VCU Board Approves Establishment of Branch Campus in Qatar

University to Offer Bachelor of Fine Arts Degrees

by Melissa Jones
University News Services

Virginia Commonwealth University's Board of Visitors has approved plans for the establishment of a branch campus in Doha, Qatar, that will offer bachelor of fine arts degrees in fashion design, interior design and graphic design. Pending approval of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, VCU expects to offer the B.F.A. degrees in the design areas in spring 2002. The branch campus will be known as the VCU-Qatar College of Design Arts.

"We're very excited about this development as it moves us toward our goal to increase VCU's presence in international education," said VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., who is a member of the board of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. "In addition, it has the significant benefit of providing Qatari students — particularly female students — with outstanding opportunities to work in design fields in the public and private sectors."

In 1997, the Qatar Foundation selected the VCU School of the Arts as its partner in developing the Shaqab College of Design Arts.

"We're very excited about this development as it moves us toward our goal to increase VCU's presence in international education."

Virginia Commonwealth University recently honored Alan G. MacDiarmid, Ph.D., who won the 2000 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., presented MacDiarmid with an honorary doctor of humane letters degree for his outstanding contributions to society. The ceremony was held earlier this month at the VCU School of Engineering. VCU Chemical Engineering Professor, Kenneth J. Wynne, Ph.D., has a long history with MacDiarmid. In the late 1970s, Wynne was a scientific officer for the Polymer Program in the Office of Naval Research where MacDiarmid was performing polymer research. Along with Wynne, VCU chemical engineering professors Anthony Giuseppi-Eile, Ph.D., and Gary E. Weik, Ph.D., also hold patents or have written publications with MacDiarmid.

Plans Under Way for VCU’s 2001 Commencement

by Donna Gregory
University News Services

On May 19, Virginia Commonwealth University graduates will be honored during the 2001 Commencement, scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. at the Richmond Coliseum.

"Commencement is a momentous occasion for our graduates as they prepare to leave university life and begin exploring the many possibilities of their personal and professional lives," VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., said.

Well-known mystery writer David Baldacci will deliver this year's keynote address. A former VCU graduate, Baldacci has published six best selling legal and political thrillers, including Absolute Power, Total Control, The Winner, The Simple Truth and Saving Faith. He has also published a Dutch novella entitled Office Hours, written for The Netherlands' Year 2000 "Month of the Thriller.

Baldacci's works have been published nationally in USA Today and The Washington Post, and internationally in Britain's Talker Magazine and New Statesman, Italy's Panorama and Germany's Welt am Sonntagn. More than 25 million copies of Baldacci's books are in print worldwide. His works have been translated into more than 30 languages and sold in more than 50 countries. Castle Rock entertainment made Absolute Power into a major motion picture starring Clint Eastwood and Gene Hackman.

"Our faculty are extremely dedicated to providing our students the best possible environment for learning."
FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Leadership at VCU and the VCU Health System

over the past ten years, we have traveled new avenues in the development of our mission at Virginia Commonwealth University and the VCU Health System.

We have sought to create the interdisciplinary university, VCU Life Sciences being the most recent endeavor to combine the excellence of the faculty and staff of our campuses and the Health System. Through programs like the Community Service Associates and the Carver-VCU Partnership, we also have created a university that takes its inspiration from the real world.

Moreover, in response to a community mandate, we have adopted economic development as one of our missions, and we have sought to protect the rule of our academic health center in teaching, research, and patient care, especially for people who cannot afford health care.

And, we are beginning to go global, the partnership between VCU's School of the Arts and the Qatar Foundation being a significant example of our potential in this area.

With the support of our Board of Visitors, we now look ahead to seeking greater national recognition for the quality and relevance of our mission and goals at the beginning of the 21st century. To get there, we will need to identify and assist emerging leaders within the University and the Health System, and perhaps this is the most important recent emphasis at VCU.

There are numerous efforts that have been in place for years that offer programs and mentoring for faculty and staff. VCU Human Resources is a major player in this regard, offering professional development, leadership workshops, and a variety of programs for faculty and staff within the University and the Health System.

These activities are the inspiration for recent initiatives to identify and develop internal leaders. Some of these include the VCU Leadership Development Program, under the auspices of the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute in the Center for Public Policy; the Center for Teaching Excellence in the Provost's Office; and the Women in Medicine Program in the School of Medicine, which was recently honored with the 2000 Women in Medicine Leadership Development Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges for outstanding contributions in developing women leaders in academic medicine.

Global and other leadership initiatives have in common is their commitment to bringing individuals who do not hold traditional leadership roles to the table. The work of producing academic and clinical innovation, affecting cultural change within our own institution, and developing future leaders for higher education requires a broader field of knowledgeable participants. I am extremely proud of this new emphasis on leadership development at VCU and encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities.

Eugene P. Trani
President

Qatar
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Foundation officials attributed their selection of VCU's School of the Arts to the school's national ranking as one of the top art and design schools in the country. The Shagab College of Design Arts enrolled its first class in 1998, established by the Qatar Ministry of Education in May 2000 and will graduate its first class next year.

While the college's curriculum has been developed and taught by a group of about 20 VCU faculty, up to now VCU course credit and degrees have not been offered. VCU's decision to assume full responsibility for the program and award degrees came after a series of on-site visits and assessments made by President Trani and other VCU administrators.

By its third year of operation, 129 students were enrolled in the Shagab College of Design Arts, which is on track to meet the college's five-year projection of 200 students. The majority of students are from Qatar, with additional students from the countries of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Sudan, United Arab Emirates and Pakistan. Currently all the students are female.

"Word of the VCU-Qatar partnership's instructional excellence is spreading rapidly throughout the Gulf region," said Roderick J. McDavis, Ph.D., VCU provost and vice president for academic affairs. "Qatari officials believe that all graduates of the first class in 2002 will find great success as they seek work in the private sector."

VCU has made no financial investments in the college. The foundation funds all operational costs associated with the program, including the construction of a 70,000-square-foot building, designed and equipped to VCU's specifications. The foundation also funds the salaries of visiting professors at VCU's Richmond campus who fill the full- and part-time positions of permanent VCU faculty who are selected for temporary assignments in Qatar.

"Establishing this college is an effort that our faculty have deeply enjoyed," said Richard Toscian, Ph.D., dean of the School of the Arts. "We're particularly impressed by the students' performance in the college's first-year foundation courses and in their individual work as they begin their majors."

The offering at the VCU-Qatar College of Design Arts will mirror those of the Richmond campus. Variations in instruction may involve an expansion of interdisciplinary instructional approaches and the incorporation of cultural design and issues relevant to the Gulf region, including Arabic letter forms as well as regional traditions in clothing, visual arts and architecture.

VCU arts students participate in international exchange and seminar programs with a number of countries in Asia, Africa, Central and South America, Europe and Australia. Several Qatari students have transferred from Doha to VCU and several Richmond students have expressed interest in studying in Doha.

COMMEMNENCE
continued from page 1

Baldacci's many readers include former President Bill Clinton, who selected The Simple Truth as his favorite novel of 1999. A Virginia native and resident, Baldacci received his Bachelor of Arts in political science from VCU followed by a law degree from the University of Virginia. Prior to becoming a successful writer, he practiced law in Washington, D.C. as a trial and corporate attorney. After delivering the commencement address, Baldacci will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters. In other Commencement activities, Dr. Trani will present his honorary degree to Helen Thomas, a Hearst Newspapers columnist who served as a correspondent for Press International and White House bureau chief for more than 35 years.

The Edward A. Wayne Medal will be presented to Bertha Rolfe for her dedicated service to VCU. Rolfe is a member of VCU's Retired Faculty Council and has served as vice president of the MCV Alumni Association of VCU.

Three individuals will be honored with the President Medallion, which recognizes outstanding contributions by a university community member. This year's recipients include Lauren Albert Woods, M.D., professor emeritus of pharmacology and toxicology and retired vice president for VCU's health sciences; Jeffrey Levin, D.D.S., associate clinical professor of dentistry; and Regenia Perry, Ph.D., former art history professor and leading historian in African and African-American art and culture.
State Honors Borzelleca for Life Achievement
by Donna Gregory
University News Services

The Science Museum of Virginia, in conjunction with the Commonwealth of Virginia, is honoring a Virginia Commonwealth University professor emeritus for his scientific achievements.

On Feb. 14, Joseph Borzelleca, Ph.D., professor emeritus of pharmacology and toxicology, was recognized on both the House of Delegates and Senate floors during their daily legislative sessions. Borzelleca was praised for his accomplishments, which include partnering with another VCU researcher to manage an antibiotic for the pesticide kepone. He will be formally honored with the 2001 Life Achievement in Science Award at a special awards dinner at the science museum on April 23.

Throughout his professional life, Borzelleca has been studying the safety of food, drug and cosmetic products. Borzelleca’s accomplishments include:

• Developing an international method to evaluate the safety of fat and sugar substitutes
• Assessing the toxicity of contaminants in drinking water in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency.
• Helping the Department of Labor set standards for workplace carcinogens.
• Working with the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army to evaluate riot control agents and antibacterial to nerve gases.

Borzelleca has served as chair for the World Health Organization’s Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues and is a consultant for the Food and Drug Administration, National Institute of Mental Health, National Cancer Institute and NATO.

Borzelleca joined VCU in 1959. From 1972 to 1986, he headed the toxicology department and became professor emeritus in 1990. Borzelleca is one of five Virginians being honored this year for their scientific achievements.

VCU to Host Women and HIV Conference
by Laura Arbogast
University News Services

The fourth annual Women and HIV Conference will be held on March 16 at Virginia Commonwealth University’s Student Commons. The annual conference is designed to inform medical and mental health providers about the latest treatments for women infected with, or at-risk of contracting, Human Immunodeficiency Virus, the virus that causes AIDS.

Workshops, speeches and exhibits will be presented between 8 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. The cost of the conference is $75. A reduced rate of $37.50 is available for VCU students, faculty and staff. For more information or to register, call the VCU HIV/AIDS Center at 804-289-2210.

VCU Documentary Traces Struggles of Bayview

Communication Arts and Design Prepares Video on Impoverished Eastern Shore Town

by Mike Frontiero
University News Services

Bayview, an Eastern Shore hamlet that has become a national symbol of rural poverty, is profiled in a new documentary produced by a group of Virginia Commonwealth University students. A free, public screening of “This Blueline’s a Bloodline: Change,” was offered recently in VCU’s Grace Street Theater.

The one-hour documentary, which took two years to make, was produced by 12 students in an advanced video class in VCU’s Communication Arts and Design Department. The video traces the work of Bayview residents and the Bayview Citizens for Social Justice from their successful fight to block Virginia’s plans to build a maximum security prison in their front yards to their recent acquisition of land to remake Bayview into the rural village it once was — with retail stores, private homes, rental units and cottage industries.

The students filmed, edited and conducted research for the documentary. “By telling a story through video, you can see it, hear it and feel it,” said Elliana Brocato, a senior majoring in history, ethics and religion. “Video is a very powerful medium.”

More than half of Bayview’s 114 citizens live within walking distance of running water, plumbing, efficient and safe heating or transportation to the few jobs in the area. Many have lived in insufficient and unsafe housing for years. Along Bayview’s pothole-dotted dirt roads,outhouses overflow with waste after heavy rains, adding to what Northampton County and officials with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People have called inhumane conditions.

In the past three years, state and federal politicians have descended on Bayview with promises to assist in what state officials estimate will be an up to $7 million program to improve the town’s housing supply, water system and other amenities.

“After three years of struggle to obtain monies to help improve the quality of their daily lives, Bayview residents are now on the verge of fulfilling their vision of earning a living wage by building a sustainable economic base,” said Teresa L. Konechne, M.F.A., the VCU assistant communication arts and design professor who directed the project. “This documentary could change how communities all over Virginia and the country demand our government to respond to the basic needs of people. It’s a compelling story.”

“This documentary could change how communities all over Virginia and the country demand our government to respond to the basic needs of people. It’s a compelling story.”

Dr. Joseph Borzelleca was recognized during a legislative session at the General Assembly.

The elderly make up about 13 percent of the population, but use 35 to 40 percent of all prescription and non-prescription drugs more than any other group, according to Delafuente. More frequent prescription drug use, combined with natural changes in the body through the aging process, can result in a variety of medication problems. Drug-related side effects are wide-ranging, from dry mouth and constipation, to dizziness, excessive bleeding and heart failure — many of which could be overlooked or not recognized as a drug reaction, said McClure. McClure has seen the problems first hand. She worked as a nursing home pharmacist before coming to VCU.

“We need to get away from the cookie-cutter approach to prescribing drugs,” said McClure. “What may work for one individual may not work for someone else — especially where the elderly are concerned.”

The CD-ROM educates physicians, pharmacists about medication issues in the elderly

by Joe Kuttenkuler
University News Services

Two Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of Pharmacy professors have created an interactive compact disc to educate pharmacists and other health-care workers about medication-related issues affecting the elderly.

The CD, titled IMPROVE, is designed to help identify the causes of common drug-related problems and address symptoms that are unique in older patients experiencing adverse drug reactions.

Jeffrey Delafuente, M.S., director of geriatric programs in pharmacy, and Lynn McClure, M.S., assistant professor of pharmacy, began gathering information for the CD more than two years ago in response to the growing number of older patients who had visited their doctors or were admitted to hospitals because of adverse reactions from medications.

“Drug problems are a major threat to the elderly,” said Delafuente. “While many of the drugs frequently used by older people successfully control illness and improve quality of life, there also can be many negative and even deadly consequences from improper use of those medications.”

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The CD emphasizes how drug absorption and elimination can vary greatly between a person who is 55 years old and someone who is through a number of steps from identifying risk factors and recognizing symptoms, to finding alternative medications that will ultimately achieve the best results for patients. Above all, the CD stresses the need for pharmacists and physicians to accurately prescribe and diligently monitor the medications their older patients are taking.

At the conclusion of each section, the program prompts the user through a quiz that must be passed before proceeding further. According to Delafuente, the interactive design of the CD makes it unique. "We looked at dozens of instructional CDs during the design phase and most of them just presented information. Our goal was to make people really think about these issues and the interactive design takes that approach."

The CD, which was funded by a grant from Roche Laboratories, was produced entirely by the VCU Instructional Development Center and Academic Technology. Twenty thousand copies of the CD were produced and are being distributed around the country to pharmacists and physicians. Users can obtain a continuing education credit by successfully completing the program.

VCU School of Pharmacy Develops National Teaching Tool

CD-ROM Educates Physicians, Pharmacists about Medication Issues in the Elderly

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University News Services

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Applications Sought for VCU Interdisciplinary Women’s Health Research Scholars Program

The Virginia Commonwealth University Interdisciplinary Women’s Health Research Scholars Program, sponsored by the VCU Institute for Women’s Health, is currently accepting applications for faculty interested in women’s health research careers.

The program is designed to encourage the development of junior faculty into independent researchers with expertise and commitment to interdisciplinary women’s health research. Applicants must have or be eligible for a VCU faculty appointment.

Scholars must spend at least 75 percent of their time in research training under supervision of a research mentor. The IWHR Program will compensate departments for time spent by scholars in research training. For more information, visit www.womenshealth.vcu.edu/researchscholars.

Workshop to Focus on Foundation Funding Opportunities

VCU’s Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations will hold a free faculty workshop on foundation funding opportunities. Topics will include an overview of current trends in private funding, methods for identifying potential philanthropies and strategies for making initial foundation inquiries. Speakers will include faculty members with successful records in obtaining private support.

This workshop will be held at noon on March 2 in the VCU Alumni House. Seating is limited to 15, and a boxed lunch will be provided. For more information or to make reservations, call 828-1230.

VCU Wins Marketing Awards

Virginia Commonwealth University’s public relations office in the Division of University Outreach walked away with six awards for their entries in the Admissions Marketing Report Annual Advertising contest. The department competed nationally against other distinguished institutions including Yale, Cornell University and Georgetown University.

In the total advertising category, VCU received a Silver Award. The department also won Merit Awards in the student viewbook, imprinted materials, direct mail advertising, single magazine ad and other categories.

African-American students from Virginia Commonwealth University were recognized for their contributions to black history during the annual Black History in the Making Award Ceremony earlier this month at the University Student Commons. Above, Njeri Jackson, Ph.D., director of African-American Studies, examines “Oware” game pieces held by Mark Wood, Ph.D., professor of religious studies, prior to the start of the ceremony.

VCU Celebrates Black History Month

Keynote Speaker was First African-American to Graduate from VCU’s School of Medicine

Laura Arbogast
University News Services

The first African-American graduate from Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of Medicine was the lone speaker at a breakfast celebrating Black History Month. As part of VCU’s month-long theme “Celebrating Our Own,” Joan L. Harris, M.D., spoke about how her medical experiences have shaped her life. More than 100 students, faculty physicians, administrators and community members attended the breakfast.

Harris talked about being shocked when she received her acceptance to the School of Medicine in 1952. Although she had graduated with honors from Virginia Union University with a degree in chemistry, she knew that Virginia schools had a record of rejecting African-American applicants.

Harris completed her postgraduate training at MCV Hospitals in 1958. In 1973 she renewed her connection to the university when she became a clinical professor in VCU’s Department of Family Practice. During her five-year tenure, she created the VCU Center of Community Health. In 1978, she became the first female to be appointed Secretary of Human Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Harris also has held academic appointments at Howard University in Washington, D.C. and Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Md. She has served as a consultant to various national organizations including the National Institutes of Health, the United States Agency for International Development and the U.S. Congress on Health Issues. Harris is currently serving her second four-year term as mayor of Eden Prairie, Minn.

VCU Forum Addresses Faith-Based Funding

Panels Debate Bush Invitation to Religious Groups to Seek Social Services Money

by Mike Frontiero
University News Services

Virginia Commonwealth University’s Department of Political Science and Public Administration hosted a forum on a controversial proposal to allow religious organizations to compete for public tax dollars to help the needy. “The Charitable Choice Forum” was held this month at the Library of Virginia.

Originally enacted in 1996 at the federal level by President Bill Clinton, a more aggressive initiative is now being promoted by President George W. Bush. The new president’s proposal would allow religious institutions to compete for a share of social services money. The Virginia General Assembly is considering similar legislation.

Supporters see the proposal as a boon to addressing the pressing human-services demands of society, while critics are concerned about maintaining separation of church and state and protecting individual rights. The forum panels included Jane B. Brown, director of community programs and research for the Virginia Department of Social Services; and the Rev. J. Fletcher Lowe, Jr., executive director of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy. Russell A. Cargo, Ph.D., acting chairman of VCU’s Department of Political Science and Public Administration, was the moderator.

“Charitable and faith-based organizations have historically provided social services that benefit individuals, families and community life,” Brown said. “However, when they elect to compete for federal funds, it is important to understand what this means for those who deliver services and those who receive them.”

“There are some alligators out there you have to look out for,” said Lowe, whose organization addresses issues involving poverty, welfare reform and health care. “We’re concerned about whether the state will dump stuff on the church to get out of the social-services business.”

“This issue seems to make people nervous because they’re not sure what it all means,” said Program Director Janet R. Hutchinson, Ph.D., associate professor of public administration. “There might be some constitutional issues involving the separation of church and state as well as civil rights issues.”
Editor's Note: Virginia Commonwealth University has a new chief of police. Willie B. Fuller has 23 years of law enforcement experience on his resume, including many with VCU Police.

In 1977, he was hired as a student security officer. He became a full-time police officer two years later and reached the rank of lieutenant in 1995. Fuller left VCU Police in 1992 to become special agent in charge of administration and training at the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. He was the first African-American assigned to that position and was later promoted to deputy director of enforcement.

Fuller left VABC in 1996 to become chief of police at Virginia State University. VCU hired him back last December to succeed retiring police chief Dan Dean.

How did you arrive at your decision to return to VCU?
I loved my job at Virginia State University, but this was a perfect opportunity to come back to lead one of the pre-eminent law enforcement organizations in the country. It was an environment I was familiar with.

The university is still growing and I want to be a part of that. I love community policing, which is a priority of the VCU Police Department. I also wanted to come back to where I started and to continue on the path that Dan Dean led in his 13 years as chief.

I want to expand the public's positive image of this department and further the development of our talented officers and staff.

What are your plans to maintain and improve security?
This is a community policing-oriented department and I am a community-oriented police chief.

As much success as we have had in the Carver neighborhood, and as VCU continues to grow, there are going to be other opportunities for community policing projects in other neighborhoods around campus.

I want to show that the success we had in Carver can be duplicated elsewhere. With adequate resources, I think we can get it done. I also want to form a closer bond with the VCU Student Government Association on the academic and medical campuses.

Part of my interview process was talking with members from both of those bodies. I think they were encouraged by the commitment I made to them to make sure they are involved in some of the programs we have in the police department and the decisions we make that ultimately affect all students.

How will you work closely with the SGA?
One of the strategies I want to introduce is a partnership with the SGA. I want to address not just immediate issues, but any future initiatives that students might have that will impact police services and vice-versa. I think that will form a closer relationship and a better understanding of what we and the SGA are trying to accomplish.

Are there plans to expand your coverage area?
We are exploring possibilities. For example, we are considering some involvement in the Randolph neighborhood. I've talked to the VCU Community Advisory Board representatives and all have expressed interest in seeing more of a VCU Police presence.

Whether it's the Fan District Association, the West Grace Street Association, the Park Avenue and the West Avenue associations, or the Oregon Hill Association, all are pleased with the work we have done and want to continue and expand our relationships.

The successes we've had with community policing, not just in the Carver neighborhood, but in general, have really increased the support that we've had in the surrounding communities.

I want to make sure we do everything we can to continue those relationships.
It is going to require more resources, but President Trani and the board of visitors have been very supportive.

Upon my introduction to the board, the rector of the board said police and public safety are very, very important to this university and they are going to continue to support our initiatives.

What other improvements are you looking to make?
Training, VCU has a state certified training academy for police officers. As we expand into these surrounding communities, we will start opening up our training to citizens in the form of seminars.

The elderly have personal safety concerns and I want to start offering seminars that will help them as well as others.

Crime prevention is another series of seminars we would like to offer. Anybody we can do to augment a person's safety, we are going to do.

We also would like to increase the use of our ride-along program. The program helps students to see a different perspective and understand some of the issues police officers deal with. Conversely, police can understand where students are coming from too.

It will help them see that police officers are not just people who carry a gun and a badge, we really care about the students.

What are your greatest challenges?
Meeting higher demands for services. Our student population has grown since 1977.

Dr. Trani has initiatives in place to bring in more out-of-state students. The diversity of this university has increased dramatically and that brings a whole different set of challenges, so our officers have to be more culturally aware.

As we grow, we want to continue the level of excellent service that we are already providing to the university and surrounding communities.

How is your relationship with Richmond police chief Jerry Oliver?
We are good friends and he is a mentor to me. Jerry has supported me in my development as a police chief. He helped me on a number of projects at VSU and he and his top staff have told me they will continue to support me here at VCU.

I want to continue to learn from him. When you have those types of relationships, people who know, trust and believe in you and the things you're trying to accomplish, it just makes your job a heck of a lot easier.

Richmond Police has been a great partner for us.

What kind of image would you like students to have of VCU Police?
That we are user-friendly, student and community oriented. We are their police department. We must always remember that because we are involved in the educational process.

We help students understand everything from proper conduct to job interview skills and how to be responsible adults through training programs and seminars. We want to help them become better citizens.
VCU Health System Names Employee of the Year

At a recent award ceremony, Judy Collins, R.N.C., M.S., W.H.N.P., was honored as the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System’s Employee of the Year. Collins was one of a dozen employees who were chosen as the year 2000 Employees of the Month.

Throughout her 33-year career at VCU and its Medical College of Virginia Hospitals, Collins served in a variety of roles, most recently as Director for Women’s Health Care at Stony Point. A frequent recipient of national and state recognition for her action on behalf of women’s health initiatives, Collins retired last June.

“I am honored and humbled by this, but you can’t do any of this by yourself,” said Collins, who asked her fellow nominees to join her in accepting the award. “These people are what keep the hospital going and will ensure that it remains the outstanding center of medical services that it is.”

Sheldon Retchin, M.D., vice president of the VCU Health System, presented Collins with her award.

“VCU lost one of its best ambassadors and role models for customer service when Judy retired,” Retchin said. “We heartily congratulate you on your accomplishments throughout your distinguished career. We want you to enjoy your retirement, but know that you are sorely missed.”

— by LAURA ARBOGAST

People in the News

by Hanley & Belfs Inc., Abubaker authored and co-authored nine of the 44 chapters.

— by PETER KNELL, Ph.D., coordinator of music composition, earned first prize in the Centara Corp. New Music Festival International Composition. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation broadcasted his work nationally on Feb. 11.

Additionally, Knell has been commissioned to write a new orchestral work for next year’s competition.

— by JUDY RICHARDSON, Ph.D., professor of teacher education, presented “One Step at a Time: Traditional to Online Instruction in a Content Reading Course” to the Technology Reading and Learning Disabilities conference in San Francisco.

— by JOHN BOGARD, Ph.D. associate dean for the College of Humanities and Sciences, JILL FOX, Ph.D. associate professor of teacher education and ALAN MCELD, Ed.D., division head of teacher education, presented a session on “Teacher Recruitment and Retention: VCU/RPS/JBSCC Plan” during the 2001 Holmes Partnership annual conference.

VCU Professors Teach Child-Birth Education in Korea

by Michael Ford

University News Services

Two Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of Nursing professors were featured lecturers for a South Korea program providing education to childbirth educators seeking to qualify to take the Lamaze International certification exam.

During their December trip, the nurses also provided post professional education to internationally board certified lactation consultants.

Sharron S. Humenick, Ph.D., professor and chair of maternal child nursing, initially volunteered to go to Seoul to award lactation consultation certificates in a ceremony. But a South Korean nursing professor familiar with her work created an opportunity for Humenick and a colleague to present elements of a VCU childbirth education program, accredited by Lamaze International.

Sheila A. Smith, R.N., clinical assistant professor in maternal child nursing and a certified childbirth educator, joined the trip as a co-presenter. Smith works part time in VCU’s Medical College of Virginia Hospitals labor units and is an expert and author on exercise during pregnancy.

“armer goal for the trip was to enable Kore-an nurses to help Korean mothers and babies have better birthing experiences by using the Lamaze philosophy of childbirth preparation,” Humenick said.

Aided by translators, Humenick and Smith presented an intensive 32-hour childbirth education course to 30 South Korean nurses over four days. The presentation included education theory and covered fundamentals of the Lamaze approach, which advocates natural childbirth and the use of relaxation techniques, breathing techniques and efficient delivery positions.

Humenick, a member of the International Board of Lactation Certification Examiners and the Virginia State breastfeeding Task Force, had initially been invited to Seoul in December to participate in an awards celebration for 67 Korean nurses who had earned their lactation consultant certification. Another two days were spent presenting 12 hours of continuing education to lactation consultants.

Humenick’s book Childbirth Education, Practice, Research and Theory, which she co-authored, was honored in January by the American Journal of Nursing as a book of the year. She edits the journal’s Perinatal Education, produced by Jones and Bartlett and sponsored by Lamaze International.

Humenick has led professional groups to China, Bali and Ireland. An important component of those trips is studying cultural differences in how women and families are supported through life transitions, such as birth and early parenting. On this trip, she was told that Caesarean births account for nearly half of all births in South Korea.

The School of Nursing is launching a program to prepare childbirth educators for certification. A local, VCU-sponsored, seminar for childbirth educators is planned for May. For information call 582-6729.

A second childbirth education session in Seoul, to be led by VCU, is already scheduled for April.

VCU Professor Sheila Smith, left, shows South Korean nursing students the elements of Lamaze birthing techniques.
VCU Dance to Present New Works by Faculty, Students

by Mike Frontiero
University News Services

Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of Dance and Choreography will present its annual Student/Faculty Concert, featuring new works by students and faculty, at 8 p.m. Feb. 23 and 24 at the Grace Street Theater. Themes driven, this year's works include everything from reflections on life to roommate issues to a work inspired by Vincent Van Gogh. Highlights of the evening will include:

• The premiere of “Andante,” a new work by Chris Burnside, professor of dance and choreography. Featuring three male dancers, the work is performed to Piano Concerto No. 2 by Dmitri Shostakovich. Burnside said the piece “is a dance of memory, honoring friends who are no longer here.”

• Judith Steele, professor of dance and choreography, will premiere her highly collaborative and experimental new work, “In the Shadows of Urban Lights.” The work examines the juxtaposition of the non-tidal wet lands at Dutch Gap Conserva­tion Area and the old power plant, which is imme­diately beside it. Other artists involved in creating this piece include nationally known visual artist, Rebecca Shaw-Hutchinson, designer Gabriel Montejo, composer Marc Langlier, and costume designer Karl Green. Nine VCU dancers also contributed to the movement material.

The performance also will feature five new works by VCU Dance students:

- Dance junior Rachael Scott Crawford will show her group work “Vincent,” based on Van Gogh's life story, letters and paintings. The work is part of a series of dance pieces based on visual art. “There is so much movement and layering in Van Gogh’s work and that is part of what I wanted to capture in the dance,” Crawford said of the piece. The original score composed by VCU senior Wendy Hay was inspired by Van Gogh’s Wheatfield with Crows. “It was by total accident that Wendy and I met when we were both working about Vincent but it has worked so well for the piece,” said Crawford.

- Sophomore Charles Scott and junior Andrew de Fiesta collaborated on their new piece “Between Time.” The work is a dance about being roommates and the spontaneous and informal nature of daily interactions between friends. This piece is performed to a non-traditional score of found sounds and conversations.

- Performed and choreographed by freshman Elisabeth Ellenberger, “Duet” is actually a solo, which plays upon the simplest yet passionate communication between the visual and audible realms.

- Junior Alexandria Holmes and Timothy Zezulas created the duet “Play,” which explores with fun, vibrant, athletic movement, while exploring the innocence and color of human relationships.

- VCU senior Shavana Johnson debuts her new work-in-progress, “One is the Magic Number.” Johnson said “One is the Magic Number celebrates the hardships and the peace of being in my Lord’s presence at all times.”

Tickets are $10 for the general public, $8 for senior citizens and free to VCU students. For tickets, call 828-2020.

Virginia Commonweath
University social work professors Robert Schneider, Ph.D., left, and Frank Baskind, Ph.D., dean of the school, spoke with Gina Giglio, center, a second year social work graduate student, during the 2nd Annual Social Worker's Legislative Rally, "Social Work Odyssey Mission: Legislative Advocacy." The rally, recently held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, focused on public policy and social work practice, and how social work practitioners can directly affect policy. Participants also visited their state legislative offices and took part in a committee meeting in the General Assembly Building.

VCU Receives $1.5 Million Research Grant from NIH

Nursing School Researcher to Study Feeding Patterns of Preterm Infants

by Michael Ford
University News Services

Virginia Commonwealth University researcher will use a $1.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to study the feeding abilities of preterm infants. As the project's principal investigator, Rita Pickler, Ph.D., associate professor of maternal-child nursing, will develop reliable criteria for determining when preterm babies are ready to bottle feed. The study also will develop ways to help preterm babies become better feeders.

"As preterm infants gain weight and get close to hospital discharge, they have to be able to take all their feeding orally before they go home," Pickler said. "It's for safety reasons, but we also want to be sure the infant is receiving adequate nutrition." Before they can feed orally, preterm infants are tube fed. Infants in the study will range from 34 weeks to, as young as, 22 weeks of gestational age. Full-term births occur at 40 weeks of gestational age.

The interdisciplinary research team will seek to predict when preterm infants have coordinated three critical actions: sucking, swallowing and breathing. Pickler said coordinating all three is a complex skill for tiny infants who often interrupt their breathing while sucking and swallowing, which temporarily can leave them with a diminished oxygen supply and exhausted from feeding.

"Their breathing becomes rapid because they're trying to re-oxygenate themselves. So it becomes a very complex and difficult milestone for preterm infants," Pickler said.

Statistics show that, American women give birth annually to 450,000 preterm infants. Nearly 250 preterm babies were treated at MCV Hospitals in 1997. In 1998, 151 preterm babies stayed an average of 49 days at the hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Pickler will enroll 95 preterm babies at VCU's Medical College of Virginia Hospitals during the four-year study, funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research.

Following six months of training for study contributors, the first 16 infants will be enrolled in July. Researchers will observe and evaluate feedings every day for two weeks after preterm infants begin bottle-feeding at 32 weeks post-conceptional age.
Campus Calendar

SEMINARS
Feb. 20—"Gardening Tips." Sponsored by Employee Health Services and Work/Life Resources. For details, call 828-1688.
Noon/Student Commons' Alumni Association Board Room

4 p.m./Oliver Hall's Kapp Lecture Hall, Room 1024

Feb. 21—"Black History Month Brown Bag Discussion." Sponsored by Multicultural Student Affairs. For details, call 828-6672.
Noon/Student Commons, Center for Multicultural Activities

Noon/Grant House Parlor Rooms

Feb. 22—"Black History Month: Diversity in the Workplace." Sponsored by the Career Center. For details, call 828-1645.
4 p.m./Student Commons, Capital A

Feb. 22—"Chemistry Seminar: Mary E. Kapp, Founder of the VCU Department of Chemistry." For details, call 828-1208.
4 p.m./Oliver Hall's Kapp Lecture Hall, Room 1024

4 p.m./Sanger Hall, Room 3-016

4 p.m./Life Sciences Building, Room 201

Feb. 26—"Visiting Writers Series: Matthew Kuhn." Sponsored by English Department. For details, call 828-9756.
8 p.m./Student Commons, Capital Ballrooms

Feb. 27—"Genotyping Short Tandem Repeat Polymorphisms by Electrophoresis Initiation Fourier Transform Ion Cyclotron Resonance Mass Spectrometry." Sponsored by the School of Pharmacy. For details, call 828-4328.
Noon/Smith Building, Room 103

Feb. 27—"Stop the Presses! E-Books are Here!" Sponsored by VCU Libraries. For details, call 828-0638.
Noon/medical Sciences Building, Rooms 104,105

Feb. 28—"Black History Month Brown Bag Discussion." Sponsored by Multicultural Student Affairs. For details, call 828-6672.
Noon/Student Commons, Center for Multicultural Activities

4 p.m./Sanger Hall, Room 3-016

WORKSHOPS
2 p.m./Sanger Hall, Room 3-048

3 p.m./Student Commons, Career Center

Feb. 21—"Counseling Staff for Performance." Sponsored by the Office of Training and Development. For details, call 828-0179. Cost is $35.
9 a.m./McGuire Hall Annex, Room B20

4 p.m./Student Commons, Career Center

11 a.m./Student Commons, Career Center

Feb. 21—"Compensation Reform for VCU Managers (Phase II)." Sponsored by the Office of Training and Development. For details, call 828-0179.
2 p.m./McGuire Hall Annex, Room B20

3:30 p.m./Student Commons, Theater

Feb. 22—"Academic Success: How to Make the Most of Study Groups." Sponsored by University Counseling Services of the Division of Student Affairs. For details, call 828-6200.
Noon/Student Commons, Theater

4 a.m./McGuire Hall Annex, Room B20

1 p.m./McGuire Hall Annex, Room B20

Feb. 27—"Leadership Program: Leading a Diverse Workplace." Sponsored by the Office of Training and Development. For details, call 828-0179.
Cost is $45.
9 a.m./McGuire Hall Annex, Room B20

March 1—"Career Connections Orientation." Sponsored by the Career Center. For details, call 828-1645.
11 a.m./Student Commons, Career Center

March 1—"Career Connections Orientation." Sponsored by the Career Center. For details, call 828-1645.
11 a.m./Student Commons, Career Center

March 1—"Weight Watchers Weight Loss Program." Sponsored by Employee Health Services and Work/Life Resources. For details, call 828-0502, or E-mail at jrhocell@vcu.edu.
11 a.m./Student Commons

March 2—"Compensation Reform for VCU Managers (Phase II)." Sponsored by the Office of Training and Development. For details, call 828-0179.
2 p.m./McGuire Hall Annex, Room B20

3:30 p.m./Student Commons, Theater

CONFERENCES
March 13—"Health Practitioners Intervention Program." Sponsored by the Office of Continuing Medical Education. For details, call 828-3640. Cost is $95 for physicians and $175 for other health care professionals.

Central Park Hotel, Fredericksburg

March 2—"Women in Medicine Pathways to Leadership Conference: Changing the Culture." Sponsored by the Office of Continuing Medical Education. For details, call 828-3640. Cost is $150.
The Jefferson Hotel, Richmond

March 2—"5th Annual Liver Symposium." Sponsored by the Office of Continuing Medical Education. For details, call 828-3640. Cost is $300.
The Jefferson Hotel, Richmond

PERFORMANCES
Feb. 26—"VCU Student-Faculty Chamber Orchestra Concert." Sponsored by the Department of Music. For details, call 828-1166. Tickets are $5.
8 p.m./Performing Arts Center, Sonia Vlahovic Concert Hall

March 2—"Piano Studio Recital." Sponsored by music. For details, call 828-1166.
8 p.m./Performing Arts Center, Sonia Vlahovic Concert Hall

March 4—"VCU Guitar Series." Sponsored by the Department of Music. For details, call 828-1166.
4 p.m./Performing Arts Center, Sonia Vlahovic Concert Hall

SPORTS
Men's Basketball
Feb. 24—VCU vs. Old Dominion University
4 p.m./Siegel Center

Feb. 27—VCU vs. University of Richmond
7:30 p.m./Siegel Center

Women's Basketball
Feb. 22—VCU vs. University of Richmond
7 p.m./Siegel Center

Feb. 25—VCU vs. Old Dominion University
7 p.m./Siegel Center

Baseball
Feb. 28—VCU vs. University of Virginia
4 p.m./The Diamond

March 3—VCU vs. Fairleigh Dickinson University
1 p.m./The Diamond

March 4—VCU vs. Fairleigh Dickinson University
1 p.m./The Diamond

Women's Tennis
Feb. 24—VCU vs. Wake Forest University
4 p.m./Thalhimer Tennis Center

Women's Tennis
Feb. 24—VCU vs. Boston University
Noon/Thalhimer Tennis Center

Open House
More than 800 prospective students attended an Open House at Virginia Commonwealth University earlier this month. Guests had a chance to tour the Academic and Medical Campuses and learn more about the university's schools and departments. Special workshops were available to discuss housing, financial aid and student resources. VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., along with several other university leaders, welcomed prospective students and guests at the Siegel Center.