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OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2022

Monarch

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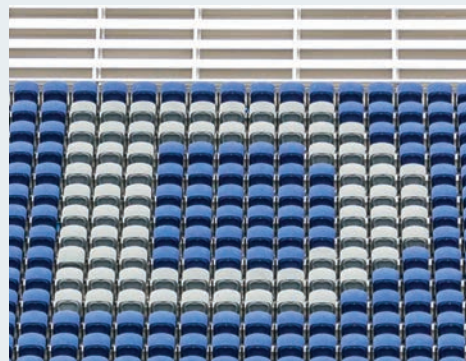
**The gold standard
of research**

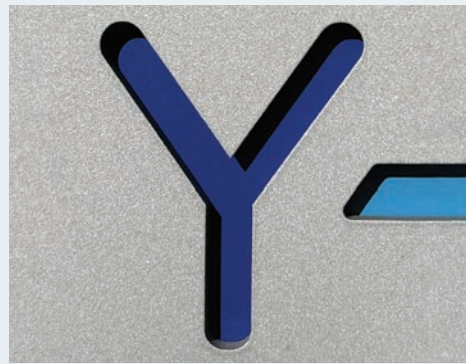
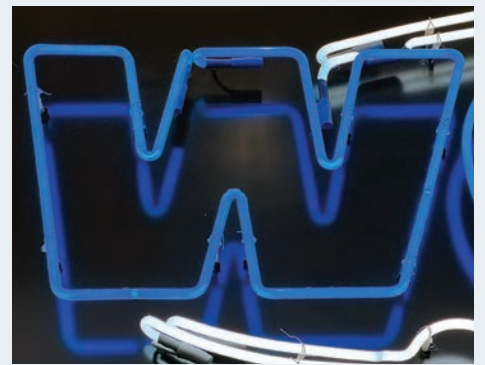


Full Frame

Enjoy the ODU alphabet. Each of these letters, from A to Z, appears somewhere on campus. Think you're a true Monarch? Let us know the locations of the letters you recognize. We'll publish the names of the people who got the most letters right in the winter issue. Send your guesses to monarchmagazine@odu.edu, SocialMedia@odu.edu or directly to our messaging inboxes on Instagram [@olddominionu](https://www.instagram.com/olddominionu) or on Old Dominion University's Facebook page.

PHOTOS BY SHARA WEBER





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COVER PHOTO BY COREY NOLAN



OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2022

Monarch

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ODU stepping forward as a world leader

Greetings, Monarch Nation!

As the summer is in full swing on the campus of Old Dominion University, we are truly honored to share our latest magazine, which highlights the spirit and strength of Monarch students, faculty,

staff, alumni and supporters. Their powerful stories are the focus of this issue and serve as a source of both inspiration and pride for all Monarchs!

Following a very successful academic year as reflected on the cover of this issue, ODU is honored to join the ranks of the nation's top research institutions. This prestigious recognition is a true testament to the diligent efforts and many achievements of our world-class researchers. In recent years, our institution has made substantial investments to advance our research enterprise and expand our reach locally, regionally, nationally and globally. Without question, our individual efforts are being recognized, and our collective growth is truly remarkable!

In the classroom and the laboratory, we are making a significant difference. Our impact in the field is equally impressive. Just this academic year, we stepped forward as an international leader in data sciences, health care and maritime as evidenced by the stories within this issue. Our research growth, including these pillars of strength, comes at a time in which we remain sharply committed to academic excellence and student success.

Creating access and opportunity in an inclusive and supportive community represents the core of the Monarch experience, and that will not change as we continue to advance and grow together as one ODU family. This is daily demonstrated by a deep commitment to serving our local communities and the Commonwealth of Virginia. That service mission is driving our collaborative and important work with Eastern Virginia Medical School to establish an academic health sciences center in order to combat the health disparities facing our citizens. We have much to look forward to in our critical roles as caring practitioners, change makers, cutting-edge researchers, thought leaders and dedicated scholars!

I hope that all Monarchs have an adventurous and safe summer. May each of you take this opportunity to reflect on the positive impact Old Dominion University had on your life and the active role you will play in its future, which holds limitless opportunities and endless possibilities for our campus and our communities! GO MONARCHS!

With Monarch Pride,

Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D.
President



@BrianOHemphill



Like many of you, I had not heard of R1 until recently. No, it's not a character that was cut out of "Star Wars." It's the highest ranking for research output from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, and Old Dominion nailed it late last year.

Our summer issue introduces you to four faculty members – Peter Bernath, Kristin Heron, Sachin Shetty and Harry Zhang – who have produced top-flight research in areas from cybersecurity to mental health.

Their work exemplifies ODU's decades-long emphasis on research that has local benefits and addresses pressing issues. You'll see further examples in the magazine, including Old Dominion's progress in collaborating with health

care partners to reduce inequities and its expanded focus on maritime activities.

This issue spotlights alumni who have emerged as leaders in Virginia and beyond. Winsome Earle-Sears '92, Virginia's new lieutenant governor, explains how Old Dominion paved her path to politics and her views on education. You'll enjoy reacquainting yourselves with the states of matter in the second-grade classroom of Daphne Fulson '10, '13 (M.S.Ed. '22), Virginia's Teacher of the Year.

We'll also introduce you to the United States of America Mrs. Virginia, Lourdes Spurlock '18, a clean energy engineer, and MEAC Commissioner Sonja Stills '93.

Lytton John Musselman, the Mary Payne Hogan Distinguished Professor of Botany, and his students will take you on a tour of his beloved Blackwater Ecological Preserve, a 319-acre stretch in Zuni featuring towering longleaf pines and flowering pyxie moss.

We also say farewell to someone I've known and respected for decades. Cecelia Tucker is leaving community relations after 31 years. Her reputation is also towering. Tucker's connections were unrivaled, and so were her efforts to increase campus diversity. Former President Jim Koch calls her "one of the most important individuals in Old Dominion history."

On the lighter side, Art Director Shara Weber '92 traversed the University too many times to count to assemble our engaging A to Z photo montage. Every letter exists somewhere on campus. See how many you can locate.

Finally, I want to thank you for your strong support of Monarch magazine. Our recent alumni survey showed the highest levels of readership and satisfaction since I joined ODU in 2016. Our team continues to look for ways to improve the magazine, and I encourage you to email me at pwalzer@odu.edu with suggestions.

I hope you have an enjoyable summer.

Philip Walzer
Monarch Magazine and University Editor

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The spring 2021 and winter 2022 issues of Monarch magazine recently received Communicator awards.

Read our online
exclusives at
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(A)head of the class

Before the dignitaries, before the graduates, come the bagpipe players at ODU's commencement procession.

Two alums, Jeff Christman (M.S.Ed. '97) and Chris Percy '10 (M.A. '12), had been leading the entourage since 2007. COVID put them – and the processions – on hiatus. But they were back in December for the first time in two years.

The occasion also marked the debut graduation performance of Christman's grandson Charles Gallion.

PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS

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R1

Rising Research

The combination of one letter and one number confirms Old Dominion University's place as a research powerhouse and will help the University catapult even higher.

Last December, Old Dominion University received the prestigious R1 designation, denoting "very high research activity," from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

Morris Foster, vice president for research, compares it to getting into the NCAA's Division I. R1 is the highest classification, earned by 5%, or 137, of all universities in the U.S.

"This is a significant milestone for our campus community and a historic moment in our research efforts," ODU President Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D., said. "Our faculty are so deserving of this prestigious honor and the limitless opportunities and well-deserved recognition that come with it!"

Working with such partners as NASA, the Port of Virginia and Jefferson Lab, Old Dominion has compiled a rich history of tackling urgent issues in coastal resilience, cybersecurity and port logistics. Carnegie looked at factors including expenditures, research staff size and doctorates awarded in determining ODU's ranking.

The designation will help Old Dominion attract even more top-quality faculty members and graduate students, increase grant opportunities and expand partnerships, President Hemphill said.

"We're focused on where ODU will go next with research," he said. "We can't just be comfortable with receiving R1 status."

In this section, you'll meet four federally funded researchers who are making breakthroughs and expanding knowledge in disparate fields. And we'll acquaint you with more facts and figures that validate ODU's new echelon.

STORIES BY PHILIP WALZER

Shetty: Harnessing cyber from defense to health care

As a researcher, Sachin Shetty aims not just to solve tough problems but to tackle “a specific Department of Defense mission or industry challenge.” And he’s been working on some big ones, including safeguarding personal health care information and automating warehouse inventory for the Marine Corps.

“I have this mantra: Math to marketplace,” says Shetty, professor of computational modeling and simulation engineering and associate director of Old Dominion University’s Virginia Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center. “A lot of it starts with math calculations, but I want my work to impact the end users.”

Shetty, who joined ODU in 2016, is helping lead a \$13 million Department of Defense project to retrofit a 5G-enabled “smart warehouse” at the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany, Georgia.

“Legacy warehousing systems have logistical inefficiencies,” he says, including suboptimal management of inventory, wasted time and cyber vulnerability. With automated asset tracking, “anytime you move something from one shelf to another, I know it’s been moved. I would be able to locate it within a few centimeters,” no matter how small the item.

Shetty is supervising the technical work for the project, which brings together five Virginia universities, including ODU, and four businesses.

“It’s probably the largest project I’ve done, in terms of the impact and the dollar amount,”

he says. “There’s a lot of moving parts since I’m straddling two cultures – academia and industry.”

The prototype for the 5G network enhancement of the warehouse will be deployed by December 2023.

“That piece excites me. Most of my deliverables are paper artifacts or software that potentially can be used. I never get to see the end users benefit from them. If this is successful, we could replicate it at other Marine Corps sites.”

His other major project, part of a three-year joint effort with Sentara Healthcare, relies on blockchain, an innovative technology that allows data to be accessed and transferred across a system while blocking rogue users.

The result, unveiled at a national health care conference in 2019, is called Bloxure. The next step, aided by a \$150,000 grant from the Commonwealth Research Commercialization Fund, is assessing the viability of a startup

business model. Shetty hopes to be the scientific adviser if it’s launched.

The benefits, he says, would be significant for all parties. Patients would gain the reassurance their information was safe. “I don’t think any of us understands how our data is being monetized by others.” Hospitals and other providers would enjoy an increase in both security and efficiency, reducing the cost of recordkeeping while providing real-time auditing.

Shetty is also working to enhance cybersecurity at the Virginia Port Authority under the auspices of the Critical Infrastructure Resilience Institute, funded by the Department of Homeland Security.

He insists on including teaching in his workload. “Every concept I teach I try to connect to a project that I’m doing. That tremendously enhances students’ ability to understand and appreciate theoretical principles.”



PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS

Bernath: Uncovering the chemical secrets of light

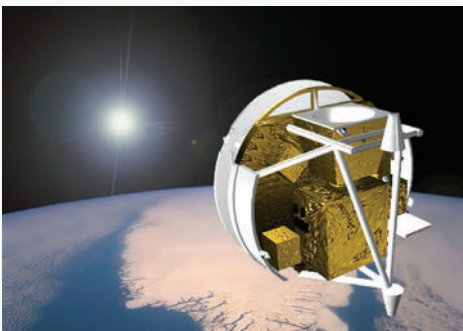


PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS

I'm basically a spectroscopist," says Peter Bernath. "Essentially, I'm analyzing light to determine the properties of matter."

That analysis can reveal the concentration of molecules in the atmosphere. Add a few more details, and you get a better sense of how extensive his scope is.

Since 1998, Bernath has been the mission scientist for the ACE (Atmospheric Chemistry Experiment), a Canadian satellite. He oversaw



its construction, attended its launch in 2003 and leads the five-member data team, based in Waterloo, Canada, that analyzes its readings.

The measurements, assessing the concentrations of molecules such as nitrous oxide and methane, have shed light on ozone depletion and climate change. But Bernath, Eminent Scholar and professor of chemistry and biochemistry, emphasizes:

"We're not modelers, and we're not public policy people. We're in the science business of measuring remote data that will be used in models."

The ACE, which has far outlasted the lifespan of most satellites, can measure the presence of 44 molecules in Earth's atmosphere.

An early discovery made the front page of the French newspaper *Le Monde*. Then, a decade ago, the ACE found a new source of nitrous oxide, which depletes the ozone layer.

Scientists previously knew that nitrous oxide, emitted by microorganisms on Earth's surface, rose to the stratosphere, where it transformed to nitric oxide. "We discovered another source of nitrous oxide that comes from higher in the atmosphere," Bernath said. "Particles from the sun hit the upper atmosphere and cause nitrogen to fall apart, producing nitrous oxide, which descends to the stratosphere."

More recently, scientists assessed the aftermath of weather events across the globe. They found that Asian monsoons essentially siphoned pollution from Earth's surface and injected it into the stratosphere.

The Australian fires of 2020 were so powerful that they, too, injected smoke and organic chemicals into the stratosphere, further degrading the ozone layer. Those findings appeared earlier this year in the prestigious journal *Science*.

Bernath, who has received a handful of NASA grants, is now tracking sulfate aerosols, using data both from the ACE and NASA Langley's SAGE III instrument on the International Space Station.

His team members are also examining hot "exoplanets" – planets that orbit stars other than the sun. Don't start thinking about extraterrestrials, though. They're mainly interested in the concentration of molecules on those exoplanets.

Bernath has written "Spectra of Atoms and Molecules," a widely used textbook on spectroscopy now in its fourth edition, and published more than 675 peer-reviewed journal articles. He also edited the book "The Atmospheric Chemistry Experiment at 10" and edits the *Journal of Quantitative Spectroscopy and Radiative Transfer*.

His research flows into his teaching, particularly his Spectroscopy of Atmospheres course. As an example, he incorporates the ACE's CO₂ readings in his classes. "They form the real-world examples of these principles, which can otherwise be a bit dry."

Despite a profusion of research, “sexual minorities tend to be understudied,” says Kristin Heron, an associate professor of psychology. She’s attempting to fill the gaps with projects that have received \$1.5 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).



PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS

Heron: Her work aims to help sexual minorities

Of that amount, Heron and her colleagues received more than \$1 million in 2019 for a four-year study on binge eating from the NIH’s National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. She is the principal investigator.

Binge eating is linked to obesity, depression and other mental health disorders and can be more prevalent among women who are sexual minorities, Heron said. She and her co-researchers want to identify the factors that contribute to these disparities.

They are following 300 women of various sexual orientations. Over two weeks, a phone app prompts them multiple times a day to answer questions about their eating, drinking, social experiences and whether they have encountered “stressors,” such as discrimination.

It’s too early for conclusions, but Heron says, “In some ways, people are people. But there

are places where key differences in lived experiences emerge for minority women.”

The other major project looked at alcohol use among female partners. It was awarded \$450,000 by the NIH’s National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in 2016. Heron served as one of the co-investigators, with Robin Lewis as principal investigator.

Their team tracked 163 female couples, who completed surveys every morning for two weeks. “We found that experiences of discrimination or marginalization were associated with risky drinking the same day and sometimes the next day,” said Lewis, who recently retired as professor of psychology.

In addition, when one woman drank heavily, both she and her partner were more likely “to engage in physical or psychological aggression.”

The ultimate goal of their research, Heron said, is to “adapt treatments to ameliorate health concerns for minority individuals and improve health equity.”

That could mean, for instance, seeking to reduce what Lewis calls “sexual minority stress” to lessen the likelihood of risky behaviors, drinking and partner violence. One way to do that is “to look at fairness and quality in terms of access to medical services.” Others include encouraging self-acceptance. “Even talking about it helps,” she said.

Heron says undergraduate and graduate students have been active in research and data collection. Some have written articles published in journals.

“One of the things I absolutely love about my job is mentoring students,” she says. “To see them getting excited about the research process is fun and exciting for me, too.”

Zhang: He's found his niche with WIC

Did you know that half of newborns in America are covered under WIC (Women, Infants and Children), the federal nutrition program?

That's good for them, but Harry Zhang wondered if it leads to an unintended consequence: lower rates of breastfeeding.

WIC is the country's largest purchaser of baby formula, which it provides free to non-breastfeeding beneficiaries. Zhang worried that the implicit message was: "Don't breastfeed if you're part of WIC."

In fact, he found that mothers receiving WIC are less likely to breastfeed than others who are not participants.

Zhang's research orbit is huge, running from WIC to the effects of high prices for fresh vegetables. The common thread: health disparities. "I'm very sensitive to equality in society," said Zhang, professor of community and environmental health and director of the Ph.D. program in health services research.

"I'm a minority, and I was a first-generation college student in my family. I'm particularly interested in how I can help low-income people."

Though he's in health sciences, Zhang's degrees are all in economics. He describes himself as a "behavioral economist," trying to nudge people to better practices. So he supports WIC's policy of not displaying formula and suggests more counseling and a breastfeeding support program.



PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS

Another major WIC-related project researched the use of apps to redeem benefits. Recipients with access to the app, he found, redeem benefits at higher rates.

The app is available in many, but not all, states. Virginia is developing its version. Washington needs to spend more money so all recipients can get it, Zhang said.

To find the balance on their accounts, recipients need just one click on the app, he said. Without the app, they have to call a hotline and might be subject to a wait. "People will say, 'Forget it. I don't know how much I have; I won't use it.'"

Zhang's work included developing a calculator for the app. "One small innovation of our project created a convenient tool used by millions of people," he said.

He's worked with a handful of state agencies, from Virginia to Nevada, as well as WIC

recipients. "You meet so many wonderful persons. They want to work with you to get things done."

Zhang estimates projects he's involved in have received more than \$12 million from the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and other funding agencies.

He's also co-chair of a national network of WIC researchers, seeking to promote collaboration and mentor the next generation of scholars. He's happy that a doctoral student recently chose WIC as the subject of her dissertation.

"I feel very lucky to have found something I have a passion for and the resources to do it," he said. "I've fallen in love with this work. I may stick with it for the remainder of my career."

A Research Roundup

ODU has 671 active research awards, **up 12%** from 2021.

Old Dominion this year **received approval** from the National Science Foundation for its fifth Research Experiences for Undergraduates summer program, this one in disinformation detection and analytics.

The University's research and associated expenditures total **\$78 million.**

Alvin Holder, professor of chemistry and biochemistry, leads a **\$1.65 million** National Institutes of Health MARC (Maximizing Access to Research Centers) program to attract underrepresented students to doctoral programs in biomedical research.

The number of doctorates awarded by the University **rose to 150 last year from 115 in 2014.**

The College of Arts and Letters and the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies jointly won a **\$2.2 million grant** from the U.S. Department of Education to build literacy skills in K-12 students.

The number of nonfaculty Ph.D. researchers has **risen to 148 from 35 in 2014.**



Blackwater *keeps on shinin'*

PHOTOS BY SHARA WEBER

BY PHILIP WALZER

“Here’s the glistening. Look at that one sparkling up there! It’s so happy, it can’t hold back.”

Neither can Lytton John Musselman.

The professor of biology turns effusive whenever he encounters the towering longleaf pine trees on Old Dominion University’s 319-acre Blackwater Ecological Preserve in Zuni. Musselman negotiated the transfer of the land from the Union Camp Corp. paper company in 1985, with the aid of The Nature Conservancy.

The preserve houses the northernmost community of longleaves on the East Coast – more than 2,000.

Other pines dot the landscape – loblolly, pond and shortleaf – standing on sand 30 feet deep. But the longleaves (*Pinus palustris*, to be technical about it) are the most senior (up to 400 years old) and stand the tallest (over 100 feet tall). They also have the largest cones (some nearly a foot long), biggest seeds and longest needles of any Eastern pine. And when the sun hits them, those needles nearly shimmer.

Musselman, the Mary Payne Hogan Distinguished Professor of Botany, is not the first biologist attracted to Blackwater. Harvard botanist Merritt Fernald wrote about it in the 1930s. But Musselman, who manages the preserve, is surely the most passionate.

"Take a look up!" he directed nearly 30 undergraduate and graduate students, as well as alumni, visiting in March. "Look at the glistening. What a scene!"

The trees aren't the only attraction.

Nick Flanders, a frequent co-leader of tours who will get his doctorate this summer, identified the Eastern towhee from its trill in March. Other visitors include the bobwhite quail and yellow-rumped warbler – though "you hear them more than you see them," he said.

In season, the pyxie moss carpets the preserve with mounds of white flowers. "It's the only place in Virginia where it grows," Musselman said, "and we've got acres of it."

He ensures that visitors have a multisensory experience, sometimes offering them huckleberries and blueberries to taste, as well as bites of sassafras and wintergreen leaves (though he warns those allergic to aspirin to steer clear of the latter).

Musselman, who is beginning his 50th year at Old Dominion, has sown a love of Blackwater in students such as Flanders. Another disciple

At left: Longleaf and loblolly pines dominate the Blackwater Ecological Preserve. Counterclockwise from bottom left: Lytton John Musselman points out the stump of a longleaf pine that's more than 300 years old; a wintergreen plant in fruit; pyxie moss; a cluster of male longleaf cones; and heartleaf sprouting from the ground.

is graduate student Lauren Heyd, who has studied seedlings and breaks down their biology to visitors.

At their youngest, longleaves "look like tiny tufts of grass," she said, pointing toward one. They can remain in this stage for five or more years, an adaptation unique to longleaf.

A walk through Blackwater with Musselman and his students comes with a history lesson. The longleaf, he said, "is the tree that built Tidewater, but people in Norfolk don't know about it."

From the 1600s through the mid-1800s, the British and Americans extracted the sap from longleaves to make tar, pitch and turpentine. Those so-called naval stores provided the lifeblood for wooden ships, lubricating and preserving the rigging and other parts. The work, visitors are told, often relied on slave labor.

Musselman is no fan of Smokey Bear.

Fire can be *good* for forests, and, in fact, longleaf pines need it to thrive. Using golfball-sized capsules that burst into flames when dropped from drones, a consortium of agencies, including The Nature Conservancy, undertakes a controlled burn about once a year to open the canopy of trees and clear the undergrowth.

The longleaf babies remain unharmed.



The preserve has a cooperative arrangement with its next-door neighbor, the Zuni Hunt Club. Members of the club may hunt for deer on the grounds; in turn, they look after the preserve, help clear the paths after windstorms and provide use of their clubhouse.

"Fire scorches the needles," Heyd said, "but it won't touch the center."

Musselman always leaves Blackwater exuberant and grateful. "I get to work with plants and students," he said. "What could be better?"

For more information about the Blackwater Ecological Preserve or to visit, email lmusselm@odu.edu

See more of the preserve at www.odu.edu/monarchmag

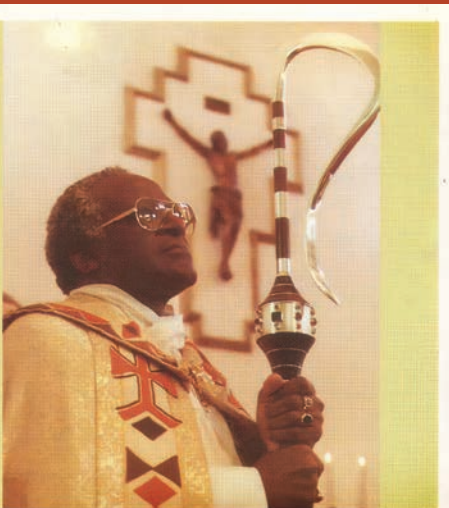
To make a gift in honor of Lytton John Musselman's many years of service to ODU, contact the Office of Development at 757-683-3090.



Lytton John Musselman's research interests include plants of the Bible. His latest book is "Solomon Describes Plants," published by Wipf and Stock. According to the Book of Kings, Solomon "described plant life, from the cedars of Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth from the wall." "If the wisest man who ever lived was a botanist," Musselman says, "I'm in good company."

REMEMBERING A HUMBLE 'VOICE OF JUSTICE'

BY PHILIP WALZER



Old Dominion University's connections with a Nobel Peace Prize winner go back to the early '90s.

That's when Bismarck Myrick, now ambassador in residence at ODU, was consul general in Cape Town, South Africa. He spoke regularly with Archbishop **Desmond Tutu** as the country moved from apartheid to democracy.

That's also when Jennifer Fish, professor of women's studies, took a one-year sabbatical to study reconciliation and social justice in South Africa. She met Tutu at St. George's Cathedral, the Anglican church he led in Cape Town.

Later, from 2006 to 2015, Fish took groups of students on annual three-week service-learning trips to South Africa. They volunteered at clinics, schools and nongovernmental organizations, and met leaders and activists. Almost always, they spoke with Tutu, often at his church or a nearby café.

"I never got the feeling I was with a global figure," Laura Castro '13 said. "He was extremely warm and charming. He embodied justice, love and compassion, and that was the whole theme of my trip."

Myrick, a former ambassador to Lesotho and Liberia, said Tutu's philosophy of "respect for all human beings as equal" matched his open, welcoming personality. "He never demonstrated pretentiousness, and he could easily laugh about things."

Fish said, "When you're with the archbishop, you feel as though you're the only person in the world."

Tutu, who won the Nobel Prize in 1984, died the day after Christmas last year. Here are more remembrances from four Monarchs.



Jennifer Fish observed several sessions of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which Tutu chaired to confront the country's past while providing healing and justice. She later worked closely with a former commissioner.

In 2018, Fish offered a tribute to Tutu at an international conference honoring the commission's work. "He was so gracious and humble, and he laughed ferociously."

That laugh was known worldwide. "It was a contagious laugh," Fish said. "He had an almost innocent, childlike humor. He would always joke with the students."

Tutu, she said, "spoke to issues with such passion and compassion." And his concerns extended beyond racial justice. He was one of the first major religious leaders to argue forcefully for LGBTQ rights, Fish said.

"When students can meet a founder of a movement who made democracy possible, it doesn't get much better than that. I feel ODU was fortunate to have touched this historic moment."

Jennifer Fish is also coordinating ODU's participation in Every Campus a Refuge, a national movement to support refugees. Old Dominion, which is the first public university to join the initiative, is housing a family from Syria on campus.



Bismarck Myrick served as consul general in Durban and Cape Town in the early '90s. Myrick and Tutu socialized and spoke professionally about the state of the country.

“He was fairly critical and complimentary towards all of the various sides in the political process” – even Nelson Mandela, Myrick said.

“And he grasped the shortcomings even of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The perpetrators of apartheid did not see human beings as equal. I think he was blindsided because of his strong belief in humanity,” said Myrick, who was recently appointed vice chair of the board of the National Defense University.

Even when Mandela was in prison, Tutu “was out there participating in demonstrations, talking about the love of God and Jesus and relating that to the cruelty of the apartheid system,” Myrick said. “He got away with that because everyone knew Tutu around the world.”

In such courses as The Politics of Africa and Interpreting the African Past, “I share the values and influences that Archbishop Tutu brought to that setting,” he said. “That kind of resource is invaluable to students who are serious about understanding global events.”



At first, **Laura Castro '13** hesitated to approach Tutu after a service in 2014. But Fish encouraged her: “Go, go to him.”

Tutu made her comfortable from the start. “He just fills the whole place with his presence, his love,” said Castro, founder of Global YNS, which provides translation and interpretation services in Washington.

“I told him a little bit of my experience as an immigrant, and he was listening. There was no sense of time for him. He was in the moment. He gave us his full attention.”

During her trip, Castro said, “I got the extraordinary opportunity to witness the power of community and women-led organizations in South Africa. I cannot tell you how much that impacted my life. I came back to the U.S. not only with professional skills but also with the confidence that there are social justice and social change movements that fully support all human beings, starting with that encounter with Desmond Tutu.”



Not everyone met Tutu at church. During her 2007 visit, **Danyette Fisher '09** saw him at an event at Dance For All, a dancing center for youth in Cape Town. Tutu was a board member.

Fisher, now a nurse educator at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital, recalled him putting on a pair of slippers. “He was dancing around, doing his two-step.” Afterward, “he spoke about the hope and the future of that center and how it would bring that community together.”

When he was done, “He mingled with us. He wasn’t standoffish, thinking he was on this pedestal. He was very down-to-earth. It was just a great moment to meet such a strong voice of justice.”

Fisher called the trip “an eye-opening experience. I feel like I used every emotion. And I got to work in one of the maternity clinics, which made me more culturally aware and solidified my passion for the medical field.”

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU WAS CALLED THE PINK PANTHER BECAUSE OF THE BRIGHT PINK ROBES HE FAVORED, FISH SAID. HE ALSO WAS “A GREAT LOVER” OF MICKEY MOUSE. “HE HAD MICKEY MOUSE ALL OVER HIS HOUSE.”

READ ABOUT KATHY WILLIAMSON’S ENCOUNTER WITH DESMOND TUTU AND THE MEMENTO SHE CHERISHES AT WWW.ODU.EDU/MONARCHMAG



Foster-U: Roy leads others to earn college degree

BY PHILIP WALZER

Melvin Roy is always looking up. Even his memories about living in four foster homes over four years in Richmond play down the negative. “It could have been better, but it wasn’t terrible,” says Roy, who received his bachelor’s degree in human services in May. Some families “didn’t grant me the space I needed to grow or the supports to make sure I could push through to the finish line.” But the experience “changed me for the better,” he reflected.

“Even though I was going through

a really hard time, it made me more empathetic and pushed me to help others who are going through the same thing.”

He started doing that as a teenager, attending and then leading workshops to prepare foster youth for college and adulthood.

When Roy got to Old Dominion University, he wanted to do something bigger. His freshman year, he founded Foster-U.

“Only 3% of foster youths get a college degree. I want to change that. I want to show them what’s possible after high school.”

COVID slowed his plans. But he still incorporated two dozen ODU students without a foster background into volunteer activities, and they assisted programs such as an independent living workshop for foster youth in Norfolk.

In 2020, he received ODU’s Evon-Broderick Award for community service. Roy has spread his influence far beyond campus. During an internship, he drafted a proposal for a government-financed trust fund for foster youth and presented it at a Zoom meeting that included then-First Lady Melania Trump.

And now? He hopes to turn Foster-U into a for-profit organization focused on online mentoring. But he’s got more to do, including a career in politics. Next step: a master’s degree in divinity from Regent University.

On March 26, 2015, Roy was called out of his Spanish class at Richmond Community High School. His principal and a social worker told him he’d be placed in foster care after he issued a complaint about his mother.

Over the next four years, “I had a place to sleep and I was being fed,” he said. “But home life was a roller coaster. I just felt like me and my foster parents weren’t on the same page identifying my needs.”

His grades fell, but he got into ODU.

Roy had visited the campus in seventh grade: “I thought, ‘This is the school for me.’ It was the diversity, the architecture. It was very beautiful, very welcoming.”

In April, Roy organized “March for Our Care,” a walk and fair on Kaufman Mall to promote awareness about foster youth.

He switched majors from political science to criminal justice to human services, which “fit perfectly with everything I had done.”

Outside class, he was vice president of the Student Government Association in 2020–21.

The experience, he said, sharpened his time-management and people skills. “I was managing eight directors from different committees, making sure they were on top of their duties and still staying on top of mine.”

He’d had the idea for Foster-U before he got to ODU, but it germinated at a Sankofa dinner he attended as a freshman. “They were asking people to stand up and say what legacy they wanted to leave at ODU. I thought, ‘This is what I’m going to leave.’”

Roy wants to encourage more foster youth to follow his path to college. He and the club’s members held workshops and helped at such locations as ForKids, a homeless shelter, and Ronald McDonald House Charities of Norfolk.

But “we learned along the way that getting foster youth in activities is a very challenging process because of all the red tape.” And “when COVID hit, it put a damper on it.”

COVID also hit Roy. He contracted the virus in January 2021, when he was living in an apartment in Richmond.

Roy lost his sense of taste and smell; he felt weighed down by headaches and fatigue. For two weeks, “I lay in bed every day and thought I was going to die.” Roy returned to campus last fall and regained his energy.

“Melvin is a remarkable individual who has beaten all odds to achieve his goals,” said Audra Bullock ’96 (M.E. ’97, Ph.D. ’00), president of Tidewater Friends of Foster Care. “He is compassionate, intelligent and a born leader.”

Joy Rios ’98, president of Connect With a Wish, which sponsors programs for foster youth, describes him as “very professional. He’s got great ideas moving forward in what he wants to do. We’re excited to see where his path takes him.”

Some of Roy’s great ideas made it to Washington.

He’s had internships with American Express, FosterClub and the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. He traveled the country talking to foster youth. Even with his extensive knowledge, “It really opened my eyes. So many kids are going through so many different things.”

For Roy, the highlight, in 2020, was writing the proposal for a trust fund for 18- to 21-year-olds. “Once they age out of the system, they might not have money for food or a stable place to stay.”

He appreciated Melania Trump’s interest. “Being on that call with her and her acknowledging us and really listening to us and asking us questions – it was a really nice experience,” Roy said.

He sees both improvements and lingering problems in the foster system. “In Virginia, it’s very decentralized. In one city, a foster youth might have everything he needs, but in another, he’s going through hell and high water.”

Roy wants to go into politics. His goal is the White House. His role model is someone who lived there, but not a president.

“Michelle Obama was the first lady, but the way she carried herself – her grace, her class, her maturity. Even though I’m a man, I want to capture that.”

PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS



Bullock changed jobs so 'they all have a chance to shine'

BY SHERRY DIBARI

Audra Bullock '96 (M.E. '97, Ph.D. '00) never intended to leave her engineering position at NASA.

She had, after all, earned her doctorate in electrical engineering from Old Dominion University, spent six years as a faculty member at the University of Hawaii and worked her way up to mission manager at NASA Langley Research Center.

But one small boy changed everything.

In 2015, Bullock and her husband took in a foster child one month shy of his third birthday.

He changed the way Bullock saw herself.

“Being a foster parent has been the most eye-opening thing I’ve ever done,” she said.

“I am a Type A personality. I want to plan and control everything in my life. But this isn’t a world you can do that. You have to live with ambiguity every day.”

Then he changed what she did.

“I never intended to quit my job at NASA, start a nonprofit and do this for free. But that’s where we are.”

“Where we are” is the small downtown Norfolk office of Tidewater Friends of Foster Care (TFFC), which Bullock founded in 2016 to improve the lives of foster children.

TFFC provides outreach to recruit foster families and offers academic tutoring and extracurricular activities for foster children and youth.

“I decided I needed to take some time and do something in this realm, that these little people were really, really important.”

Even her former adviser champions her career switch.

“Audra has shown an interest for the well-being of others ever since I have known her,” said Amin Dharamsi, professor emeritus of electrical and computer engineering. “This choice to go into a humanitarian endeavor, even while she could have continued with her successful career in science and engineering, shows she has wisdom beyond her years.”

Bullock – a three-time ODU graduate – had been first and foremost an engineer.

She left her faculty job in Hawaii and in 2009 took a position as an electro-optics specialist at NASA Langley Research Center. “I had done my Ph.D. research for NASA, so it was a logical fit,” she said.

As a NASA engineer and mission manager, Bullock worked on space shuttle and International Space Station missions and attended a launch. “It was a highlight of my life to have seen that shuttle launch, sit at mission control and watch the data come in.”

Then came Kaden.

The house was starting to feel empty to Bullock and her husband, Richard Litton. Litton’s three children from a previous marriage were grown; the last was headed to college. The couple still wanted to have children in their lives.

“In Hampton Roads, there are between 750 and 800 children in foster care on a regular basis,” according to the TFFC website. “The vast majority will spend up to two years in foster care.”

Foster care was a natural choice. But it was an eye-opening experience.

“We just assumed that these kids were taken care of, that there were enough foster parents,” she said.

The more Bullock learned about the foster-care system, the more it troubled her.

Only half of foster youth graduate from high school, and only 3% graduate from college. Too many end up homeless, incarcerated or deceased within four years of exiting the system.

“I was unsettled by how easy it is to obtain government resources for spaceborne missions and how hard it is to obtain resources for these little people who are in peril,” she said.

Bullock was already skilled in grant writing, project management and data analysis. So she founded TFFC.

The nonprofit originally served only Norfolk. But the need was so great that it expanded to Chesapeake, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach.

“We have been very lucky with the support of community members who believe in our mission and are now aware,” she said. “That’s the most important thing we do – we give them an insight into the world of foster care, because it’s not what many people think it is. It’s not an easy life at all.”

Foster parents need to go with the flow, she said. “It’s a very dynamic and very emotionally charged endeavor. And if you are not expecting that, or able to handle that, you end up closing your home.”

Children can be plagued by the fear of abandonment. Or the sight of a police officer could trigger a panic attack that a child will be taken from her family again.

Bullock and Litton have adopted Kaden, now 10, and Chantal, 6, who joined their home in 2016.

“Kaden can find joy and happiness anywhere,” she said. “I am so envious of him for that.”

“And Chantal is so charming. Everybody can fall head over heels in love with her. And she’s absolutely brilliant.”

That’s why Bullock started her organization: “to make sure they all have a chance to shine.”

But she’s noticed a troubling trend – “more older kids and multiples in foster care than ever before. There’s been an exponential growth since the beginning of the pandemic.

“While there’s a lot of hope, there’s still a lot of work to be done,” Bullock said. “And the pipeline continually has to be replenished with people who are ready to meet the needs of these kids.”

For information on TFFC, go to tidewaterffc.org

Sherry DiBari is director of communications and marketing for the Batten College of Engineering and Technology.

Bullock was among six recipients of Distinguished Alumni Awards last fall. The others were:

Sylvia Bugg ’92, chief programming executive, PBS

Laura Deaner ’00, chief information security officer, Northwestern Mutual

Johnny Garcia (Ph.D. ’11), founder and CEO of SimIS Inc.

Elza Mitchum, president, C&M Industries

Janice Underwood (Ph.D. ’15), director of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, U.S. Office of Personnel Management



Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears '92 with Gov. Glenn Youngkin and taking the oath of office with (from left) husband Terence, daughters Katia and Janel and retired Judge Richard D. Taylor.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF
LT. GOV. WINSOME EARLE-SEARS' OFFICE

Lt. Gov. Earle-Sears aims for 'the real thing'

BY PHILIP WALZER

Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears '92 – the first Black woman to hold that position in Virginia – says she wouldn't be there if her first experience in politics hadn't been so positive.

It was at Old Dominion University, where she served in the Student Senate.

"I saw some things that needed to be changed from a student's perspective," she said in an interview in February. "I figured the best way to do it was to offer myself up for student senator. That was where I cut my political teeth. It was my first elected office."

In 2001, she was elected to the House of Delegates, becoming the first Black female Republican in the General Assembly. When, after a 20-year absence from politics, she ran for lieutenant governor, "it was the same reason why I ran for Student Senate. I saw some things that needed to change. You can light the candle or curse the darkness. To light a candle is to find a solution."

Earle-Sears draws a straight line from another positive part of her Old Dominion experience to her support of a \$100 million allocation in the recently approved state budget to encourage universities to open laboratory schools.

She recalled dropping off two of her children at what was then ODU's Child Study Center when she went to classes. "Having seen the benefits of the program, where they gained at least a grade or two because of the intensive ideas of a laboratory school, I want that for every student in Virginia."

You won't hear from Earle-Sears the hedging tones of many elected officials. The Washington Post called her style "unfiltered." She puts it a different way.

"I just speak what I think is the truth," she said. "I'm not going to be the typical politician who smiles in your face and doesn't mean you any good. That's not who I am."

"People see the feeds; they're sick and tired of that. If you can't do it, just tell me. Don't pump yourself up and say you're going to try. People are looking for the real thing."



A fierce advocate of the Second Amendment, Earle-Sears spoke at the National Rifle Association's annual meeting in May. Last year, she drew attention beyond Virginia for an ad picturing her carrying a rifle. She later said: "Harriet Tubman carried a gun, and if it was good enough for her, then it's good enough for me."

When she was in the House, she charted her own path, finding success with bills on a range of subjects. One banned cross burnings. She called it the "KKK bill: They hate Black people, they hate Jews, they just certainly hate. We had to fix that." The General Assembly also approved her bill to reform 13 state medical boards.

"We found so many different problems. People told me at the time that I was committing political suicide. But somebody had to do it. If you're always trying to finagle your way to win the next election, you're of no use."

Perhaps education, with an emphasis on school choice, ranks highest on her priority list. In her term in the House, she also got through a bill to loosen charter-school regulations.



Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears, Gov. Glenn Youngkin, Attorney General Jason Miyares and spouses during inauguration day. Earle-Sears' photo in the 2002 House of Delegates yearbook.
PHOTOS COURTESY OF LT. GOV. WINSOME EARLE-SEARS' OFFICE

"Education is what got me where I am," Earle-Sears, 58, said. "I try to tell the children I meet that I really didn't do anything special to get here. If they think I did something extraordinary, they will think it's unattainable. All I did was stay in school and study."

She majored in English at ODU. "It was a good place for me," she said. "They enveloped me at a time when people really weren't embracing the nontraditional student." Earle-Sears also credits

Career Development Services for helping her get a paid internship with Norfolk Southern Corp.

Her non-political jobs have included working as a mechanic for the Marines, leading a prison ministry and women's shelter, and running a plumbing and repair business with her husband. Those, too, have shaped her outlook.

"We don't want to lock people up and throw away the key," she said. "The heinous crimes – yes. I'm not a bleeding heart. But I do believe we can redeem people." The key, once more, is with education.

Her experience as a business owner fueled her frustration with "onerous regulation. All it does is stifle businesses from coming to Virginia. We don't have to cause them to jump through so many hoops."



Her most significant influence is her religious belief. "Everybody has a world view. For me, it's Jesus Christ. That's what gives me hope to continue" – even after her daughter and two granddaughters died in a car accident in Fairfax in 2012.

"Had I not had that hope, I don't think I could have made it," she said. "I would have lost my mind."

Earle-Sears has spoken against the use of critical race theory in schools but in support of teaching about "the good, the bad and the ugly and how do we progress from that?"

In the interview, she recalled coming to America from Jamaica at age 6 with her family. Her father had \$1.75 in his pocket.

"I think there's no place like America. We have a saying in church: I may not be what I'm supposed to be, but I ain't what I used to be. That's America. In fits and starts, she's getting there. She's becoming.

"To see the glass half-empty is to be negative. I don't have time for negativity."



As lieutenant governor, her major role is to preside over the state Senate and break tie votes. "She has worked through the daily calendar of bills with precision," the Post reported, "not hesitating to reach for her gavel when a senator broke decorum."

Her reaction to the frequent references to her "firsts" in Virginia politics: "So you're first at this, first at that. What happens after that? That's what's more important. How are you going to govern? How are you going to serve the people?"



Artist Kim Keever



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KIM KEEVER

BY TERESA ANNAS

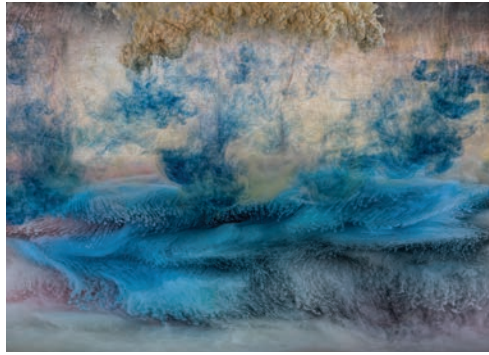
Kim Keever sees his studio as a lab for ongoing experiments. All artists engage in trial and error, but Keever consciously employs scientific principles to develop his latest and most successful work.

“My engineering background has always helped me in making art,” said Keever, who earned a B.S. in thermal engineering at Old Dominion University in 1971 but chose to doggedly pursue a career in art.

He began his four decades in Manhattan as a painter, printmaker and sculptor trying out various styles, from airbrushed realism to dreamy surrealism.

In the late 1990s, he hit on something unique: Pouring pigment into a water-filled 200-gallon fish tank and photographing what happens.

Keever was shocked, then mesmerized, that first time in 1997, as he watched the paint undulate and billow, resembling sped-up



Keever works in a studio – or “tank room” – in his Miami condo. His pieces sell at prices ranging from \$3,500 to \$9,000.



pours his art out

cloud formations or slo-mo fireworks as it moved downward.

His search for a signature approach had ended, though he continued to experiment.

The new style gradually shifted his art career from sputtering to soaring.

In the last decade, he has exhibited internationally and sold hundreds of pieces at prices now ranging from \$3,500 to \$9,000. Several galleries sell his art. One of them, Waterhouse & Dodd of New York and London, also carries work by famous artists such as Pablo Picasso, his idol. In a city with more than 50,000 artists, he

had beaten the odds. He finally was making a living solely from his art.

Brisk sales enabled him to sell his tiny East Village apartment in 2020 and buy an expansive, sleek condo in Miami. Even his tank room has a view of Biscayne Bay. His technique has often been triggered by the hunt for a solution. In the '90s, “I got tired of painting,” he recalled. “I wanted to do something else.”

That “something else” drew from the deep connection to nature he felt as a child at his engineer father’s remote property on the Eastern Shore.

“Once I made a decision to become an artist, it was like do or die,” Keever said. “I told myself if I ended up on the street, at least I could say I lived the life I wanted.”

At first, he funneled that urge into building model landscapes and toyed with ways to photograph them. But the tabletop dioramas, begun in 1991, “didn’t have any atmosphere, and that was bugging me.”

Six years later, he got the idea to place the landscapes in a big tank, fill it with water and pour in paint. That, too, came from his childhood – a memory of his father partly filling a glass with water and then pouring in condensed milk, creating clouds to amuse his son.

His father was demonstrating a physics principle called variable diffusion.

“It looked like what’s happening in the tank now.”

Keever’s engineering background also proved crucial as he brainstormed new ways to disperse pigment into an aquarium.



A graduate course on fluid dynamics certainly came in handy. “That’s exactly what I’m doing now,” he said, because it addresses “how fluid would interact with a wall or a corner.”

Robert Ash, a retired Old Dominion professor and Eminent Scholar of mechanical and aerospace engineering, said that he remembered Keever well, and that he helped the budding artist do experiments to control his paint’s viscosity — that is, its ability to flow.

“We spent an afternoon in my lab, doing a lot of tests,” Ash said. “Kim felt like he owed me, so he baked me a batch of cookies. He had no money then.

“He was a really neat guy, and a very bright person.”

Ash also recalled when Keever told him he was leaving engineering to pursue art full time. He had just one course left to earn his master’s degree in thermal engineering, Ash said. “I tried to persuade him to finish,” but Keever was bent on art.



“Once I made a decision to become an artist, it was like do or die,” Keever said. “I told myself if I ended up on the street, at least I could say I lived the life I wanted.”

He avoided that fate.

By the early 2000s, after countless tank-pour experiments, kudos for Keever came flowing in. Elton John bought several works. Reviewers called the images otherworldly, suggesting a primordial or perhaps post-apocalyptic Earth, and compared the effects to those of the Hudson River School landscape paintings.

He still wasn’t satisfied.

About a decade later, he went abstract — just paint dropped in the water, no landscapes. “First time I tried it, I was like, wow, that works!” The poured pigment might resemble a bulbous pile of dense foam or curling ribbons of gauzy fabric.

Begun in 2013, those were the images that ignited his popularity.

Two years later, Paul Thomas Anderson, the director of the acclaimed movie “Licorice Pizza,” shot a video for singer-songwriter Joanna Newsom in front of Keever’s tank as he dropped in paint.

Also in 2015, the *New Yorker* magazine commissioned him to do a tank-pour photo for a story on seaweed.

Earlier this year, he had 93,000 followers on Instagram.

Keever, who calls art a “beautiful addiction,” has enjoyed an increase in sales during the pandemic. “People are wanting something uplifting and fun and interesting,” says Brooklyn, New York, gallery owner Michelle Tillou, who has carried his art since 2004.

Keever’s work has sold even better during the pandemic, said Michelle Tillou, a Brooklyn, New York, gallery owner who has handled his art since 2004. “I sold one three days ago, and one yesterday, and I have somebody coming tomorrow to look at one. And I have a client I’ve been talking to about a landscape one.”

She sells far more of his abstracts than landscapes. Her guess is that “people are wanting something uplifting and fun and interesting.”

But Keever doesn’t focus on what collectors want. He’s searching for something new, something he hasn’t seen before.

“I just bought some liquid glycerine,” he said in January, hoping it would “keep the paint congealed together longer” so he can take more pictures. Achieving that goal hinges on understanding the relative “specific gravity” of liquids, he said. That principle explains why some substances float and others sink at a given speed.

In the end, though, he relies on his artistic eye to recognize the aesthetic beauty in an image, crop it and print it.

“I call it a beautiful addiction to be an artist.” Of his career, he said, “I’m glad to be where I am. But I’d like to be farther.

“I’m still shooting for a higher rung on the ladder.”

Read more about Keever’s path to success in art at www.odu.edu/monarchmag

*Teresa Annas remembers seeing Keever’s work displayed in the 1970s at Cogan’s, a Norfolk bar. She later featured him in a show on the East Village art scene she curated in 1984 in Virginia Beach. Annas was a staff arts writer for *The Virginian-Pilot* from 1986 to 2014.*

Meet USOA Mrs. Virginia, Lourdes Spurlock '18

BY PHILIP WALZER

Her background:

Spurlock joined the Navy at 17. For six years, she served as a nuclear electrician. After that, she worked for nine years at Newport News Shipbuilding, certifying and testing mechanical and electrical systems on submarines and aircraft carriers.

Her time at ODU:

Spurlock studied mechanical engineering technology, taking in-person and online classes while she worked, tended to her family and was pregnant with her second child. "I was able to balance so much because of my professors," she said. "Everyone wanted me to succeed. You told them your schedule, and they said, 'We'll make it work.'" In particular, Vukica Jovanovic, associate professor and chair of engineering technology, "always supported me any time I had a question in the middle of the night. She's the reason I graduated."

Where she's working:

Last year, she joined Apex Clean Energy in Charlottesville as a compliance manager. "I worked around military ships and nuclear power for 15-plus years. It was time to try something new that would challenge me." She ensures that companies such as Ikea and Starbucks adhere to regulatory standards.

Mentorship:

Spurlock participates in the Big Sisters program and has spoken to K-to-12 students in Virginia, Georgia, New Jersey and Hawaii. "I love seeing their faces light up when I tell them about my career," she said. "When I was little, I never met a female mechanical engineer or a female military veteran." Even now, she said,

"You don't see a lot of engineers who are mama bears. I want to be the role model I always wanted."

Becoming United States of America's Mrs. Virginia:

Spurlock began entering pageants to make friends and boost confidence for job interviews. After four tries, she was named USOA Mrs. Virginia last year and competed in February in Las Vegas for the national crown. Her platform centered on mentoring children. The contest included interview and evening gown segments, but no swimsuit category. Her competitors included "women working in the White House, lawyers, doctors, stay-at-home housewives who run four or five charities."

Her family:

Spurlock, 33, lives in Harrisonburg with her husband, Hal '12, and their children, Donovan, 10, and Nina, 6. "When I'm not working or pageant prepping," she said, "I'm skiing with my family."

Her advice to students:

"Make the best of any situation, and focus on the solutions rather than the obstacles. Know the reason why you want to finish your degree, and keep going."

Her life lesson:

"I was born in the Philippines, and we came to America when I was 4. I couldn't speak English, which was terrifying. My mother always said, 'You don't have to be the smartest or the prettiest person in the room. But if you're kind and someone people want to be around, you'll be OK.'"





PHOTOS BY VICKI CRONIS-NOHE

Space has been his frontier from the start

BY PHILIP WALZER

Eric Ingram '13 was “a big space nerd” when he was a kid.

He devoured movies like “The Fifth Element” and “Independence Day.” He stared at the sky for long stretches. He even had G.I. Joe astronauts.

“I didn’t just want to learn it or look at it,” Ingram, 31, said. “I wanted to be the person to go there and experience it.”

Ingram, who majored in physics, worked at the Federal Aviation Administration for three years, evaluating whether launch technologies met licensing regulations. In 2019, he co-founded SCOUT (SpaceCraft Observe and Understand Things) to address a critical gap in space safety: Most satellites don’t have sensors to detect oncoming objects.

“Spacecraft are flying blind in orbit, almost literally,” Ingram said in a podcast last year. “That increases the threat of collisions with debris or other spacecraft. What SCOUT is doing is working to provide vision and awareness to spacecraft.”

The first satellite equipped with a SCOUT sensor launched in June 2021. A few

months later, Ingram got a brief taste of what it would be like in space.

He went on a two-hour “parabolic flight” from Long Beach, California. It didn’t escape the Earth’s atmosphere, but it simulated short bursts of reduced and zero gravity.

“For the first time in my life,” he said, “I was standing unassisted, which was outside the scope of anything I anticipated.” He described the experience in a New York Times article as “legitimately weird.”

His dream burns stronger than ever. Ingram wants to be one of the first people with disabilities to go up in space.

Ingram molded his education around his dream. At Granby High School in Norfolk, he took nine AP courses, including physics, chemistry and computer science.

At Old Dominion, he got a D-minus in his first physics class. But that, he said, was because “I was discovering parties.” He got a lot better.

Charles Sukenik, professor and chair of physics, calls Ingram “one of the most enthusiastic and driven physics



PHOTO COURTESY OF ZERO G CORPORATION AND AL POWERS

majors we have had in decades. It was an absolute pleasure to work with him because he was simultaneously excited about his projects, fearless about moving forward and clever in solving problems.”

Ingram gained practical experience co-founding a chapter of Students for the Exploration and Development of Space, or SEDS, which he led for two years and grew to 75 members.

As he would with other pursuits, Ingram also took on a national leadership role, serving as the chapter expansion manager. “It helped me get into the space industry and navigate it better,” he said. “I learned a ton about what different companies were doing.”



Eric Ingram had to work hard to persuade his parents to let him play wheelchair rugby when he was a teenager.

First, they said no. “Then they wanted me to wear a helmet,” he recalled. “But I wore them down.”

Ingram helped establish Virginia’s first team, the East Coast Crippleers, in 2005 when he was 15. He served as captain for eight years.

“The wheelchairs are battering rams that take the brunt of it,” Ingram said. He discounted the injuries he’s suffered along the way: “A lot of jammed fingers, little cuts and bruises, only a couple of concussions.”

He now plays for Medstar NRH United in the Washington area, which is ranked 20th in the nation.

For Ingram, the games relieve stress. “I’m able to turn into a bit of a crazy person, but in a controlled manner.”

He’s also been active behind the scenes, serving as president of the U.S. Wheelchair Rugby Association from 2016 to 2020. Under his watch, he said, the organization achieved the highest surplus in its 30-year history.

Ingram has a relatively rare disease—Freeman-Sheldon Syndrome. He underwent more than two dozen corrective surgeries as a child.

His symptoms include club feet, scoliosis and unusually shaped joints. “I can’t move my legs much,” Ingram said. His fingers also have minimal flexibility, though he works out with 25-pound dumbbells.

Ingram stays active. He co-founded a wheelchair rugby team as a teenager and now plays on a team in the Washington area. He also earned a blue belt in jiu-jitsu at ODU.

Ingram has fought stereotypes and diminished expectations, such as the time at a restaurant when a waitress asked his wife, Andrea Jensen, a federal geologist, for his order.

At work, “If I’m able to seize the dialogue early on, that dispels it. Talking is probably one of my best strengths.” And, along with his analytical skills, it’s been crucial to his company’s success.

“As CEO,” Ingram said, “I have to be able to accurately and succinctly describe what we’re doing, whether it’s to an investor, a highly technical engineer or a general from the Space Force.”

Ingram lays out the problem in space: About 6,500 satellites and other objects are in orbit, but that number could be 40 times higher in 10 years. Space traffic is now monitored from the ground with radar and optical telescopes. But “adding more ground stations is not going to be a foolproof solution.”

SCOUT has two answers: First, a sensor — “It looks like a pair of binoculars with a small computer attached to the back” — that can be mounted on a spacecraft.

SCOUT also is developing a satellite the size of a shoebox equipped with the sensor. Ingram sees it acting as a space traffic controller, with the capacity “to develop the equivalent of a Google street view of space.”

Ingram said his products provide an additional plus: transparency. “There are a lot of things happening in space that we don’t have good knowledge of now.”

SCOUT, which has four full-time and six part-time employees, was named Startup of the Year in 2021 by Established, a national business consulting firm. It has received \$200,000 in grants and awards, including \$75,000 from the Virginia Innovative Partnership Corp., formerly known as the Center for Innovative Technology.

Its first grant — \$15,000 — came from ODU’s Virginia Institute for Spaceflight and Autonomy. The grant, which supports promising new ideas, went through a highly competitive process, said John Costulis, the institute’s deputy director.

“Eric and the team did an outstanding job with their proposal, and the fact that he is an alumnus was an added benefit.”

Orbit Fab, which seeks to deploy refueling stations in space, installed one of Ingram’s SCOUT-Vision systems on a tanker last summer. CEO Daniel Faber had worked with Ingram before, hiring him as an intern when Faber ran Deep Space Industries.

“He was young and keen and smart,” Faber said. In SCOUT, Ingram has built “a really good team. With Eric’s background and their experience working with technology, they’re proving their chops.”

Ingram said: “It’s been an uphill battle, but the last nine months have been good to us. I hope the momentum can continue.”

At first, Ingram didn’t apply for a spot on the zero-gravity flight.

He was already a board member of AstroAccess, which sponsored the mission, and didn’t want to create a conflict of interest. But the leaders of the organization heavily encouraged him.

Ingram rode on the flight with 11 people with disabilities — five others with mobility issues, four vision-impaired and two hearing-impaired. The plane, which flew 40,000 feet up, executed 15 parabolas, approximating either Martian, lunar or zero gravity. Each lasted 20 to 25 seconds.

Martian gravity, Ingram said, “felt mostly normal.” The lunar bursts gave him the first experience of standing.

“It was kind of surreal,” he said. “I pushed off the ground and went from lying to standing. I thought, ‘Can I actually stand?’ It just blew my mind.”

He felt the full effect with zero gravity. He rose, his head just inches from the plane’s ceiling. “It was really weird. I had the feeling of my clothing not having any weight. I was standing, and my shirt was around me, not on me.”

One of the key tests was whether the passengers could return to their spots on individual mats within a specified time. Ingram, using handholds, did it all but one time.

Now he’s more eager than ever to go up into space — but not everywhere.

“I’m not a big Mars fan boy,” Ingram said during a recent podcast. “I’m more moon-focused.”



Ingram applauds entrepreneurs like Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk for expanding the possibilities for space travel. But he says they’re getting the publicity all wrong.

The focus shouldn’t be on big-name passengers, but on “the benefits to society,” such as space-based solar power, biomedical research and even cancer treatments developed in space.

“We need to be looking at the infinite resources in space, so we don’t have to rely on the finite resources on Earth. A lot of that stuff doesn’t get talked about.”

He's well-equipped to lead Paul D. Camp

BY PHILIP WALZER



Corey McCray (Ph.D. '15) probably couldn't come up with a better resume for his job as community college president.

He's been, among other titles, a Navy veteran, high school teacher, director of a regional career and technical center, executive vice president at Tidewater Community College and associate vice chancellor in the Virginia Community College System (VCCS).

"Every one of those things provides me with the experience to relate to the typical community college student and the preparation to lead around workforce and academic initiatives," said McCray, who's been president of Paul D. Camp Community College since March 2021.

Even his past as a high school football and wrestling coach helps. "How to guide your campus through success is the same skill set you use on the football field or the wrestling mat."

Charles Sanders, chair of Paul D. Camp's local board, said: "Everybody I talk to on the staff is really excited about him. He's

open to hearing new ideas. He's got a lot of energy, and he's not afraid to get out and talk to people."

Sanders said McCray has already shortened the time between the first contact with an applicant and when he or she begins classes. McCray, he said, also is analyzing data to increase retention.

"I want to enroll more students," McCray, 52, said. "But do you know what I want even more? Making sure those students are successful and complete their education on time."

McCray was twice a student at ODU. In 1996, he earned his teaching certification in the Troops to Teachers program. He returned in 2012 to pursue his doctorate in higher education leadership. "There were times I asked myself: Why am I putting myself through this? But I had the benefit of being supported by my family, the faculty and my classmates."

McCray singled out the chair of his dissertation committee, Karen Sanzo, a professor of educational foundations

and leadership: "She wasn't there to make the landing soft. She was there to push me to go back and dig a little deeper, to challenge my assumptions."

Paul D. Camp, based in Franklin, has 2,400 students and 120 employees. "Here's the thing that's unique about Camp: When I walk out of the office, I know the people in the community by name and occupation," McCray said. "It's such a hometown kind of environment."

Paul D. Camp is also one of the few community colleges with an athletics program. Expanding sports, he said, could help recruit more out-of-state, and even international, students.

He also plans to broaden allied health programs and tighten connections with public school systems and universities.

"I think I'm the luckiest president in the VCCS," he said. "The people I work with are passionate about what they do. I'm fortunate to be surrounded by a community of faculty, staff and students who are committed to success."



State's teacher of the year blends

PHOTOS BY KRISTEN ZEIS

creativity

and

evaluation

BY JANINE LATUS

Nineteen second-graders squeeze into a chalk circle on the floor.

"I want you to stand still, like a statue," says their teacher, Daphne Fulson '10, '13 (M.S.Ed. '22).

Her students freeze.

"What are we?" Fulson asks.

"A solid!" the kids yell.

"That's right. We're packed so close together we can barely move!"

Fulson asks half of the students to return to their seats. She tells those still in the circle to wave their arms.

"Wiggle a little," she says. "What are we? A liquid! We can move a little bit now. Interesting!"

Fulson, who in December was named Virginia Teacher of the Year, is introducing her students at Chesapeake's Portlock Primary School to the states of matter. She incorporates as many approaches as she can, going far beyond worksheets and lectures, using the teaching strategy called Universal Design for Learning.

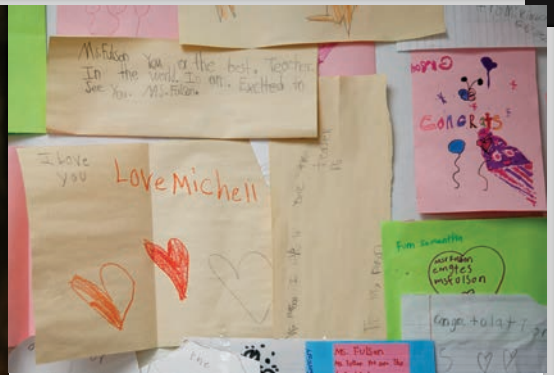
"UDL is my jam," Fulson says. "It allows kids to learn in the way that's best for them."

Some get concepts as soon as they hear them.

Others learn by reading. Most kids this age, though, are kinesthetic-tactile learners. Knowledge sticks best when they engage their bodies, which is why she's having them act out the states of matter.



“You can’t create a cookie-cutter lesson and then expect it to roll out to every kid, and then get upset when it doesn’t work,” Fulson says.



Later, she once more splits the class into two groups. In one, students glue beads into circles representing the three states – thick clumps for solids, half as many for liquids and just a few for gases.

Fulson leads the other half in eagerly rubbing their hands together. She counts down, then instructs them to hold tight around a thermometer – “Which way is the temperature going?”

Now put a baggie with an ice cube between your palms, she tells them.

“What’s happening?”

“It’s turning into a liquid.”

“And why? Look at your thermometer!”

“Heat!”

The 30-minute activity takes tremendous in-class energy, as well as two hours of teacher preparation. Then there’s Fulson’s incessant assessment to ensure all the activities meet Bloom’s Taxonomy of teaching – receiving information, applying it by interacting with it physically, and synthesizing it by creating something with the knowledge.

“You can’t create a cookie-cutter lesson and then expect it to roll out to every kid, and then get upset when it doesn’t work,” Fulson says.

Her enthusiasm and constant evaluation of each lesson plan – along with her school leadership roles – lifted her above thousands of Virginia teachers to stand beside then-Gov. Ralph Northam in October and shakily read each

of her students’ names during her acceptance speech. She’d promised them she would.

“I said, ‘Y’all, if I win this, I’m going to say hi to all y’all on TV,’” she says. “I couldn’t not say my kids’ names and tell them how much I love them.”

The award has led to a slew of honors, including doing the coin toss at the Norfolk State University homecoming game.

Fulson became a teacher in large part because of her own second-grade teacher, Mrs. Townes at James Hurst Elementary in Portsmouth, who made her feel like she could do anything.

“She asked the human questions: Are you happy? Are you safe?” Fulson says.

So Fulson has her own students gaze into a mirror before they walk out the door and say something positive about themselves. Suggestions – such as “I am a problem solver,” “I am a leader,” “I am kind” – are printed on purple, pink and green paper and taped onto the mirror’s frame.

“We are so excited and so proud of her,” says Portlock’s principal, Heather Brusso ’99 (M.A. ’01, Ed.D. ’04). “She has defined what we like to see in the classroom, which is really working on the whole child. Her ability to connect, inspire and praise students just warms my heart. As an ODU grad myself, it feels good to see her focusing on things that were taught when I was there.”

Fulson, 34, was a double major in communication and Spanish education, with a double minor in social welfare and English. As soon as she graduated, she headed out to see the world, starting in Costa Rica, where she lived with a family whose matriarch – Mama Tica – knew fewer than a dozen words of English. Fulson quickly became fluent in Spanish.

She later studied Spanish linguistics at Universidad Veritas and started a domestic violence prevention program. On breaks she traveled to Nicaragua, Guatemala and Panama. She taught in Peru before teaching bilingual second grade with Teach For America from 2015 to 2017 in Texas.

She recently received her third degree from ODU – a master’s in educational leadership, which could be the springboard for her dream job.

“The position I’ll have hasn’t been created yet,” she says. “There’s no title for it.”

She wants to reach far more students by creating mentoring programs for teachers that promote Universal Design for Learning, positive relationships with students and their families, and educational equity through anti-racist teaching.

Fulson is already a leader among faculty. Her many roles include Big Sisters volunteer, a Spanish-to-English volunteer translator and co-chair of the school’s math and STEAM nights.

And now, she’s Virginia Teacher of the Year.

Parents told Fulson that their kids jumped up and down and cheered when she won, that they felt like superstars when they heard their names on TV and knew others around the world were listening.

Just as she had promised.

Janine Latus credits her high school English teacher, Cheryl Lee, with shaping her into a writer. Watching Fulson work reminded her how much energy teachers invest into changing lives.



Verlander goes the distance as Fox analyst

BY HARRY MINIUM '77

It was a tough conversation. Ben Verlander had moderate success pitching and playing in the outfield for two years. But Old Dominion baseball Coach Chris Finwood told him, “You’re not going to get drafted by a major league team doing both. You need to pick one and excel at that.”

That short talk changed Verlander’s life. He chose the outfield.

Today, he’s a baseball analyst for Fox Sports Digital who also hosts a podcast called “Flippin’ Bats.” Although it’s just a year old, it’s the sixth most popular baseball podcast in the United States and No. 1 in Japan, which reveres Verlander because he was an early advocate of Shohei Ohtani, the pitcher/outfielder for the Los Angeles Angels.

“I’ll always credit my career” to Finwood, Verlander said. “If we hadn’t had that conversation, I wouldn’t be where I am.”

After taking Finwood’s advice, Verlander hit .367, drove in 50 runs in 2013 and was named a third-team All-American. He was drafted in the 14th round by the Detroit Tigers, where

his older brother, Justin, was a Cy Young Award-winning pitcher.

Verlander played five seasons in the Tigers organization. He never made it to the majors, although he did face his brother once in spring training. The younger Verlander knocked the first pitch over the right field fence.

Brothers being brothers, Justin kicked the dirt in disgust and wouldn’t look at Ben.

Ben is 6-foot-4 and blessed with boyish good looks. He’s articulate and enthusiastic and has deep knowledge of baseball.

“I never fell out of love with the game, which is easy to do when you’ve played it your whole life and your career comes to an end,” he said.

“I knew baseball was my passion in life. I knew I wanted to talk about baseball and thought I could be good at it, but I didn’t know how to get into it.”

After he worked for an event management company outside Richmond, Verlander’s agent got him a gig co-anchoring a watch party for the 2020 World Series.

He did so well, Fox offered him a job and he moved to L.A.

At the age of 30, he is a major voice for America’s national pastime.

He has amassed almost 100,000 Twitter followers while remaining unabashedly positive. During the Major League Baseball lockout, he declined to criticize the players or owners, instead tweeting his hopes that the two sides would come to an agreement.

He breaks news only when it involves his brother – for instance, tweeting about Justin’s \$25 million deal with the Houston Astros last year.

Verlander mentions the Monarchs on Twitter and his podcasts. “Even when I was going through hard times in the Tigers organization, I know I had ODU fans,” he said.

“I can’t begin to tell you how much that school means to me. I wouldn’t be here, I wouldn’t have the career I have, if it wasn’t for ODU.”

As of mid-June, Justin Verlander had an 8-2 record, with a 1.94 ERA.

Harry Minium '77 is senior executive writer at Old Dominion.

'Clubbie' lays bare the ugly side of the minors

BY HARRY MINIUM '77

Greg Larson (M.F.A. '17) knew he'd never make it as a professional baseball player.

So in 2012, after graduating from Winthrop University in South Carolina, he decided to do the next best thing – take a job as the clubhouse attendant, or “clubbie,” with the Aberdeen Ironbirds, a Class-A affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles in Maryland.

Ah, the crack of the bat hitting a ball, the smell of popcorn and hot dogs, the roar of the crowds and the thrill of hanging out in the locker room.

The reality was far darker.

“They were making about \$1,200 per month,” he said. “You had four guys living in an apartment.

“And they weren't paid in the offseason. It was a rude awakening for me.”

Two weeks into his job, Larson began taking copious notes. The result: “Clubbie: A Minor League Baseball Memoir,” published by the University of Nebraska Press in April 2021. Library Journal called it a “well-written, realistic, and necessary addition to current baseball literature.”

The book is full of compelling stories, both sad and amusing. Larson lays out in painful detail the torturous breakup with his girlfriend, who couldn't understand why Larson, a college grad, talented writer and smart guy, was working as a clubbie for poverty wages.

He washed and laid out all uniforms, jock straps included. He was instructed to be

stingy in handing out equipment. He collected money from players for locker room snacks. He charged them more than he needed. He was expected to make a profit, but he still feels guilty about it.

When players were cut, Larson says, not only were their dreams shattered; many had no college degrees, no money saved and no clue what to do next. One veteran player compared playing minor league ball to the lottery: You lose every day until you run out of money.

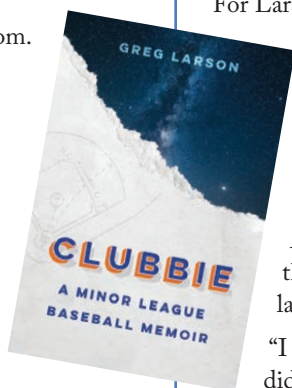
For Larson, a highlight in his first season was warming up the right fielder and taking batting practice. Against his better judgment, he stayed for a second. “As awful as minor league baseball is, it's addictive,” he said.

At ODU, his 247-page thesis was the first draft of “Clubbie.” But it lacked his own experiences.

“I think that unconsciously, I didn't want to deal with the really challenging parts of what I experienced, including the demise of my relationship with my girlfriend. But I had to include everything to make it compelling.”

Larson, who spoke at ODU's Literary Festival last fall, lives in Austin, Texas. He's writing his first novel, tentatively titled “Tormenta,” loosely based on his experience quarantining with a woman he'd just met. Larson is also co-founder of Self-Publishing Sherpa, a ghostwriting and publishing company that specializes in debut books by business leaders.

“Clubbie” is available in audiobook, hardcover and Kindle, and additional content can be viewed at clubbiebook.com



Larson (middle row, far right) worked as clubhouse attendant for the Aberdeen Ironbirds.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GREG LARSON

Focus got Stills to the top at MEAC

BY TOM ROBINSON

Sonja Stills '93 greeted her appointment in January as the first female commissioner of an HBCU Division I athletic conference with a mixture of modesty and surprise.

"I really like being in the background; I'm a good No. 2," says Stills, who was elevated from chief of staff/chief operating officer of the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC), a 51-year-old union of eight historically Black colleges and universities based in Norfolk.

"I really never saw myself sitting in this seat and having eight bosses. I'm very humbled."

Perhaps the secret to her steady rise during two decades at the MEAC is staying strictly on task, whatever the task might be.

"I always planted myself where I was and did the job I was hired to do," Stills says. "I never asked for promotions. Everything kind of came because I was focused on the job at hand."

Stills, 52, ascended at an especially challenging time for college sports. Waves of conference realignment have roiled the NCAA, as have new rules regarding student-athlete benefits and transfers. The MEAC has lost five members since 2018, but Stills says her eight member schools are committed to one another and to expansion, one of her main goals as commissioner.

And she says she is hopeful that recently raised awareness of HBCUs will translate into meaningful partnerships for the MEAC.

"Everybody's suddenly on the HBCU train," says Stills, who previously led the MEAC's branding, marketing and esports efforts, "but we're looking for corporate partners who are going to do impact investing and not just drop money to say they assisted HBCUs."

As a student, Stills would not have imagined her influential role in college sports.

After high school in Newport News, she had to leave ODU as a sophomore because of her grades. Stills returned to ODU a year later, switching her major from computers to counseling, with her eye on becoming a director of student activities. She credits academic counselors with "helping me find my balance."

She wasn't an athlete at ODU, but while earning a master's degree at Hampton University, she fell into the fairly new field of athletic academic support. That led to full-time work for Hampton Athletic Director Dennis Thomas, who brought Stills along when he became MEAC commissioner in 2002. Thomas endorsed her again when he retired in December.

"Sonja has always demonstrated vision and a passion for student-athlete achievement," Thomas said in a statement through the conference. "I'm confident she will lead the MEAC to its next level of success."

Stills attributes much of her success to her time at Old Dominion.

"People talk about my Hampton HBCU connection, but my foundation is ODU," says Stills. "I needed to be at ODU. It was the best experience of my life."

Tom Robinson, a freelance writer in Williamsburg, is commissioner of a fantasy golf league.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MEAC





Strausbaugh (far right) during filming of "Marathon"

He races for laughs in 'Marathon'

BY JOE GARVEY

Keith Strausbaugh '07 (M.A. '09) still can't get over being "guilt-tripped" by his mother and physical education teacher into trying out for the cross-country team in high school in Virginia Beach.

"Back then, I thought runners were nuts," he said. "Because they are."

Strausbaugh got back at all of them, with a long stride of humor.

"Marathon," a mockumentary that Strausbaugh co-directed and co-wrote, was released last year.

A lot of people got the jokes. The movie has an 88% audience score on Rotten Tomatoes.

"The world of marathon running," Strausbaugh said, is "perfect for satire and parody – big personalities, weird outfits and a variety of goals and motivations. It's also a community that takes themselves way too seriously at times, so we thought it'd be fun to twist the knife. Or bluntly stab."

The film, made on a shoestring \$55,000 budget, is a fictional documentary that tracks five amateur runners as they train for a

marathon in the desert. One mistakenly loads up on crabs, not carbs, the night before the race. Another, seeking to break the marathon record for a runner dressed as a fruit, runs in a banana costume – only to find another entrant dressed as a banana, sponsored by Dole.

Strausbaugh received his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Old Dominion University and returned for the master's program in professional writing. Along the way, he took a screenwriting class from Robert Arnett, now an associate professor emeritus of communication and theatre arts.

"Screenplays typically call for terse, punchy diction and snappy dialogue, which I found aligned well with my writing style," Strausbaugh, 36, said.

A screenplay he later wrote won Best Comedy at the Gotham Screen International Film Festival in New York. To further polish his skills, Strausbaugh received an M.F.A. in the screenwriting program at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas.

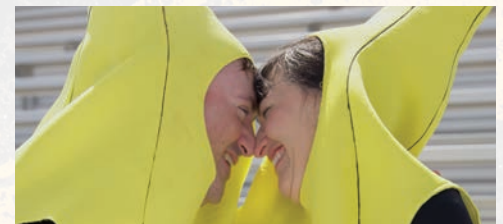
Strausbaugh, who lives in Pittsburgh, and his "Marathon" partner, Anthony Guidubaldi, are

seeking financing for a new venture, "Lambo." Set at a "down-and-out Las Vegas car dealership," it follows 16 characters "who place their hand on a Lamborghini; the last person standing wins it," he said.

"Let the bidding war begin."

"Marathon" can be seen on Prime Video, Apple TV or Vudu.

Joe Garvey is a public relations and marketing specialist at ODU.



Strausbaugh ended up running cross-country all four years of high school and was captain and MVP for two of those years – "completely against my will and better judgment." But he's never run a marathon.



Farewell,

BY PHILIP WALZER

Sometimes Cecelia “Cee Cee” Tucker is still stunned when she stops at 49th Street and Hampton Boulevard.

“I can’t believe what I’m seeing,” Tucker said. “All the Black kids going to ODU. That was definitely not the case when I came here.”

In the past 30 years, the percentage of undergraduates who are students of color has jumped from 21% to 54%. “I didn’t do that,” Tucker said. “The school’s reputation did that.”

But she’ll take “some of the credit.”

Tucker, 83, retired in June after 31 years in community relations. She seemed to be at every event and know every personage in Hampton Roads, from politicians to pastors.

The arc of her life mirrors the country’s sometimes zigzag journey to integration.

As a girl, Tucker had to use colored bathrooms and fountains. While attending Virginia Union University, she was shoved, spat at and called the n-word at a sit-in for integration in Richmond.

Virginia barred Blacks from attending its graduate schools but paid for them to go out of state. So Tucker earned her master’s degree in biology education at Michigan State – for free.

After working primarily in education and with nonprofits, Tucker was hired in 1991 as assistant to ODU President James V. Koch for community relations.

“ODU had the reputation of being racist – I knew that – but he wanted to change all of that,” she said. “And I thought, ‘This is something I could help do.’ I bought into his vision to bring the community together.”

Tucker launched a program for youths, particularly in nearby Lambert’s Point, offering education, recreation and jobs. She ensured audiences for lectures and other events were diverse. On recruiting trips, she approached Black parents to encourage them to consider ODU.

Now, she said, “We don’t have to sell African American parents and students. They have so many good experiences here.”

Koch calls her “one of the most important individuals in Old Dominion’s history.

Cee Cee was transformational – an engine behind moving the institution from an almost entirely white student body into the diverse, integrated University we see today.”

In May, Tucker became ODU’s first recipient of the Presidential Medallion for Distinguished Service.

Tucker spent most of her childhood in South Hill, attending all-Black schools. Her father, a principal, and mother, a second-grade teacher, instilled their belief in the power of education. Tucker was her high school’s valedictorian.

Her father also sought to protect her, as best he could, from the stinging needles of racism. He forbade her from going to the local theater, where she could sit only in the balcony. He counseled her against becoming a doctor, thinking it an impossible path for a Black woman. So she taught high school biology.

Tucker spent most of her teaching career at Booker T. Washington High School in Norfolk. She married Dr. B.J. Tucker, a family physician, in 1965. Two years later, she left education to raise three girls.

In the early ’80s, Tucker began volunteering and working for nonprofits. She raised money for Norfolk Community Hospital. She helped establish the Urban League of Hampton Roads – “I fell hard for that organization” – and served as acting director.

Tucker moved from board member to acting director of the Hunton YMCA, the nation’s second-oldest Black Y.

That’s when she got the call from Koch.



Tucker (from left) attending a Kwanzaa celebration at Webb University Center in the early 2000s, with actress Ruby Dee and students in the '90s, dressed as the Tin Man reading to Larchmont Elementary School students in 2009 and with students from the Lambert's Point summer program in the early 2000s.

Cee Cee!

After she took the job, friends and colleagues called her a traitor. "They told me, 'They're going to use you.'" Tucker warned Koch: "If I find that to be the case, I will resign on the spot."

She never did. "He gave me a platform to work from," Tucker said.

Under her leadership, the Lambert's Point summer program restored ODU's relationship with a neighborhood that previously saw the University as a land grabber uninterested in its welfare.

"People started calling me: 'Can my grandson get in?' The president and the General Assembly continued to increase my budget, so that increased opportunities for young people."

The program, which was later taken over by the City of Norfolk, has benefited hundreds of children.

Tucker's contributions stretch beyond Lambert's Point. For years she arranged campus tours for African American leaders. Tucker organized breakfasts to introduce business, faith and organizational leaders to President Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D. And she helped land speakers and honorary degree recipients including "Hidden Figures"

mathematician Katherine Johnson and professor and PBS host Henry Louis Gates Jr.

Tucker's conversation is sprinkled with the names of Hampton Roads dignitaries: U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott. Dr. L.D. Britt, vice dean and chair of surgery at Eastern Virginia Medical School. Gilbert Bland, president and CEO of the Urban League.

"It's good when you know people in high places," she said in an understatement.

To ODU's benefit, "I don't have any problems talking to any person," including governors, Tucker said. "We're all alike. They have good days; they have bad days. They put their clothes on in the morning the same way I do."

Despite the progress she's seen, Tucker is still sometimes the only African American at an event or on a board. "That is not easy," she said.

Racism hasn't been extinguished. But she believes "we're going to get past this. The truth will always prevail."

To contribute to the Cecelia Tucker Scholarship Fund, go to www.odu.edu/about/support-odu/foundations/educational

IN PRAISE OF TUCKER

"Many individuals work a lifetime and are unable to build the networks and maintain the connections that Cee Cee has. It is truly her life's work and what sets her apart from others. She cares, connects and inspires others. And she does so with elegance and grace!"

— President Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D.

"Her impact on the University has been nothing less than huge. She acted as a much-needed superb, credible spokesperson for the University externally and often served as a mother-away-from-home for hundreds of students on campus."

— President Emeritus James V. Koch, Ph.D.

"Her network is endless, and, because of this, she has left an indelible mark. From her work to restore the University's relationship with Lambert's Point to her efforts with the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, she was known as the face of ODU."

— Velvet Grant, special assistant to the president

"Cee Cee learned life's calling very early in her career – to serve communities, make a difference and impact lives. She models the importance of kindness, civility and respect daily. Not only did she find her path; she brought young and old alike to travel with her, and they reached the same destination – a community."

— Karen Meier, assistant vice president for community engagement

"Cecelia Tucker has always been involved in the community, her family and her church, and she's been a blessing. She knows everybody who's doing something positive in Hampton Roads. Cecelia was an expert at bringing people together for good. I think there will be a void at Old Dominion with her absence."

— The Rev. Anthony C. Paige, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church Lamberts Point and former secretary of ODU's Board of Visitors

"If you want to make a contact with somebody in the African American or white community, she knows them or they know her. She's a powerful woman. Every meeting we attended, if there was ever any slight to the African American community, she let people know that was inappropriate."

— Community activist Dr. Barry Einhorn



Pollock, in back row, wearing glasses and a tie, with ODU's Human Relations Council, and in his University office. (ODU Archives)

Pollock pushed for integration in Colonial Place

BY AMBER KENNEDY

Attending the 1963 March on Washington converted Norman Pollock into an activist.

“It touched the conscience of many of us fence-sitting liberals and caused us to get down off the fence on the side of action,” he later recalled.

The following year, he started teaching at Old Dominion University and began pushing for change on and off campus. Pollock, a professor emeritus of history who developed a reputation as a forceful advocate for integration, died in October. He was 88.

In the classroom, “He was always a great teacher,” said Peter Stewart, a professor of history who shared an office with him.

Pollock was also tough. Those who arrived late to class encountered a locked door, and students had to work hard for an A. “If you got a B-minus, you were probably doing pretty well,” Stewart said.

Outside the classroom, he served as faculty sponsor of the Human Relations Council, a group organized by the few Black students to provide “a way of feeling more attached

to the University.” And he pushed colleagues like Stewart to get involved in civil rights activity in the community.

In 1964, Pollock and Stewart joined colleagues at Norfolk State University for a demonstration in downtown Norfolk to commemorate the first anniversary of the murder of Medgar Evers. The next year, they marched in support of integrating the downtown YMCA.

“He was pretty set on getting something achieved,” Stewart said. “Norman had strong views of right and wrong, and people listened to him.”

Perhaps nowhere more so than the Colonial Place neighborhood, where he lived from 1964 to 2001. When white families began moving out as Blacks were moving in, Pollock jumped to action.

“Even as many of his neighbors fled to Virginia Beach, Norman began a one-man campaign to recruit colleagues, touting big houses, modest prices and convenience to campus,” said a 2015 pamphlet recalling his contributions.

In an interview for ODU’s archives in 1999, Pollock said, “We created a committee and tried to persuade whites to accept change. We had to persuade real estate interests to bring in white families. Real estate was a very segregated business. We made a multi-pronged effort with schools, with real estate, with the advertising of Black property in *The Virginian-Pilot*.”

Artemis Stoll, co-author of the book “Colonial Place and Riverview: One Hundred Years of History,” said: “It’s important to recognize what a trailblazer Norm Pollock was in terms of not allowing our neighborhood to succumb to racially driven, narrow-minded ideals. He and his fellow committee members had a vision for Colonial Place and Riverview to move forward positively, embracing inclusion and diversity.”

Pollock, who retired in 1998, summed up his involvement in the ODU interview: “We seized the moment. We made it work. It’s nice for a historian to know he got it right.”

Amber Kennedy is ODU’s director of news and media relations.

Time to take a tough stand against 'China, Inc.'

BY SHAOMIN LI

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) runs China like a giant corporation. I call this model of operation China, Inc. Living and working are not rights but privileges granted by the CCP. State-owned firms are business units or subsidiaries, private firms are joint ventures, and foreign firms are franchisees of the party. The party leader acts as the CEO of China, Inc., which has the agility of a firm and the resources of a state.

The CCP identifies certain industries as high priorities. The party-state then mobilizes all resources to protect and develop these industries, which quickly realize scale economies, lower unit costs and, eventually, dominate the world market, hurting other countries. Examples include electric vehicle batteries, solar panels and high-speed rail.

Emboldened by its success, the CCP has taken an increasingly repressive domestic and internationally aggressive stance. It rejects democracy, challenges international law and order, and undermines the governance systems of the world's democracies. Now the question is: How can we protect our democracies from the CCP?

The only way is to form an alliance, demanding the party make meaningful changes toward respecting human rights, the rule of law and fair and open markets.

China relies on the world's democracies more than vice versa, because an isolated dictatorship degenerates into infighting. Therefore, democracies should stand firm in their demands and adopt a "tit-for-tat, delink-ready strategy." Democracies must be ready to drastically reduce links with the Chinese economy.

The process will not end in complete delinking. In the first stage, the democracies push the CCP to make changes; the CCP refuses and retaliates. In the second, the democracies raise the pressure and begin the process of delinking, isolating China. Realizing the democracies are serious and fearing isolation, China should begin to make significant changes to abide by the rule of law.

Former President Trump moved in the right direction by using tariffs as a weapon to demand China stop its unfair and predatory trade practices. His mistake was to confront China alone, without building an alliance of democratic countries.

President Biden has begun constructing that alliance. However, his administration categorically rules out seeking meaningful structural changes in China, such as establishing the rule of law and allowing the free flow of information.

Avoiding dealing with these hard issues is shortsighted. If we keep doing business as usual with China, we will be in a much weaker position when China puts more resources into projecting its power globally. And that will leave tougher decisions to the next generation.

Shaomin Li is a professor and Eminent Scholar in the Department of Management. He received the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's Outstanding Faculty Award in 2008. His 19th book, "The Rise of China, Inc.: How the Chinese Communist Party Transformed China into a Giant Corporation," was recently published by Cambridge University Press.

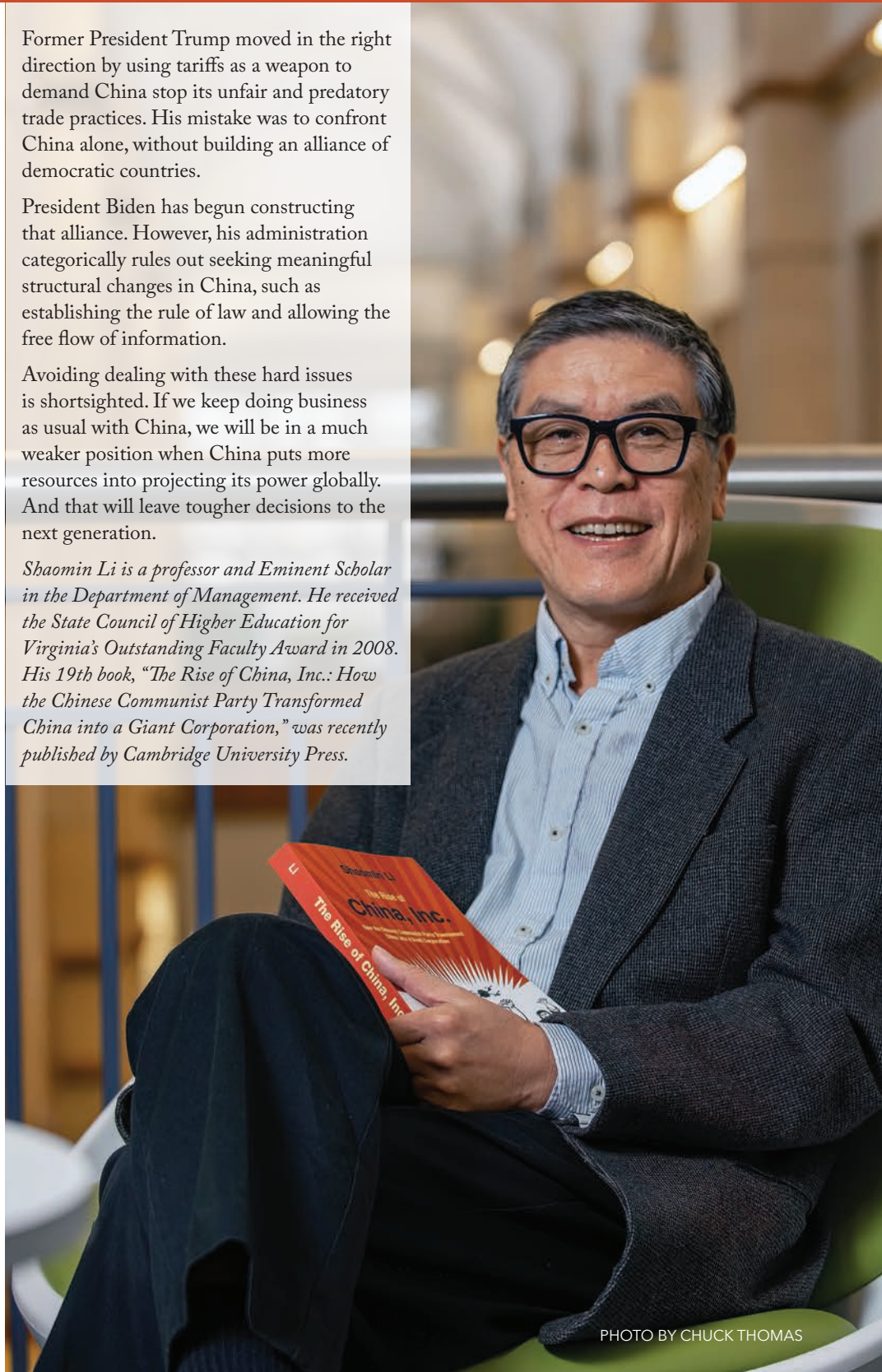


PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS

BUILDING ENGINES, SCOOTERS AND RESPONSIBILITY

BY PHILIP WALZER

At the Engineering Makerspace and Invention Center, students are creating autonomous vehicles, skateboards, even a model of a brain tumor. But the center's director, Orlando Ayala, likes to point out another important thing they're making: decisions.

Big decisions.

ODU's is among the few university Makerspaces where students are really in charge, he says. They craft budget requests, decide what equipment they need, make purchasing orders and conduct safety training.

"We're basically running a business; we just don't charge people," Sydney Fletcher, the operations manager and a senior studying mechanical engineering, said in February. "There's no limiting factor on what you can do here."

Ryan Snoddy, a senior in mechanical engineering technology who serves as safety manager, said: "We understand a lot of what the kids coming here are going through. So it makes it a better space for students."

The Makerspace occupies 7,000 square feet on the second floor of Monarch Hall. Last semester marked the first during which it was open 9 to 5 every day.

For Ayala, an associate professor of engineering technology, it shows that "At ODU, when you give students a responsibility of such magnitude, they respond very well. That's the kind of students we're getting at ODU. They are very mature."

Ben Yusman isn't really a scooter kind of guy. "But I saw Lime scooters lying around all the time, and I thought it would be cool to have one of my own and one that I built."

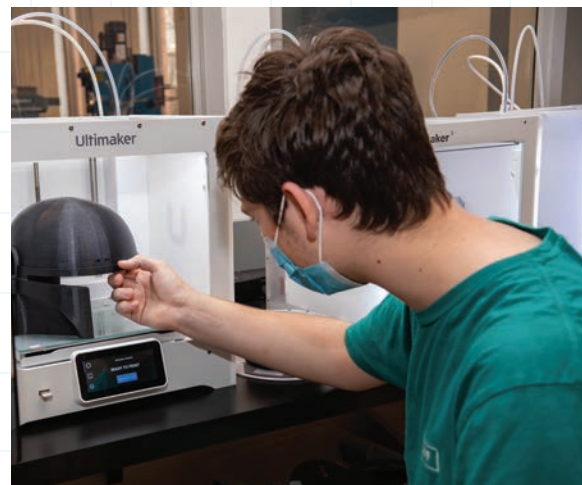
Yusman, a senior in electrical engineering technology, was assembling an electric scooter



in the shop area at Makerspace last semester. The equipment includes lathes, bandsaws, laser engraver, drill press and Bridgeport mill machine. "It's the kind of industrial-standard mill you'd see in the shipyard," Fletcher said, "except ours is a little newer and a little cleaner."

Yusman's first version, built in his garage, didn't turn out great. "I cut a lot of corners and didn't do enough research," he admitted. Fortified with "a lot more research and a ton of CADing," he expected better results with his second.

In the back of the shop space, Snoddy was rebuilding the K24a4 engine from a 2004 Honda Accord to use in his 1991 Toyota Tercel. "I want to learn how engines work," he said, "and this is one of the best engines to learn on." Snoddy hoped to improve the compression for better results on the road.



Director Orlando Ayala with (from left) student board members Sydney Fletcher, Ryan Long, Tyler Cason and Ryan Snoddy. Long (below) finessing his Mandalorian helmet.

PHOTOS BY CHUCK THOMAS

Across the room, four seniors in electrical engineering – Dylan Buyrn, Ethan Mueller, Joseph Nguyen and Matthew Wehr – were at work on a four-wheel autonomous vehicle. A few tables down, Milo Linkel was perfecting an electric skateboard.

His first was a bit unusual: It has three wheels. “It’s small but lively,” said Linkel, a sophomore majoring in mechanical and aerospace engineering.

The new model was almost ready to go: It needed just the power switch. “I’ve definitely learned a lot about electrical issues,” he said. “Hopefully, it will be useful in future classes



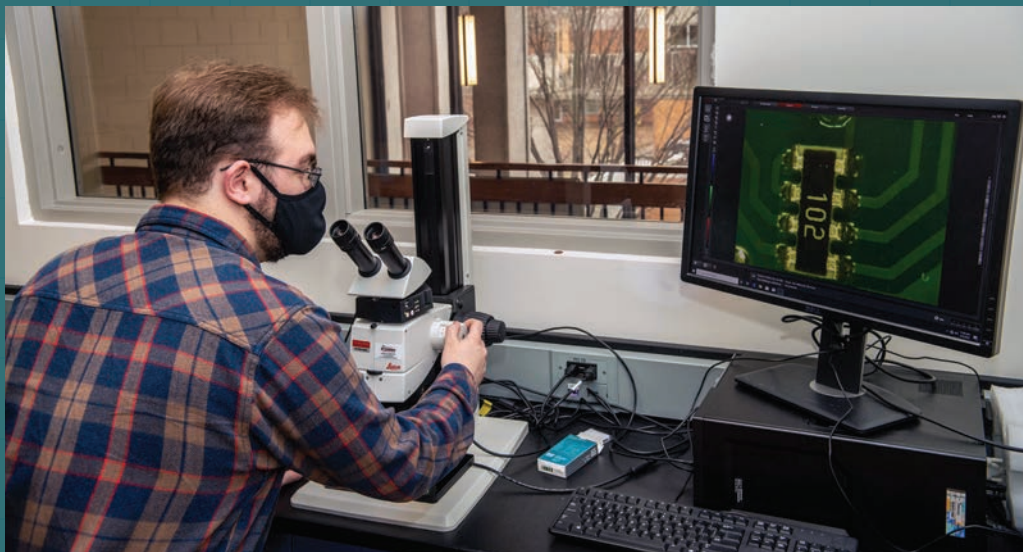
and in my career” – which could be in the electric vehicle business.

The Engineering Makerspace and Invention Center also features a bioengineering area and a space with 10 3D printers. That’s where Ryan Long, a sophomore in modeling and simulation engineering who is the training manager, was constructing a Mandalorian helmet from “Star Wars.”

3D projects can be smaller. Jalen May, a freshman studying mechanical engineering technology, was making extensions for his pool cues. When Fletcher got a spare moment – she’s also the first woman to play in the Monarch Marching Band’s snare drum line – she was working on a racecar replica. “I’m a Formula One fan,” she explained.

Makerspace is open to students in the Batten College of Engineering and Technology and others working with them. Though many projects dovetail with personal interests, Ayala hopes to increase the number related to coursework.

Jalen May (left) at work on his pool cue extensions. Cason (below) will run a summer camp at the center.



The Engineering Makerspace and Invention Center received a \$10,000 grant from the Virginia Space Grant Consortium to hold a camp for high school students this summer. Tyler Cason, the secretary and treasurer, will be in charge.

Tim Canedy ’19 (M.E. ’21) found that the Makerspace experience prepared him well for the work world.

“The opportunity to have responsibility really helped,” said Canedy, a mechanical engineer with DLBA, a naval architectural firm in Chesapeake. He manufactured longboards, but that wasn’t all.

“I got to work with other students, make decisions and act as a kind of mentor. I learned how to run meetings and work in a collaborative setting like you see in the real world.”

It’s not just a Makerspace; it’s a safe space.

“I spend more time here than I do in my dorm room,” Long said.

Tyler Cason, the secretary and treasurer, agreed. “This is our home away from home,” said Cason, a senior majoring in computer and electrical engineering. “It’s a place where you can relax and feel welcome.”

Ayala and the student leaders have forged a tight relationship.

“I’m pretty sure we’ll be friends after they leave here,” he said within earshot of the group.

Fletcher joked: “I don’t know; we’ll have to think about it.”

In reality, she said: “We’re very lucky he is the guy.”

Ayala returned the compliment: “We wouldn’t be able to do this without you.”

A.J. Bafetti’s creation from the Engineering Makerspace and Invention Center makes his life better nearly every waking moment. It’s a prosthetic arm.

Bafetti ’21, who was born without most of his left arm, manufactured a handful of prototypes at ODU. The one he uses now, which he finished in May 2020, is the best and lightest of all, he says.

The prosthetic, made of polymer, silicon and medical bands, has a square magnet, which can hold hardware, and a hook to carry tools like scissors. “I can grab a few extra light items now,” said Bafetti, 25, who received his mechanical engineering degree in December.

Bafetti recently began a job as a mechanical engineer with Kegman Inc. in Florida.

A.J. Bafetti made his prosthetic arm at the center.



ESPORTS INSPIRES A CALL OF DUTY— AND FUN

BY PHILIP WALZER

The room is quiet except for ping-pong of game consoles and an occasional burst of chatter:

"They're outside."

"I need help; I need help!"

"We got this, bro."

The computer screens show avatars slinking around corners to avoid gunfire in the game Apex Legends.

Welcome to Old Dominion University's Esports Arena.

The 2,400-square-foot space on the second floor of Webb University Center features 46 computers with high-backed comfy chairs, a broadcast suite – and plenty of avid gamers.

ODU was the first public four-year school in Virginia to join the National Association of Collegiate Esports, said Grant Deppen, assistant director of intramural sports and esports. Last semester – the first featuring



PHOTOS BY CHUCK THOMAS

a full schedule of competition – about 85 students played on varsity and JV teams in 12 games, including Call of Duty, League of Legends and Overwatch.

The program capitalizes on soaring interest in gaming, adds to the "student life experience" and helps ODU's efforts to expand STEM enrollment, Deppen said. About three-quarters of the participants are majoring in STEM fields.

The experience changed Ryan Davis' major.

Davis, a sophomore who is captain of the Call of Duty team, had planned to study cybersecurity or something in health sciences. Now he's majoring in game design and considering a future in esports.

"What makes it fun is the competition aspect and trying to get the best version of yourself," he said. "It's really rewarding."

The benefits go beyond esports. "When you're in a high-pressure situation, you have

to be able to communicate effectively with your teammates," Davis said. "Not everyone plays the game the same way. You have to adapt to someone else's style of thinking."

Evan Liu-Phillips, a member of the Overwatch team, agreed. "It's a big, important life experience you get playing with a diverse group of people," said Liu-Phillips, a junior majoring in cybersecurity. "It's very beneficial to those who haven't been in a group-related environment."

In the age of COVID, esports also is an activity that goes on in-person or from other locations. "The flexible community we have here is kind of underrated," Liu-Phillips said.

Many of the matches are broadcast on twitch.tv. Ben Draper, a sophomore majoring in media studies, is one of the play-by-play commentators. He sees it as great experience for the career he plans in sports media. "I've had so much fun being able to come in and put out quality streams," Draper said.

One night in January, another broadcaster, James Doherty, a junior majoring in computer engineering, was announcing a Call of Duty match.

"ODU is back on the attack. They have Roach (alias Jeffrey Welsh) as bomb carrier again."

Then an opponent got hit hard in a sneak attack.

"That was a little brutal," Draper said, "but good job, ODU."

Final score: ODU 3, Lees-McRae College 0.



Fishing Club lures anglers

BY LORRAINE EATON '85 (M.F.A. '99)

Campus was quiet that chilly morning when Chase Harley descended the boat ramp behind Whitehurst Hall and waded chest-high into the Elizabeth River.

“My toes are numb,” Harley, a 19-year-old mechanical engineering major from Hampton, said later. “But I’m not wet at all.”

Carter Lamb, the president of the ODU Fishing Club, noted the less-than-ideal conditions: “Saturday morning, 40 degrees – that’s a tough sell.”

Yet there they were, a half-dozen or so hardcore members, threading strips of squid onto hooks – though everyone but Harley stayed along the bulkhead.

ODU’s Fishing Club was launched in 2016, when Thomas Newton ’19, a mechanical engineering technology student from Charles City County, began canvassing oceanography faculty members for a sponsor.

Go see Cooper, they all said.

John Cooper, professor of chemistry and biochemistry, spends much of his leisure time aboard the 32-foot Cape Horn fishing vessel that he calls the Green Machine.

Cooper’s answer to Newton: Of course!

For a first foray, Cooper welcomed members aboard the Green Machine, fired up the outboard and zoomed into the Atlantic Ocean to troll for tuna. Three hours bobbing in 6-foot seas yielded a single yellowfin.

Undaunted, the anglers begin casting for new members. The roster, which rose to a pre-pandemic high of 100, stood at 37 in the fall.

Club members fish behind Whitehurst once or twice a week in all seasons, and they keep a few rods at the ready for anyone who wants to give it a try.

Besides fishing from their hotspot at ODU, club members have rented kayaks and borrowed john boats to land puppy drum, speckled trout and Spanish mackerel. From the Green Machine, they snagged marlin, mahi mahi and a dock full of sea bass. They reeled in red drum from Hatteras beaches and competed in collegiate bass fishing tournaments as far away as Michigan.

The club, named ODU’s 2020 Student Organization of the Year, trudges out at low tide to pick up trash along the campus shoreline. To raise money for equipment and ODU scholarships, it hosts the Monarch Cobia Classic tourney, which netted \$117,000 last year.

The club’s sponsors include L.L.Bean, which donated the slick chest waders that Harley wore that November day. After a couple of hours, the members called it quits without a single catch. No one complained.

Scores of U.S. colleges boast fishing clubs. But as Parker Brandt, 19, a sport management major from Chesterfield, noted, ODU’s is unusual in at least one respect.

“You can saltwater fish right on campus,” Brandt said. It’s one of the reasons he chose ODU.

“There’s tons of fish out here,” added Lamb, a 22-year-old mechanical engineering major from Hampton. “We’re incredibly lucky to be here.”

Lorraine Eaton '85 (M.F.A. '99) had her proudest moment as an angler when her women’s fishing team, the Risky Reelers, took top honors in the Hatteras Invitational Surf Fishing Tournament.



Dong “Andy” Shin shows off the mahi mahi he caught.



(From left) Bingqi Zhao, Pascual Lewis and Chase Harley with speckled trout and red drum.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FISHING CLUB



In December, President Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D., signed a **memorandum of understanding** (MOU) with leaders of Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) and Sentara Healthcare to work toward closer collaboration, including the possibility of a jointly run academic health center.

Just four months earlier, ODU signed another agreement – with EVMS and Norfolk State University – seeking to establish the state’s first school of public health.

Both agreements seek to improve health care, strengthen research and eliminate disparities in Hampton Roads. “The reality is, we’re leading in all the wrong categories,” President Hemphill said at a news conference, citing disproportionately high levels

of diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure and other disease.

ODU and EVMS have created five joint working teams – in research, patient care, education and training, financial planning and communications. The institutions are also looking at methods to ensure robust funding from the commonwealth and community partners.

“There are many details to work through,” President Hemphill said, “and we must ensure that any affiliation would substantially benefit ODU as well as our communities and our citizens. In the end, we are optimistic that a properly resourced affiliation could be of tremendous value to both ODU and EVMS, as well as the Hampton Roads region.”

The University’s recently announced **Maritime Initiative** seeks to expand degree programs, intensify research and expand collaboration with government and industry.

The maritime area spans such disciplines as wind energy, autonomous systems and cybersecurity. ODU already has more than 100 degree programs, certificates or centers related to maritime or water. Its partners include the Navy, Port of Virginia and shipbuilding companies.

“Old Dominion is proud to be a national and international leader in maritime,” President Hemphill said. “Our important work is having a profound impact.” With the initiative, “we are taking a bold step forward.”

The University hoped to name an associate vice president for maritime initiatives by this summer.

COURSE PROFILE

Wicked problems find answers

The class: Wicked Problems in Public Administration

The instructor: J. Gail Nicula (M.U.S. ’99, Ph.D. ’01), adjunct associate professor of public administration. She has taught at ODU since 2013.

The purpose: “The goal is to dig down as far as possible into the facts and to identify multiple points of view, all the stakeholders. If you act based only on your own beliefs, your own worldview, you’re going to have a shortsighted approach to a problem. I also want them to relate theories to their professional and personal experiences and to take away practical lessons in every module.”

The students: The course, which Nicula launched in 2016, has about 20 students, including master’s and doctoral candidates in public administration. “Every student is important, and I enjoy working with each one as an individual. I’ve had so many fabulous students. One of the benefits for me is staying in touch with them.”

The topics: Nicula warns students at the start that the class is “demanding and very fast-paced.” The dozen or so subjects include environmental justice, sea level rise, affordable housing and food insecurity. Last fall, she added two: trust in government and gentrification. She offers examples of successes and failures – contrasting, for instance, the response to the Flint, Michigan, water crisis with the collaborative approach, encompassing government agencies, nonprofits and activists, that Spartanburg, South Carolina, took to address hazardous waste.

The assignments: Essays might include explaining why the Coast Guard’s response to Hurricane Katrina exceeded those of other agencies. She also regularly uses discussion boards. In the fall, Nicula plans to add more practical exercises, such as drafting executive summaries and concept papers, that might replicate tasks at their future jobs.



A student’s perspective: “Everyone should have some experience with this type of curriculum. What I learned is that some things you can’t solve – you can only make better. It’s not an easy class, but it’s one of my favorites. I can’t tell you just how dedicated Dr. N is and the amount of time she puts into it.” – NBA referee and Norfolk restaurant owner Tony Brothers ’86, who will receive his master’s in public administration this summer.

PEOPLE

Tammi Dice, dean of the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, won the Lenore McNeer Award from the National Organization for Human Services.

Charlotte Potter Kasic was named executive director of the Barry Art Museum.

Drew Lopenzina, professor of English, received the Richard Beale Davis Prize from the Modern Language Association Forum on Early American Literature.

Jomo Mutegi, associate professor of science education, was elected president of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching.

Gymama Slaughter, former director of ODU's Frank Reidy Research Center for Bioelectrics, was named founding executive director of the Research Center for Bioelectronics.

Don Stansberry, vice president for student engagement and enrollment

services, was elected president of the Southern Association of College Student Affairs.

Jena Virga was named executive director of the Old Dominion Athletic Foundation.

NEWS

Old Dominion University and the Hampton Roads Workforce Council will lead the **757 Regional Internship Collaborative**, which aims to strengthen the talent pipeline for high school and college students.

ODU will launch Virginia's first four-year major in **manufacturing engineering technology** on its campus and at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research in Danville.

ODU was **ranked among the top 4.4%** of nearly 20,000 universities in the world – and No. 194 in the country – in the Center for World University Rankings' Global 2000 list.

CollegeNET ranked ODU among the **top 10%** of U.S. institutions and best in Virginia in its Social Mobility Index rankings.

Five online programs were listed among the best in the nation in U.S. News & World Report's 2022 rankings. **Nineteen graduate programs and two colleges** were cited in U.S News' Best Graduate Schools list.

ODU became the first Virginia institution to receive **accreditation** from the American Library Association for its master's program in library and information studies.

Old Dominion earned a gold ranking as a **Military Friendly® School** for 2022-2023 from militaryfriendly.com.

THANK YOU

The ODU Alumni Association would like to recognize the following sponsors for their support of the 2021 ODUAA Alumni Honors & 40 Under 40 Dinner:

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The logo features a crown above the words "Alumni Honors" in a cursive font, followed by "& 40 UNDER 40" in a bold, sans-serif font, and "2021" in a smaller font below.

Nick Saldiveri

The 6-6, 307-pound Waxhaw, North Carolina, native made ODU history last season by becoming the first offensive lineman to score a touchdown. He also was a Conference USA Honorable Mention. The sport management major, who will be a redshirt junior in the fall, has started 24 games, all at right tackle.

PHOTO: BILL TIERNAN





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FROM ATHLETIC DIRECTOR WOOD SELIG

The Sun Belt fits perfectly



Athletic Director Wood Selig at Sun Belt announcement and with (from left) Sun Belt Commissioner Keith Gill, ODU President Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D., ODU Rector Bruce Bradley and Big Blue.

Old Dominion's athletic program will take a dramatic step forward this summer when the University formally joins the Sun Belt Conference. The football team will face its toughest schedule yet, but the move will have huge pluses for ODU. Here are five reasons why:

LESS STRESS

The schools in the Sun Belt's East Division are a lot closer to Norfolk than most of the ones in Conference USA. That means less travel, less missed class time, reduced travel expenses and less physical and mental wear and tear on student-athletes.

TOP COMPETITION

The Sun Belt may be the best football conference among the Group of 5. Sun Belt baseball is one of the top leagues nationally, and men's basketball has outperformed Conference USA in four of the last six seasons in power ratings. If ODU teams are at the top of the Sun Belt, they should be among the best in the nation.

FAN-FRIENDLY

ODU fans will finally get their wish to be in a league with more regional focus. JMU gives us our first in-state conference rival since 2012. The Sun Belt East has six other schools, including Appalachian State and Coastal Carolina, from five contiguous states, all heavily supported by loyal alumni.

BIGGER TV PRESENCE

No longer will Monarch fans have to search for games. The Sun Belt has a 10-year deal with ESPN that guarantees that every conference football and men's and women's basketball game will be on an ESPN network.

COMPATIBLE SCHOOLS

The Sun Belt has 14 institutions that have made a genuine commitment to athletics. Look around the league, and you'll see new football stadiums, basketball arenas and more. The schools share a desire to gain national prominence, so they'll bring their A game.

GET YOUR TICKETS

Old Dominion's home opener on Sept. 2 will mark Virginia Tech's first visit since the Monarchs upset the nationally ranked Hokies, 49-35, in 2018.

Only season-ticket holders will be eligible to get tickets for the game. Season tickets are available for \$150 to \$300 for all six home games.

For more information, call 757-683-4444 or go to ynottix.com

Read about DeLisha Milton-Jones' induction into the National Women's Basketball Hall of Fame at www.odu.edu/monarchmag



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FROM THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

As a committed partner and supporter of Old Dominion University, the Alumni Association strives to build and sustain a network of Monarchs who help raise the profile of our institution. Our goal is to provide programming that is valued by our alumni, builds enduring and mutually beneficial relationships, and inspires loyalty while celebrating ODU's achievements and strengthening its reputation. We also advance Old Dominion's mission through our chapters and clubs by involving alumni in meaningful activities and experiences.



While we already have several active chapters and clubs, the association is excited to announce that we have chartered two additional chapters in our region – Southside Hampton Roads and Peninsula Hampton Roads. Both will create opportunities for alumni to engage with one another and to keep a lifelong bond with Old Dominion. Chapters are critical to help maintain a vital connection among graduates, current students and the University.

With chapters becoming more active in the regions, we anticipate alumni becoming more engaged to continue a lifetime relationship with Old Dominion. Whether it is attending an athletic event, networking at a meetup or social activity, participating on a panel discussion with other alumni, serving as a guest speaker at a student event or volunteering during Homecoming or commencement, we encourage alumni to get involved. It is a rewarding experience, and it's the Monarch Way!

In the near future, the association will identify additional regions where we have a strong alumni base to establish or reinvigorate a chapter. We are also seeking more volunteers to assist with commencement exercises and with our postcard campaign to recruit high school students to attend ODU. If you are interested in establishing a chapter in your area or want to become more involved as an Alumni Association volunteer, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at odualumni@odu.edu.

Yours truly,

Joy L. Jefferson
Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations

Class Notes welcomes news and photos about your professional accomplishments, new jobs, weddings and births. Submit your items to pwalzer@odu.edu with the subject line "Class Notes."

Send address changes to odu.edu/alumni/contact-update.

1970s

Robert J. O'Neill Jr. '73 has specialized in getting local governments to work better together for the people. He now has been tapped for a similar problem-solving task among federal agencies as a member of the Center for Intergovernmental Partnerships, an initiative of the National Academy of Public Administration.

Patrice Malena '74, a certified family nurse practitioner at the Hampton Veterans Administration Medical Center, received the Virginia Women Veterans Lifetime of Service Award at a virtual summit in 2021. Malena was key to establishing the Women's Health Center in Hampton and served as program manager from 2012 to 2020.

Msgr. J. Kenneth Rush (M.S.Ed. '75), who was ordained as a Catholic priest on May 15, 1971, celebrated 50 years of service just months ahead of another milestone: He retired from active ministry in July 2021. Rush's longest assignment was a 29-year term as pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church in Lynchburg.



Lynne Seagle '77 (M.S.Ed. '82), executive director of Hope House Foundation since 1982, was honored in September with the Arc Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award.

Since 1975, Seagle has been a passionate advocate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their right to choose how to participate in the community. Seagle developed programs and funding for clients who dreamed of living in their own apartments rather than group homes, a first in Virginia. The foundation now supports 120 citizens in Chesapeake, Norfolk and Virginia Beach who live in their own homes.

Class Notes are compiled by Janet Molinaro (M.A. '14)

1980s

Michael F. Carroll '84 in September sold Corsair Insurance Agency, which has offered medical malpractice coverage to physicians and health care facilities in central Florida since 2011. Carroll now operates under King Insurance, a full-service insurance firm.

Pamela M. Norris '87 was hired as vice provost of research at George Washington University in November. She left positions as executive dean of the University of Virginia School of Engineering and Applied Science and the Frederick Tracy Morse Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering.

Mike Krank '89 has been promoted from superintendent to project manager for E.T. Gresham Co.

1990s

Denelle Wallace-Alexander '90 (Ph.D. '04) was promoted to dean of the School of Education at Norfolk State University last July. She has filled many roles at NSU since 2008, including associate dean, researcher, faculty member and graduate student adviser for counseling and principal preparation programs.

Michael A. Mee (M.P.A. '90), whose career has focused on public works and utility operations, was hired in October as director of corporate development for Aqua Virginia. Mee will work to expand the company's water and wastewater services currently offered to 81,000 customers across 37 Virginia counties. The company is based in Rockville, Va.

Barry Flowe '91 was hired last July as director of athletic bands at Bridgewater College, located in Virginia's Rockingham County. He oversees the Screamin' Eagles marching band and teaches music education classes. Strike up the band!

Shamina Singh '91, who grew up in Chesapeake, in October received the Distinguished Public Servant Award from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. In 2013, Singh founded and became president of the Center for Inclusive Growth, a philanthropic initiative of Mastercard. She was profiled in the Winter 2020 Monarch.

Major Ronald C. Maxey Jr. '92 of the Virginia State Police was promoted to deputy director of VSP's bureau of field operations last summer. He most recently commanded the safety division and has been a trooper since 1993.

Chris Damvakaris '93 was hired in January as chief revenue officer for Cyberlux Corp., a technology company reshaping digital capabilities in projects such as unmanned aircraft systems, renewable energy and bandwidth infrastructure. Cyberlux is based in the Research Triangle Park in Raleigh, N.C.

Colleen Lyston '93 (M.S.Ed. '95) was named Camden Middle School (N.C.) 2021-22 Teacher of the Year. A veteran teacher with nearly 30 years' experience, Lyston earned a master's degree in reading and special education to better support her struggling students.

Maureen Stewart (M.S.Ed. '93) began the school year as assistant principal at Sunderland Elementary in the Calvert County (Maryland) Public Schools. Her previous job was dean and individualized education program facilitator at another school in the system.

Brian Solis '94 (M.P.A. '03) was named Chesapeake's deputy city manager for community development in November. He oversees economic development, planning and recreation and tourism departments for the city. For the past 22 years, he worked for Virginia Beach city government.

Cheryl Klein '95 and her husband, Tom, of Richmond, have been hired as vice presidents to lead First National Title Insurance Co.'s national agency division. Cheryl has long worked in the title insurance and banking industries and for 10 years owned and managed her own title company.

Calvin D. Farr Jr. '96 began as general manager for water and wastewater utility services in Prince William County in May 2021. He previously was director of the public utilities department in Richmond.

Sylvia E. Johnson (Ph.D. '97) was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in December to a five-year term on the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board. The post taps her expertise in occupational and environmental health and workplace risk evaluation, as well as legislative know-how from jobs at the National Education Association and United Auto Workers.

Outstanding Women in Business

Several women with Old Dominion connections were honored by Inside Business on its annual Women in Business list in December 2021. They include:

Robin S. Cooke '92, president of Portsmouth and Suffolk TowneBank. She has worked at TowneBank for 21 years and is a former ODU field hockey player.

Kimberly Hughes Phillips '88, family law attorney and owner/partner, Phillips & Peters, PLLC. She has donated countless hours to organizations that serve children and a wide array of civic and military interests.

Donna L. Scassera, former Board of Visitors member and co-founder of ODU's Women's Initiative Network. She is president and CEO of DLS Engineering Associates Inc.

Leading Hampton Public Schools

A handful of ODU alums were promoted to leadership roles in Hampton public secondary schools when the 2021-22 school year began. They include:

Sierra Ware '15 (M.S. Ed. '18), assistant principal, Andrews PreK-8

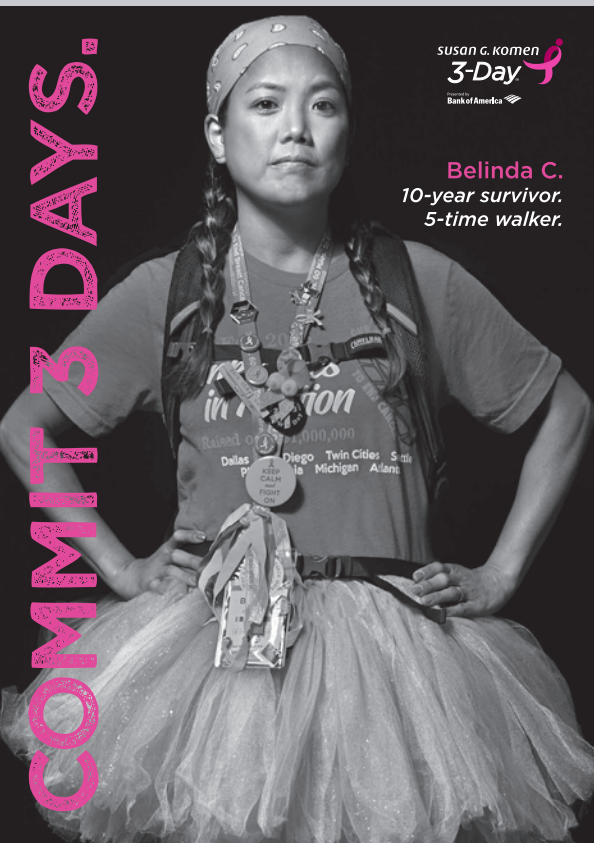
Gordon Blair '02 (M.S.Ed. '14), academy principal, Bethel High

Jacinta Harris '09 (M.S.Ed. '13), assistant principal, Lindsay Middle

Malachi Wafford (M.S.Ed. '22), interim assistant administrator, Phoebus High

Andrew Perry (M.S.Ed. '20), assistant principal, Syms Middle. He was Newport News Public Schools teacher of the year in 2019-20.

Chavez will log 240 miles in 4 Komen races this year



Belinda Chavez '99 is ready to get moving again this summer.

Chavez, a breast cancer survivor, finished seven three-day walks in 2019, each spanning 60 miles, to benefit the Susan G. Komen organization. Last year, she sat idle because of COVID.

This year, she plans to do four long walks, starting in Boston in August. "I'm excited to get back out there," said Chavez, 50, who lives outside Fort Worth, Texas, "and I'm hoping to raise even more money."

Chavez was diagnosed with cancer in 2009 when she was 37. Her three children – then ranging in age from 1 ½ to 4 – "didn't understand why Mommy didn't have any hair."

She also got surprised looks and comments during her walks in 2019. Such as: "You can't be a survivor; you're too young."

Her response: "Well, yeah, I am."

Chavez, who majored in mass communications, previously worked in sales and advertising. When she was diagnosed with Stage III breast cancer, "It was devastating," Chavez said. "I didn't understand how this happened. No one in my family had breast cancer. Nor did I carry the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes."

Chavez underwent a double mastectomy and several rounds of chemotherapy and radiation. Almost immediately, she got involved with the three Komen affiliates in the Dallas area. "I know everyone deals with cancer differently. For me to find healing and comfort, I needed to look elsewhere and talk to other survivors to better understand this disease."

In 2019, the 10th anniversary of her diagnosis, she completed seven three-day, 60-mile walks in Detroit, Minneapolis, Boston, Seattle, Dallas, Philadelphia and San Diego. In Dallas, she was the top fundraiser.

That year, she also was one of the faces in Komen's nationwide marketing campaign, wearing a pink tutu and her team shirt, Pink Soles in Motion.

This year, she will start with a 60-mile walk in Boston, followed by walks in Chicago, Dallas/Fort Worth and San Diego. She hopes to raise a total of \$10,000.

— Philip Walzer

To support Chavez, go to <http://www.the3day.org/goto/belindachavez>



Kimberly O. Jones '97 last August was chosen Professor of the Year by the Faculty Senate at Tidewater Community College. Jones, a professor of funeral service, has taught at TCC since 2006.



Tiona Staton '97 (M.S.Ed. '98), math teacher and STEM leader at Crittenden Middle School in Newport News, was excited to win the city's 2021-22 Middle School Teacher of the

Year honor. Now in her 24th year, Staton likes teaching the "twens age group. "It's cool to see that transition" from children into young adults and, later, to hear how their goals and careers played out. "I love making a difference," she said, and credits ODU for thoroughly preparing her for her own transition to a professional educator.

2000s

When IPConfigure, a video surveillance software development company, outgrew its office in ODU's Innovation Research Park, CEO

Chris Uiterwyk '00 thought big. Last October, IPConfigure revitalized an industrial area in Lamberts Point and created The Colony, a 4.5-acre office park. The 30,000-square-foot property – the original home of the Linde Gas Factory – houses IPConfigure and four other businesses: 3DXtremes, a product development firm led by **Blade Taylor '18**; Paralain, a project management company; Back East Landscaping, a gardening service, and Sanctuary, a taco restaurant and bar.



Damien Geter (M.S. '02), a composer, bass-baritone and actor based in Portland, Ore., in October became interim music director as well as co-artistic adviser for the Portland Opera.

The opera described his composing style as one that "infuses classical music with various styles from the Black diaspora to create music that furthers the cause for social justice."



Chris Newsome '02 of Cobbs Creek, Va., was appointed to a four-year term on the Virginia Marine Resources Commission last August. He is a fishing guide for his company, Bay Fly

Fishing LLC, and previously worked as an environmental specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Ronald K. Thornhill (M.S.Ed. '02) is an education enabler in Lawrenceville, Va., first as principal of Brunswick High School since 2019, and since September as a member of

the Southside Virginia Community College Foundation, which eases the financial load for students who want to attend SVCC.

Scott L. Jeffries '03, Wythe County Public Schools superintendent since 2018, moved into higher education administration in November, when he was hired as assistant vice president of Wytheville Community College.

Virginia Quiambao Arroyo '04 and her company, Avid Core, tackled PlanRVA's reputation problem: to explain how the Richmond regional planning commission could help its community. AvidCore designed an inclusive community outreach strategy that has already generated feedback, new partners and funding for community programs. The campaign won a 2021 Platinum MarCom Award, the highest level in the creative competition.

Jay Bolin (M.S. '04, Ph.D. '09) became dean of science and the environment at Catawba College in Salisbury, N.C., early this year. He oversees biology, environmental studies and chemistry and the Center for the Environment.

Yawntreshia Coleman '04 created Magic City Food Tours in Birmingham, Ala., with a bit of her own magic to realize her dream of owning a business. Her company hosts pop-up "picnic experiences that are Instagram photo-op worthy," designed by Coleman and catered by local restaurants. The pop-ups celebrate wedding proposals, date nights, baby showers or birthdays, or as the finale to scavenger-hunt food tours. Find her on Facebook or at www.mcftpicnics.com.



Dannielle Eller '04 in September was promoted to captain of the Criminal Investigations Division for the Bristol, Tenn., police department, where she has worked since 2005.



Sean Nelson '04 notched a career move and a chance to return home in October when he was hired as Culpeper District engineer for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Nelson will oversee operations for nearly 10,500 lane miles in nine Virginia counties. "I was born and raised in Louisa and am now raising my family there. I am proud to come home and am committed to making a difference in this region."

Janine Wood (M.S.N. '04), who leads the referrals and case management department at Naval Hospital Bremerton in Washington, was named civilian of the quarter last year from among 430 staff members. A native of Deer Park, Wash., Wood joined the Navy Nurse Corps in 1991 for the travel benefits and professional opportunities, and "the honor to serve my country."



MarQuita Barker '05 (M.S.Ed. '08) was hired in November as vice president for student development at Knox College in Illinois. Her prior post was assistant dean of campus life and director of residence life at Elon University in North Carolina.

Capt. Josh Menzel (M.E.M. '05) took command of Naval Station Everett (Washington) last July. The Naval officer and Michigan native began his career in the Navy's nuclear enlisted commissioning program.

Bob Schuetz (M.E.M. '05), site vice president for Energy Northwest's only commercial nuclear power plant in the Northwest, became CEO of the facility in Richland, Wash., last August. The company plans to add an 80-megawatt reactor just north of Richland. Schuetz spent 28 years as a U.S. Navy submariner and retired as a deputy commander.

Jeff Singer '05 has been named 2022 NAVFAC Atlantic Civilian Engineer of the Year. A senior project engineer and geotechnical and concrete materials expert, Singer assisted the U.S. Attorney General and Naval Criminal Investigative Service in identifying substandard materials used in construction at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. The finding led to a \$16.4 million settlement in February 2021.

Army Maj. Martina Taylor Campbell (M.S.N. '06) is seeking the next corps of medical professionals in her new job as executive officer of the 6th Medical Recruiting Battalion, based in Las Vegas, Nev. Her own career got a jump-start through an Army program that opened a path to earn a bachelor's in nursing and become an officer.



ALUMNI AUTHORS

"We Are Made to Praise!" by **Esther Blair '11** (Koehler Books). Blair wrote her first book to teach her toddler son to recognize and appreciate the people and nature around him when the pandemic shut down everyday life. Based on Psalm 148, the book uses paper cutouts, assisted by photographer Jenny DiCola.

"10 Hats of a Man: Reflections on Becoming an Adult Male" by **Reshaud Rich (M.S.Ed. '14)** (AltruIsMe LLC). Rich offers his guide to help young Black males reach manhood with full emotional, psychological and spiritual health. Chapter headings display a hat to indicate the men's role that is addressed in the chapter. His "book of notes" is a tool intended for both men and women who are raising young men.



She blogs toddlin' tips

Allena Hurwitz Anglen (M.S.Ed. '13) embarked on a discovery of Tidewater through a child's eyes soon after giving birth to her first son. "I was by myself, all day, every day," she said. "I needed to find more things to do."

She vowed to get out of the house daily and create fun experiences for her son. And she invited everyone along for the ride.

Her outings evolved into a blog, *Toddlin' Around Tidewater*, *Big Adventures for Little Kids* (toddlinaroundtidewater.blogspot.com/), in 2017. It quickly climbed to 40,000 views per month.

Anglen, who teaches third grade at Strelitz International Academy in Virginia Beach, has found public library story hours, museums, play areas – indoors and out – and activities featuring animals, sports, crafts, nature walks and food. She includes details for parents, comments about the excursions and lots of pictures. She also seeks out free places or businesses that offer discounts and coupons for admission.

"I love when moms come up to me and say, 'Your blog really saved me,' " she said.

Anglen's parents – Ron '75 (M.B.A. '80) and Sharon '87 – also went to ODU, and she has been an ODU fan as long as she can remember. "My dad was THE ODU sports guy," with season tickets to all the sports. She paid their ODU school spirit forward by teaching the "Ice Cream and Cake" dance by Zoom to her son's preschool class.

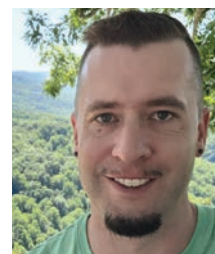
After her father died of pancreatic cancer in 2018, the family created the nonprofit Team Hurwitz, which has raised more than \$60,000 to fund cancer research through family-sponsored walks, yard sales and even a Zumbathon. Anglen has spoken before Congress to advocate for additional research funds.

Anglen and her husband, Neil, now have two boys, ages 5 and 2. "I love that when my kids are older, I will have this sort of book of all these adventures that we went on together."

For a fun summertime family activity, Anglen recommends Norfolk Botanical Garden, where families can explore 175 acres by foot, boat or tram. Top of the list is the splash fountain in the 3-acre Children's Garden, open from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. from April 1 to Oct. 15. Botanical Garden members get in free; tickets are priced for adults, military, kids 3-17; toddlers under 2 get in free with a parent or guardian. (norfolkbotanicalgarden.org)

"On the way home, about a mile away, is Penguin's Snoballs, where the price for one of their hundreds of flavors can't be beat!"

— Janet Molinaro (M.A. '14)



Trey Mayo '06 (M.S.Ed. '08) has been busy. Mayo, the former director of advising for ODU's Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, started a new job at Virginia Tech in January

2021 as director of graduate programs for the Department of Computer Science. He also received his Ed.D. from the College of William & Mary this spring.

Kevin P. Amick '07 early this year began a new assignment as medical center director for the Veterans Administration Sierra Nevada health care system in Reno. Amick previously was executive director for the VA Health Care System in Butler, Pa.

Chutima Boonthum-Denecke (Ph.D. '07), professor of computer science at Hampton University, received the inaugural Norma B. Harvey Character Award last May, an award named for former President William R. Harvey's wife. Boonthum-Denecke was selected for her work to increase student participation in computing and research programs such as robotics and technology, and her own service and research in the cybersecurity field.

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Ed Elkins (M.B.A. '07), vice president of industrial products for Norfolk Southern since 2018, was promoted in November to executive vice president and chief marketing officer in the company's Atlanta headquarters. Elkins began as a locomotive engineer in 1988. He succeeds Alan H. Shaw, who became chairman and CEO of Norfolk Southern in May.

Adam M. Saich '09 joined Featherstone Partners, a Virginia Beach-based real estate investment firm, as managing director in January.

2010s

Justin Bullock '10, a self-described "parks and rec kid," found a major in recreation and tourism studies and a career at ODU. Now Bullock is the parks and recreation director

for Greene County, Va., where he improves community health through wellness events, classes and sports.

Nicole Dockery '10 (M.S.N. '13) has been promoted to vice president, chief nursing officer, for Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital. The Danville/Pittsylvania County native began as an ICU nurse in 2009. Her last position was director of patient care services.

Alicia Hargrove '11 was promoted to director of finance for Emporia, Va., in December. She had been director of business and finance for the Greenville County Public School System since 2016.

Rear Adm. William P. Pennington (M.E.M. '11) was assigned last year as deputy commander of the 10th Fleet, and is based at Fort Meade, Md. A native of Wilton, Iowa, Pennington was an aviator before moving into command posts.

G. Rob Rowley '11 was appointed chief of emergency management and workplace safety for Henrico County in August 2021.

J. Lee Brown III (Ph.D. '12) left Fayetteville State University in North Carolina last August to become dean of the College of Graduate and Continuing Studies at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, S.C.

Desmond Walker (M.E.M. '12) was chosen for the Career Achievement in Government Award at the 2022 Black Engineer of the Year Award STEM Conference last fall. Walker joined the Navy 25 years ago, expecting to learn a trade. Instead, he found a different career. Now executive officer on the USS Bainbridge, Walker marvels that he's "on the cusp of commanding my own ship."



Battling the stigma surrounding mental health care

"My life has been patterned around serving and helping other people," says licensed professional counselor **Jenay Garrett '09 (M.S.Ed. '12)**. Particularly people who look like her.

In 2019, Garrett founded Swerve the Stigma, an online initiative to spread mental health awareness among people of color.

She realized that most of her clients sought her out because she is a Black woman. "I noticed that there weren't a lot of therapists of color that people had access to," said Garrett, 34, who lives in Chesapeake.

She saw the need to reach out further to minority communities to erase the stigma of addressing mental health issues.

Swerve the Stigma provides videos and quotes from people Garrett praises as being brave enough to share their stories.

"There is still so much hurt; there is still so much trauma," she said. "There needs to be awareness that this is OK. It's normal to feel depressed, normal to have anxiety."

Since she founded Swerve the Stigma, Garrett said, people are facing increasing mental-health challenges, including the fears of contracting COVID or experiencing discrimination.

A common anxiety for some of her clients is: "Am I going to be next?"

That inspired her to co-found Black Open Spaces, a virtual community for African Americans to discuss racial and social injustices. She hopes the tips and strategies offered by the initiative will help others find peace, something she believes is her mission in life.

At ODU, Garrett double-majored in human services and psychology. She returned to complete a master's program in mental health counseling. She recently added another degree – a Ph.D. from Walden University in human and social services, with a concentration in family studies and interventions.

She chose the program because – like her – it offers a strong focus on social change.

For more information, go to Instagram: #SwerveTheStigma, @JG_Counseling, @BlackOpenSpace

— Victoria Tillinghast '21

Wesley A. Brugh '13, a financial adviser affiliated with New York Life since 2014 and founding partner of Eagle Strategies LLC investment advisory firm, was tapped for the annual Roanoker 40 Under 40 Awards in 2021.

Devon O'Boyle '14 balances infrastructure needs with environmental protection in her new job as senior project engineer at VHB in Midlothian, Va.

J. Tyler Hart (Ph.D. '15) was promoted to provost for Richard Bland College of William & Mary, in Prince George, Va., in April 2021. He has held administrative roles at the college since 2008 and previously was a business and tax consultant.

Alyse Stanley '15 of Chesapeake joined the Washington Post last August as a multiplatform editor for Launcher, a section that covers news from the video game and esports industry. She previously was a freelance writer, with expertise on technology and social media topics.

Hashim Taylor '15 was drafted to join the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, parks and recreation team in 2021. He became "team captain," or director, after stops in Prince William County, Alexandria and Virginia Beach.

Imani Black '16 landed a job in 2018 at the Hooper Island Oyster Co. in Cambridge, Md., as an oyster farmer and assistant hatchery manager after internships with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science oyster aquaculture training program. She tackled another professional challenge in 2020 after finding out she was the only manager or woman of color involved in aquaculture from Maryland to Texas. The nonprofit Minorities in Aquaculture is Black's effort to train and encourage minorities to enter this growing field in the sustainable seafood industry.

Mychell Brewington '17, a former personal trainer, opened a beauty salon, Beauty Bar by Chelly Jae, in downtown Hampton in late 2021. The salon focuses on body contouring and esthetics.

Christine Van Savage '17, a career switcher who has "a love of making math fun" for her seventh-grade students at Colonial Heights Middle School, won Division Teacher of the Year in 2021. Her students say math is easier because she sings, dances and does "cool tricks" to help them learn.

2020s

Robert D. Moran '20 of Staunton, Va., hit the road as a Virginia State Police trooper last August after completing basic training at the VSP academy. His first assignment paired him with a senior officer for additional training in Hanover and Henrico counties. Moran also is a second lieutenant in the Virginia Army National Guard.



Katherine Martinez '21 in January was named Student Veteran of the Year by the Student Veterans of America. Martinez, profiled in the winter issue of Monarch magazine, was the first female president of ODU's SVA chapter. "Katherine epitomizes grit," Kim Bullington, adviser to the ODU chapter, wrote in her nomination letter. "She works past incredible personal odds." Martinez now works as a federal personnel security specialist.

Heather Monfasani '09 (M.S.Ed. '10) and **James Mallon '15** joyfully announce their marriage on Oct. 30, 2021, at the Westmount Country Club in Wayne, N.J. The bride and groom are pictured here with fellow ODU alums who seized the occasion to celebrate their ties to Old Dominion University and Greek life at the wedding. Monfasani is a former president of Alpha Phi sorority and Mallon was a member of Pi Kappa Alpha at ODU. Heather teaches in Hanover County and James works at an electrical supply distribution business in Richmond – close enough to hold football season tickets and keep up college friendships at ODU games.



Received March 1 – Sept. 30, 2021

Norman Olitsky '46 of Portsmouth, 4/8/21

Bernice D. Moses '48 of Norfolk, 9/28/21

Leon R. Robbins Jr. '48 of Atlanta, Ga., 4/13/21

Garland S. Hale Jr. '49 of Portsmouth, 6/2/21

Martha C. Henry '49 of Virginia Beach, 3/11/21

Miriam W. Mansfield '49 of Norfolk, 6/3/21

Chauncey G. Olinger Jr. '50 of Bronx, N.Y., 6/14/21

Robert D. Keefe '52 of Norfolk, 3/15/21

Idus B. "Mac" McCurry Jr. '52 of Southport, N.C., 9/10/21

Alice W. Somerville '53 of Virginia Beach, 2/23/21

Grace Vakos Dragas '56 of Virginia Beach, 3/15/21

Phyllis G. O'Berry '56 of Portsmouth, 8/23/21

Robert R. Higginbotham '57 of Portsmouth, 8/3/21

J. Carter Luck '57 of Virginia Beach, 5/23/21

M. James Raiford Jr. '57 of Newport News, 6/1/21

Charles A. Bartlett '58 of Portsmouth, 4/2/21

Patricia H. Holman '58 of Newport News, 6/10/21

Paul E. Garrett '58 of Norfolk, 8/18/21

Frank J. Moore Jr. '58 of Newport News, 6/21/21

Donald R. Snipes '58 of Chesapeake, 9/2/21

Frank T. Alleva '59 of Atlanta, Ga., 5/27/21

David D. Dickerson Sr. '59 of Virginia Beach, 5/19/21

Shannon T. Mason Jr. '59 of Henrico, Va., 6/19/21

Larry O. Sharpe '59 of Suffolk, 5/31/21

Ralph W. Carrington Jr. '60 of Cobbs Creek, Va., 5/6/21

John E. Hubbard '61 of Newport News, 2/26/21

Betty H. Orsland '61 of Hendersonville, Tenn., 7/23/21

Ann W. Tynes '61 of Virginia Beach, 7/22/21

Nancy H. Wiedmaier '61 (M.S.Ed. '70) of Chesapeake, 6/10/21

Patricia H. Bocock '62 (M.S.Ed. '76) of Virginia Beach, 7/21/21

James R. Darden Sr. '63 (M.S.Ed. '69) of Virginia Beach, 3/10/21

Harold W. King '63 of Henrico, Va., 5/8/21

M. Barron Kesser '64 of Norfolk, 3/23/21

Carlton S. Deal Sr. '66 of Knoxville, Tenn., 3/5/21

Susan G. Rathbun '66 of Syracuse, N.Y., 8/11/21

JoAnne H. Rhudy '66 of Virginia Beach, 8/24/21

Basil D. Spalding III '66 of Virginia Beach, 3/18/21

Frank H. Allen III '67 of Portsmouth, 4/25/21

Michael C. Johnson '67 of Virginia Beach, 6/30/21

Anne A. Madden (M.S.Ed. '67) of Portsmouth and Richmond, Va., 7/24/21

Patricia A. Pfeiffer '67 of Portsmouth, 4/20/21

Norma J. Schmidt '67 (M.S.Ed. '74) of Lynnfield, Mass., 6/22/21

Myron W. Curtis, USN (Ret) '68 (M.S.Ed. '76) of Virginia Beach, 9/17/21

Irma W. DeLauri '68 (M.S.Ed. '71) of Portsmouth, 3/21/21

H. Larkin Goshorn '68 (M.B.A. '76) of Richmond, Va., 9/17/21

M. Woodrow Griffin Jr. '68 of Hampton and Wake Forest, N.C., 8/12/21

Heyer had a big voice and a big soul



BILL HEYER '76 “had one of those rare God-given voices,” said Dave Paddock, a friend and fellow barbershop singer for more than 30 years. “He was a true bass, and he could just rattle the room with his natural tone and resonance.”

But Heyer, who died at the age of 70 in Virginia Beach on Nov. 12, embodied a more important attribute. “He was welcoming of everyone,” Paddock said. “He

was such a friendly person and a very protective, compassionate guy.

“Some people with a lot of talent are quite judgmental and just hang with other people with a lot of talent. Bill rooted for the underdog. He would go out of his way to include new members, people who seemed like wallflowers, and try to engage them and teach them.”

Heyer’s sister, Julia, an opera singer in New York, said, “He was his happiest when he was singing ‘tags’ with his barbershop cronies.” Tags are dramatic conclusions to barbershop renditions that can be only four or five words.

And once more, he used them to draw in other people. “He’d teach parts of these tags to new members, so they could join in right away and make great music,” Paddock said.

Heyer served as bass section leader of local barbershop groups, including the Commodore Chorus. “I’m sure he served on every committee that exists,” Paddock said. He also sang with the Virginia Beach Chorale and the Virginia Symphony Chorus and particularly enjoyed performing in the Virginia International Tattoo.

He worked for 40 years as an electrical engineer at companies including Comtek and Northrop Grumman, helping upgrade and maintain compatibility in IT systems at Naval facilities.

“Bill enjoyed all things technical and had a talent and proclivity for it,” Julia Heyer said. “He liked keeping networks running smoothly, and took satisfaction in that.”

Because of the sensitivity of Heyer’s work, “he had to carry around some 50 passwords in his head and he couldn’t write them down,” Paddock said. “He was always surprising me with a new, extraordinary talent.”

— Philip Walzer

IN MEMORIAM

James T. Lane '68 (M.S.Ed. '73) of Virginia Beach, 6/19/21

John F. McHone Jr. '68 (M.S. '73) of Virginia Beach, 6/5/21

Vernon J. Price Jr. '68 of Virginia Beach, 4/15/21

Michael F. Seidemann '68 (M.S. '69) of Kenner, La., 7/23/21

Barbara A. Worthington '68 of Mobile, Ala., 8/27/21

Philip R. Bernard '69 of Belville, N.C., 9/15/21

John G. Eager '69 of Bartlett, Ill., 3/2/21

Judith W. Hilty '69 of Norfolk, 9/23/21

Allen W. O'Brien '69 of Norfolk and The Villages, Fla., 6/15/21

Catherine F. Reaser '69 of Williamsburg, 6/7/21

C. Edward Shuford Jr. '69 of Salem, S.C., 8/12/21

Robert L. Young '69 of Virginia Beach, 8/27/21

Richard A. Boxer '70 of Henderson, Nev., and Yorktown, 9/18/21

Lt. Col. David M. Fisher Jr., USA (Ret) '70 of Lindon, Utah, 2/21/21

Lillian B. Hall '70 of Suffolk, 4/11/21

Jean C. Morton (M.S.Ed. '70) of Norfolk, 5/28/21

Howard L. Price Jr. (M.E. '70, Ph.D. '79) of Virginia Beach, 4/20/21

William C. Rice '70 (M.S.Ed. '76) of Norfolk and Tampa, Fla., 8/5/21

Duane A. Wilson '70 of Norfolk, 11/11/20

William A. Gill Jr. '71 of Stafford, Va., 5/16/21

Richard G. Johnson Jr. '71 of St. Augustine, Fla., 7/1/21

Charles D. Moore '71 of Norfolk, 8/5/21

Christine H. Rafal '71 of Virginia Beach, 8/24/21

Gretchen H. Shine '71 (M.S.Ed. '77) of Norfolk, 5/21/21

Janis K. Whitehurst '71 of Portsmouth, 8/11/21

John L. Wood Jr. '71 of Levering, Mich., 5/13/21

William L. Burnette '72 of Harrisburg, Pa., 6/8/21

William B. Ellen '72 of Mathews, Va., 7/8/21

William T. James Jr. '72 of Norfolk, 9/15/21

Mayes D. Mathews (M.B.A. '72) of Toano, Va., 4/18/21

Jean M. Shepherd '72 of Norfolk, 2/8/21

Jeanne P. Smith '72 of Spokane, Wash., 6/25/21

Violet T. Tuttle '72 (M.S.Ed. '75) of Chesapeake, 3/8/21

Gerald C. Worthington '72 (M.S.Ed. '75) of Virginia Beach, 8/18/21

Fernando L. Artaud '73 of Norfolk, 5/25/21

Sharon R. Berry (M.S.Ed. '73) of Hoover, Ala., 6/1/21

Richard L. DiPeppe '73 (M.U.S. '80) of Norfolk, 4/16/21

Fred H. Evans '73 of Norfolk, 6/26/21

Samuel B. Heltzel (M.S. '73) of Vicksburg, Miss., 7/22/21

Shelba H. McFarland (M.S.Ed. '73) of Virginia Beach, 4/8/21

Edward E. Meyer (M.E. '73) of Rock Hill, S.C., 10/31/21

W. Wesley Newhouse '73 of Salem, N.J., 5/3/21

Donald E. Remy '73 (M.S.Ed. '79) of Virginia Beach, 4/28/21

Zina M. Shoaibi '73 of Virginia Beach, 4/17/21

Narcissus K. Sims '73 of Portsmouth, 7/18/21

Capt. C. Richard Ward, USN (Ret) (M.S. '73) of Roseville, Calif., 4/18/21

Richard A. Werber '73 (M.B.A. '77) of Virginia Beach, 4/7/21

Paul C. Baker '74 of Virginia Beach, 8/13/21



Putman was 100 and still leading dancing classes

GUY PUTMAN JR. '60, who died on July 14, 2021, at the age of 103, had long careers in the Navy and banking. But he was known late in life for his dancing.

Putman led ballroom dancing classes even past 100. He was stopped only by the COVID shutdowns.

Putman had wanted to continue dancing after his wife, Dorothy, died in 2002. So he attended big band concerts in Norfolk and coached classes at the Primeplus and Ocean View senior centers.

"I tell people, 'If you can walk, you can dance,'" he said in 2018.

"He just loved it," said his son, Guy Putman III '72. "The doctors told him they think it's one of the secrets of him living to 103."

Bob Batcher, executive director of Primeplus, said, "He was quiet and focused on doing it right but also having fun."

Putman, Batcher said, embodied Primeplus' mission to "focus on solutions and engagement. He lived life to the fullest."

Putman joined the Navy at age 17. He rose to lieutenant commander during his 23-year career. Putman served stateside during World War II, but in the late '30s he operated a motor launch in Spain to help evacuate American refugees from the civil war.

"He was extremely proud of being in the Navy," his son said. "He always thought the Navy gave him his chance. He took the ball and ran with it."

Putman later received a business administration degree from what was then the Norfolk Division of the College of William & Mary. He also was among the first members of the Alpha Kappa Psi business fraternity.

He spent the next 25 years in various banking positions, including auditor, comptroller and assistant vice president.

Last year, Putman was diagnosed with severe aortic stenosis. But "other than his heart valve, he was in astounding condition," his son said. Putman eagerly elected to undergo surgery, though he did not survive it.

"One of the reasons he gave to the doctors," his son said, "was to get back to dancing."

— Philip Walzer

Robert E. Branch '74 (M.E. '78) of Norfolk, 3/23/21

Thomas R. Cocke '74 of Gloucester Point, Va., 5/8/21

Emily T. Eagar (M.S.Ed. '74) of Chattanooga, Tenn., 7/6/21

William L. Linton Jr. '74 of Tyner, N.C., 8/8/21

Vicky T. Phillips '74 of Memphis, Tenn., 7/14/21

Joseph T. Sanzo Jr. '74 (M.S.Ed. '78) of Hampton, 8/1/21

Paul H. Shilling '74 of Roswell, Ga., 3/19/21

D. Sean Brickell '75 of Virginia Beach, 3/3/21

James D. Pope Jr. (M.S.Ed. '75) of Capron, Va., 10/4/21

F. Ronald Ross (C.A.S. '75) of Portsmouth, 3/16/21

Nancy L. Ruff '75 of Bedford, Va., 2/28/21

James H. Cowan Jr. '76 (M.S. '81) of Baton Rouge, La., 8/10/21

Edwin L. Ellis (M.S.Ed. '76) of Suffolk, 6/29/21

Martina H. Foster '76 (M.S.Ed. '84) of Norfolk, 3/16/21

Lorraine L. Heath '76 of Elizabeth City, N.C., 6/20/21

Dorothy B. Henley '76 (M.S.Ed. '80) of Chesapeake, 8/12/21

Joyce Winstead Jones (M.S.Ed. '76) of Chesapeake, 9/16/21

Diane P. McCarron '76 of Virginia Beach, 5/9/21

Annis N. Murphy (M.S.Ed. '76) of Hertford, N.C., 2/28/21

Michael J. Olenik '76 of Virginia Beach, 3/19/21

Vincent L. Orazi '76 of Virginia Beach, 3/28/21

Philip W. Williams (M.S.Ed. '76) of Virginia Beach, 2/27/21

Lt. Col. Joseph P. Frankoski, USA (Ret) (M.A. '77) of Newport News and Summit, N.J., 4/20/21

Thomas R. Hatfield '77 of Dryden, N.Y., 6/12/21

Joan G. Helm (M.S.Ed. '77) of Virginia Beach, 8/1/21

Ann-Carol Holley '77 (M.S.Ed. '82, Ph.D. '88) of Richmond, 6/20/21

Katie C. Knight '77 of Holland, Va., 8/22/21

James D. Landes Jr. '77 of Nellysford, Va., 7/10/21

Langdon D. Montgomery '77 of Suffolk, 5/19/21

Patricia H. Pretlow '77 of Chesapeake, 3/19/21

Andrew P. Seufer '77 (M.S.Ed. '86) of Norfolk, 6/16/21

W. Christian Straley '77 of Norfolk, 3/9/21

Robert T. Hanson (M.B.A. '78) of Wilmington, Del., 7/27/21

Delsey Hopewell '78 of Hampton, 3/1/21

Anne G. Hunter '78 (M.S.Ed. '85) of Virginia Beach, 6/14/21

Gloria F. Rudibaugh (M.S.Ed. '78) of Lima, Ohio, 5/28/21

Judith M. Zahn '78 of Cary, N.C., 5/25/21

David C. Baird '79 of Amissville, Va., 4/11/21

Barbara F. Cox '79 of Norfolk, 3/29/21

Selma L. Gibson '79 of Port Orange, Fla., 8/4/21

Janice M. Hurley '79 (M.U.S. '82) of Chesapeake, 4/20/21

David L. Jones '79, '11 of Chesapeake, 7/15/21

H. Lee Nuzzo '79 of Norfolk, 4/25/21

Aurelia S. Overton (M.S.Ed. '79) of Newport News, 3/2/21

Col. Robert F. Barry II, USA (Ret) '80 of Huntsville, Ala., 11/7/21

Margaret Harwood (M.S.Ed. '80) of Virginia Beach, 8/18/21

Lt. Cmdr. Robert P. Olson, USN (Ret) (M.S. '80) of Chesapeake, 8/30/21

Raymond "Skip" Watts Jr. '80 (M.B.A. '81) of Virginia Beach, 4/10/21

Carole H. Herbert '81 of Virginia Beach, 7/31/21

Hope H. McCullough '81 of Mechanicsville, Va., 10/29/21

Dean P. Mitzel '81 of Florianopolis, Brazil, 5/4/21

Susan W. Moore (M.S.Ed. '81) of Montgomery County, Va., 8/1/21

Deborah S. Vince '81 of Chesapeake, 3/13/21

Mary E. Brown '82 of Chesapeake, 4/15/21

Harry F. Lamb '83 of Virginia Beach, 5/10/21

Andrew W. Moncol Jr. (M.B.A. '83) of Rockville, Va., 7/11/21

Gary T. Schools '83 of Chesapeake, 7/15/21

Jennifer W. Callis '84 of Chesapeake, 4/18/21

Nancy W. Fass (M.A. '84) of Lauderhill, Fla., 5/14/21

Jonathan A. Hoebeke '84 of Newport News, 2/27/21

Martha S. Nielsen (M.S.Ed. '84) of Virginia Beach, 7/23/21

Rodney J. Ramsey '84 of Reston, Va., 5/10/21

Patricia B. Brown '85 of Winchester, Va., 7/5/21

Susan G. Morgan '85 of Norfolk, 5/17/21

Elizabeth J. Wood '85 of Virginia Beach, 8/7/21

James W. Carmines (C.A.S. '86) of Tabb, Va., 8/9/21

Michael J. Curran '86 of Chesapeake, 4/8/21

Kevin L. Gilbert '86 of Virginia Beach, 5/28/21

Tony A. Marsh '86 of Mableton, Ga., 3/18/21

Michael J. Bates '87 of LaMoille, Ill., 5/16/21

Theresa M. Petrill '87 of Fredericksburg, Va., 4/15/21

R. Martin Shelton '87 of Spring Lake, N.J., 4/10/21

Michael R. Czarnecki '88 of Newport News, 5/2/21

Dorothy P. Lee (Ph.D. '88) of Chesapeake, 5/4/21

Jason E. Perry '88 (M.S. '92) of Mathews, Va., 6/6/21

Paul R. Politi (M.P.A. '88) of Norfolk, 7/7/21

Kerry S. Todd '88 of Virginia Beach, 4/5/21

Tracy A. Jenkins '89 of Chesapeake, 7/20/21

J. Thaddeus Seeberger '89 of Madison, Va., 8/1/21

Donne W. Jones '90 (M.S. '02) of Norfolk, 7/16/21

David M. Trollinger '91 of Boca Raton, Fla., 8/19/21

Ralph E. Munsey '92 of Chesapeake, 4/8/21

Marjorie R. Tautkus (M.A. '92) of Norfolk, 3/27/21

Pedro V. Noble Jr. '93 of Chesapeake, 3/11/21

Chief Yeoman Donald M. Squibb, USN (Ret) '93 of Virginia Beach, 9/22/21

William I. Garbee '94 (M.S.Ed. '95) of Hampton, 4/21/21

Gale C. Garner (M.F.A. '94) of Norfolk, 2/11/21

Lawrence J. Goldrich (HON '94) of Norfolk, 3/28/21

Alicia C. Hereford (M.A. '94) of Norfolk, 3/11/21

Michael D. O'Neill '94 of Virginia Beach, 3/30/21

Eileen M. Powell '94 of Norfolk, 7/10/21

Linda S. Schonk '94 of Norfolk, 7/27/21

Michelle L. Wilson '94 (M.S.Ed. '95) of Norfolk, 5/22/21

Sr. Chief Petty Officer Kelvin L. Bradley, USN (Ret) (M.S.Ed. '95, Ph.D. '01) of Lexington, Ky., 11/18/20

Daniel W. Forrest II '95 of Poquoson, 3/14/21

Yvonne J. Manley (M.S.Ed. '95) of Winton, N.C., 5/1/21

Sherice D. Thomas '95 of Newport News, 4/18/21

Tracy A. Bishop (M.S. '96) of Woodbridge, Va., 8/11/21

Dixon ‘fought the entire time’



The players on the 1985 women's basketball team, the last at Old Dominion University to win a national championship, went their separate ways after leaving school. They had not held a reunion since.

That changed when former forward **MEDINA DIXON** contracted pancreatic cancer. Players and coaches, sometimes all of them, sometimes only a handful, began connecting with Dixon on Zoom.

Dixon died on Nov. 8 at the age of 59, but the Zoom meetings have continued.

“Medina was surviving because of the group chats,” said former ODU teammate Adrienne Goodson. “And we’re still meeting. We’re trying to support each other.”

Though she played just three seasons at ODU, Dixon ranks eighth in University history with 1,968 points. She won an Olympic bronze in 1992 and played professionally for 10 seasons in Europe before the WNBA was formed.

Old Dominion retired her jersey – No. 13 – in 2011.

By then, Dixon was already sick. She had learned in 1998 she had epilepsy. She later was diagnosed with diabetes and then, in 2018, with pancreatic cancer.

“She was so damn brave,” said Dawn Cullen Jonas, a forward on the 1985 team. “There was never any ‘Woe is me.’ She fought the entire time.”

Cullen Jonas, who lives in New York, and Lisa Blais, who lives in Maine, went to Boston in November to visit Dixon in the hospital.

“She was so happy to see us,” Cullen Jonas said. “We tried to be lighthearted. But you could see she was suffering.”

The following morning, Dixon passed away with her wife, Yoyo, and 16-year-old daughter by her side.

“Throughout her entire ordeal with pancreatic cancer, Medina believed she was going to beat it,” Goodson said. “I know she was in excruciating pain. At times, she couldn’t get on a call with us, but we would talk anyway.

“If it was up to her, she would still be here fighting. But God was like, ‘Enough is enough. It’s your time to go.’”

Goodson added: “I will have to do her justice and march into glory the same way she did.”

— Harry Minium '77

W. Justin Drinkwater '96 of Virginia Beach and Warsaw, Va., 6/29/21

Sandra H. Lassiter '96 of Virginia Beach, 6/10/21

Jeffrey A. Lord (M.S.Ed. '96) of Yorktown, 9/7/21

Cynthia F. Turnbull (M.S.Ed. '96) of Virginia Beach, 3/21/21

Colleen Hunt (M.S.Ed. '97) of Chesapeake, 7/6/21

Susan B. Maroulis '97 of Goodview, Va., 6/13/21

Travonnia D. Phelps '97 (M.S.Ed. '98) of Norfolk, 3/23/21

Joseph D. Frohwitter (M.S.Ed. '98) of Sebring, Fla., 8/20/21

Tammy L. Gibson '98 (M.S. '00) of Lebanon, Va., 8/21/21

Diane Sampson Gravatt '98 of Urbanna, Va., 5/6/21

Anthony R. Kyvelos '98 of Fogelsville, Pa., 8/4/21

Judith R. Wallace (M.S.Ed. '98) of Virginia Beach, 8/28/21

Carol C. Withers '98 of Elliston, Va., 9/1/21

Owen M. Demeny (M.B.A. '99) of Moravian Falls, N.C., 5/31/21

Capt. Peter J. McLaughlin, USN (Ret) (M.S.Ed. '00) of Centreville, Va., 8/12/21

Lt. Cmdr. Kevin J. Hermann, USN (Ret) (M.B.A. '01) of Virginia Beach, 4/28/21

Michael S. Ogle '01 (M.E.M. '05) of Norfolk, 9/26/21

Jackie D. Perry '01 (M.S. '03) of Kitty Hawk, N.C., 8/7/21

Cmdr. Kenneth P. Pisel Jr., USN (Ret) (Ph.D. '01) of Virginia Beach, 5/25/21

Tracy M. Brown '02 of Hayes, Va., 9/12/21

Ryan M. Foxworthy '02 of Jacksonville, Fla., 8/5/21

Sean C. Vaughn '02 of Newport News, 7/30/21

Penny H. Harrison '03 of Salisbury, N.C., 5/9/21

Florence B. Smith '03 of Virginia Beach, 3/29/21

W. Allen Cook (M.S.Ed. '04) of Williamsburg, 6/12/21

Christina M. Draper '04 of Fieldale, Va., 4/25/21

Stephen T. Joyner (M.S.Ed. '05) of Virginia Beach, 10/24/21

Katie L. McFarland '05 of Virginia Beach, 6/13/21

Jennifer Y. Witherspoon '05 of Ashburn, Va., 3/31/21

Jennifer Rios Mansfield '06 of Newport News, 5/31/21

Gretchen A. Flynn '07 of Blacksburg, Va., 8/28/21

Edward D. Klawitter '07 of Chesapeake, 5/3/21

Gregory P. Waldecker Sr. '07 of Norfolk, 4/25/21

Tameka N. Byrd '09 of Norfolk, 4/8/21

Richard Phillips '11 of Crimora, Va., 7/19/21

Stuart W. Conroy '12 of Chesapeake, 6/4/21

William Gaither III '13 of Atlanta, Ga., 6/24/21

Michael T. Ricciarelli '15 of Midlothian, Va., 12/9/20

Matthew T. Langham '16 of Stafford, Va., 4/11/21

TyVaughn N. Eldridge '17 of Chesterfield, Va., 7/3/21

Christopher W. Rappoldt '17 of Bowling Green, Va., 8/2/21

Darius J. Gillus '18 of Chesterfield, Va., 10/1/21

Brandon D. Pearson '18 of Virginia Beach and North Chesterfield, Va., 10/29/21

Javaud A. Ahangari '20 of Virginia Beach, 5/19/21

Danielle I. Goldstein '20 of Norfolk, 4/8/21

Lukia DeWitt Beverly (D.N.P. May 2022) of Norfolk, 5/14/21

DWIGHT W. ALLEN, who earned an international reputation as a champion of education innovation, died on Oct. 16. He was 90.

Allen came to ODU in 1978 and retired in 2008 as Eminent Scholar of Educational Reform. Allen wrote nine books and served as a United Nations adviser. “His refusal to be reasonable provided incredible opportunities for me and hundreds of others like me,” said Jennifer Kidd, master lecturer in teaching and learning.

STEVEN K. ATIYAH, an assistant professor emeritus of mathematics and statistics who wrote eight college textbooks, died on Feb. 18. He was 91. He taught full time from 1965 to 2000 and as an adjunct from 2001 to 2004.

In his eulogy, Michael Lê ’80, an IT executive in North Carolina, recalled how Atiyah helped him graduate. “Steve, even though you will no longer be around physically, your kind spirit will always stay with me.”

WILLIAM BISHOP, a former announcer for men’s and women’s basketball games, died on Nov. 28 at the age of 86.

Bishop also announced Tidewater Tides and Hampton Admirals games, sang with local groups and performed in “Sunday with Sinatra and Friends” at the Sandler Center in Virginia Beach.

KEN BLOW, former director of risk management, died on Sept. 4 at the age of 71. He worked at ODU from 1979 to 2015.

“Ken played a key role in managing the insurance program for ODU,” said Dave Harnage, former chief operating officer. “I could always rely on his expert advice and felt very lucky to have had the opportunity to work with him.”

KEN DALEY, an art professor who taught at ODU for 51 years and pioneered printmaking at the University, died on Jan. 17. He was 80.

Daley taught lithography, etching, screenprinting, typesetting and letter press. He served as chair of the department for 15 years and retired in 2016.

He was a prolific artist who embraced a variety of forms. “His large-scale neon pieces are among his best,” said Robert Wojtowicz, dean of the Graduate School. His works have been shown at the Chrysler Museum of Art and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

JOHN PATRICK KELLY, an adjunct English instructor and former assistant men’s basketball coach, died unexpectedly on Aug. 19. He was 65.

“He was a Renaissance man – professional basketball player, musician, world-class tennis player, the closest thing to Aquaman I ever encountered, Faulkner aficionado, and lover of all things Irish,” said Mike Pearson, University Professor emeritus of English.

OTTO MARTINSON, a professor emeritus of accounting, died on Sept. 1. He was 89.

He served in the Air Force and was vice president of a hospitality business before joining ODU in 1989. Accounting Professor Doug Ziegenfuss said Martinson, who retired in 2008, “did the best job of anyone I know bridging the professional world with the academic world due to the fact he had three successful careers.”

TIMOTHY MCKEE, an associate professor emeritus of accounting, died on Oct. 13. He was 77.

McKee joined ODU in 1985 and retired in 2010 as a University Professor. He served as accounting chair for two years and received several teaching awards. Students particularly liked the “mock court” exercise in his accounting business law and ethics class, Ziegenfuss said.

NASH MONTGOMERY, who worked in Career Development Services from 1999 to 2005, died on Feb. 26. He was 67.

His positions included assistant and associate director. “He was courtly and funny, and his background in human services made him valuable both for his co-workers and the students he served,” said Janis Krebs Smith, former associate director of the career center. Montgomery later led Norfolk State University’s Career Services department.

BILL QUINN, a former police chief, died on Sept. 4. He was 76. After working as a detective in New York, he joined ODU’s police force in 1989 as a patrolman. He retired in 2009.

“Bill was a dedicated professional and a true leader within the police department,” Harnage said. Retired Sgt. Marc Huckless said Quinn was “the type of supervisor who believed in looking after his people.”

JOHN W. RAMSEY, professor emeritus of political science, died on Jan. 11. He was 91. Ramsey taught at ODU from 1964 to 1992.

“He was NEVER boring,” Joe Mishofski ’84 wrote in a memorial post, “and he imparted a lifelong love of political science with me.” Noting Ramsey’s signature hairstyle, Mishofski wrote: “NOBODY rocked the crewcut like John Ramsey!”

Although he had his doctorate, Ramsey insisted his students call him “Mr. Ramsey.”

WILLIAM T. REECE, former chairman of the accounting department, died on May 9. He was 98.

Before Reece came to ODU in 1969, he worked as an IRS agent. He retired from Old Dominion as a professor emeritus of accounting in 1988.

JOHN B. SPINELLI JR., director of alumni affairs from 1973 to 1980, died on Oct. 18. He was 91.

“I admired the verve with which he went about his work engaging alumni in the life of the University,” David Shufflebarger, former vice president of university advancement, wrote on Spinelli’s obituary page.

GLEN SUSSMAN, professor emeritus and former chair of the Department of Political Science and Geography, died on Dec. 31. He was 71.

Sussman wrote six books, including “American Politics and the Environment.” Sussman, who was at ODU from 1992 to 2019 and was named a University Professor, received several awards. He was “a great person who was totally committed to his teaching and to his students,” said Jonathan Leib, chairman of the political science and geography department.

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Introducing Dr. Bassett

Actress Angela Bassett, hooded by Provost Austin Agho and Rector Bruce Bradley, gave an electrifying speech to graduates of the College of Arts and Letters in May. "Monarchs, you didn't come this far to come *this far*," said Bassett, a Golden Globe recipient who has appeared in such movies as "Black Panther" and "What's Love Got to Do With It." "No, you came this far to excel. You came this far to soar to heights that you, your parents, your grandparents and your ancestors sacrificed and prayed for you to reach."

Bassett, who received an honorary doctorate from ODU, also told the graduates to "be comfortable with being uncomfortable" and to "claim your place at the table of purpose and prosperity." Go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZ8iT04d7tE&t=175s to see her speech. In all, nearly 3,000 students received bachelor's, master's or doctoral degrees during the University's 136th commencement exercises.

PHOTO BY CHUCK THOMAS





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Tip: It's critical to let us know of your gift because administrators of many popular retirement plans assume no obligation to notify a charity of your designation. The administrator also will not monitor whether your gift designations are followed. We would like the opportunity to thank you for your generosity and to talk to you about your intentions so we may ensure they are followed.

Next Steps

If you are considering a gift to ODU through your estate plans, please contact us. We would be happy to assist you as you make these important decisions. Contact: Barbara M. Henley, CFRE, at 757-683-6563, or email bhenley@odu.edu, or Brett Smiley, CFRE, at 757-683-4735 or bsmiley@odu.edu, to discuss using your IRA to support ODU and our mission. We always advise you to seek the advice of your financial or legal adviser.

If you've been considering an estate plan that includes ODU or you have already done so, we welcome you to join us in the 1930 Society, where your gift will assist future students with their educations through scholarships or program support.



Office of Gift Planning

Barbara Henley
Executive Director
757-683-6563
bhenley@odu.edu

Brett Smiley
Assistant Director
757-683-4735
bsmiley@odu.edu



To learn more about how you can create a named scholarship to honor a loved one or to help future ODU students in other ways, simply contact a member of the Gift Planning team today.
plannedgiving.odu.edu



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3% on gas

2% on groceries and wholesale clubs

1% on everything else!

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Langley Save, Borrow
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[1] Signature Cash Back Visa credit card holders will receive 5% on a category chosen by cardholder, 3% cash back on gas purchases, 2% cash back on in store grocery and wholesale club purchases and 1% cash back on all other purchases. 5% cashback rewards must be activated to earn cash back. Annual Percentage Rates (APR) for cards are variable and determined by credit history, subject to approval. The Langley Signature Cash Back credit is applied to your savings account and shown on your statement. Federally Insured by NCUA.