due to the perseverance of a team of ODU graduates — most of them in sport management.

The mission of the USCAA is to provide quality athletic competition at a national level for student-athletes who attend small colleges such as Illinois Tech, Marygrove College in Detroit and Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Ind.

Sanctioning and administrative offerings of the USCAA provide opportunities for these colleges to compete on an equal competitive basis with schools of similar size and athletic budgets. This includes conducting national championships, selecting All-American teams, honoring scholar athletes, providing compliance services and overseeing eligibility standards for USCAA member schools.

Schools in NCAA divisions and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA, which has many smaller institutions as members) get most of the media coverage in the United States.

But there is a long list of other, usually smaller institutions that are competing for enrollment and tuition dollars, seeking students that they can recruit and retain. Many try to set themselves apart by way of athletic opportunities. For many small colleges, the battle of competing against larger institutions with more significant resources is overwhelming.

With more than 250 institutions competing in each division of the NCAA and NAIA, smaller schools have minimal opportunities for recognition and consistent postseason play. In the recruiting process, publicizing these accomplishments can make a big difference.

Formed in 2001 under its current name, the USCAA has a rich history that dates back to the 1960s. But in 2005, USCAA was a struggling organization with a mere 42 member institutions, many of which were not really engaged.

Bill Casto, then athletic director at The Apprentice School in Newport News, Va., was appointed by the USCAA board of directors as the association’s commissioner and tasked with rebuilding the association.

At that point, ODU’s history began to intertwine with the USCAA.

One of Casto’s first decisions was to hire ODU student Matthew Simms (B.S. ’08 in organizational psychology) as the assistant to the commissioner.

Simms had worked under Casto during a summer internship at The Apprentice School of Northrop Grumman. As a junior in college, Simms was tasked with running the national organization’s day-to-day operations.

“The USCAA was struggling and I had been asked by the board to take over. Our budget was small and I knew that I could use someone who was young, talented and driven for success. Matt fit the part and came on to work more than 20 hours a week, while still completing his degree at ODU,” says Casto.

In 2007, Casto and Simms asked Robert Case, director of ODU’s Sport Management Program, to provide feedback on the USCAA’s five-year action plan.

That meeting, however, turned into much more. Soon after, the USCAA began a formal partnership with ODU in which the association hired two sport management graduate students each year.

These students worked together to man-
age all operations of the USCAA national office, under the direction of Casto and Simms, who were now working full-time with The Apprentice School.

That structure continued until 2011 when Simms and Michael Goodman (B.S. ’10 and M.S. ’11, both in sport management) were hired full-time by the association.

This marked the first time the USCAA hired full-time staff members. Another ODU alum, Kevin Wegman (M.S. ’12, sport management), joined the staff full time in 2013. Today, nearly two dozen former Old Dominion students can list the USCAA in their work histories.

“Old Dominion University has been critical to the growth of the USCAA,” says Simms, who now serves as the organization’s chief operating officer. ODU students and graduates have had “a profound influence in the quality of our operations, including customer service and execution of events. It is clear that the Sport Management Program is doing its job, because year in and year out, we receive top-notch graduate assistants and interns who are ready to hit the ground running on valuable projects.”

Today, the USCAA is home to 85 small colleges across the country. Since those early days in 2005, the association has doubled in size and anticipates that trend to continue. With growth have come additional opportunities for USCAA members in the form of expanded tournament fields, award offerings and services from the national office.
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