Monarch

Philip Walzer (Editor)

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ON THE COVER
Victoria Borges’ illustration captures Monarchs pressing on during a tumultuous year featuring protests and the pandemic.

Name those masked men It’s hard to recognize people in masks. Or is it? A professor and a famous alum are pictured to the right. Who are they? (Hint: The prof’s mask features a map of the world.) Email your guesses to pwalzer@odu.edu Answers in the winter 2021 issue.
On my decision to retire

The average tenure of a college president these days is 6 ½ years. I’ve had the good fortune to lead Old Dominion for 12 years, or nearly double that time span.

The experience has provided a multitude of rewards for Kate and me. Most meaningful have been the close relationships we have forged with students, faculty, staff, alumni and other supporters of the University. It’s also meant missing countless birthdays and anniversaries to attend ODU games, concerts, lectures and other events. After 40-plus years of marriage, it’s time for me to redeem at least some of my IOUs with Kate, so I have decided to retire next summer.

As we reopen this fall, I know the magnitude of the COVID-19 challenges that stand before us, and I assure you, as I did the Board of Visitors, that my commitment will not waver until the ninth president of ODU enters Koch Hall. Most important, we must provide our 24,000 students with a superb education, no matter the format, while striving to protect the health and safety of the entire community and securing the necessary resources to maintain our momentum in research and teaching. Teams representing a broad array of Monarchs have devoted significant time to craft a comprehensive reopening plan; we have stressed that its success relies on a sense of shared responsibility.

Addressing the pandemic, however, cannot be our only order of business. I was proud to co-lead our March for Justice this summer with Mufu Taiwo, and I’m proud of the steps we’ve taken to support diversity and inclusion these past dozen years. But the killings of George Floyd and too many other African Americans only reinforce the necessity to work harder to eliminate racism and ensure equal opportunity. I am committed to pressing forward with this priority. As with so much else we’ve accomplished, it requires a team effort.

Higher education should be a time of joy and discovery, and the coming year will still include celebration. My happiest moments as president have been on the stage during commencement. I have shaken the hands of more than 30,000 graduates, including all three of my sons, and I look forward to congratulating the graduates in December and May. I wish all of them as fruitful and fulfilling a career as I have experienced.

Until then, we have much work to do.

John R. Broderick, President
Old Dominion University

Read more about John R. Broderick’s tenure as Old Dominion’s longest-serving president in the winter 2021 issue of Monarch magazine.
The world has changed since the last issue of Monarch magazine, and we must change with it. Now we’re wearing masks. I had mine on, in the accompanying picture, during the March for Justice on campus in June.

Masks help block transmission of the coronavirus, but the killing of George Floyd and the subsequent rallies around the world have un-masked and spread awareness of the abuse suffered by African Americans – degradation that too many of us willfully ignored for too long.

I don’t presume to know the way forward, but I believe part of the solution is simply to listen. Listen to fresh viewpoints and people from an assortment of backgrounds. You may learn a few things.

I listened to the speeches at the March for Justice. I listened to the pain, anger and frustration voiced by students, faculty and staff members at several Zoom discussions sponsored by Old Dominion. And I began to understand more.

For instance, as a white man from the North, I considered the Confederate statues odd relics from a strange, bad time long ago. But I didn’t give them much thought – until recently. The comment that really struck home came from a student at one of the Zoom discussions. She said she could still feel the pain passing the row of monuments on the bus to and from school in Richmond every day.

We need to listen to experiences such as hers. I hope you’ll also listen to the voices in these pages. You’ll meet four students and alumni who organized or participated in Black Lives Matter rallies from Norfolk to D.C. The protests energized them, and all emerged optimistic. Jorden Cofield ’22 said: “We’ve seen quick change in less than a month. Imagine what we can see in the next two or three years.”

You’ll also hear how other students, professors and alumni are feeling. “The only thing you can do wrong,” one student warned, “is doing nothing.”

She’s right. The next step after listening is taking action, whether on the personal, professional or political level. Alumnus Gregory Hutchings Jr., the school superintendent in Alexandria, plans to expand discussions on history and racism in the classroom. “We’re supposed to be warm and fuzzy,” he said, “but we have to be willing to push people into discomfort.”

Let’s all get more uncomfortable so everybody in this country can truly live the American dream.

Philip Walzer
Monarch Magazine and University Editor
#ODUAthome

Old Dominion University students, faculty and staff got the job done, mostly at home, last semester. They also managed to have some fun along the way.

Here are just a few of our hard-working students’ workspaces ready for remote learning. We are here for you! #ODU #ODUAthome

@ODU I’m working at home alongside my kids—whose school has also gone virtual. This is how I’m doing #ODUAthome with my 7-year old doing first grade at home!

#Social Distancing doesn’t mean social isolation, Monarchs. Do some yard work, FaceTime friends or family, read a book or show your art skills by drawing Big Blue! @heta_cute. #ODU #ODUAthome
MUFU TAIWO ‘18, a defensive lineman for four years on ODU’s football team, saw the protests mushrooming. One group seemed conspicuous by its absence.

“I felt student athletes’ voices weren’t as loud as they should have been,” said Taiwo, now a master’s student in sport management. “We have a platform we can use. The country needs leadership, especially from my generation.” He also felt that “the campus was quiet, and we should do something.”

So he organized a march. “I didn’t have to ask President Broderick,” Taiwo, 23, said. “He called me directly and said, ‘I want in on it.’ That speaks to ODU and its character.”

Taiwo and the president led the march, which began at the L.R. Hill Sports Complex, on June 11. “When I looked back, I was just blown away,” he said. “I didn’t really think that it would grow to be that big. It really got me, too, that there was a lot of faculty there.”

In all, nearly 300 people joined Taiwo, including University vice presidents, 25 football players, dozens of other students, and the entire football staff. They carried signs with slogans such as “We Will Not Be Silent” and “Everyone vs. Racism” and chanted “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot” and “No Justice, No Peace.”

Outside Webb University Center, Taiwo, the son of Army retirees, recalled his mother’s unfulfilled dream...
that he would be spared prejudice by the time he grew up. “You still have people with hate in their hearts,” Taiwo said later in an interview. “It’s something I will never understand.”

But Taiwo was energized by the rally. “It definitely inspired people to start brainstorming. I think we’re going to have more conversations about this.”

Broderick, who also spoke to the crowd, said: “It was a positive and moving event, and I applaud Mufu for organizing it. He has been a leader off the field both as an undergraduate and graduate student.”

Taiwo served as president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee and was vice chair of Conference USA’s SAAC. This year he was elected treasurer of the Student Government Association.

He received his undergraduate degree in business administration, with an emphasis in information technology. He hopes to get his master’s in December. His ultimate goal: to be a university athletic director. “I like the college scene and the university experience.”

Like Taiwo, JORDEN COFIELD ’22 wanted to get more people involved—specifically, young people in Chesterfield County, where Cofield lives. So he co-organized a march from the police station to the county courthouse in June. It attracted 20 people.

“We decided to do it again,” he said. That time almost 300 participated.

“It was a good biracial mix between younger and older people,” said Cofield, a sophomore majoring in criminal justice.

Members of the county’s Sheriff’s Office and Police Department were supportive, he said, providing cars to lead and follow the marchers and offering a snack and water station at the courthouse.

During the event, he told the crowd: “Sixty years later, we are still fighting the same fight that our grandparents fought, but we’re done fighting the same fight. We want peace.”

In an interview, Cofield added: “We need police reform. We just want justice and fairness. The criminal justice system is supposed to protect us.”

Cofield, 20, has felt the sting of racism. A few years ago, he said, he was in a car driven by a friend and an officer stopped them for no reason. A few times when he’s been shopping in stores, “I’ve been told to hurry up and buy.”

He describes #BlackLivesMatter as “my heritage. All lives do matter. But at the present time, Black lives are at the front line.”

Cofield plans to go to law school and end up in politics. “I’m very optimistic,” he said. “We’ve seen quick change in less than a month. Imagine what we can see in the next two or three years.”
MONTAE TAYLOR ‘18 was so impressed with the Black Lives Matter rally he attended in Richmond, he decided to take his young cousin the next day. “He’s 7 years old, and he didn’t know what racism was,” Taylor, 24, said. “I explained it to him. He said, ‘Now I get it. That’s why those kids in my class don’t get into as much trouble as me when they do the same things I do.’”

Taylor ended up going back with his cousin daily for two weeks. One day, his cousin offered a short message to the crowd. “He said, ‘Hey guys, I just want to say, Black Lives Matter and I love you all.’ There was so much love for this kid from so many people.”

Taylor described the atmosphere as “beautiful. I saw so much community going on. There was free food, medical tents, tents where kids could cool off.” Sometimes the young ones, like his cousin, led the marches.

They are one reason he’s optimistic: “The children of right now realize what’s going on a lot more than I did at that age. They are more vocal, and they’re not going to stand for a systematically racist society.”

Taylor recalled two serious instances of police profiling as a teen in Henrico County: being stopped while driving his parents’ Mercedes and being patted down at a Cook Out by police looking for Black men who had committed a robbery nearby.

Dismantling Confederate statues, he said, “is a small step. We need to have police officers who kill Black and brown people arrested. We need to have white people who are racist held accountable. We need to live in a country where we are truly free.”

At ODU, Taylor received both the University’s Evon-Broderick Award for Community Engagement and Service and the Rising Community Leader Award from the Urban League of Hampton Roads.

She dou-

“THE ONLY THING YOU CAN DO WRONG IS DOING NOTHING. IF PROTESTING IS NOT YOUR THING, GET YOURSELF EDUCATED ON HISTORY.”
– Danielle Carter, Student Government Association president

“MY SON CAME TO ME CRYING BECAUSE HE IS A 19-YEAR-OLD BLACK MAN IN AMERICA, AND HE DOESN’T UNDERSTAND WHY ALL THIS IS HAPPENING. I COULD NOT SAY EVERYTHING WILL BE OK. INSTEAD, I SAID, ‘YOU HAVE TO BE CAUTIOUS IN EVERY DECISION YOU MAKE.’ IT IS OUR REALITY AS BLACK MOTHERS. WE WORRY, WE PRAY, WE CRY AND WE CARRY OUR FAMILIES.”
– Narketta Sparkman-Key, director of faculty diversity and retention

“AMONG DR. KING’S MANY COMPELLING WORDS ARE THESE, ‘IN THE END, WE WILL REMEMBER NOT THE WORDS OF OUR ENEMIES, BUT THE SILENCE OF OUR FRIENDS.’ THIS IS NOT A TIME FOR WHITE PEOPLE TO BE SILENT. SILENCE IS COMPLICITY.”
– Ron Carlee, assistant professor of public service

“MY EYES HAVE BEEN OPENED TO HOW HARD IT IS TO BE A BLACK MAN IN AMERICA. IT IS VERY, VERY HARD. BUT IT HAS ENCOURAGED ME TO DO BETTER NOT ONLY IN MY OWN LIFE BUT WITH THOSE WHO ARE AROUND ME.”
– Junior Melvin Roy

“VOTE, VOTE. THERE’S POWER IN VOTING. ALSO UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF ECONOMICS. DON’T JUST GO TO CLASS. LEARN ABOUT WHO YOU ARE, YOUR HISTORY AND WHAT YOUR FOREFATHERS ENDURED THAT PAVED THE WAY FOR OUR SUCCESS.”
– Melvina Sumter, associate professor of sociology and criminal justice

QUOTE THEM
ogy and sociology. Now Taylor, a beekeeper, sells Tae’s Honey, as well as hemp products. To combat racism, he supports other minority-owned businesses as well as those that serve nonwhite, female and LGBTQ communities.

“We have stooped so low in the racist society we’ve had for 400 years,” Taylor said. “There’s nowhere else for us to go but up. To see children so motivated to stand up, to see Black men and women and also our white counterparts supporting us – all of that gives me great hope.”

NEIL TURNER ’20, who attended three protests in the District of Columbia, compared them to “a big block party, driven by purpose.” “We were protesting, chanting, raising our fists, putting up signs, but nobody seemed mad,” said Turner, 22, who just received a communication degree. “It was beautiful to see.”

The diversity of the crowds reminded him of ODU. “I’ve never seen anything like it, not even on TV or in novels. It wasn’t just color. It was young people, it was old people. And families. The educational value was amazing, too. The middle-aged people were teaching the young adults and vice versa in so many different ways.”

He was interviewed at one protest by The Washington Post as he was standing on a newly painted “Defund the Police” message on the street. But Turner told the Post he wasn’t sure that was the answer: “If their intention is to help us out, help the community out, then of course not.”

Turner, who grew up in Fairfax, graduated in May with a communication degree. At ODU, he helped film documentaries and videos, and he hopes to work in video or TV production. At the protests, Turner began taking black-and-white photos. “You don’t have to show people in color to represent the color of people,” he said.

Turner said he’s faced one serious instance of profiling. Driving home from a summer job at a restaurant two years ago, an officer stopped him and asked for his license and registration. “He said he was doing a search for someone who looks like me. He let me go, and I just went home.”

But he shares his peers’ optimism. “With everything that’s going on now, I have absolutely 100% faith it will change in a drastic way,” he said. “If we keep up this energy and the momentum we have, things are going to get better, and they’re already getting better.”

Read La Wanza Lett-Brewington’s poem “8 minutes 46 seconds” and other reactions from Monarchs at www.odu.edu/monarchmag
PERSEVERING through the Pandemic
Since mid-March, the pandemic has rewritten the way we live and work. At its worst, the coronavirus has stolen cherished lives from our world. At Old Dominion, it has reshaped how faculty teach and students learn, with unexpected results. Some alumni-owned businesses were devastated; others found success even in this dark time. Travelers were stuck in a months-long limbo; students were pressed into child-care duty. And some gave of themselves in other ways to lighten the burden for others. Read how Monarchs have suffered, adjusted and risen to the challenge in our special section.

STORIES BY PHILIP WALZER
Ex-military students design PPEs for front

Three mechanical engineering technology students, who all served in the military, collaborated to manufacture personal protective equipment for Sentara Healthcare from mid-March through the summer.

They did the work at the Additive Manufacturing Lab in the Engineering Systems Building, where they had previously taught 3D printing and design to sailors. The project was overseen by Anthony Dean, assistant research dean for the Batten College of Engineering and Technology, and Sebastian Bawab, chair of the mechanical and aerospace engineering department.

When Sentara’s request came in, “I had plenty of time, and I was extremely willing to help,” said Chris Betton, 25, a former nuclear mechanic with the Navy. Added Dante Lege, 28, who served as a sergeant with the Marine Corps: “If there is something new, I’m not one to say no. That’s gotten me into a lot of trouble, but it also gets me a lot of opportunities.”

Using the lab’s 3D printers, the students produced hundreds

Left: “I had plenty of time, and I was extremely willing to help,” says Chris Betton.

of adapters, which allow masks to be used as respirators. They also created a customized filter design.

They got off to a quick start. “We had the prototypes out the same day they gave us the idea for the design,” Lege said.

Sentara appreciated their efficiency.

“The one-day turnaround time for the first prototype was truly impressive,” said Justin Seemueller, respiratory clinical specialist at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital.

The equipment has been used by about 100 staff members at Sentara Norfolk General and Children’s Hospital of The King’s Daughters, Seemueller said. “It was a huge morale boost,” he said. “I can’t thank the ODU team enough for their urgent, tireless work in perfecting the prototypes and better preparing us to handle this pandemic.”

Betton said: “We’ve gotten great feedback from the Sentara workers. When they first received the parts, some of them reported back that they were actually crying. They felt safer on the job. That means a lot to all of us.”

Initially, Betton, Lege and Juan Cortez – a nuclear electrician who served on the same ship as Betton – worked together at the lab, sometimes through 14-hour days.

Then they switched to taking turns.

“We’re pretty much on a rotation to keep the printers running as often as possible,” Cortez, 27, said in mid-May. “We’re in a good groove right now.” Cortez received his bachelor’s degree during the project and planned to begin ODU’s master’s program in the fall.

Lege said the work has made “a positive impact on my perception of my major.

“I can actually build things. I’m digitally designing pieces used in everyday life that are applicable to people right now.”

It’s also made a positive impression on his mother, a nurse practitioner in Richmond. “She tells me I’m doing a good job. It sounds cheesy, but I get this welling sense of pride knowing that I’m helping people that are in my mom’s position.”

Watch the students make PPE and hear their thoughts at www.youtube.com/watch?v=CENlkj5DUFw&t=2s.

Right: The students made hundreds of adapters, which allow masks to be used as respirators.
Factory owner switched to mask production

BY HARRY MINIUM ‘77

WHEN THE PANDEMIC EMERGED in March and elective surgeries were put on hold, Murry Pitts ’80 lost his main source of business. His company’s plants make protective gear for health care employees who work with radiation.

“Our competitors all either shut down or laid people off,” said Pitts, CEO of Burlington Medical, which has offices in Newport News and outside London. “We hired people. We were able to pivot when our competitors couldn’t.”

Pitts, 61, retrofitted his operations – “It was relatively simple” – to manufacture equipment most needed by those treating patients with COVID-19. Burlington has since sold millions of masks and hundreds of thousands of gowns. It also manufactured face shields, protective eyewear and other items.

“Our goal was to keep my plant operational, keep my people employed and help people,” Pitts said. “We didn’t overcharge or make a lot of money on it.” And Burlington hired an additional 10 employees in Newport News to meet the production demand.

Purchasers of the equipment in Virginia included Eastern Virginia Medical School, Inova Health System, nursing homes, fire departments and the Norfolk Sheriff’s Office.

At Old Dominion, Pitts majored in criminal justice, but after graduation he entered the business world. One of his ventures, Carded Graphics, a manufacturer of paper products in Staunton, grew from 34 to 200 employees.

Pitts tried retiring a few years ago, but “I got bored after three weeks.”

He lives in Charlottesville but works five days a week in Newport News. Among the lessons Pitts said he reaped from the pandemic: “Our supply chain is so dependent on China. We’ve got to get away from that.”

And: “You need to be nimble – I don’t care what industry you’re in – and you need to have compassion for your people.”
Fisher’s food business is more than surviving

When natural disasters hit, business booms for Survival Cave Food, which sells cans of beef, chicken, turkey and other meat nationwide. But never like this.

“Sales are eight to 10 times what they normally are,” said the company’s owner, J.R. Fisher ’83, who lives outside San Diego.

The sales bounce might have been predictable. The customer base isn’t.

“You would think it would be a guy named Homer living in a trailer in the woods. But that’s not who’s buying from me. It’s generally somebody who’s highly educated. Many of them have expendable income, two or three homes. They don’t want to stand in line for quality food.”

Survival Cave Food could be making a lot more.

Earlier this year, Fisher, 60, thought about raising prices, which he hadn’t done in five years. Then the coronavirus outbreak hit. “I couldn’t do it because then I’d look like I was gouging people,” Fisher said.

At Old Dominion, “I was one of the poorer kids,” Fisher said. “I didn’t do the fraternities or clubs or any of that. I went to school and bartended at Chi Chi’s in Military Circle.”

In fact, his bartending job influenced his major.

One afternoon his sophomore year, he had to declare his major. He didn’t have much time because he had to get to work. “One line wasn’t very long, and that was the finance line. I knew it would involve math, but it was a lot more than I expected.”

Fisher graduated in 3 ½ years. It took a while, though, for him to get to Survival Cave Food.

He cycled through a series of jobs, including managing car dealerships, operating an air charter service and placing applicants in pharmaceutical jobs, both in Virginia and California.

Even those experiences were beneficial. “You try enough things to figure out what doesn’t work,” he said. “Eighty percent of what I did failed. But that 20% far outweighed the 80%.”

Fisher was selling camping products in Chesapeake when a company asked if he could add freeze-dried survival foods, including breakfasts and drinks. Sure, Fisher said.

Sales were growing, but “the company that was making the products got behind” in shipping them. “I thought, ‘Maybe I can come up with my own brand.’ ”

Fisher founded Survival Cave Food in 2011. He chose the name “because I thought it sounded cool. That was probably the worst name I could have picked. Nobody was searching for it.”

The choices are chicken, turkey, pork, beef and ground beef. (Fisher’s favorites: beef and chicken.) There is no expiration date. Each item, Fisher said, has just two ingredients: the protein and salt.

His products are sold by such distributors as Walmart, Amazon and eBay. They come in cans of 14.5 or 28 ounces, half-cases (six cans) or full cases (12 cans).

One testimonial on the company’s website says: “I can’t remember the last time I tasted a steak this good.” Another compares Fisher’s beef to “my mom’s roast.”

Fisher does other things besides sell food.

He’s posted more than 500 videos on his YouTube channel, J.R. Fisher Training, on ways to make money online. “If I can free someone from going to a job they hate every day, that’s my main goal.”

Fisher’s 2016 book, “The Great American Food Shortage: How To Prepare And Protect Your Family From The Upcoming Food Shortages,” has enjoyed renewed popularity. It offers tips on what to grow in a garden, where to store food and how much to keep, and predicts empty shelves after a natural disaster.

Fisher isn’t the only Monarch in the family. His wife, Jessica, graduated in 2012 and his daughter, Nicole Armentrout, in 2011.

“Old Dominion kept me on the straight and narrow,” Fisher said. “I hate it when people say, ‘I’m not using my degree.’ You are using it. Everything you learn, you’re going to apply somewhere, and it’s going to be helpful.”
IN MAY, KERRY KILBURN ’18, ’19 submitted an image of her collage “Corona” to the University Libraries, which is collecting memorabilia about COVID-19.

Her 8 ½-by-11 work contains familiar images, including spherical representations of the virus, but also some surprises, like Bingo sheets. Kilburn’s explanation: “Think about Bingo as a game of chance. You take a chance every time you walk into a grocery store, every time you interact with another person.” And why the prose in another language? “Viruses are a foreign language to us from a biological standpoint.”

Kilburn was a senior lecturer in biological sciences from 1995 to 2010. She returned to Old Dominion as a student to receive a bachelor’s degree in art history in 2018 and another bachelor’s in photography in 2019.

To submit COVID-19 memorabilia to the libraries’ Special Collections and University Archives or to find out more, go to https://www.odu.edu/library/special-collections/covid19archive
CHRISTINA STEEL (PH.D. ’10) began the spring teaching two sections – one onsite and one online – of Cell Biology. She also taught in person Research Methods, for prospective science and math teachers. Steel dropped one chapter from the biology class, because the semester was shortened, and allowed the research students to bypass the final experiment. She recorded lectures in her office on video, which students could watch at their convenience. “Because I have a touch-screen computer, I can sketch drawings while I teach, which the students find helpful.” Steel credited ODU’s Center for Faculty Development with offering help and innovative ideas.

THE RESULTS “We met a majority of the real objectives. I was really surprised by the quality of the final papers. Most did better in the final exams than they did previously.”

ON DROPPING THE LAST LAB Steel gave Research Methods students a choice, and they opted to revise a paper instead of conducting an experiment. That was OK with Steel. “There really was no way to design a rigorous home experiment. They don’t have access to microscopes or a chemistry hood. Who has a radar gun at home?”

THE BIG TAKEAWAY “Some of our students have unreliable or no internet at home. I loaned a computer to one student. Some have work-related issues, child-care issues. We know this happens, but we maybe didn’t make as much allowance for that as we should have. I decided to give students a one-week grace period on late assignments. Some were emailing me literally in tears trying to get all their assignments in. They’re generally willing to put in the work, but they’ve got to have the time to do it. Life happens.”

ONLINE LABS? “I don’t think they’re an adequate replacement for face-to-face labs. Will they do as a stopgap? Yes. But students will not be prepared as well as they should be. It’s not just about seeing the experiment; it’s learning the physical skills.”

WE’RE PEOPLE, TOO “A lot of faculty also face issues with this transition to home. All of a sudden, we have to come up with a way to motivate ourselves and spend eight hours on the computer getting our work done. At some point, we all hit a wall. It’s important to be cognizant that moments like that will happen for us. Sometimes it’s better to take some time to binge on Netflix than to burn out.”

TO ZOOM OR NOT? Steel prefers Microsoft Teams: “It offers not only video options, but a really strong set of tools,” including a chat feature, to-do lists and the ability to collaborate on projects. “Zoom is a video-conferencing tool, not a classroom management replacement.” But Zoom conferences with individual students offered a powerful reminder, “With pets interrupting and kids interrupting, it humanizes us and helps us all see each other as people.”

Telomeres are maintained differently in different cell lineages

- In somatic cells, telomere lengths are reduced each cell division to limit cell doublings.
- A critical point occurs from telomere shortening when cells stop their growth and division.
- In contrast, cells that are able to resume telomerase expression continue to proliferate.
- These cells continue to divide and do not show normal signs of aging.
- Approximately 90% of human tumors have cells with active telomerase.

end-replication problem senescence
SHANNON WELLS (M.S. ’07, PH.D. ’09) taught two lecture sections of 250 students each in Introduction to Oceanography. She also supervised 23 lab sections, taught by eight graduate students. Wells and the grad students made 15 videos for four labs and put them on You-Tube. She said of the semester: “I’ve been so flexible I feel like Gumby’s cousin, but we owe it to our students.”

EVALUATING THE LAB VIDEOS “There were a couple that I don’t know if students really got what we were trying to convey and a couple that worked better than they did in the classroom. We use our wave tank simulator to simulate high-frequency and low-frequency waves. We could do slo-mo on the video, which allowed them to better see what was happening. I have in my head a much different course in the fall. If students know exactly what we’re expecting from them, we’ll be a lot more successful.”

WHAT’S LOST “You lose the joy of touching things. Maybe that’s me as a scientist. I want to see it; I want to touch it. They also lost the opportunity to use a microscope. It’s not standard in high school anymore.”

ON VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS “It’s different students. Traditionally, higher achievers showed up and those who were desperate and suddenly figured out things are not going well. Now it’s the middle-of-the-road students or the ones who just want somebody to talk to. They had the opportunity to interact with a human and they took it, and that’s fine.”

ON LECTURES Wells divided them into “smaller, bite-sized pieces” on Zoom, ranging from 7 to 30 minutes. “They could watch them when they wanted. From my perspective, it was very helpful to have a 16-year-old in the house. I know what his attention span is.”

ALL ABOUT TEAMWORK “I couldn’t have done it without my eight graduate TAs. They are the heroes, not me. I had the vision, but they did everything from updating answer keys to video editing. We were very much a ‘we,’ working together to make sure every student could finish the semester.”

THE PERSONAL CHALLENGE “The hardest thing for me has been the lack of separation. I live in Newport News. On my drive to and from Norfolk I used to be able to shift from mom to teacher/scientist. Now I get up, I roll out of bed, and I’m on the computer.”

‘You lose the joy of touching things’

—SHANNON WELLS, SENIOR LECTURER IN OCEAN, EARTH AND ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES

▼ ABOUT 7,300 PEOPLE FROM 115 COUNTRIES SIGNED UP FOR ODU’S NEW FREE EIGHT-WEEK STEM SUMMER PROGRAM, REMOTE EXPERIENCE FOR YOUNG ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS (REYES).
Zoom Boom

How did the switch to online education go last semester? Here’s what five faculty members and students think.

“I would say it’s pretty positive. It’s definitely forced me to think more critically. With the professor not always there, you have to do it yourself. It also forced me to become better at organizing my days. Now I’m actually using my student planner. During the whole ordeal, I learned how dedicated our professors were to teaching us. I walked away with a lot of newfound knowledge.”

Devontae Allen, sophomore majoring in political science and National Guard member

“The ‘enjoyment’ of both learning and teaching is reduced when you are physically away from students and teachers. During face-to-face classes, I emphasize working in groups while I walk around and give my feedback and corrections. That is hard to do online. Showing a student how to write certain Arabic letters on their sheets or on a board makes a stronger impact than when it is done on a screen. In a regular classroom, I felt that I had more options to address different styles of learning and adjust my teaching style to their needs.”

Shadi Bayadsy, lecturer in Arabic

“From a student perspective, being online is definitely not my preferred method of learning. I learn by watching other people do it and then having them help me through it. I tend to be pretty active in class discussions, and not getting automatic feedback – even people saying ‘Uh huh’ – ‘cause everyone is on Mute is definitely a challenge. The things that have worked: You can constantly push the envelope virtually with team-building exercises. Recording sessions is awesome. You’re able to go back and look at the lectures and listen to exactly what your peers said.”

Emily Love, master’s student in higher education

“I ran my normally scheduled office hours over Zoom once classes went online. At first, I wondered whether anyone would use them, but they were much better attended than my on-campus office hours have ever been. In the future, I plan to hold office hours both on campus and on Zoom.”

Allyn Walker, assistant professor of sociology and criminal justice

“It’s a good reminder that there are many ways to learn. Neither online nor in-person fits all learners. Online education often engages shyer, more reticent students – the kind of student I was as an undergraduate – who need more time to assemble their thoughts. But for those of us who believe in a class seminar experience that allows students to exchange ideas, to work through difficult texts line by line – it’s not doable in the same way and with the same intensity that you would get in person. Nevertheless, I’ve been surprised at what Blackboard, Zoom and all these various internet tools do have to offer.”

Elizabeth Zanoni, associate professor of history
The Top 10 Things I’ve Learned About Teaching With Zoom

BY SCOTT SECHRIST

10. I really should have gone with that high-end internet access deal last year.

9. If you intend to stand up during a lecture, consider what you are wearing.

8. Students will fidget, eat, look at their phones, and get up and walk away during a class. Just like in the regular classroom.

7. If you’re recording a lecture with Zoom, one of two things will happen: You will forget to start the recording until you are halfway through the lecture, or you will notice an error in the middle of the PowerPoint slides that you never noticed before. Depending upon your level of OCD, you’ll need to record the lecture again.

6. The awkward silence in the traditional classroom when you ask, “Are there any questions?” is just as awkward on Zoom. Equally awkward is your ability to forget where the “End Meeting” button is at the end of every lecture.

5. When you’re using Zoom to lecture, the camera adds 10 pounds, unless you’ve already gained 10 since the quarantine. Then it looks like 20.

4. When you’re using Zoom to lecture, the camera adds 10 years. If you are seeking to become chair of your department, this may work to your advantage. Otherwise, you just need a haircut.

3. Your Zoom virtual background is funny only to you.

2. “Chat to Everyone” means it is recorded. Tell your students to be careful.

1. Have a light source in front of you during a lecture, not behind you. Otherwise, you’ll look like someone in the witness protection program.

And the Top Thing I Learned About Teaching Online with Zoom:

This article originally appeared in the Center for Faculty Development’s FacSheet.

Scott Sechrist ’75 (M.S. ’87), an associate professor in the School of Medical Diagnostic and Translational Sciences, retired in June after 33 years at ODU. He helped establish the University’s Nuclear Medicine Technology program in 1987.
funeral home owner Lamonte Fields ‘89 has had to bury five people who had the coronavirus. The first time, he didn’t find out right away.

“I wasn’t aware the case was COVID when I went to the hospital,” Fields, 53, said. “The family never mentioned it. If I hadn’t seen it on a piece of paper in the hospital, the disease could have been transmitted to me.”

Fields runs the business his father started, W.L. Fields Funeral Home, outside Petersburg, and manages Bland Funeral Home in Petersburg.

His work procedures have changed dramatically since March. Everyone who visits the office must wear a mask. To help make up for limits on funeral attendance, Fields has scheduled longer and more frequent visitation periods. Doorknobs and restrooms in the homes are sanitized hourly and the chapel after each service.

The virus can be transmitted from a dead body. “When you move someone that’s deceased,” Fields said, “there’s the potential to push air out of the lungs.” So when he and his employees come in contact with a body, they wear masks and put a towel over the person’s face. In the cases where the person had COVID-19, he has on the equivalent of a haz-mat suit that entirely covers his body. He removes and discards it immediately after he’s done.

Perhaps the most time-consuming change: A more elaborate procedure to disinfect the body, particularly the mouth cavity, during embalming. That adds about one hour to the process. “When you do something for a long time,” Fields said, “you have a tendency to find quicker and shorter ways to do it. This virus is taking me back to my roots, when I first learned how to be safe, which is a good thing.”

Families sometimes exceed the maximum attendance at funerals, “and there’s not a whole lot you can do at that point,” he said. “But most people are understanding of the rules for size and social distancing.”

Fields began working at his family’s funeral home in McKenney when he was 10, greeting guests, sometimes answering the phone.

When he entered Old Dominion University, he wasn’t considering returning to work there. “But after talking to some professors, I came to realize that a family business was established and was waiting for someone to take it over.” So after receiving his marketing degree, Fields earned an associate’s degree in mortuary science at John Tyler Community College.

In addition to his two funeral homes, he works part time at a third in Richmond.

The pandemic, he said, “hasn’t changed my impression of funeral service. I get the most satisfaction out of creating an uplifting memory for a family. Even if it’s crying or sad, it’s something they will remember positively.”
KEVIN LOPEZ-GIBBS ’19 never expected one of his responsibilities for the spring semester would be part-time caretaker for his 2-year-old nephew.

In March, his sister started working from home. Because her son’s day care center closed and her husband was on a work trip overseas, she needed help. So Lopez-Gibbs, 27, a master’s student in history, volunteered.

He went to Northern Virginia and stayed at his sister’s house in Alexandria for two weeks.

He took the early shift. Lopez-Gibbs tended his nephew, Hugo, from about 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day, and then his sister would take over. He and Hugo would play PAW Patrol, walk the dog, kick around a soccer ball, watch TV.

“It’s not an easy job, especially when you have to balance work and taking care of young kids,” Lopez-Gibbs said. “I definitely have a new respect for my sister and my mom.”

Most of his relatives are in his native Puerto Rico. “It’s been difficult that you can’t be there if something happens,” Lopez-Gibbs said. “But in a way, I was already prepared for this.”

A former petty officer in the Navy, he was stationed in the West Coast and Japan. “I couldn’t just hop on a plane to Puerto Rico,” he said. And Hurricane Maria in 2017 was “even more stressful. I couldn’t communicate with my parents for a week. You didn’t know what was happening. At least now, I can see them on Zoom.”

As a history student, he’s felt challenged by the coronavirus limitations: “It’s been frustrating because of the limited access, only having online resources. Usually, interlibrary loan is the best tool to find something that we need.”

But Lopez-Gibbs has pressed forward, even when he was in Alexandria, with his part-time work as an intern for the Jefferson Lab archives – transcribing interviews, cataloguing documents, sorting negatives.

“It’s really interesting learning the history of the lab,” he said. But Lopez-Gibbs joked: “Even now, after a year, I don’t completely understand everything the lab does.”

He recalled one moment of discovery that excited him: “I was going through scientific documents and all of a sudden I found letters to a scientist in the Soviet Union. They were all in Russian.”

After Lopez-Gibbs gets his degree next year, he hopes to find a permanent job doing research at an archive. “I’ve always liked working by myself, and I like doing the grunt work.”

PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS

PANDEMIC POINTS

▼ The Strome College of Business has launched the Open4Business program; students will brainstorm ways to help businesses overcome economic challenges.

▼ The Monarch Pantry (right), sponsored by the Division of Student Engagement and Enrollment Services, has provided about 20 food items each to 50 students every week since May. PRA Group donated $50,000 to the pantry.

▼ Old Dominion raised nearly $40,000 for its Rise to the Challenge fund, which helps students, faculty and staff cover unexpected expenses stemming from the pandemic.

▼ During the first four months of the pandemic, members of the Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy issued 53 news releases on economic research and were quoted in local and national media 54 times.
THE PANDEMIC has turned teaching and work schedules upside down, probably more so for Rachawan “Aey” Wongtrirat (Ph.D. ’10) than any other Monarch.

From March to early July, Wongtrirat, associate director for international initiatives, was stuck in her native Thailand, where the time is 11 hours ahead of Norfolk. She’s had Zoom meetings that ran till 4 a.m.

“I haven't slept that much; sometimes I nap in the afternoon,” Wongtrirat said in late May. “My supervisor tells me, ‘Go to bed,’ but I feel bad, so I try to work around U.S. time.”

One good thing: She had stopped drinking coffee last summer, but when she learned she couldn’t leave Thailand, she started again. “And my parents brought me lots of coffee.”

Wongtrirat alternated staying at family homes in Bangkok and Rayong, a city on the east coast. She had come to Thailand before spring break for a 10-day trip to meet a faculty member in Bangkok and visit relatives.

Her job has a three-fold mission: supporting the University’s international students, through events and one-on-one interaction; providing on-campus opportunities to educate “domestic students”; and promoting international education at ODU and beyond.

Since the pandemic, she’s reached students through methods including virtual lunches, welcoming sessions, Zoom chats, a weekly e-newsletter and WhatsApp. “I always give them encouragement and motivation,” she said.

But she knows the changes are especially hard for international students. “I don't think they are here just for the education. It’s the whole package. The reason they study abroad is to have a full experience.”

As at many schools, most of ODU’s international students remained in the United States. “They have a strong persistence, and they want to graduate,” Wongtrirat said. “In general, they’re OK, but I think some of them have concerns about their future after graduation.”

She participates in “virtual engagement sessions” for admitted students. “We want to welcome them to ODU and we want them to come, but the reality is, some of the U.S. embassies don’t even have an identified date for when they can submit an application for a visa interview.”

She stresses the bright side: “This situation is a wonderful opportunity to broaden our conversations with students on the importance of global learning. COVID-19 is not about the U.S. It is not about Thailand. This is about our experience as human beings. Only if we work together, if we know how to engage, how to navigate and collaborate, will we save all of us.”

Wongtrirat’s nickname, “Aey” (pronounced like the first letter of the alphabet), means “naughty” or “leader.”

It was inspired by her mother’s three-day labor before her birth. “Now,” she said, “my mom is my leader.”

In Thailand, she said, nearly everyone wears a mask and face shield when outside.
Old Dominion University historians have been looking back to previous health crises: “Quarantine” was a familiar word long before the coronavirus outbreak to those who regularly walk across ODU’s campus. A marker outside Webb University Center notes the former location of Quarantine Road, a small street that still snakes three blocks north of 49th Street.

On the road sat Virginia’s first “quarantine house,” which operated from 1783 to 1862. In an essay posted on the University’s website, Annette Finley-Croswhite, University professor of history, wrote: “Since Norfolk was a regular stopover for ships leaving the West Indies on their way to New York and because yellow fever outbreaks were common in the Caribbean, vessels coming from that direction were often quarantined if there was reason to believe the ship and crew had been exposed.”

Unfortunately, she added, “Disease and scapegoating are linked now just as they were then. … Many doctors in Norfolk in 1855 placed the blame for yellow fever on the Irish who lived downtown on the impoverished streets where the disease first appeared.”

Read Finley-Croswhite’s essay at https://odu.edu/facultydevelopment/news/2020/5/quarantines_past

Ingo Heidbrink, a professor of history, is a member of an international team studying the European ice trade in the late 19th century. He’s found disturbing parallels between the current predicament and the cholera outbreak in Germany in the late 1890s.

And what’s ice got to do with it? Water was often the vehicle by which the disease was transmitted.

The Bacteriological Institute in Bremen “sometimes found surprisingly high numbers of bacteria,” even in ice made from clean drinking water, Heidbrink wrote in a blog post for the Norwegian Maritime Museum in Oslo.

“The reason for these bacteria was often insufficient hygiene and cleaning of equipment. … Does it sound familiar again today?”

Read Heidbrink’s blog post at https://marmuseum.no/cholera-and-ice-the-examples-of-hamburg-and-bremen

ZAKI BOUKHRISS, a senior studying marketing, used to work an occasional Saturday or Sunday at his father’s Norfolk restaurant, Omar’s Carriage House, and that was it. “He said he didn’t want to have anything else to do with the restaurant,” Omar Boukhriss recalled. That changed when the pandemic turned a family trip topsy-turvy.

Boukhriss, his sister, Yasmine, and their parents went to Morocco during spring break to visit his ailing grandfather. The children planned to return on March 16 to go back to school; their parents were going to stay a few days longer. But when they got to the airport to see off Zaki and Yasmine, “the guy at the checkout desk told us this was the last flight leaving Morocco. I saw my dad’s face go blank.”

His parents would not be able to get back to Norfolk until April 11, nearly a month later. So Boukhriss began working 40- to 50-hour weeks at the restaurant. “It wasn’t a question,” Boukhriss said. “There’s no other option. My dad’s not here. I had to be the eyes and ears for him.”

He continued the long hours even after his father returned, while juggling five spring classes. The first few weeks, “I did basically run the place,” he said. Accompanied by just two chefs, “I was in the back of the kitchen, helping them cook, making salads. I was making deliveries” – the first time in the restaurant’s 22-year history that it offered delivery service. “I was doing whatever was needed to keep the restaurant afloat and steady and make everyone happy.”

Now more than ever, he said, “every business needs to be proactive, whether changing its menu every day, changing the operation, keeping up with the new laws.”

So capitalizing on Zaki’s social media skills, the restaurant began posting daily photos of entrees on Instagram. When Virginia permitted outdoor dining, Omar’s turned part of its parking lot into a café, and Boukhriss added waiting tables to his duties. “We’re just running around like chickens with their heads cut off,” he said in late May. “Everyone’s struggling, but no one’s complaining.”

Boukhriss, who expects to graduate in December, planned to continue working at Omar’s through the summer while taking classes. “It’s been a proud moment for me as a father,” Omar Boukhriss said. “He has stepped up to the plate and played a big role.”

Now, his son said, “I’m more interested in my dad’s restaurant.” Whenever he finds an intriguing idea on Facebook, “I’ll call him to tell him, ‘We’ve got to put this into action.’” Boukhriss also embraces his role as backup for the restaurant. “When my dad’s not there, someone needs to be there on the ground.”
As Amy Brandwein ’93 began 2020, “Everything was going great.”
She had just completed the renovation of her popular Italian restaurant in D.C., Centrolina, expanding the bar and private dining. Over the summer, she’d opened her second restaurant, Piccolina, which the Washingtonian magazine said was “just as deserving of praise.” She had made record profits in 2019.
Then came the pandemic. And then the protests. “It’s been an incredibly difficult time period,” she said, “making sure our employees are taken care of and at the same time trying not to suffer economic losses.”
Brandwein closed both restaurants on March 18 but continued providing takeout and delivery of cooked meals, as well as items from Centrolina’s market. That brought in about 35 percent of her usual revenue. In late April, an employee was diagnosed with the coronavirus, and she shut all business for two weeks.
Centrolina and Piccolina were back to delivery and takeout in May. Brandwein was allowed to reopen the patio areas on May 29. But on May 31, everything was closed again.
The restaurants are in CityCenterDC, whose manager shut the development after protests damaged some businesses. Tenants were encouraged to board up their windows.
“I felt very bad,” Brandwein said. “I don’t want there to be an impression that I was scared or angry. I fully support the protests, and I participated in one.”
The restaurants reopened on June 11 and began full service, including indoor dining, on June 22.
“We’re OK; we’re not facing any imminent danger,” she said in late June. “At the same time, most every restaurant is most likely not making any money and lucky to break even.” The experience, Brandwein, 50, said, reinforced “my tendency to be very careful with money and the fact that this industry of ours is very, very fragile.”
One thing didn’t change this year: In the spring, Brandwein was nominated for the prestigious James Beard award for best chef in the mid-Atlantic. It’s the fourth year in a row she’s been a finalist.

Brandwein employed 20 of her 80 workers during the takeout period. But for two and a half months, she offered all of them free groceries. “We have access to food, and the cost was not great to me,” she said. “It was something that I could do that came from me.”
When Gregory C. Hutchings Jr. ’00 was a sophomore at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, he couldn’t get into honors classes because his grades didn’t meet the minimum requirements. But he knew that was his best route to college.

So Hutchings got other students to sign a petition supporting his request, and he brought it to the principal. “He walked me down to the counseling department,” Hutchings recalled, “and said, ‘Enroll Gregory in honors English.’ That was the first time I realized that my voice was actually power.”

More than 25 years later, Hutchings has far more power at T.C. Williams. Since the summer of 2018, he has been superintendent of Alexandria’s 16,000-student school system. The year after he arrived, all of the city’s schools achieved state accreditation for the first time in 20 years. “That was big,” Hutchings said.

He’s even more excited talking about a recently approved strategic plan to eliminate racial disparities in achievement.

“I am not going to tolerate lip service,” Hutchings, 43, said. “We haven’t been laser-focused on inequity, and we haven’t called it for what it is. If we don’t air our dirty laundry, how are we going to fix it?”

A week after the killing of George Floyd, Hutchings was wearing not his standard bow tie but a T-shirt that read: “What if your son was black?” That morning, he and top administrators spoke for two hours on how to incorporate the issue of racism in the classroom.

“Sometimes we’re not willing to have the raw discussions we need to have in education,” Hutchings said. “We’re supposed to be warm and fuzzy, and we don’t want to hurt people’s feelings. But we have to be willing to push people into discomfort. That’s the only way we’ll see change.”

Hutchings, the son of a divorced mother, attended four elementary schools in Alexandria. But that didn’t slow his academic progress.

“Greg was always such a good student,” said his kindergarten teacher, Dorothy McKenzie, with whom Hutchings keeps in touch. “I told him he had the potential to be the first Black president of the United States.”

John Porter, the principal at T.C. Williams, recalled agreeing to Hutchings’ honors request because “he took the initiative. Greg had a vision for his future and wanted to challenge himself to reach further and learn...
as much as he could."

His senior year counselor, Jimmi Barnwell (M.Ed. ’77), was the one who encouraged him to attend ODU. "He was the kind of student you expected great things from," she said.

At ODU, he developed a sense of belonging at the Hugo Owens African American Cultural Center, then on 49th Street, and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. "I was around some of the most remarkable, intelligent, forward-thinking African American men. It gave me the confidence and support network to be the leader that I am today."

Hutchings had hoped to be a doctor, but after failing organic chemistry he switched to interdisciplinary studies, with a focus on math and science. It was a popular route to teaching, but that wasn’t yet on his mind.

As a student, Hutchings was a tour guide and part-time admissions counselor. John R. Broderick, then vice president overseeing admissions, suggested he work after graduation as the University’s representative at its new Northern Virginia Center.

"I thought, ‘Wow, the vice president wants me to do it. Of course I’ll do it,’" Hutchings said. He lasted just six months. "I was all alone in this big building. There was no one to talk to. I’m a people person."

A principal he’d once met told him he’d make an excellent teacher. Hutchings contacted her and soon found himself in front of 20 fifth-graders who had been transferred from other classes. "I remember thinking, ‘I’m responsible for these kids, and I don’t even know anything about them. I’m only 23. What am I going to do?’"

Seconds later, a new thought: "I can mold their future."

All of his students passed the state’s Standards of Learning tests that year. Then Hutchings set his sights higher: "I wanted to be a principal. I need to change more than 20 kids."

Hutchings, who later received a doctorate in education from the College of William & Mary, was an assistant principal outside Richmond and in Nashville before realizing his goal of leading a school in 2007. Two years later, he was named Tennessee’s middle school principal of the year.

In 2010, he returned to Alexandria as director of pre-K-to-12 initiatives. He left in 2013 to become superintendent in Shaker Heights, outside Cleveland.

Five years later, he waited until the last day to apply for the top job in Alexandria. Hutchings was happy in Ohio, "but how could I not come back and try to give everything I had learned and experienced back to the city that made me who I am?"

Hutchings credits increased accountability and empowerment of principals for Alexandria’s accreditation success last year. But he also cites years of good work before him. So he insisted on a photo with five of his predecessors.

"I wanted to let them know how much I appreciated their sacrifices," Hutchings said. "There’s always somebody before you to open the door to make it possible for you to walk in."

His gratitude is accompanied by a passion that lights up when he talks about the district’s strategic plan targeting racial inequities. It calls for more money for textbooks, mandatory anti-racism training for employees and a pared-down set of objectives to ensure a tighter focus.

"We have to have the audacity to say we will not tolerate inequities and not be apologetic about removing barriers for children. When we accomplish that, that is going to be my proudest moment."

How did Alexandria handle the reopening of schools?

Go to www.odu.edu/monarchmag

HE DOESN’T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT

You’ll rarely see Gregory C. Hutchings Jr. at work without a bow tie. The tradition started in 2011, when Hutchings was director of pre-K-to-12 initiatives for the Alexandria school system. The School Board was about to vote on one of Hutchings’ programs. One of the members always wore bow ties, so Hutchings thought it couldn’t hurt if he had one on, too.

"I got a lot of compliments that day," Hutchings said. "So I thought, maybe I should start wearing them."

And he has ever since. "Now it’s hard for me to exist without a bow tie," he said.
As a teenager, Sylvia Bugg ’92 stood in front of her bedroom mirror, holding a brush as if it were a microphone, and recited her book report. She was practicing for her future career as a TV reporter. Bugg never realized that dream. Instead, she climbed a lot higher.

Bugg has spent most of her 28-year career behind the scenes in public television. In February, she began her third stint (“Third time’s the charm”) at the Public Broadcasting Service, this time as vice president for programming.

She oversees a content team of seven and approves every new show, from arts to science. “I spend a lot of time screening cuts and programs, looking for those films that resonate, finding that next title we want to produce or commission,” Bugg, 49, said.

Her previous job, which she’d held since 2014, was vice president of diversity and television content at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the overseer of federal funding for PBS and other public media. Diversity still ranks high among her priorities.

“It’s not just what people see on their screen. It’s what happens behind the camera. We’re bringing more diversity into the pipeline of producers.”

Almost immediately after Bugg got her new job, another issue drove to the top of her agenda: the coronavirus. “Our top concern,” she said, “is for the health and wellness and safety of PBS employees.”
She’s also sought to strike the right balance for viewers. They crave the latest information. But “we don’t want to drop everything and do nonstop COVID,” said Bugg, who left her Arlington, Virginia, office to work out of her home in Montgomery County, Maryland, less than a month after she had rejoined PBS. “People are looking for comfort and some sort of normalcy, and we will continue to do that.”

**Bugg grew up in Brunswick County**, two hours west of Norfolk. “Old Dominion felt like a great choice for me,” she said. “It wasn’t too far from home. It had a good communication program.

“I say to young people, make sure you have that basic foundation. You want to have great writing skills and be a great storyteller. That was something I was grounded in at Old Dominion.”

Her first go-round at PBS was from 1993 to 1999. “Each year,” Bugg said, “I was able to advance to the next role,” rising from administrative assistant to associate director of programming. “I worked with filmmakers to get shows packaged and ready for air. I also may be the only person, outside of Ken Burns and his staff, to watch every single frame of his baseball documentary.”

The next 13 years, she worked for Discovery Communications, ending as operations director for its flagship network, Discovery Channel.

From there, Bugg returned to PBS as director of general audience programming, switched to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and came back this year as vice president.

Bugg is so private, said Barbara Stith ’92, a friend since elementary school, that she kept the new job a secret for a while. When Stith learned the news, she wasn’t surprised.

“She always knew what she wanted. And if she didn’t know how to get where she wanted to go, she knew how to network, talk to people, market herself and learn whatever she needed to learn to get there.”

**PBS, Bugg said, isn’t “broccoli or spinach TV”**— programs that are “good for you” but not necessarily the liveliest. One of its most popular offerings is “Antiques Roadshow,” which debuted in 1997. “It’s a great fun show.”

Another: “Finding Your Roots,” which Bugg says, “tries to find ways to insert flair and excitement into what is a traditional genealogy show,” researching the pasts of such celebrities as pop star John Legend and comedian Amy Schumer.

PBS provides programs to 330 local stations, including WHRO in Norfolk. “The stations have control over their schedule,” she said. PBS sometimes asks them to air a program on the same night, though the times may vary.

WHRO earlier this year carried a six-part series, “Somewhere South,” looking at the intersection of food and culture in the South. The series mixed standard and surprise dishes—from collard sandwiches to kimchi to dumplings.

“Somewhere South” realized Bugg’s expectations for strong viewer appeal. But predicting audience reaction is “not a perfect science,” Bugg said.

“Sometimes, we think, ‘Wow, this program will be a home run,’ but it didn’t resonate.” On the other hand, a documentary about the performer Sammy Davis Jr., which Bugg wasn’t sure would attract younger viewers, netted strong ratings last year.

Another well-received show, which blended coverage of the coronavirus with a push to provide more digital content, was “In This Together,” which aired in May. The half-hour special collected videos and photos from viewers, including a woman recovering from the virus who was separated from her newborn twins and a warehouse employee furious at a lack of information and safety precautions at his workplace.

But “we think people want some kind of escapism,” Bugg said. “So we want to make sure we’re giving them lighter fare,” such as a show in March about Virginia’s Inn at Little Washington, known for its gourmet restaurant.

From an early age, Bugg was taught: “You get a good job. You get an education, and then you give back.” Now, she said, “I think I’m working for a company that does just that.”

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*ALUMNI*

Bugg also has a master’s degree in journalism and public affairs from the American University and an M.B.A. from the University of Maryland at College Park. She is pursuing a doctorate in organizational change and leadership from the University of Southern California.
How Toykea Jones learned – and profited – from failure

BY PHILIP WALZER

Toykea Jones ’03 (M.E. ’05) was the youngest person to endow a scholarship at Old Dominion University, creating an award for engineering students when she was 29.

Jones also is the youngest member of the University’s Board of Visitors. She was appointed when she was 35.

She bought her first house less than two years out of school, in expensive Northern California. She now owns a few properties on the East and West coasts. During 14 years with Johnson & Johnson, Jones, 39, has attained leadership positions in all three sectors of the drug company.

But what seems like a meteoric rise hasn’t always been a straight or easy shot up.

Her first few months in California, she was intensely homesick, calling her parents and grandmother every night.

In 2009, overseeing employees older than herself, Jones learned a lesson on leadership: “I thought I was an amazing manager, but my team told me I wasn’t. They were brutally honest.”

More recently, she switched to medical device sales. “I thought I’d be a great salesperson, but I fell on my face during one sales call,” she told students during an Empowering Black Females seminar in February. “I didn’t know how to sell to physicians.”

In each case, Jones regrouped and persevered.

In California, she resolved to create a network of friends. She was so successful that she was homesick for California when she moved back east.

As a young boss, Jones learned that “You can’t have a one-size-fits-all approach. Some people are better hands off, and some people you have to manage more closely.”

In sales, “I did my research, practiced in-services with my peers and was better the next time” – though there are still days she feels “frustrated and defeated.”

Taking risks is part of Jones’ success strategy.

“Failure is great,” she said. “How else are you going to learn? You just have to bounce back quickly and move on.”

Jones grew up in public housing in the Young Park and Huntersville neighborhoods in Norfolk. Her family didn’t go on fancy vacations, “but I had a roof over my head. I had love, family, food, fellowship.”

And she had the firm support of her parents. “They were there for me in everything I did – cheerleading, track, softball, marching band.”

Jones also vividly recalls her mother volunteering almost every day at the Young Park Recreation Center – a lesson that would influence Jones’ philanthropy.

She attended Old Dominion because “I wasn’t ready to leave the nest, but I wanted to live independently.” She lived in Whitehurst Hall, which she found “so well-mixed with different backgrounds and cultures. I was always learning from those women.”

Jones majored in chemistry. “I loved formulas, putting stuff together and having reactions,” she recalled. “But it was very difficult. I wasn’t picking up and retaining the information as quickly as my classmates.”

So she pushed herself harder, reading the material a few times until she got it.

Even before she received her bachelor’s degree, Jones wondered if there were a better way to blend her love of math, science and processing. Engineering seemed like the answer. So she stayed at ODU for grad school, selecting environmental engineering because it had the fewest prerequisites.

She got through the master’s program, she said, with the help of professors including Gary Schafran, Mujde Erten-Unal and Jaewan Yoon. “They just motivated and encouraged me to continue and not give up,”
Jones said, “I was always asking questions and took advantage of office hours. I almost felt like they were my personal tutors.”

Jones received six scholarships when she was an undergraduate. “Somebody made it happen for me,” she said. “I wanted to do my part and pay it forward.”

Jones has established three scholarship programs at Old Dominion – for students in environmental engineering, chemistry and supply chain management. She also created a foundation that provides a book stipend for a Norfolk student majoring in engineering in Virginia, and she funds a scholarship for a member of the Southside Boys & Girls Club. So far, 17 students have benefited from her generosity.

In addition, as the first graduate in her family, Jones has inspired her father, a younger sister and two cousins to get their degrees. “The only way I know how to have a different life is to go to college and get the best grades you can. I said, ‘This is the path I’m taking. It can be the path for you, too.’”

**Jones considered several** job offers after grad school. She went with Johnson & Johnson because it was a stable company with a long history – and “big enough that I could figure out what I want to do.”

Jones, now based in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, has covered a lot of ground at Johnson & Johnson, working in pharmaceuticals, consumer products and medical devices.

She’s been an operations team leader, supervising nearly 40 employees across three departments, and a senior manager of manufacturing excellence, streamlining inventory levels and finding other ways to save the company millions of dollars.

In July, Jones was appointed senior manager of commercial operations, overseeing the sales policy and procedures team, for Ethicon, a Johnson & Johnson subsidiary.

Through it all, Jones said she’s relied on the strengths she developed at ODU: “I understand processes and how to put them in place. I can explain complex situations to VPs and other executives so they understand them. I got that from being an engineer.”

And this is how she describes her other strengths: “I connect and collaborate with people by being transparent and honest. I make sure I’m someone you can trust and want to work with. I’m a hard worker and I’m going to ask questions.”

Wim Appelo, vice president for supply chain, found that to be true when Jones served as his chief of staff. “She had an amazing amount of energy and commitment and was very easy to work with for many people,” Appelo said.

And Jones’ move to sales, he said, “showed energy and guts. Not many people have that drive and desire to step out of the norm. You can see that it’s really helping her to round out and become a better leader.”

At Johnson & Johnson, “I love the fact that there is constant change,” Jones said. But even Jones couldn’t predict how much change would overtake the company this year.

“What we need to do to support our customers didn’t change,” she said in May. “But the way we now need to support our customers did change.”

In elementary school, Jones set her life’s goal: She would become a CEO one day. She’s since revised that a bit.

“I want to lead an organization and set strategy and assess my team’s execution of it,” Jones said. But not necessarily as a CEO. “I’m not chasing titles anymore. It’s just about the experience and the impact I’ll make.”
A passion for preservation

Archivist Jay Gaidmore (M.A. ’99) curates special collections under special conditions.

BY TOM ROBINSON

IT STAYS 60 DEGREES in the basement of Swem Library at The College of William & Mary, where archivist Jay Gaidmore (M.A. ’99) curates special collections under special conditions.

Chilly and dry creates the perfect preservation climate for the multitude of rare books, manuscripts and university memorabilia – more than a million items – that Gaidmore oversees.

Treasures such as letters written by Thomas Jefferson. Personal papers of former Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Chief Justices John Marshall and Warren Burger. Super-rare first editions of Isaac Newton’s “Principia” (circa 1687), Adam Smith’s “The Wealth of Nations” (1776) and the Book of Mormon (1830). And the country’s second-largest collection of dog books, which is nothing to sniff at.

So many rabbit holes of world, U.S. and Virginia history, so little time to disappear down even a fraction of them. Everything, though, is open for anyone to peruse – one item at a time in a proctored reading room.

“I have friends who probably haven’t been into a library in years,” says Gaidmore, 49. “When I tell them some of the stuff I handle, they’re like, ‘Are you kidding me? That’s so cool.’”

Gaidmore first found archiving cool while earning a master’s in history at Old Dominion University. Working in academia, but not in the classroom, appealed to him. Advice from associate professor Jim Sweeney, once ODU’s archivist, led Gaidmore to get a second master’s, in library science, from the University of South Carolina.

The irony is Gaidmore thoroughly enjoys teaching researchers, visitors and visiting students about Swem’s special holdings.

He continues to learn along the way. Seven years at William and Mary are hardly long enough for him to know all that’s in his cabinets and on his shelves.

Gaidmore worked at the Library of Virginia, Brown University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before coming to Williamsburg. He and his wife, Amy ’98 (M.Ed. ’98), live in Toano with their 12-year-old son, Max.

With the coronavirus outbreak, he began working from home in March. “My staff and I in Special Collections have plenty to do,” updating “finding aids” to the archives and creating online research guides. “Many of these projects don’t get the necessary attention when we are open,” he says, “so it has actually been nice to move forward on them.”

Normally, he spends much of his time overseeing the digitizing of collections and adding to them by cultivating donors, known as “friend raising” in the archivist business. Last year, he approached former FBI director James Comey, a William & Mary alumnus, about archiving his papers one day.

Gaidmore says his thrill comes in preserving the past so people in the future can use it, see it and experience it. It’s sort of cliché, but you’re doomed to repeat it if you don’t know what happened.”

Tom Robinson will sell his archive of string and bubblegum wrappers to the highest bidder.
Exuberant about art – and life – at age 96

BY TERESA ANNAS

In late January, Lorraine Fink decorated her walker, put on a chunky iridescent necklace and flowing outfit and headed out to an art reception.

When she got to the Baron and Ellin Gordon Art Galleries at Old Dominion University, she didn’t go directly in to see the art.

Instead, she was swarmed at the entrance by friends, family, students, former professors and fellow artists. She beamed at the attention, greeting guests for more than an hour before taking a seat.

Fink was the star of the evening. At 95, she was having a solo exhibition at her alma mater.
Recordings of bird song rang through the space. “I wanted to hear birds in the gallery — trilling, chirping, tweeting,” Fink said with a grin.

Birds are a favorite subject for her. “It’s freedom,” she said, meaning “I can do what I want to do. Nobody tells me.”

Fink created nearly half of the 78 objects in 2019. Few artists of any age are as prolific as Fink, who turned 96 in August.

“That’s what I do every day. It’s what I think about and what I do.”

The show’s title suited the exuberance of her art: “To Life! Works by Lorraine Fink.”

Guests marveled that her latest works, some 6 feet tall, looked just as energetic as the earliest ones, dating to 1980. Cullen Strawn, the University’s executive director for the arts, said he was “impressed with the sheer force of her creativity.”

Strawn curated the show with Agnieszka Whelan, senior lecturer in art history, and Stirling Goulart, the gallery’s assistant operations director.

The trio spent months scrutinizing more than 200 works that animate her home on the Norfolk waterfront. They looked at abstract paintings and mixed media art. They studied the sculptures she had made from tossed tech gadgets, such as CDs and circuit boards.

At the reception, one of Whelan’s students, freshman Russell Parietti, told Fink her dressed-up walker should be in the show. The artist said that she had attached painted plastic bags, and that he could create art from anything, even items other people would throw away.

“Lorraine was a real inspiration for me,” he wrote for Whelan’s class.

**Fink took her first Old Dominion art class in the late 1960s, on a lark.**

Within a year, instructor Charles Sibley, a revered painter and founding chair of the art department, informed Fink that she was an artist. Her free, expressive approach to any assignment had surfaced right away. The encouragement took. As her five children got older and went to college, she increased her course load. She studied with Sibley for seven years, and another seven with professor Ken Daley to learn printmaking.

Daley watched as Fink, spontaneous by nature, began to adapt aspects of the print process in her painting, such as planning her use of color.

Fink said she liked the look of her half-finished prints, which she would complete by painting onto parts of them. It was her own method, which she has continued to use; soon she was teaching it as an adjunct professor and, later, in her home studio.

“I loved every minute at ODU,” said Fink, who earned a bachelor’s degree in fine arts in 1978 and went on to be in the first graduating class (’83) for an M.F.A. in visual studies, then a joint program with Norfolk State University.
Since the early 1970s, she has shown her art state-wide, including at the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond. Her work is in numerous collections.

Happy at home among friends and family, she chose not to pursue a national career.

In 2005, Fink started a scholarship for Old Dominion art students in honor of Daley. It is named for her and her late husband, pediatrician H. William “Bill” Fink. She also has served on the board of the College of Arts & Letters.

**Fink maintains connections** to the University. She and Daley, who was a consultant for the exhibition, meet Fridays to play cards and chat. Fink often shows him her latest work. “My God, she’s prodigious,” he said. “She does a dozen or more pieces every week.”

Since COVID-19 hit, they play gin via Skype.

Otherwise, Fink said she hasn’t been too affected by the pandemic. She gets plenty of calls, and family members stop by for backyard visits wearing masks. Her household and art assistant Carolyn Sessoms still comes on weekdays.

Making art keeps her “as happy as the times will let me be.”

In January, Fink began a small-scale art practice – colored pen drawings on paper. By early March, she showed off a stack of about 100 14-by-17-inch works, mostly of women with birds. By June, she had 200, including humans interacting with giraffes and other animals.

She never purposely inserts a message. But Fink said she sees themes of global warming and the virus in these images. “We’re all in this together.”

She calls it her Sedentary series, because she draws while sitting in what she still calls “Bill’s study” – a spacious room with a wide view of the Lafayette River, where she can spy herons and egrets and other water birds.

“I don’t think I’ll call it Sedentary anymore,” she suddenly declared. “Because I’m anything but that.”

A cluster of large, blank canvases stood in her studio, awaiting her attention.

**Teresa Annas is a freelance arts writer in Norfolk who has known Fink for more than four decades. In 1981, Annas brought famed art critic Clement Greenberg to a University art building. Read about his response to Fink’s art at [www.odu.edu/monarchmag](http://www.odu.edu/monarchmag)**
NEW COURSE: DIGITAL LITERACY

Old Dominion’s course catalog is constantly evolving. Here was one newcomer in the spring:

The class: Comm 272G, Digital Literacy. It was introduced last fall for students in the Department of Communication and Theatre Arts. In the spring it became an option for all students to fulfill the general-education requirement in information literacy. That brought new perspectives and enriched discussion, said Avi Santo, the class instructor and chair of the department.

The details: The class covered such topics as the digital divide, privacy and search engines. Other digital classes tend to be task-driven, Santo said, teaching such skills as how to create a LinkedIn account. Digital Literacy is intended to stimulate critical thinking. For instance: How does Twitter’s 280-character maximum affect the expression of thoughts? “I’ve found students are willing to engage in this discussion.”

One student’s take: Matthew Farmer, a senior majoring in criminal justice and sociology, said he appreciated the “writing-intensive” and “discussion-based” aspects of the class. “It’s made me think about the issues more critically and more in-depth.”

The online switch: When Digital Literacy moved online in March, Santo added a module on increasing reliance on digital media to navigate life in quarantine. Blog posts substituted for in-class discussion. “Overall, the class adapted well,” Santo said.

Luisa Igloria, the Louis I. Jaffe Endowed Professor of English and Creative Writing, was named Virginia’s poet laureate for 2020-22. Retired professor Tim Seibles also held that role from 2016 to 2018.

Old Dominion University this fall began offering an interdisciplinary master’s degree in data science and analytics under the auspices of the Graduate School. The Board of Visitors approved a tuition freeze for the 2020-21 year for all students – undergraduates and graduate students, Virginians and out-of-state students.

ODU was ranked ninth in the country and No. 88 worldwide for “reducing inequalities” in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings for 2020.

Old Dominion announced in April that it would immediately close its wrestling program. Wrestlers will continue to receive scholarships through their fourth year at ODU.

AWARDS
Old Dominion University President John R. Broderick and Cecelia Tucker, assistant to the president for community relations – Community Leader Awards from the Urban League of Hampton Roads.

Kent Carpenter, professor and Eminent Scholar of biology – Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

Don Stansberry, interim vice president for student engagement and enrollment services, Retention Coordinator Samantha Palmucci and the University’s Center for Social Mobility – awards from NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.

RETIREMENTS

ReNeé Dunman, assistant vice president for institutional equity and diversity, after more than 25 years at ODU.

Jutta-Annette Page, founding executive director of Barry Art Museum.

PROLIFIC PROFS
At least three physicists were published in significant scientific journals. Charles Hyde, chair of the department, in Nature Physics; Lawrence Weinstein in Nature; and Yuan Zhang, in Nature Chemistry.
Alison Reed, an assistant professor of English, has several tattoos. The one that best reflects her vision is the heart on her right arm. She calls it the “abolitionist heart on my sleeve.” What she wants to abolish is the prison system. Reading James Baldwin’s “The Fire Next Time” in high school in Salt Lake City fueled that belief in Reed, along with her conviction of the importance of arts and community organizing.

Reed has put her interests into action in a program that has attracted other faculty members and students. In 2016, she and Meghan McDowell, then an assistant professor of sociology and criminal justice, founded Humanities Behind Bars (HBB) as a weekly reading group at Norfolk City Jail. It has evolved into much more.

Besides organizing reading and tutoring in the jail, HBB offers a pen-pal program, community reading and film series, music program and book drives. The coronavirus halted the jail meetings in March, but the pen-pal program moved online.

In her book “Love and Abolition,” expected to be released next year by the Ohio State University Press, Reed writes: “Abolition is an everyday strategy of shrinking the power of the prison industrial complex while also, crucially, building alternative forms of collective social life,” such as a fund recently created by HBB that has raised thousands of dollars to help people post bail.

Reed’s passion for the subject—and the people—influences her use of language, too. She doesn’t use the word “inmates,” preferring “incarcerated people.” “An ‘inmate’ suggests a static identity that has implicit moral judgment,” she said.

The goal of HBB’s arts programs, Reed said, is to encourage students to envision alternatives.

Derek “D.J.” James, 29, attended an HBB reading group when he was in Norfolk City Jail. It changed his life, says James, who now works as a basketball coach, artist, poet, public speaker and HBB’s resident poet. “I can share my story, and it gives them hope,” he said.

Contraband Love, an arts magazine featuring submissions from James, other incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, and their relatives, was published last fall. Their work proves that “spiritual freedom persists amidst conditions of captivity,” Reed said.

The Humanities Behind Bars experience has left a lasting impression on at least three graduates. Casey Guditus (M.A. ’17), Meghan Morris ’17 and DeAnna Smith (M.A. ’19) all have HBB-inspired tattoos.

For more information, go to www.humanitiesbehindbars.org

Peggy Sijswerda (M.A. ’84, M.B.A. ’05) is editor and publisher of Tidewater Women and Tidewater Family.
Dr. Bill retires at 95

From ODU to Congress and back

BY PHILIP WALZER

G. WILLIAM WHITEHURST, better known as Dr. Bill, joined the faculty of the two-year Norfolk Division of the College of William and Mary nearly 70 years ago to teach history.

He was appointed dean of students in 1962 and left Old Dominion College in 1969 to serve as a moderate Republican in the U.S. House. Whitehurst returned in 1987 to become the Kaufman lecturer for public affairs.

He estimates he’s taught 12,000 students. He retired in May, still passionate about history, praising today’s students but lamenting the turn toward bitterness in Washington.

You’re only 95 years old. Why retire now?
I didn’t think I’d live this long. What’s happened is, I’ve just started to lose some things. I can’t remember names. Mentally, I’m not alert as I used to be. Am I going to miss it? Certainly, but I know it’s time for me to walk away.

Do you think your experience in Congress made you a better instructor?
Definitely. I found myself frequently citing events that had taken place when I was in office. I’ll give you an example. My first term, I was put on a task group to go out to Vietnam. We went to Cambodia to look at the cache of captured North Vietnamese weapons. They had stashed the stuff in a shaft 10 or 15 feet into the ground. I thought, how are we going to win this war? Anybody who puts that kind of energy into this, they’re not going to give up. It was the first time I had doubts about the conflict. When I came back to teach, the war was essentially over, but I shared it with the students in my classes.

President Nixon asked you to run for Senate. Why did you say no?
I never really wanted to go to a body where I would be representing a lot more people. You don’t have the one-on-one relationships that you have in the House. I was able to do a lot of things for people that I don’t think I could have done in the Senate. The other thing was, I would have been running against Bill Spong (who later became interim president of ODU). Bill was a wonderful guy. I voted for him when he first ran.

Why did you leave Washington to return to teaching?
I thought, if I want to do something else in life, do it now. If I hung in there till I was 70, who the hell would hire me then? I wanted a life less hectic than going back and forth from Washington every weekend. And I wanted to get back to the career that gave me so much gratification.
You’ve said you have the best job in the world. What makes teaching so much fun for you?
I have a captive audience to share my knowledge and experience. And young people are fun to be around. You get personal relationships that are very heartwarming. It’s an environment of perpetual youth and, consequently, making a living in that environment is very gratifying. I remember very well the first week I taught, in September of 1950. I had 30 students looking at me. At the end of the week, I saw that they were interested in what I had to say. I knew then that I was going to make it.

What’s been the biggest change in students since 1950?
I’ve taught students in recent years who have written papers that compare favorably to my own writing, and I’m no slouch. So I would have to say that the scholars are really outstanding and, quality-wise, better than those I taught when I first got into teaching.

What did the campus look like when you got here? What are some of the most surprising changes you’ve seen?
When I arrived, the campus was two blocks long, with the old Larchmont Elementary School and two World War II barracks buildings, which comprised the classroom buildings. The gym was in the administration building. When we became a four-year school, Old Dominion began to shine. As the school grew, the budget grew, the programs became more sophisticated and we drew some very strong teachers, some real scholars, and a higher-quality student.

One of your courses is about speakers of the House. Who’s the most underrated?
The most underrated speaker was Carl Albert of Oklahoma. Very bright. Newt Gingrich was by far the strongest and made the most far-reaching changes. Newt could play hardball, but he was also a visionary, when you think about what he did. He got rid of a bunch of committees. He put a three-term limit for chairmen. I saw how smart he was and his energy, and if I had stayed there, he would have made me chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

You talk with pride about working with representatives from the other party to get things done in the House. Those days are gone. How will we get back to a sense of collegiality in Washington?
It’s hard to say. There’s just a lot of damn hateful partisanship out there. It’s not just Congress. I think we manifest a lack of recognizing that the other person has a piece of truth themselves. It was different when I was in office. My closest friend in the House was Tom Downing (a Democrat from Newport News). I loved Tommy. It wasn’t that we voted together. We respected each other. I sense a lot of disrespect now. Maybe it’s a cyclical thing.

Finally, why do you always wear a coat and tie to class?
Because I think that it makes a statement. I’m not a student. I’m a faculty member, and we need to dress in a way that establishes our position. We lose something when we dress like them.

MORE FROM DR. BILL

On his academic passion:
“History is a fun course. I always enjoyed it, even as a child. My father had some books on the First World War. I remember as a little boy, 10, 12 years old, being fascinated by them. And so I taught in that field. One semester, (Norfolk executive) Harvey Lindsay sat in on one of my classes. At the end, he told my students, ‘I went to U.Va. and I took some history courses up there, and none of those professors could match Bill Whitehurst.’ ”

On lobbyists, the focus of one of his courses: “I found them helpful and informative. There’s a lot of horse trading that goes on in Washington. I found that out very quickly. Somebody out west in an agricultural area says, ‘I need your vote on this particular item that’s going to help the milk industry, and I’ll scratch your back when you need money to build an aircraft carrier.’ You want to play in the game, you have to play by those rules.”
McKenzie was cool as a cucumber. But those who knew him well never asked him to eat one. Though the world-traveling engineer tried almost any food, including insects, he had a known aversion to cucumbers. That was about the only thing he didn't embrace.

Rick, who was 55, had been at ODU for 21 years. He died on July 12.

Black men enjoy an unspoken brotherhood. Even a slight nod across the room can put you at ease in a new environment. That's what I remember about meeting Rick. It was August 2017 — my first day as director of communications and marketing for the Batten College of Engineering and Technology.

We were at a leadership retreat. Seeing him there made me feel a bit more comfortable. And when he introduced himself as the chair of the Department of Computational Modeling and Simulation Engineering, I felt the glow of that smile, which could draw you in and elevate your mood.

A few days later, Rick was one of the first chairs to respond to my request to meet. He greeted me as if we were old friends. As I sat down in his colorful office, I could tell immediately by all the books, photos and artwork that he was brilliant; he loved his work; he loved to travel, and he loved food. Most of all, he loved his wife, Issel, and sons, Karl and Connor.

We spent half the time talking about food, family, travel, even our amateur art, and the other half on the cutting-edge work he and others were doing in medical simulation. He then gave me a tour of the Cave Automated Virtual Environment, where I stood in a virtual operating room one minute and on an aircraft carrier the next. At that moment I realized just how much fun it would be to tell the story of engineering at ODU.

From then on, we regularly dropped by each other’s office. Rick had an empathetic way of making you feel important, despite all that was going on in his world. You wanted to be around his calming yet exuberant personality just to absorb some of his cool, positive energy.

With brilliance often comes arrogance. Not so with Rick. He was proud of the work he poured his heart into, such as treatments for children with chest deformities, yet he was quick to recognize the contributions of others, particularly his students. He held seven patents, but like a proud father, he wanted his students to be the focus of any modeling and simulation story.

ODU lost not just a respected engineer but a treasure. Fortunately, the value of that treasure will live on with his family, the University, Hampton Roads and the engineering field. Rest in peace, my cool friend.

Keith Pierce is Old Dominion's director of public affairs and media relations.

McKenzie with his sons, Connor (left) and Karl, in the Great Smoky Mountains in 2016.
Military bases would love a drone detector. It could thwart enemies trying to steal intelligence. An Old Dominion University student spent the last year and a half developing such a device, and the Navy is interested.

Michael Nilsen, who recently received a bachelor’s degree in electrical and computer engineering, worked on the detector, the size of an iPhone, under the guidance of Sachin Shetty, associate professor of computational modeling and simulation engineering. Really, “I just brought him the big-picture idea and the techniques he could apply,” Shetty said. “Michael did all the design, coding and testing.”

Nilsen’s work was financed by a $10,000 grant last year from Old Dominion’s Program for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship, or PURS. Shetty is a strong advocate of the program, run by the Office of Research and Perry Honors College. “You cannot wait until senior year to provide students these opportunities.”

As a freshman, Nilsen heard Shetty talk about cybersecurity. He was hooked. Nilsen also was intrigued by PURS: “A lot of the stuff in my classes, even at the sophomore level, was not as hands-on as I’d like.” He received two PURS awards, the first as a sophomore in 2018.

The detector works by reading wireless signals. It can spot a drone in less than 10 seconds.

“Michael did all the design, coding and testing,” Shetty said. “Nilsen made it appear smooth sailing,” Shetty said. But Nilsen said it was “incredibly frustrating when something wasn’t working and you had no clue why you messed up. I’d put it down for a day or two or the rest of the week. The process definitely got easier as time went on.”

He did the work, often in the evenings or on weekends, at ODU’s Virginia Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center in Suffolk, where Shetty is associate director.

In June, Nilsen began a job at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab. He also is pursuing a master’s degree in electrical and computer engineering.

Without PURS, he said, “I wouldn’t be at Hopkins in this field.” Or as Shetty said: “You’ve got to get students involved early and let them explode.”

Six $10,000 PURS awards were distributed to undergraduates this year. The deadline to apply for next year is in the fall. For more information, go to https://odu.edu/facultystaff/research/funding/opportunities/intramural-funding
The new faces
ON CAMPUS

Two buildings, with state-of-the-art amenities for students, faculty and staff members, will open by the start of the spring semester. Here’s what makes them special:

PHOTOS BY CHUCK THOMAS
The University's second-largest residence hall, named after ODU's first African American rector, intends to blend academics and residential life. "The plan is for these students to live and study together in a way that reflects Dr. Owens' legacy of diversity and inclusivity," project manager Chris Pewterbaugh said.

- 470 beds, five floors, 165,000 square feet.
- First new residence hall since 2009.
- Permanent first-floor exhibit recalls Owens' activism to overturn segregation in Hampton Roads and his contributions to the dental profession.
- Will house four living-learning communities: cybersecurity, entrepreneurship and gaming, health professions and engineering.
- Learning Commons on first floor; study rooms and lounges on each floor.
- Two classrooms; cybersecurity lab; incubator space where students can design projects; office for faculty members to hold office hours.

"The great thing about this building is that students will live together, socialize and go right downstairs to class. It is designed for the living-learning experience and will be a home away from home."
- Don Stansberry, interim vice president for student engagement and enrollment services

The new Chemistry Building, with four floors and 110,000 square feet, will replace the nearly 55-year-old Alfriend Chemistry Building.

- 37 labs, 40 offices and 185 hoods.
- Increased space, allowing for greater enrollment in labs and biochemistry classes.
- Centralizes department activities, which had been scattered across 30 locations.
- State-of-the-art research facilities, including freezer room to maintain proteins at minus-40 degrees Celsius.
- Replaces Pretlow Planetarium with 122-seat planetarium with quadrupled resolution and live-streaming capabilities that can also serve as digital theater and lecture hall. Can show projections of 3D proteins and molecules and more advanced and more frequent laser shows.
- Designed for maximum accessibility for people with disabilities.

"For incoming STEM-H students, the first floor is the most exciting space. It will contain a lecture hall, an Active Learning Center, a Student Success Center with tutoring, all of the freshman labs, all of the lecturer offices, and a large interactive space for students to meet and exchange ideas."
- John Cooper, chairman of the chemistry department
Old Dominion University assistant basketball coach Bryant Stith had a health scare nearly a year ago when he was briefly hospitalized with high blood pressure.

He took his doctor’s advice seriously, swapped applesauce and oatmeal for fried chicken and cheeseburgers, worked out every day and lost 23 pounds. His body looked almost as muscular as it had when he was a star forward for the University of Virginia and the NBA’s Denver Nuggets.

Stith now considers the spike in blood pressure a “divine intervention,” which saved his life and saved him from the fate of his father and grandfather, both of whom suffered strokes.

That intervention may have saved his life yet again this year.

Stith’s COVID warning: Don’t let your guard down

BY HARRY MINIUM ’77
The 49-year-old Freeman, Virginia, native recently overcame a serious case of COVID-19. It was so bad he feared he might have to be put on a ventilator. Had he not been in such good physical condition, Stith thinks he would have fared far worse.

Since the pandemic hit the United States hard in March, Stith, his wife, Barbara, and four kids, including former ODU basketball players B.J. and Brandan, were careful to wear masks and practice social distancing. Until Mother’s Day weekend, when they visited family at back-to-back gatherings in Freeman, about 80 miles west of Norfolk.

All six ached for a sense of normalcy, so off came the masks. They shared plenty of hugs with relatives and guests.

A week later, his daughters, Bria and Brooke, were diagnosed with the coronavirus. They were followed by B.J. ’19 and Barbara, a 1992 ODU graduate whom Stith began dating in high school.

Brandan ’18 never got sick. “Brandan’s new nickname is Tank,” Stith said. “I don’t know how he didn’t catch it.”

Stith’s wife and three kids began to recover after a week and were OK after nearly two.

Stith came down with symptoms as they were recovering. He seemed to be following the same path they did. Then, during the second week, he was bedridden with chills, a fever and a deep cough.

“I got cold sweats, and my chest started getting tight. It felt like a 300-pound person was on it.

“It was a frightening experience, beyond scary,” Stith said. “I was laying on the bed feeling awful and had problems breathing and then would look at cable news and would see people on respirators.

“My daughters would come in and check on me and they had tears in their eyes.”

That’s because no one in his family had ever seen him that sick, his wife said.

“We all started with severe headaches, body aches, debilitating weakness, loss of taste, smell and appetite. But then Bryant developed a lingering cough, shortness of breath and erratic breathing.

“This is when I became alarmed,” she said. “I always described Bryant as being ‘chiseled out of stone’ because he never gets sick. So when I saw what COVID was doing to him, I knew we had to stop and take this virus seriously.”

She insisted he go to the emergency room at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital, where he received breathing treatments and an inhaler. That reduced the shortness of breath and set him on the path to recovery. It took Stith about six weeks to feel somewhat normal again.

ODU head coach Jeff Jones, who had coached Stith at U.Va., said he’d never seen him so sick.

“Bryant’s a big, strong, tough guy, and it kicked his ass,” Jones said.

The Stiths were infected at the Mother’s Day gatherings. They didn’t know that a cousin who was there had been tested for the virus but had not yet seen the result.

By the time the test came back, half the people who’d been at the celebrations had come down with the virus.

Compounding Stith’s pain was his father’s recent death.

Norman Wesley Stith, a stonemason who had served in Vietnam, had been hospitalized in Petersburg in April, right after his 77th birthday, and transferred to hospice care.

On May 22, three days before Stith’s COVID-19 test came back positive, his mother, Maudriece, called him.

“She asked me if I was alone, and I knew it wasn’t good news,” he said. “She told me she’d gotten a call from the hospital and that Dad had passed.”

Stith was devastated. “I wasn’t there when he passed,” Stith said. “I wanted to be there for him.”

Stith credits his faith and his family for getting him through the struggles of 2020.

“We have a strong support system and by the grace of God were able to get through a terrible time in our lives,” he said. “I come from a large and close-knit family. There was nothing but love and support flowing through our family.”

His daughters have since returned to East Carolina University and his sons to Belgium, where they play professionally.

“We all know we have antibodies in our systems now,” Stith said.

“That makes me feel so much better about my kids.”

Stith said ODU’s basketball players didn’t see him in person during his illness but saw how ill he was on team meetings held online.

“I learned a big lesson, and I’ve passed on that lesson to our players,” he said.

“You have to be vigilant 24/7 around people you don’t know, but, more importantly, around the people you love. Nobody can let their guard down. This disease is serious.”

Harry Minium ’77 is senior executive writer at Old Dominion University.
She’s a two-time Olympic gold medalist. A former WNBA All-Star, head coach at Pepperdine and assistant at Syracuse. Even interim coach of the former Los Angeles Stars, making her the second woman to coach a professional men’s team. And now the women’s basketball coach at Old Dominion. DeLisha Milton-Jones joined ODU in April. “She’s going to do great things,” former Old Dominion star Nancy Lieberman predicted.
President John R. Broderick has made some bold and courageous decisions during his more than 12 years leading Old Dominion University.

None may be more courageous than his announcement on Aug. 10 that ODU would cancel all fall sports, including football.

As athletic director, I’ve deeply appreciated President Broderick’s commitment to athletics and our student-athletes. Before making his final decision, the president spoke with medical experts, conference officials and state and local officials as well as our fall sports coaches.

Of the 130 schools in the nation’s highest classification of college athletics, the Football Bowl Subdivision, only the University of Connecticut had announced that it would shut down fall sports. No one in Conference USA was ready to make such a weighty decision.

The score was then 129-1 in favor of playing football.

We delayed the announcement several days so that we could inform our coaches and student-athletes first. We knew such a decision would receive national scrutiny and attention.

President Broderick was willing to take a stand because he believed that our student-athletes could not safely compete given all the uncertainty about COVID-19.

Football is obviously a contact sport. And while there is no tackling in field hockey, men’s and women’s soccer and volleyball, there is enough contact that we didn’t feel it was safe for any of them to compete, not during a pandemic that has killed so many thousands of Americans and continues to rage around the globe.

Ultimately, we wanted to do the right thing not only for our student-athletes but also for their families and our staff. So many parents and grandparents attend our events. We did not want to compromise their health.

The overwhelming majority of those who reached out to me were appreciative of the president’s decision, including Sully Callahan, an attorney and lifelong Norfolk resident.

“I know you have agonized over the question of sports in the fall,” he texted me. “But I want you to know that I personally think you made the right call.”

Added a resident of Norfolk’s Larchmont neighborhood: “We support the call. It is the right one and will save lives and prevent suffering.”

We don’t know the consequences of the coronavirus. There are reports they could include long-term heart problems.

The president and I saw no reason to put our student-athletes in harm’s way. He’s been about putting students first from day one of his presidency, and that philosophy continues to this day.

That will be a hallmark of his presidential administration.

All ODU alumni should feel the same level of gratitude for President Broderick’s leadership that we in athletics share.

“The president and I saw no reason to put our student-athletes in harm’s way. He’s been about putting students first from day one of his presidency.”

FROM ATHLETIC DIRECTOR WOOD SELIG

The right decision at the right time
FROM THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

Dear Monarchs,

We have all been touched by the wide and varied impacts of COVID-19 as we continue the unorthodox dance necessary to protect ourselves and those we hold dear from a relentless enemy. We have all been shaken by the ongoing debate over racial discrimination in this country, which has unjustly affected Black and brown people. Both of these very important matters are viruses that demand a cure for the physical, mental and emotional health of our communities and the nation as a whole.

Eventually, doctors will find a vaccine for the virus, but the conversations and education about how we overcome a long history of mistreatment and biases toward fellow Americans will continue. Although a focus on diversity and inclusion has long been a key priority for the Alumni Association, we recognize we have to do more. If we keep hope and opportunity at the forefront of our conversations, we will start to witness a nation that begins to heal.

No matter what our ethnicity is, as Monarchs, we are resilient and strong. In times of adversity, we rise to the challenge and pivot where needed. ODU alumni who are professionals in the health care industry have been instrumental in saving the lives of coronavirus patients in hospitals in our region and across the country. Monarchs who are entrepreneurs have been creative and innovative in developing personal protective equipment that has helped people avoid contracting COVID-19. Alumni who are researchers continue to seek out ways to improve public health, advance civil rights, lessen social stratification, and reduce economic and education disparities and occupational deficits while the country endeavors to recover from recent setbacks. We thank these alumni and all our Monarchs for their commitment and service, and we continue to be amazed by the power of the Monarch community.

In the months to come, even during isolation and restricted gatherings, the Alumni Association will continue to provide programs and activities that will keep you engaged with Old Dominion and fellow alumni. We appreciate our differences, and our path will be guided by a continued focus on diversity and inclusion. Stay healthy and optimistic that we will find a cure for both of these viruses.

Joy L. Jefferson
Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations
Ken Brackney ’81 (M.S. ’85), professor of accounting in the Walker College of Business at Appalachian State University, was recognized for excellence in teaching by the university last fall.

Kenneth J. Phelan ’81, retired chief risk officer for the U.S. Department of the Treasury, has been elected to the Huntington Bancshares Inc. board of directors.

Curtis R. Taylor ’81 was named Citizen of the Year in January by the Greater Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce. Taylor, a community leader and former CEO of Surry Communications in North Carolina, worked early on to bring internet service to the rural area and most recently helped establish the Surry Rural Health Center.

Kim Murphy ’85 brings her extensive experience in global vaccine marketing to fill a new position on the board at Oragenics Inc., which is developing a vaccine to tackle the coronavirus. Murphy previously worked at pharmaceutical powerhouses GlaxoSmithKline, Novartis and Merck & Co.

Mike Ostrander ’87 describes himself as “a fisherman with an art degree,” sharing the history and wildlife of Virginia’s James River. His tour company, Discover the James, grew from volunteer tours with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Find him at DiscovertheJames.com.

Fr. Thomas Ianucci ’88 celebrated his Silver Jubilee as a Catholic priest in July 2019. He intended to explore the priesthood for a year “to try it out”; 25 years later, he continues to serve as a military chaplain.

John Roos (M.A. ’88) has been promoted to executive vice president of corporate communications and research for INSP, a family entertainment cable company in Indian Land, S.C.

Jacqueline (LaLonde) Darcey ’89, M.D., was promoted in March to program director of the internal medicine residency and vice chair of education for the Department of Medicine at Morristown Medical Center (MMC) in New Jersey. She is a clinical assistant professor of the Sidney Kimmel Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University, which is affiliated with MMC. She is grateful for her ODU education and gives special thanks to retired biology faculty members Nancy Wade and Robert Rose.

Her mission: Healing soldiers’ hands in a far land

What became Trish Shallenberger’s mission started with a simple gesture. On a flight in 2007, Shallenberger ’87 struck up a conversation with a medic training in the heat of Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas. “I noticed his hands were a mess,” she says. “The tops were really sunburned, and when he turned them over, they had quarter-sized welts on them.”

Shallenberger offered to send him skin-care items. He refused, saying it wouldn’t be right if no one else in his unit received a gift. So Shallenberger agreed to help all 180 of his colleagues.

So began A Soldier’s Hands, which Shallenberger, who lives in State College, Pennsylvania, formally established in 2013. She estimates that the organization has supplied 12,000 care packages to nearly 65 military units. That includes 3,200 packages sent to the staff of the USS Reagan last year.

Each package contains sunscreen, hand cream, lip balm, candy, a handwritten letter and a star from a retired military flag. The packages cost $17 each and are paid for with donations.

“Have you ever had lips that were so chapped that they bled?” Shallenberger, 56, said. “They have. It’s so humid or, conversely, it’s really, really cold. That’s also tough on the skin.”

To help “those on the frontlines of a different war,” A Soldier’s Hands has also donated more than 1,000 packages to health care workers at COVID-19 wards in California, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia, Shallenberger said.

The operation runs on volunteers, who have included Jen Rahne, the wife of ODU head football coach Ricky Rahne, Penn State’s former offensive coordinator.

One captain thanked Shallenberger for “improving the morale and well-being on my ship.”

Shallenberger said: “Our gifts lift the morale of the whole company. They realize they are not forgotten.”

For more information on A Soldier’s Hands, go to asoldiershands.org

- Philip Walzer
Scoring points for racial unity in South Africa

Doug Nedab ‘18 used to play pickup basketball twice a week at the Student Rec Center. Now he’s working with an organization that sees basketball as the perfect bridge to unite students of different races in post-apartheid South Africa.

“We believe that children who learn to play together can learn to live together,” said Nedab, 24, who joined PeacePlayers International in Durban as a two-year fellow in July 2019. But “we don’t want kids to simply play against each other and not grow from the experience.” So the games are augmented with life-skills and leadership development sessions.

He spends most of his time not on the court, but in the office, focusing on marketing and fundraising to meet an annual $300,000 goal.

At ODU, he fondly recalls working as an intern for the Old Dominion Athletic Foundation and pulling all-nighters at Perry Library. Nedab changed his major at least three times before deciding on dual majors in business management and analytics.

After he graduated, he began a master’s program in sports industry management at Georgetown University. Nedab has continued his classes while in South Africa and expects to receive his degree in December. After his fellowship with PeacePlayers ends, he’d love to continue working there or with a group like NBA Africa or Nike’s Social & Community Impact Division. “The world is a beautiful place, and I want to explore it while doing things I’m passionate about.”

On March 20, Nedab returned to Upper Marlboro, Maryland, to be with his family during the pandemic. He plans to go back to South Africa “when things settle down.”

In Durban, Nedab also plays in an adult basketball league. “You can catch me at point guard running the show,” he said.

For more information on PeacePlayers, go to peaceplayers.org. Nedab’s blog is at ifeelathome.com

Nedab offers students these tips:

- Never chase money.
- Aim for something that makes you internally happy.
- Your 20s will bring constant changes in your life.
- Get comfortable being uncomfortable.
- That is how you grow.

- Philip Walzer

Cindy Kochersperger ‘89 was elected in February as one of the new partners to lead the Retirement Plan Services team in PBMares’ Norfolk office. She has been named a “Super CPA” several times by Virginia Business magazine.

1990s

January O’Neil ‘90, poet and author, was the John and Renee Grisham writer in residence at the University of Mississippi for the 2019-20 academic year. She has published “Rewilding” (2018), “Misery Islands” (2014) and “Underlife” (2009).

Robert Anderson ‘91 was hired in January as a commercial loan officer for Langley Federal Credit Union. His career has focused on small business development loans.

Wilmer Sweetser (M.E.M. ‘91) has joined the research staff of the Institute for Defense Analyses, a not-for-profit in Alexandria, Va., which receives federal grants to analyze national security issues.

Caryl Thompson ‘91 was promoted to chief operating officer for the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center in Virginia Beach in November, from a position in marketing and public relations.

Myra Blackwell ‘92, aka the College Prep Lady LLC, in Harrisburg, Pa., has held free workshops since 2016 to help students and parents in central Pennsylvania navigate the daunting process of postsecondary preparation. Her Facebook page, College Prep Lady, posts scholarship and essential resources to get them started as early as middle school.

Jennifer M. Golder ‘92, based in Rockville, Md., became director of the Office of Administration for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in December.

Julie Timm ‘93 (M.S. ‘97) became the sixth chief executive officer and first female CEO of the Greater Richmond Transit Co. in September. She most recently worked for transit authorities in Nashville and middle Tennessee.
Claudio Biltoc ’94 was hired by the Institute for Defense Analyses in Alexandria, Va., to research national security issues pertaining to intelligence.


James L. Long (M.E.M. ’94), associate professor of engineering at Liberty University, received the President’s Award for Teaching Excellence during the 2019 commencement. He is a former Navy lieutenant commander.

Richard McGill ’94, P.E., joined McLaren Engineering Group in October as principal of its civil division in Baltimore. His 25-plus years of engineering management experience includes a decade running his own firm.

Kelly Wanamaker ’94, B.S.N. ’97, board-certified cardiothoracic surgeon, was hired in July 2019 by Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Mass., its first female in the surgical specialty. Her career evolved from plans to teach math, to becoming a cardiac ICU nurse and then graduating from medical school. Kudos to this first-generation college graduate!

Ericka Davidheiser Leslie ’95 will be inducted into the National Lacrosse Hall of Fame this fall as one of the sport’s outstanding collegiate lacrosse officials. Leslie is in the ODU Hall of Fame and was a two-time All-American in the 1990s.

Fruqan Mouzon ’95 has joined McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter LLP law firm in Morristown, N.J., to establish and manage its cannabis law practice group.

Susan R. Ralston (M.B.A. ’95) of Virginia Beach was appointed executive vice president and chief operating officer of Old Point National Bank in October after 20-plus years as a CEO in the industry.

Eric Schori ’95 of the Washington, D.C., area, was hired as regional sales manager for Lavatec Laundry Technology Inc.’s northeast operations in September.

Tryn Stimart (M.S. ’95) has been hired as general counsel for AbCellera Biologics. He will lead its intellectual property strategy. Stimart, a Navy veteran, has worked in the biotech and pharmaceutical industry for 16 years.

Barton A. Thrasher ’95 (M.B.A. ’00), P.E., was promoted to chief engineer of the Virginia Department of Transportation last July. Among his new duties, he provides oversight for the Commonwealth’s 124,000-lane-miles of roadways.

Matthew Gehman ’97, a freight transportation planner, has been promoted by TranSystems to principal and senior vice president of the firm’s Charleston, S.C., office.

Marlo M. Edwards ‘98 is the new president of Verus Underwriting Managers, a company of commercial insurer W.R. Berkley Corp. of Greenwich, Conn.

Marcia Arvelo Lumpkin (M.U.S. ’98) was appointed interim president for Saint Augustine’s University in Raleigh, N.C., in March, five months after she became chief operating officer at the school. A 1996 graduate of Saint Augustine, Lumpkin was the youngest interim president in the school’s 153-year history.

Charleena A. Morring ’98, a Kaufman Award winner, found her niche in workers’ compensation and disability, helping dock and shipyard workers in Norfolk and Newport News. She recently was named a Coastal Virginia Top Lawyer in her field.

Luke Ritter (M.B.A. ’98) of Annapolis, Md., in June was hired as vice president of business development for HALO Maritime Defense Systems Inc. He will work out of HALO offices in Bahrain and the U.S.

G. Derek Andreason ’00 has joined the white-collar defense and government investigations practice of Brown Rudnick LLP, in the law firm’s Washington, D.C., office.

Chekquita Johnson (M.S.Ed. ’00) was appointed by the Gwinnett County Board of Education (Georgia) earlier this year to lead Sweetwater Middle School.

Gary Morris ’00 (M.S. ’01) was named provost and vice president for academic affairs at Glivinville State College in February, after serving as interim for a year. Morris earned a Ph.D. in biomedical sciences at Eastern Virginia Medical School in 2006 and joined the GSC faculty in 2008.

Melissa P. Arthur (M.S.N. ’01), a family nurse practitioner and faculty member, was promoted to coordinator of the associate degree nursing program for Southside Virginia Community College last fall.

Tanaia Hines ’03 is the new principal of Bellevue Elementary School in Richmond. She endorses project-based learning to develop STEM-literate students who are prepared for 21st-century careers.

Ryan Davis (M.S.Ed. ’05) has been promoted to associate vice president for institutional equity and diversity at Brown University in Providence, R.I.

Ronald Jackson (M.P.A. ’05), who led the Hampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority since 2011, moved into the director’s job with Norfolk’s housing authority in February. He’s now responsible for 325 employees and a $120 million budget.
Brian McGowan ’05 has relocated from Greensboro, N.C., to become associate professor of education at American University in Washington, D.C., and associate director of the university’s Center for Teaching, Research and Learning.

Holly A. Holtzen (Ph.D. ’07) has been appointed Ohio state director for AARP. She previously was COO and acting executive director for the Ohio Housing Finance Agency.

Jenna Horning ’07 on July 4 celebrated the first anniversary of Bean’s Ice Cream, a family business launched so the Horning’s daughter and others with severe peanut allergies could feel safe while eating dessert. Find them on Facebook or at 475 Wythe Creek Road in Poquoson.

Jodi C. DeBruyne ’09 began work as the Beatrice Fox Auerbach director of collections for the Mark Twain House & Museum in Hartford, Conn., earlier this year after jobs in Alaska and Maine. She writes: “I’ve been out of Alaska for two years and am still not used to these 70+ temperatures.”

Sidy Dieng ’09 has been promoted to assistant vice president of claims for GEICO’s regional operations in Tucson, Ariz. He has worked for GEICO since 2003.

Kate Ricks (D.P.T. ’09) was promoted in 2019 to vice president of operations for ATI Physical Therapy, overseeing the company clinics in Maryland and Ohio.

Paige Thomas ’09, owner of Elevate Branding Inc. design company, was named to the 40 Under 40 list in Sarasota, Fla., in October. She has lived in Tampa Bay for six years.

2010s

Natalie Harder (Ph.D. ’10) became the 17th president of Coker University in Hartsville, S.C., in May. She came from the chancellor’s job at South Louisiana Community College.

Paul Carpenter ’11 (D.P.T. ’15), in partnership with a chiropractor, opened Little Falls Integrated Physical Medicine last year in Little Falls, Minn. He says the physical therapy career combines his two passions: engineering and fitness.

Samantha Cohn ’11 shares on the history department webpage that researching a project, writing a paper and presenting a rational argument – everyday essentials for history majors – are “immeasurable skill(s)” she has used almost daily for law school and with Chaplin and Gonet law firm in Richmond.

Adam Golembeski (M.S. ’11) leaped at General Motors’ job offer in December to become program manager for its NASCAR Cup Series. Golembeski puts his degrees in mechanical and aerospace engineering to work with drive teams, helping remove roadblocks and make the cars go faster.

Peter Henning (M.S.Ed. ’12) relocated to Corvallis, Ore., from Pennsylvania to become principal of Adams Elementary School in July.

Briana-Allyn Ammissah ’13 has been named director of diversity and inclusion for Anna Maria College, in Paxton, Mass.

Alex Georghiou Frankart ’13 was hired as a graphic designer at Red Orange Studio, based in Richmond, in November.

Katrina Wells (M.S. ’13) was elected in November to the board of directors of Lunenburg Health Service. Wells is a nursing professor on the John H. Daniel campus of Southside Virginia Community College.

Zhane Brown ’16, yeoman third class from Chester, Va., was named Junior Sailor of the Quarter in 2019, while stationed aboard the USS Constitution in the Boston Harbor.

Faith O’Neil ’16 in April became director of public relations and marketing for Danville Community College in Virginia. She previously worked for Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital in customer development and marketing.

Karen Cobb ’17, formerly of ODU Alumni Relations, graduated from FEMA’s National Emergency Management Basic Academy in December and was hired in January by ODU’s police department. As business manager, Cobb put her FEMA training to work immediately to help ODU respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

Patti Hart (D.N.P. ’17), RN, CPN, NE-BC has been promoted to chief nursing officer for the Medical University of South Carolina’s Charleston division. She is responsible for nursing care and therapy services for MUSC, which comprises four hospitals and 865 beds in its Charleston division.

Mehdi Sharifi Khobdeh (Ph.D. ’17), has been hired by Canisius College in Buffalo, N.Y., as an assistant professor of management.

Adam Hutchison (Ph.D. ’18), former provost of Texas State Technical College, became president of Virginia Highlands Community College in Abingdon in January. His first challenge as new president? Managing the university’s response to the COVID-19 crisis. The meet-and-greet sessions with the community will have to wait.

Read about Brian Zwoyer (DNP ’18) and his rise at Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital at www.odu.edu/monarchmag.

A photo of Daren Williams, P.E. (M.E.M. ’07), his children and Big Blue that ran in Class Notes (Monarch Winter 2020) actually was taken on campus at the National Pan-Hellenic Council’s reunion during ODU Homecoming festivities in October 2018. Williams was volunteering with the ODU Black Alumni chapter. Williams also has spoken to student engineers on campus and served a term as Virginia section president of the American Society of Civil Engineering, beginning in November 2018.
More than 20 years ago, Karen Bosch saw a Canada goose in a pack of mallards and white geese at a pond in Virginia Beach. “I wondered, why is he with them?” Bosch (Ph.D. ’86) said. “Does he realize he’s different?”

She gave him a name: Charley. “Even my students knew about Charley,” said Bosch, a professor emeritus of education at Virginia Wesleyan University. She also told her daughter, Morghan (M.Ed. ’10), who urged her to turn it into a children’s book.

Morghan Bosch, an assistant professor of special education at Barton College in Wilson, North Carolina, had another idea: Why not make Charley a goose with autism? Her mother liked it. Together, they wrote “Being Charley: Embracing Differences,” published in December. The book has received a five-star rating from the Readers’ Favorite program.

The word “autism” is mentioned once, but the book offers several signs that Charley is “different from his brothers and sisters.” He flies upside down because the sun is too bright for him. He holds his wings over his ears when Mama Goose teaches her goslings how to honk.

“Kids can relate to Charley’s behaviors,” Morghan Bosch said. “Many say, ‘I cover my ears when the bell rings at school or when my brothers play video games at home.’” Siblings who act as caregivers also can connect with Charley’s brother Gus, who at one point checks on Charley after he has left the family’s V-formation.

The book was illustrated by Leyla Caralivanos, a reading specialist with Virginia Beach City Public Schools and one of Karen Bosch’s former students.

Morghan Bosch said her former students are reading the book to their students. The teachers told her that children who feel they are different in some way — not just because they have autism — are finding solace. “It’s difficult for teachers and parents to start those conversations, but if you have something that gives you that little push, it’s so much easier.”

Her mother recalled the revelation that came to her one night while they were writing the book: “You know what? We’re all Charleys.”

- Philip Walzer

**ALUMNI BOOKS**

“Bad Mind” by Karen Cavalli ’82 (Blue Fortune Enterprises). Cavalli uses examples from her life, and those of others, to explore whether extraterrestrial life exists and how an encounter would affect our perceptions of reality.

“The Upbeat, Organized Home Office” by Darla DeMorrow ’92 (Blue Tudor Books). DeMorrow guides housebound alums on a “homework” assignment for physical and digital decluttering in the home office.

“Don’t Judge this Book by its Title” by Frank J. Greco (Ph.D. ’95) (Amazon). Greco presents a philosophical approach to managing contradiction, developed during his 33 years running Greco Research Engineering Co., which supported government contractors.

“Planet Auschwitz” by Brian Crim (M.A. ’97) (Rutgers University Press). Crim, a University of Lynchburg historian, delves into the pervasive presence of Holocaust themes and Nazism in modern science fiction and horror media.

“Boop and Eve’s Road Trip” by Mary Helen Sheriff (M.S.Ed. ’99) (She Writes Press). In her first novel, Sheriff, a former teacher and college instructor, follows a retiree and her granddaughter as they take a surprise-filled road trip through the South.

“Memories of Mount St. Helens” by Jim Erickson (M.Ed. ’03) writes about his experiences following the eruption of Mount St. Helens. Learn more at www.odu.edu/ monarchmag
KENDRA CHERRY-JONES '03 and CW3 Broderick Jones (USA, Ret) are proud to announce the birth of their first child, Brielle Anaya Pearl Jones, born at Womack Army Medical Center, Ft. Bragg, N.C., on Oct. 11, 2019.

Mitchell and TARA MCGEIN SCHILLUMEIT '09 joyfully announce the birth of Samantha Leigh, born on June 29 in Charles City, Va. Samantha joins big sister Sophia, 6, and big brother Sullivan, 2. Congratulations!

The kilts and tartans came out when KRISTINE CARDER '99 and James J. Tricario were married Dec. 7, 2019, at The Cloisters Castle in Baltimore, Md. Their nuptials celebrated the Irish and Scottish connections of the wedding party and friends. Carder is a former professional firefighter/paramedic and member of a pipe and drums unit – which both have tartans. Tricario is a business analyst of Irish heritage, and was wearing a kilt when the couple met at an Irish festival. The honeymoon has been put off for a year due to the pandemic. Carder is busy at work; she is a forensic investigator for the chief medical examiner of Maryland.

KEIRRA LARAYE BRUNSON DILLARD '14 and LEWIS A. WILKINS JR. '14 were married on Oct. 26, 2019, at St. Martin’s Episcopal Church in Williamsburg. Dillard has taught biological sciences at Old Dominion and Norfolk State universities; Wilkins works as an information technology analyst. The couple now lives in Richmond.

KATHLEEN MCGEIN LAI '88 and ROBERT T. LAI '87 (at right in the photo) happily report that despite the pandemic, their daughter, Christine, was married to Chase McLaughlin on June 20 in Easton, Mass. (His parents, Jill and Keith McLaughlin, are pictured on the left.) The “COVID ceremony” had familiar concessions: It was held outdoors at the Municipal Center and was attended by immediate family only, following physical distancing protocols. Christine and Chase met at Northeastern University in Boston and majored in civil engineering. They will live in Easton. Mother-of-the-bride Kathleen is a self-employed CPA; Robert majored in mechanical engineering and is employed by Forst Consulting and Architecture in New York City.
ROY E. COLVER JR., a carpenter in the Facilities Management & Construction Department from 1985 to 2019, died on Jan. 24. He was 64.

Colver loved working in the carpentry shop. In his spare time, he was a cabinetmaker and acquired two black belts in martial arts.

Colver’s wife, Ruth, is a financial services coordinator for the University Libraries.

WILLIAM A. DREWRY, professor emeritus of civil and environmental engineering and a two-time chair of the Faculty Senate, died on June 23. He was 83.

“He was intellectually curious and valued civility,” said Nina Brown, a former Faculty Senate chair. “I was impressed by his attention to detail and his ability to see the bigger picture.”

Drewry, who retired in 2008 after 32 years at ODU, was proudest of his work to establish clean water and sanitation systems to Bayview on the Eastern Shore.

MARK D. HAVEY, professor and Eminent Scholar of physics, died on July 19. He was 68.

Charles Sukenik, chair of the physics department, praised Havey’s contributions to “the field of atomic, molecular and optical physics” and his “legacy of exceptional and innovative teaching that set the standard for physics instruction within the department.”

Havey, who joined ODU in 1980, received honors including fellowship in the American Physical Society and ODU’s Research Award and Gene W. Hirschfeld Faculty Excellence Award.

CARL O. HELVIE, a professor emeritus of nursing who championed alternative health treatments, died on Dec. 3, 2019. He was 87.

He began teaching at Old Dominion in 1971, served as chair of nursing and retired in 2000.


LOUIS H. JANDA, associate professor emeritus of psychology, died on March 24. He was 73.

Janda taught psychology for 42 years at Old Dominion. He retired in 2015. His research centered on such issues as obesity, sexuality and psychological testing.

Recalling how Janda led a class from his wheelchair, Michelle Kelly, professor of psychology, said, “He loved teaching and was determined to finish his course.”

GOVIND KHANDELWAL, Eminent Scholar of physics emeritus, died on May 13. He was 88.

“Govind was instrumental in establishing the Ph.D. program,” said Gail Dodge, a dean of the College of Sciences. “He was a successful researcher and dedicated teacher, but he especially enjoyed teaching introductory physics.”

His honors included the Research, Scholarship, and Creative Achievement Award and Most Inspiring Faculty Award. Khandelwal’s NASA research included work on the space shuttle’s heat shield, his son, Michael, said.

VIVIAN V. LEE, who taught in the Department of Counseling and Human Services from 2002 to 2004, died on May 11. She was 62.

“She was driven to foster excellence in school counseling and was a kind and wonderful person with endless energy,” said Ed Neukrug, chair of the department.

Lee had been at Johns Hopkins University since 2015.

JAMES J. McNALLY JR., a professor emeritus of English, died on Feb. 19. He was 95.

McNally, who was at ODU from 1963 to 1992, served as president of the Faculty Senate of Virginia and the Poetry Society of Virginia and president of the ODU chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

Former student James Farmer wrote: “There is not a day that passes that I don’t find myself using something Dr. McNally instilled in me.”

MICAH SCOTT ’90, a former director of Old Dominion’s family nurse practitioner program, died on July 11, 2019.

Scott, who worked at ODU from 1998 to 2016, coordinated the family nurse practitioner program at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. A colleague there said: “Micah was one of the most positive, kindest individuals I’ve ever met.”

KONRAD WINTERS, who helped build the University’s theater and film programs, died Feb. 10 of acute myeloid leukemia. He was 71.

Winters joined ODU in 1986 and was named associate professor emeritus of communication and theater arts last year after he retired.

He was known for innovative set design. Alumna Jill Manning said Winters was “the perfect balance between gruff exterior and squishy marshmallow. He made an entire generation of kids feel loved and seen and valued.”

The department will establish a scholarship in his name for scenic design students.

DENNIS J. ZEISLER, a University professor emeritus of music, died March 30 of pancreatic cancer. He was 73.

Zeisler joined ODU in 1979 and retired in 2018. He served as department chairman for 15 years. He also founded the Virginia Wind Symphony.

ODU President John R. Broderick said, “He exhibited a rare blend of passion (for music), compassion and sense of humor.”

Nancy Klein, chair of the Diehn School of Music, called Zeisler “one of the most energetic people I have ever known.”

A scholarship named for Zeisler helps instrumental music majors at ODU.

OTHER NOTABLE PASSING

EDITH WHITE, who helped launch Old Dominion’s Literary Festival, died in Williamsburg on June 6. She was 96.

“For the 42-year history of the festival, Edie has been helping us bring renowned writers to campus,” said John McManus, director of creative writing. White and her husband also established the Edith and Forrest P. White Writer in Residence program.

During her colorful life, White served in a women’s code-breaking unit during World War II and lobbied for school integration in Norfolk.
IN MEMORIAM

Received Aug. 1, 2019-Feb. 15, 2020

Edwin C. Kilgore '42 of Hampton, 8/23/19

William H. Longworth '42 of Norfolk, 11/22/19

Wilson B. Dodson II '43 of Norfolk, 8/3/19

S. Frank Blocker Jr. '45 of Norfolk, 1/25/20

Hereman Powers '45 of Macon, Ga., 4/28/19

Evelyn G. Newman '46 (M.S.Ed. '70) of Portsmouth, 1/2/20

Walter L. Palmer '46 of Portsmouth, 2/8/20

Col. George M. Bacon Jr., USAR (Ret) '47 of Norfolk, 12/3/19

Geraldine R. Clark '47 of Norfolk, 9/15/19

Mary Catherine Harrison '47 of Norfolk, 11/25/19

Madeline Ciola Hubbard '47 of Norfolk, 1/11/20

Lewis A. Jett Jr. '47 of Norfolk, 12/13/19

Audrey G. Rapaport '47 of Virginia Beach, 9/17/19

M. Ludlow Staples '47 of Portsmouth and Fredericksburg, Va., 12/16/19

Harry B. Adreon Jr. '48 of Arlington, Va., 10/8/19

Shirley B. Becker '49 of Norfolk, 1/22/20

Joel B. Cooper '49 of Chevy Chase, Md., and Norfolk, 11/3/19

G. William Detterman Jr. '49 of Virginia Beach, 1/9/20

Roger E. Hedgepeth '49 of Blacksburg, Va., 11/12/19

A. James Given Jr. '50 of Virginia Beach, 1/20/20

Maurice A. Person '50 of Emporia, Va., 8/13/19

Charlotte K. Stamper '51 of Norfolk, 8/29/19

Allan K. Schugeld '52 of Chesapeake, 12/22/19

Samuel A. York, USNR (Ret) '54 of Chesapeake, 12/2/19

Donald C. Williams '55 of Knotts Island, N.C., 11/21/19

Edgar F. Tyree Jr. '56 of Virginia Beach, 8/18/19

George B. Barco '57 of Virginia Beach, 11/9/19

Ann K. Bock '58 of Norfolk, 9/17/19

Ronald H. Bock Sr. '58 of Hinton, Va., 8/30/19

Ann B. Wilson '58 of Virginia Beach, 11/26/19

Irene B. Ullman '59 (M.S.Ed. '79) of Norfolk, 12/30/19

Ruth H. Jordan '61 of Chester, Va., 10/12/19

Peggy D. Wagner '61 (M.A. '72) of Chesapeake, 1/24/20

Carole M. Aguilar '62 of Virginia Beach, 9/17/19

Phyllis N. Friedman '62 of Virginia Beach, 12/12/19

Norman F. Goodwin '62 of Norfolk, 11/10/19

Robert Howsare '62 of Virginia Beach, 12/15/19

Linwood “Tick” Thumm,
Old Dominion University’s oldest living alumnus, died on April 15. He was 105.

Thumm—who got his nickname from an uncle because of his ticklishness—received a business degree from the two-year Norfolk Division of the College of William & Mary in 1936.

“He would always say he and his friends ran the school,” said Susan Paxton, one of Thumm’s four daughters. “He knew all the professors, and they hung out together.”

In an interview with Old Dominion commemorating his 100th birthday in 2015, Thumm recalled sitting on the brick wall outside of what was the administration building, singing with other members of a quartet. “We had a wonderful show we put on every year—the High Hat Review—and we came up with a surprising amount of talent in the student body.”

After graduating from the division, Thumm worked as a salesman for the Bemis bag company in Norfolk. During World War II, he commanded a Coast Guard cutter.

Thumm later founded Virginia Heating, an air conditioning and heating business in Norfolk, and became vice president of A1 Sheet Metal before retiring in 1979. It wasn’t his last job. Starting in his early 80s, Thumm worked for more than a decade as a ranger at the entrance to First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach.

Thumm loved dancing with his wife, Jane, to Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald, playing cards and going to parties. Once, his daughter Kathy Thumm ’88 recalled, her parents were at a party ready to close down at the Norfolk Yacht & Country Club. “He didn't want to end the party, so he brought the whole band back to the house.”

Thumm swam regularly until he was 103, said his daughter Virginia Thumm. He was also “still walking in his assisted living place until about a year ago,” Kathy Thumm said.

Nelson A. Odom ’62 of Williamsburg, 1/23/20

William L. Sears Jr. ’62 of Virginia Beach, 8/15/19

Jerry Tompkins ’62 (M.S.Ed. ’71) of Virginia Beach, 10/31/19

Edward S. Broach Jr. ’63 of Norfolk, 8/4/19

Arthur E. Lemasters, USN (Ret) ’63 of Chesapeake, 9/27/19

Lacy L. Scoggin Jr. ’63 of Hampton, 11/3/19

Lowell M. “Lucky” Stike ’63 (M.S.Ed. ’74) of Portsmouth, 10/7/19

Dorothy G. Wolfred ’63 of Norfolk, 8/25/19

Linda Z. Bamforth ’64 of Norfolk, 1/18/20

Sam T. Beale III ’64 of Richmond, Va., 12/2/19
SUMMER 2020 59

IN MEMORIAM

Al C. Harrell ’64 of Stanardsville, Va., 1/20/20

Trudy Kitchin Kohl ’65 of Virginia Beach, 10/6/19

Lt. Cmdr. C. Dean Tate, USN (Ret) ’65 of Virginia Beach, 10/7/19

Gene W. Hoge ’66 of Sunset Beach, N.C., 10/19/19

J. Stephen Cottrell Jr. (M.S.Ed. ’70) of Hayesville, N.C., 9/23/19

George H. McQueen ’70 of Chattanooga, Tenn., 9/10/19

William E. Moore ’70 of Waynesboro, Va., 8/30/19

Barbara D. Pratt ’70 of Virginia Beach, 12/4/19

Robert S. Wahab III ’70 of Norfolk, 12/4/19

Senior Chief Kenneth P. Warmunde Sr., USN (Ret) ’70 of Chesapeake, 12/7/19

William D. Miller ’71 of Portsmouth, 11/30/19

Mary B. Termini ’71 of Virginia Beach, 2/1/20

Doris M. Bellamy (M.S.Ed. ’72) of Chesapeake, 12/17/19

Vicki B. Buchanan ’72 of Virginia Beach, 1/19/20

Col. James J. Crowling Jr., USAF (Ret.) ’72 of Norfolk, 8/22/19

Joseph G. Kowalski Jr. ’72 of Virginia Beach, 11/28/19

William A. Mereno, USN (Ret) ’72 of Virginia Beach, 12/29/19

Stanley L. Plevyak Jr. ’72 of Chesapeake, 11/11/19

Phillip W. Turner (M.S.Ed. ’72) of Annandale, Va., 1/29/20

Valerie Gary Bell ’73 of Manassas, Va., 2/4/20

Nanci C. Tatem ’73 of Norfolk, 12/19/19

Betsy S. Bright ’74 of Hampton, 11/20/19

Stephen E. Edwards ’74 of Virginia Beach, 2/3/20

Michael S. Gay ’74 of Chesapeake, 1/31/20

Teresa T. Kelly ’74 (M.S.Ed. ’78) of The Villages, Fla., 8/9/19

Dorothy B. Miller (M.S.Ed. ’74) of Chesapeake, 11/27/19

Frank R. Scheidler (M.S. ’74) of League City, Texas, 10/10/19

Harrison M. Simpson ’74 of Fredericksburg, Va., 12/18/19

Shirley P. Wood ’74 of Norfolk, 10/11/19

Capt. Donald B. Burke, USNR (Ret) (M.B.A. ’75) of Virginia Beach, 8/19/19

Charles D. Corey Sr. ’75 of Hampton, 11/4/19

Theresa Diane Esposito ’75 of Norfolk, 12/31/19

Robert B. Hecker (M.B.A. ’75) of Newport News, 1/8/20

Merrill A. Mayo ’75 of Williamsburg, 11/30/19

Stephen R. Wallace ’75 of Virginia Beach, 7/30/19

Terri F. Dannemann ’76 of Virginia Beach, 12/10/19

Paula B. Green ’76 of Chesapeake and Prescott, Ariz., 8/20/19

Jonnie F. Hargrove ’76 of Hampton, 11/24/19

Lt. Col. John C. Holladay Jr., USAR (Ret.) (M.B.A. ’76) of Norfolk, 2/9/20

George R. Nelixbach ’76 of Williamsburg, 8/20/19

June H. Warren ’76 of Virginia Beach, 11/4/19

Rosemary S. Wenchel ’76 of Washington, D.C., 5/11/19

Davis B. Wright ’76 of Lanexa, Va., 8/24/19

Gregory P. Adams ’77 of Edmond, Okla., 2/5/20

E. Harvey Bright ’77 of Portsmouth, 10/12/19

Brian G. Cox ’77 of Topanga Canyon, Calif., 8/14/19

John J. Wooldridge ’77 (M.S.Ed. ’97) of Norfolk, 7/30/19

Randi M. Felts ’78 of Bristol, Va., 11/28/19

Georgia A. Henson ’78 of Cary, N.C., 12/7/19


Brenda C. McGee ’78 of Chesapeake, 11/27/19

Robert P. Rowland ’78 of Roanoke, Va., 9/16/19

C. Christopher Souder ’78 (M.S.Ed. ’91) of Virginia Beach, 1/28/20

Marsha P. Tilley ’78 of Norfolk, 12/11/19

Matthew E. Brown ’79 of Durham, N.C., 11/27/19

Lee Evans Satterthwaite ’79 of Virginia Beach, 11/18/19

Pedro P. Cunanan (M.E. ’80) of Woodbridge, Va., 2/4/20

R. Leon Edmondson Jr. ’80 of Virginia Beach, 1/10/20

Billy O. Foster ’80 of Maryville, Tenn., 8/28/19

Mary F. Lee (M.S.Ed. ’80) of Virginia Beach, 2/10/20

Lowell A. Martin, USN (Ret.) ’80 of Norfolk, 1/13/20

Harold E. Richlie ’80 of Virginia Beach, 11/15/19

Edward L. Sawyer ’80 (M.S.Ed. ’81) of Suffolk, 10/13/19

Daniel F. Nimershiem, USN (Ret.) ’81 of Norfolk, 1/8/20

Jeffrey “JD” Reed ’81 of Maitens, Va., 11/2019
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Field</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathy R. Dollins '82</td>
<td>of Staunton, Va.</td>
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<td>9/27/19</td>
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<td>AnnMarie Funda '82</td>
<td>of Norfolk, Va.</td>
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<td>Master Chief William G. Kearon, USN (Ret) (M.U.S. '82)</td>
<td>of Virginia Beach, Va.</td>
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<td>Janet G. Morgan (M. S. '82)</td>
<td>of Virginia Beach, Va.</td>
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<td>Dianne K. Pruden (M.S.Ed. '82)</td>
<td>of Virginia Beach, Va.</td>
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<td>Kerianne A. Barnes '83</td>
<td>of Virginia Beach, Va.</td>
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<td>Jane Morris Estes '83</td>
<td>of Jacksonville, Fla.</td>
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<td>Tuni Amarkirti Singh '83</td>
<td>of Norfolk, Va.</td>
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<td>Mary V. Wiggins (M.S.Ed. '83)</td>
<td>of Virginia Beach, Va.</td>
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<td>Nicholas C. Anderson '84</td>
<td>of Fredericksburg, Va.</td>
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<td>Sofia Ruiz Konikoff '84</td>
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<td>James H. Langhorne Sr. '84</td>
<td>of Hampton, Va.</td>
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<td>Lisa G. Morales '84</td>
<td>of Charlottesville, Va.</td>
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<td>D. Allen Perkins III '84</td>
<td>of Goochland, Va.</td>
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<td>Elsie W. Rosensteel '84</td>
<td>of Yorktown, Va.</td>
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<td>Antonio H. Young '84 (M.S.Ed. '92)</td>
<td>of Chesapeake, Va.</td>
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<td>Ann B. Broadus '85</td>
<td>of Norfolk, Va.</td>
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<td>Rebecca S. Dailey (M.A. '85)</td>
<td>of Norfolk, Va.</td>
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<td>Frances C. Haddock '85 (M.S.Ed. '92)</td>
<td>of Portsmouth, Va.</td>
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<td>Raymond A. Haie (C.A.S. '86)</td>
<td>of Suffolk, Va.</td>
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<td>Helen N. Morris '86</td>
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<td>W. Edward Smith '86</td>
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<td>Diane F. Tessenear '86</td>
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<td>Jeffrey L. York '86</td>
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<td>Sandra G. Ange '87</td>
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<td>Stephen W. Barnes (M.S.Ed. '87)</td>
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<td>Charles Hardy Parker '87</td>
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<td>Kathryn K. Ranno '87</td>
<td>of Orange Park, Fla.</td>
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<td>Brian S. Mann '89</td>
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<td>Gloria H. Norris '89</td>
<td>of Norfolk, Va.</td>
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<td>Master Chief W. “Frank” Roach, USN (Ret) '89)</td>
<td>of Poca, W.Va.</td>
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<td>Micah A. Scott '90</td>
<td>of Clinton, N.C.</td>
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<td>Margaret M. Curran (M.S. '91)</td>
<td>of Stanardsville, Va.</td>
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<td>Linda E. Hawkins (M.S.Ed. '91)</td>
<td>of Norfolk, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arnold C. Nye Jr. (Ph.D. '91)</td>
<td>of Gloucester, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gail S. Langevin '92 (M.A. '94)</td>
<td>of Williamsburg, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>T. Mercer Collier Jr. (Ph.D. '93)</td>
<td>of Williamsburg, Va.</td>
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<td>1/22/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lt. Col. Edward J. Durham Jr., USA (Ret.) (M.S.Ed. '93)</td>
<td>of Raleigh, N.C.</td>
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<td>Michelle J. McLees '93</td>
<td>of Midlothian, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawrence Y. Schwab (M.S.Ed. '93)</td>
<td>of Portsmouth, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dean G. J. Brassington (M.S.Ed. '94)</td>
<td>of Norfolk, Va.</td>
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<td>Wayne L. Evans '96</td>
<td>of Portsmouth, Va.</td>
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<td>Constance V. Cameron '98</td>
<td>of The Villages, Fla.</td>
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<td>Cynthia C. Kirkland (M.P.A. '98)</td>
<td>of Danville, Va.</td>
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<td>Jennifer A. Moore '98</td>
<td>of Virginia Beach, Va.</td>
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<td>Heidi C. Radam '98 (M.S.Ed. '99)</td>
<td>of Virginia Beach, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charlene D. Buchanan '99</td>
<td>of Richlands, Va.</td>
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<td>Jennifer Minar Jaynes '99</td>
<td>of Hideaway, Texas, Va.</td>
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<td>Laura E. Jones '99</td>
<td>of Chincoteague Island, Va.</td>
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<td>Jamie R. Kelly '99</td>
<td>of Chesapeake, Va.</td>
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<td>Barbara D. McCook '99</td>
<td>of Virginia Beach, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christopher P. Stefanucci '01</td>
<td>of Charlotte, N.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td>11/9/19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

IN MEMORIAM

Martha M. DeMontpellier (M.S.Ed. '03) of Norfolk, 9/14/19
Labib H. Khaddage '04 of Glen Allen, Va., 10/17/19
Melissa W. Starr (M.A. '05) of Portsmouth, 1/9/20
Meredith H. Esson (M.S.Ed. '06) of Virginia Beach, 1/10/20
Matt N. Crawford (M.S.Ed. '07) of Murrells Inlet, S.C., 8/3/19
Elizabeth J. Ross (M.S. '08) of Portsmouth, 12/2/19
Janice K. Anderson (M.S.Ed. '10) of Virginia Beach, 11/7/19
Delphine F. Everhart (D.N.P. '13) of Cana, Va., 8/22/19
Adam S. Neely (Ph.D. '13) of Newport News, 8/10/19
Lauren L. Horton '14 of Chesapeake, 9/7/19
Travis W. Glover '15 of Fort Worth, Texas, 12/3/19
M. Kevin Dusch '16 of Virginia Beach, 9/27/19
Gabriel M. Miller '16 of Chesapeake, 11/1/19
Matthew C. Splitstone '19 of Smithfield, Va., 1/7/20
Amarea Ware (enrolled) of Fredericksburg, Va., 4/9/20
Keira M. Reese-Johnson (enrolled) of Chesterfield, Va., 4/25/20
Kaufman Mall was strangely quiet in April, with no one in sight but the Monarch Lion.

PHOTO BY DAVID HOLLINGSWORTH
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E.G. Middleton
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Bay Electric
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Old Dominion University
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Her career is on fire

NAKIA MADRY-SMITH (M.B.A. '05), the director of the ODU Peninsula Center in Hampton, sings in two local groups – The Fuzz Band and Rocky 7. Last year, she was selected to sing in a third, which has been seen and heard by millions across the country.

The Voices of Fire Choir sang back-up for Pharrell Williams when he appeared on two late-night shows – “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert” and “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” – in December and January.

“The whole thing has just been a dream come true,” Madry-Smith said. “It’s been a wild ride and a really fun experience.”

Pharrell recently announced that Netflix will air a documentary later this year on the choir’s formation.

Watch the Voices of Fire Choir perform with Pharrell Williams on “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOTaTJGoDcQ
Dave Derbyshire was truly a BMOC (Big Man on Campus) - not only was he tall and gangly at 6’5”, he was also a student leader involved in many facets of college life at Old Dominion University from ’78 to ’82. Many will remember him as the co-chair of the Muscular Dystrophy Association’s “Dance-a-thon,” which raised thousands of dollars for MDA. Others remember Dave for his passion for The Circle K Order (CKO), the collegiate level of the Kiwanis Club, a fraternity that he nurtured, grew and led. Dave brought together a group of students with a shared vision of service to others while having a lot of fun. The fraternity shared many of the same traits as other fraternities and sororities on campus at that time.

CKO members initially lived in an unofficial fraternity house in the Enfield Apartments and moved later into a home on Hampton Boulevard. Dave led a group that petitioned the traditional Greek fraternity system to allow CKO to participate in the Greek intramural sports leagues. There may have even been a toga party or two. Most importantly, though, was the theme of service to others in the community, and it remained the main reason for CKO's existence. CKO members learned about an elderly woman who couldn’t care for herself. The fraternity adopted and tended to her regularly. They also helped the Downtown Norfolk Kiwanis Club feed and distribute toys at Christmas to inner city children. Throughout his college career, Dave led CKO, and the group became fast friends for decades to come. Unfortunately, Dave would not live to see that.

After graduation, Dave married his college sweetheart, and began his career in sales at the United States Gypsum Company. He joined the Kiwanis Club that sponsored the fraternity, many of whose members had grown fond of Dave from his college days. Dave’s friends were certain that one day he’d be mayor of Norfolk. His physical presence and gregarious personality combined with his desire to improve the lives of those around him would surely have him in a position of leadership in the community. His future was as bright as the stars!

However, three years after graduation while at softball practice with many of his former fraternity brothers, Dave’s life tragically came to an end. He collapsed and a brain aneurysm took him swiftly. A life full of achievements and influence had ended, but, Dave would not be forgotten.

Nearly 35 years later, the same CKO group of friends still gather for ODU’s Homecoming festivities and talk about how great they used to be when they were thinner, stronger and had more hair. They also talk about their friend Dave Derbyshire - the common thread that has woven their lives together. They knew that something great could come out of Dave’s significant life. The commonality was their love for ODU and Dave Derbyshire, and their desire to merge those ideals into a legacy that would honor Dave and help ODU.

The David Derbyshire Leadership Scholarship was born from this, and in just a few short years, the group has raised over $50,000, primarily from the group of former CKO alumni. The scholarship has been awarded for two years to a very deserving student who embodies the qualities of Dave Derbyshire. The recipient of the Derbyshire Scholarship is Rita Meraz. Rita represents all that the committee had envisioned—a tireless champion of service to others.

Rita is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering and a minor in physics, and will graduate next spring. She is the president of the ODU chapter of Engineers without Borders, secretary of the Society of Hispanic and Professional Engineers (SHPE), a member of the Society of Women Engineers, Theta Tau engineering fraternity, and the Global Monarch Club. She mentors students, and volunteers for Habitat for Humanity and Relay for Life. Rita also works in the library and has maintained a 3.96 GPA.

Each year, ODU recognizes one student with the Monarch Citizen of the Year Award. The awardee serves as a role model who exemplifies being a true Monarch. This individual is always willing to show Monarch Pride, is an ambassador for ODU, and represents ODU well. Last year’s recipient was Rita Meraz. When hearing the news, Betsy Meadows, a former CKO member said, “Wouldn’t Dave be proud?”

The group is thrilled that they’ve created an endowment that will allow Dave Derbyshire’s legacy to live on forever at ODU, and each year, a deserving student will learn about this man and his many accomplishments.

Raising $50,000 in a short period of time was great, but the group’s ultimate goal is to increase the endowment to the $300,000 level in order to provide a substantial scholarship award, and honor Dave. They’re appealing to those who remember Dave from their days at ODU, along with others who see the value of a truly meaningful life cut short, and also believe in the things that Dave stood for. Like his friends, they may want to pay it forward and help those who will bring to life the accomplishments that Dave would have attained. The Dave Derbyshire scholars will also know that Dave played a part in their accomplishments.

If you would like to contribute to the David Derbyshire Leadership Scholarship, please contact Barbara Henley in the Advancement office at (757) 683-6563.
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