Baldacci Urges Graduates to Find Their Passion

VCU Awards 4,332 professional, graduate and undergraduate degrees

by J. Suzanne Horsley
University News Services

Commencement marks a major life event for college students, taking on personal meaning for all graduates: the culmination of an academic career for some while just the beginning for others; the first steps toward a career choice or the formal graduation boost to advance in their chosen profession.

Baldacci encouraged graduates to live the life they love so they do not have regrets later.

Life Sciences Building to be Named for President and Mrs. Trani

New Building Scheduled to Open This Fall

by Mary Beth Alford
University News Services

During a surprise announcement at VCU's commencement ceremony on May 19, Rector Edward L. Filippone, J.D., revealed that the board of visitors unanimously approved naming the new Life Sciences Building in honor of President Eugene F. Trani, Ph.D., and his wife Lois E. Trani.

The $28.1 million facility, located at Harrison and Cary streets, is scheduled to open this fall.

"We were very surprised and humbled to learn that the life sciences building would be named for us," said Dr. Trani. "It is very rare to receive recognition of this magnitude during our time at VCU."
continued from page 1

The Maymont Foundation held an art show and sale last month featuring the paintings of W. Baxter Perkinson, D.D.S., and wildlife sculptures by William H. Turner, Turner's son, David H. Turner. Perkinson, a member of VCU's board of visitors and the VCU Health System board, donated 25 paintings for the show and selected five of them for auction.

In 1998, Perkinson auctioned paintings that raised $200,000 for VCU athletic scholarships.

The Maymont Foundation

Messer is the right person to provide that leadership as we move into the challenges of making VCU much better known beyond the commonwealth.

Messer came to VCU in 1973 as a faculty member in the Department of Art History; a position she continues to hold. Since 1985 she has served as the assistant dean in the School of the Arts, then associate dean and director of graduate studies in the School of the Arts. In 1992 she became the assistant vice provost for the Division of Continuing Studies and Public Service, later named the Division of University Outreach.

"For almost 30 years, I have had the great pleasure of promoting VCU – in one way or another – to our audiences locally, regionally, nationally and internationally," said Messer.

"Now I am honored to have the opportunity to work at the vice presidential level of the university in leading VCU's marketing, communications and recruitment initiatives."

Messer earned a bachelor's degree from Duke University and a master's degree from Indiana University in Bloomington.

continued from page 1

Mr. Flippen's re-election as rector is a testament to his quality leadership as well as his commitment to VCU," said VCU President Eugene F. Trani, Ph.D. "His work with the university has been a true benefit to students and faculty."

In addition to frequent guest lectures at VCU, Mr. Flippen has lectured on public utilities law at the University of Virginia School of Law, on trade regulation at the Graduate School of Business at the College of William and Mary and on economic regulation at the T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond, the Washington and Lee University School of Law and the Marshall Wythe School of Law at William and Mary.

Mr. Flippen has published a number of articles on economic regulation and is listed in the public utilities section of The Best Lawyers in America. Mr. Flippen received his bachelor's degree from VCU and his master's and law degrees from William and Mary. Prior to joining McGuireWoods, Mr. Flippen served as deputy general counsel for the State Corporation Commission, assistant general counsel for Duke Power Co., and partner in the energy and environment practice group at Mays and Valentine LLP.

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VCU Board of Visitors Approves 2001-02 Budget

by Melissa Jones University News Services

On May 18, VCU's board of visitors approved the university's 2001-02 revised budget plan that continues the freeze on Virginia undergraduate tuition, supports VCU Education Institute work, and calls for increased funding for recruitment and enrollment efforts. The newly approved budget serves as an update to last year's original biennial budget projections.

The foremost among this year's budget items is the $227.8 million and expenditures of $625.5 million for fiscal year 2001-02. Budgeted revenues represent an increase of 6 percent over the 2000-01 budget and 5.1 percent over 2001-02 original budget plan estimates. Budgeted expenditures represent an increase of 5.9 percent over the 2000-01 budget and 5.2 percent over 2001-02 budget plan estimates.

The 2001-02 budget holds steady the $1.5 million in support for VCU Life Sciences that was approved last year. The foremost among these strategic priorities, VCU Life Sciences will integrate diverse disciplines from across the university's two campuses and comprehensively involve all levels of faculty and students in the pursuit of life sciences education and scholarship.

"The rapid pace of scientific discoveries makes our commitment to VCU Life Sciences all the more critical," said VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D. "By building on the university's traditional strengths, VCU is uniquely positioned to equip its students to meet the current and future demands of the life sciences revolution."

The budget update adds $2.7 million above this year's budget for strengthening campus research. The budget also supports student enrollment and programs with nearly $2.5 million in new funding for enrollment and recruitment initiatives.

The new budget maintains support for university priorities set out in last year's budget, including new School of Engineering faculty position, the School of Engineering Clean Room and Science Initiatives. Because the 2001 General Assembly adjourned without approving an amended budget for the 2000-02 biennium, the budget passed by the 2000 General Assembly remains in effect until June 30, 2002.

"VCU's Health System's MCV Hospitals' Helipad Now On Main Hospital Rooftop"

by Erin Lucero University News Services

Beginning this month, helicopters that transport critically injured trauma patients to the VCU Health System's MCV Hospitals will begin landing on the roof of Main Hospital, at 12th and Marshall streets. Previously, helicopters delivered patients to a landing pad off of Seventh Street, and a waiting ambulance transported patients for the remaining half-mile to Main Hospital. Now, after landing on Main Hospital's rooftop helipad, patients will be taken by elevator directly to the emergency department or the operating room. The rooftop location is expected to shave as much as 10 minutes off a trip in which every extra minute can be a matter of life or death for critically injured patients.

"Having the helipad at the rooftop of Main Hospital will make a tremendous difference for our patients," said Rao Ivatury, M.D., director of MCV's Level I Trauma Center. "Not only will the trip from the scene of the accident to the hospital be quicker, we will have the option of taking patients straight to the operating room."

For 17 years, the Virginia State Police's Medevac helicopter has transported critically injured individuals to MCV Hospitals from all over Central Virginia. While in the air, victims are cared for by specially trained paramedics. Once the helicopter lands, patient care is taken over by the hospital's trauma team — a collaborative effort made up of staff from VCU Health System's Surgery and Emergency Medicine departments and other support areas.

"We expect that the considerably reduced transportation time will result in paramedics at accident scenes requesting helicopter transports more frequently," said Ivatury. Because the half-mile drive from the helipad to the hospital has been eliminated, patients will arrive at MCV Hospitals quicker than ever before. "Even accident scenes that are within a 10 minute ambulance drive of the hospital could shorten their trip by using helicopter transport."

More than 160 patients were transported to MCV Hospitals by helicopter last year. Hospital officials expect that number will rise in the rooftop helipad's first year of operation. MCV Hospitals' helipad is the only rooftop helipad in Greater Richmond. Forty-five U.S. hospitals have rooftop helipads. Only one other Virginia hospital — Roanoke's Memorial Hospital — operates a rooftop helipad. VCU's new helipad has been reviewed by the Federal Aviation Administration and approved by the State Fire Marshal's Office.

Plans to relocate the helipad were set in motion last fall because the Virginia Department of Transportation's plan to add lighting along Interstate 64 would interfere with a helicopter's approach to the previous Seven Street landing pad. VDOT provided the hospital with $300,000 toward the $1 million construction costs.

Campaign for VCU Heart Center Exceeds Goal

by Michael Ford University News Services

At the close of a one-year campaign, VCU has raised $8,366,240 — exceeding its goal by more than $1.4 million — for the Heart Center at the VCU Health System's Medical College of Virginia Hospitals. The campaign provides new funding for education, clinical care and research. Last month, VCU raised a $1 million challenge grant from the Theresa A. Thomas Memorial Foundation, the campaign benefited from gifts by private philanthropists, corporations, foundations and many individual donors. James C. Roberts, attorney and partner in the firm Troutman Sanders May & Valentine, and Charles Thalhimer, a Richmond philanthropist, co-chaired the campaign.

"The Heart Center Campaign has taught us that a close-knit cadre of visionary volunteers and donors, working hand-in-hand with our dedicated faculty, can frequently result in raising objectives on a single Center of Excellence," said President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D.

"I am immensely pleased with the response and grateful to so many people who gave so generously of their resources to make this possible," campaign co-chair Robert Smith said. "As we come to the formal end of the campaign, it is my hope that people in our area will realize we have one of the best heart centers in the country."

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death worldwide. Every 33 seconds, someone dies of heart disease in America. Men suffer heart attacks an average of 10 years earlier than women, yet every year since 1984, cardiovascular disease has claimed the lives of more females than males. Today, women die of heart disease more often than the next 16 causes of death combined.

Best known for pioneering heart transplant surgery in 1968, the VCU Heart Center incorporates the Division of Cardiology, the largest division of the Department of Internal Medicine, with team members from cardiac surgery, physiology and cardiac anesthesia. Sustaining about $7 million in research funding annually, areas of clinical investigation include the cardiac catheterization lab's work in new device development and electrophysiology's use of next-generation pacemakers to treat irregular heartbeats. There is additional research in heart muscle damage following heart attacks and in understanding the basic mechanisms of heart rhythm disturbances.

"Our goal at the VCU Heart Center is to improve the lives of people by advancing the boundaries of medicine through research and with excellent patient care," said George W. Vetrovec, M.D., chair and director of the VCU Heart Center. "This outstanding campaign provides us the funds to continue to offer the most modern patient care and to explore new treatments that will save more lives. We also are now better able to recruit excellent new faculty so that we will remain among the top heart centers in the country.

In addition to its initial gift, the Theresa Thomas Foundation also has donated $1 million to create a new endowment to support nurses and other non-physician staff of the VCU Heart Center. Other money raised during the campaign will be used to endow a $1 million cardiology chair and seven professorships. Another $2 million will fund a new chest-pain initiative, with $1.5 million more supporting research, including fellowships.
"What we human beings do best is think and reflect," he said. "You've done a lot of that obviously, and you've done it well, and that's why you're here to enjoy the fruits of your labors. But in today's world, we are often compelled to receive and react instantly. Sometimes, it seems to me, that we factor our greatest strength as human beings, our power to think, right out of our own future.... However, I can stand here today and tell each of you that you can do anything with your lives."

A Virginia native, Baldacci has written five best-selling legal and political thrillers, including *Absolute Power*, *Total Control*, *The Winner*, *The Simple Truth* and *Saving Faith*. His latest novel, *Wish You Well*, is about life in Virginia's Appalachian Mountains during the 1940s. More than 25 million copies of Baldacci's books — translated into more than 30 languages — are in print worldwide. Baldacci earned his bachelor of arts in political science from VCU and 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.

"Whatever you do in your life, you have to find at least one thing that you're absolutely passionate about — and don't accept anything less than that. For some, but not all, it will be their work. For others, it might be community service. For some others it might be a cherished hobby. For most of us, it's hard to find that one passion."

Baldacci closed his address with a reminder that graduates are in control of their own destinies.

"While fortune, either good or bad, plays a role in all of our lives, it's largely up to you to craft the life that best suits you. Now if you shirk that responsibility, trust me on this, too — life will create one for you."

VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., presented Baldacci with an honorary doctor of humane letters during the ceremony. Dr. Trani also presented an honorary doctor of humane letters to former White House correspondent Helen Thomas.

The Edward A. Wayne Medal, recognizing extraordinary service to VCU, was presented to Bertha C. Rolfe, retired VCU School of Pharmacy faculty member. She was honored as one of VCU's and the community's most important public-service advocates.

Three university community members received Presidential Medallions for their outstanding contributions: Jeffrey Levin, D.D.S., a School of Dentistry alumnus who has been in private practice in Richmond since 1985 and a VCU associate clinical professor since 1990; Regina A. Perry, Ph.D., one of the nation's foremost art historians in African and African-American art and culture and former VCU art history professor; and Lauren Albert Woods, M.D., Ph.D., VCU professor emeritus of pharmacology and toxicology and former vice president for health sciences.
More than 2,500 students, joined by their family and friends, gathered at the Richmond Coliseum to receive their degrees at the May 19 event. Pictures: (1.) Two graduates are happy to see their names in the Commencement program. (2.) VCU Rector Edward Flippen, J.D., congratulates President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., and Mrs. Lois Trani following the surprise announcement that the new Life Sciences Building would be named in their honor (see story, page 1). (3.) Parents are just as happy as the graduates at the Richmond Coliseum. (4.) A graduate spots her family in the audience. (5.) Dr. Trani and Provost Roderick McDavis, Ph.D., present the Presidential Medallion to Jeffrey Levin, D.D.S. (6.) Terry Austin, Ph.D., conducts the VCU Commencement Band during the ceremonies. (7.) David Baldacci takes time to autograph some of his books before the ceremonies begin. (8.) The VCU Police Honor Guard open the ceremonies. (9.) Helen Thomas, former White House correspondent, receives the Excellence in Communications Award from Terry Oggel, Ph.D., during the School of Mass Communications diploma ceremony. The brass award was created by Lester Van Winkle, professor of sculpture. (10.) At left, Jack Lanier, Dr.P.H., associate vice president for health sciences, public health, talks with Claude Allen, deputy secretary of health and human services, before Allen's address to the master's of public health graduates.
Sharp Tells Business Graduates to Embrace Change

Mike Frontiero
University News Services

Richard Sharp, chairman of Richmond-based retailing giant Circuit City, gave School of Business graduates some basic guidelines for personal success: get involved in your community, exercise your right to vote and resist the status quo.

"Those who want to achieve their results within the status quo may be good managers and perform well," Sharp said. "Those who embrace change wholeheartedly will be our next generation of leaders.

Sharp spoke to business school graduates and their guests during the school's diploma ceremony, attended by more than 325 graduates and undergraduates. Nearly 670 degrees were awarded this year.

The graduates listened intently as Sharp asked them to consider their obligations as citizens to get involved in their community. "Those of us who are better off have an obligation to offer a hand up—not a hand out—to those less fortunate," Sharp said.

He warned them not to make the mistake of thinking they can't make a difference, saying people young and old across the country are making a difference every day.

Sharp emphasized the importance of voting and getting involved in the political process in the way he expects of President George W. Bush's razor-thin victory over Democratic candidate Al Gore in last November's general election.

"Our democracy works best when everyone is involved in the system and we have a country of informed, participating citizens," he said.

The Circuit City chairman told the graduates they were fortunate to receive their business education during one of the most exciting periods in American business history and took a moment to give insight on Wall Street today.

"There are many lessons to be learned," Sharp said. "Perhaps we can call them the good, the bad and the ugly.

The good, Sharp said, is the strength of the American economy, which was built on the free enterprise system. He contended that a nation's standard of living only improves when companies innovate and become more productive.

The bad, according to Sharp, happened when the bears returned to Wall Street last year, sending the Dow Jones Industrial Average and the NASDAQ Composite Index plunging from their record highs. "I'm going to suggest that the markets are down today because sanity has returned," Sharp said. "For a brief moment in history, the markets were nuts.

Sharp used defunct dot-com toy retailer eToys to make his point. At its peak, he said, the company had sales of $151 million and losses of $189 million, yet its share price was $80 and market capital totaled $8 billion.

The ugly, Sharp said, is that many investors got caught up in the dot.com hype and lost a lot of money when the bull market ended.

His forecast on the economy: bright for America. "I'm a big believer of American capitalism. I believe that prudent investors—who pay attention to the fundamentals—will do well in the market as they have for the last hundred years."

Laskin Awarded Honorary Degree

by Laura Arbogast
University News Services

Last month, Indiana University presented VCU's Daniel M. Laskin, D.D.S., M.S., with an honorary Doctor of Science degree. It was only the second time the university has ever awarded a degree.

The degree was presented at the university's commencement ceremony in Indianapolis. Laskin, who received his dental degree from Indiana University in 1947, has served as chairman of oral and maxillofacial surgery in VCU's schools of dentistry and medicine for the past 17 years.

"Dr. Laskin's career has exemplified the very highest standards of personal integrit and steadfast commitment to the public good," said Lawrence Goldblatt, D.D.S., dean of the Indiana University School of Dentistry. "I cannot imagine anyone whose life and work better exemplify the model of professional and personal qualities so valued by our school."

After completing his residency at Cook County Hospital in Illinois in 1951, Laskin became a faculty member in the University of Illinois' Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. He later served as head of the department before coming to VCU in 1984.

In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Laskin has published more than 900 articles in the fields of oral and maxillofacial surgery and dental research. He also has served as president of numerous organizations including the American and International Associations of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.

Throughout his 50-year career, Laskin has been awarded more than 70 national and international awards. However, the honorary degree holds special meaning for him.

"I am especially thrilled by this award because it is from Indiana University," Laskin said. "For me, it is one of the highest honors to be recognized by your own alma mater for your achievements.

NAMING

continued from page 1

one's lifetime. Lois and I take enormous pride in the accomplishments of this university and are thrilled to become part of the VCU legacy.

The proposed VCU College of Science building will house College of Science Department of Biology and the Center for Environmental Studies and will support the biomedical engineering, chemistry, mathematical sciences and physics departments. The 132,000 square foot building will include 44 laboratories, a three-season greenhouse, and lecture and classroom space. An aquatic facility will have up to 20 research tanks for controlled experiments on both marine and freshwater fish, amphibians and other aquatic organisms.

Imagining the Future of a Multi-Million Dollar Solar-Powered Refreshment Cart

by Mike Frontiero
University News Services

Imagine you're on a golf course or a construction site on a warm, sunny day. You're dying of thirst and your stomach is growling, but you didn't pack a lunch, and it's a long walk to the nearest snack bar. What do you do?

Two VCU mechanical engineering students found a solution. For their senior year design project, Chip Combs, 29, from Mechanicville and John Torres, 22, from Powder, Puerto Rico, invented a rolling refreshment center that keeps cold drinks cold and hot food hot all day. The battery-powered device mounts on the payoff bed of a John Deere electric Gator, which is similar to a golf cart.

People who go to golf courses want to stay for several hours, but not all golf courses let you bring your own refreshments," Torres said. "With our refreshment center, hungry golfers won't have to leave the green and the golf courses will profit.

For students who don't play golf, inventing a device that contributes to the enjoyment of the game required business sense as well as technical genius.

Before construction could begin, Torres and Combs were required to perform a marketing study to see if anyone would buy their invention. Seven golf course operators in the Richmond area expressed interest.

"Our marketing research showed potential clients would pay up to $6,000," Combs said. "Many golfers are willing to pay $3 to $5 for a 12-ounce bottle of Coca-Cola, so the refreshment center would pay for itself pretty quickly."

The students' design resembles the original golf cart and resembles the original golf cart's battery where it's needed when temperature requirements in certain compartments are met or when the power draw gets too high.

"The technology they used was not new, but they used it in a unique way, that's good engineering," said associate professor Timothy M. Cameron, Ph.D., who coordinated senior design projects for 30 mechanical engineering students this year. "They definitely got an 'A' for this.

The idea for the project came from John Deere, where Combs worked last summer. "It just so happened that the company had a huge list of attachments they wanted to develop and we pitched the refreshment cart idea," Combs said.

John Deere gave the students a $5,000 grant for construction. Part of the learning experience was realizing that the finished product doesn't always resemble the original design, and that engineers are often bound by price, time and power availability.

"For example, we wanted to weld the edges together, but we found that was very expensive," said Combs. "so we redesigned the refreshment center without welds and bolted it together."

"The goal is to give the students a large, multidisciplinary design experience and send them off into their careers with a success story and a portfolio," Cameron said. "I hope the project teaches them some humility so they realize that making things work in real life is challenging."

Look for the refreshment cart soon on a golf course or construction site near you. Company officials were so impressed with the prototype, they decided to put it into production after some modifications are made to the design.

It's unlikely that Combs and Torres would receive royalties or other rewards for their invention, but their professors say that's important.

"What's most important is that the students learn something valuable from what they build," said assistant professor Donna M. Meyer, Ph.D., who helped the students work through some of the problems they encountered during the nine-month course. "If they went in it just for the credit they wouldn't learn much."

Both students graduated May 19. Combs has accepted an engineering position at Dominion Energy's North Anna Power Station. Torres is considering returning to VCU in the fall to continue his engineering studies.
Guest Professor Shares Techniques for Teaching Students With Learning Disabilities

by J. Suzanne Horsley
University News Services

Small classrooms offer many advantages for faculty and students, particularly students who have learning disabilities. But sometimes, professors find that by changing their teaching style to help students with learning disabilities, they actually help all of his students. The VCU Center for Teaching Excellence, in collaboration with the Division of Student Affairs, invited Wallace to share his innovative teaching methods with VCU faculty in May. Wallace discussed "Teaching Disasters or Teaching About Disasters" with faculty from large lecture classes and then led a roundtable discussion for all faculty interested in learning new teaching techniques.

I discovered there were different pathways to learning," Wallace said of his first encounters with students with learning disabilities in his "Geologic Disasters and Society" lecture classes. "One of the most startling realizations for me was that some people can't listen and take notes." By trying new techniques that reach all the different types of learners, he found that it made him a more effective teacher for all students. "I learned to affect all of the senses in the classroom," he said. "I do a demonstration in every class to reinforce the words and the lessons from that day's lecture. And I incorporate technology through Web sites, e-mail and computer graphs to help get the important points across."

Wallace developed tactile-based exercises for sight-impaired students to help them understand maps and geological phenomena, but to his surprise the rest of his students also wanted to do the exercises. He incorporated the sense of smell to show how some types of volcanic eruptions can fill a community with the heavy stench of sulfur. And he told stories of human survival after a major earthquake to make students visualize the destruction.

Elizabeth Kuhns, Ph.D., an associate professor of linguistics, has had students with disabilities in her classes and was able to relate to Wallace's examples of using the senses to teach.

"When we drew tree diagrams to study transformational grammar, I used pudding paint on posters to draw diagrams that the student could feel," she said.

"Every faculty member wants to teach well," Wallace told his audience, "What we need most are the resources to be the most effective with a diverse group of students."

For more information on helping students with learning or physical disabilities, contact Liz Getzel in VCU's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center at 827-0748.

School of Medicine Receives $1.8 Million Grant From Donald W. Reynolds Foundation

by Joe Kuttnerkuler
University News Services

Benefiting from one of the largest grant initiatives ever offered for geriatric education, VCU's School of Medicine has been awarded a four-year, $1.8 million grant from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation to enhance geriatric medical instruction.

VCU is one of only 10 schools in the nation to receive a share of the $20 million Reynolds funding. The grant also will benefit the Geriatrics Section at the McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center, which is closely affiliated with the School of Medicine and a partner in the project.

The funding, which VCU will match by half for a total of $2.7 million, will finance a number of new projects, support development of interactive curricula and increase the number of required hours on medical students and residents on gerontology subjects.

"This will make it possible for our medical school to build a cohesive curriculum for geriatric education," said Peter A. Boling, M.D., director of the Geriatrics Section in VCU's School of Medicine. "It will enable us to take a quantum leap forward."

Under the terms of the grant, all medical students will be exposed to up to 60 hours of new instruction in gerontology during their four years of training. Students also will work closely with the medical school's Supply Center-Richmond, formerly known as Bellwood, detected levels of toxic chemicals on its property, which is adjacent to Rayon Park. In 1987, the area was designated a Superfund site.

"We got involved in this project knowing that this same neighborhood had to cope with water issues more than 10 years ago, and now it's having toxic problems," Goldstone said. "Although it is unclear at this point whether or not the two issues have any commonalities, it is clear that these individuals need assistance."

Recent testing by a private company found that the water that runs from a storm water pipe originating from the Defense Supply Center into No Name Creek, an area where Rayon Park children play, contained high levels of toxic chemicals.

Another test issued by the state showed much lower levels of toxic chemicals, Williams said. William M.D., director of the Chesterfield Health District, agrees that the water from the pipe, which is currently capped, needs to be monitored closely by the Department of Environmental Quality. He contends that the contaminants do not pose any immediate health risks.

"We knew that we couldn't fix the problem overnight," Goldstone said. "But we feel confident that with our help and attention to their cause, the voices of the residents of Rayon Park will be heard a little louder. We look forward to accompanying them to future community and board meetings to help solve their problems as quickly as possible."

In Brief

Va-LEND Program Earns Grant for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

The Va-LEND Program at the Virginia Institute for Developmental Disabilities has earned a grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration. The purpose of the project is to improve the health of children with special health-care needs, especially those at risk of abuse and neglect, by improving the clinical competence and leadership skills of their health-care providers.

The project is a collaboration with other university centers in Colorado, Georgia, Tennessee and Oregon to develop a training curriculum and produce a national video teleconference in spring 2002. For details, call 828-5246 or email at acero@virginia.edu.

Recreation Sports Spring Golf Tournament to Honor Jack Corazzini

The annual spring golf tournament, sponsored by Recreational Sports has been named "The Jack Corazzini Memorial Golf Tournament" in honor of the former director of University Counseling Services, Corazzini, who served VCU for 19 years, died in 1999.

This year's tournament will be held June 21 and is open to all faculty, staff and their guests. The cost is $40 per person and includes greens fees, cart, lunch and prizes. Space is limited. For an entry form, call 828-6039.
VCU Program Integrates Service, Teaching and Research
Program Now Accepting Applications

by Lissette Linares
University News Services

VCU faculty are sharing their expertise with the Richmond community while reinforcing in their students the importance of community service... This is the goal of VCU's Community Service Associates Program, which for years has connected faculty with neighborhood groups, civic associations, government or professional organizations and non-profit agencies. Faculty have used these experiences to enhance their teaching and to launch research projects.

Several years ago, Frank Farrington, M.D., associate professor of pediatric dentistry, participated in the program, partnering with St. Joseph's Villa to provide residents with dental care and health screenings. The program was such a success that Farrington and other faculty in the School of Dentistry have incorporated similar community service projects into their curricula. Faculty and students conduct weekly health screenings at Carver Elementary School, run health fairs and conduct educational programs in the community.

“The program succeeds in bringing two parts together — service to the community and the education component,” Farrington said. “It gets health professions students out into the community to see that wherever they enter practice, they can and should be a part of the community.”

David Croteau, Ph.D., associate professor of sociology and anthropology, worked with Homeward, an agency that coordinates service needs for the homeless in Richmond. Croteau consulted with four graduate students who worked with Homeward to identify the intersection of the organization's needs and the students' interests. The resulting research projects included: the role of church groups in providing services, issues in coordinating different types of organizations and agencies, how to best serve the academic needs of children of homeless families, and the education of children about HIV/AIDS.

The students conducted research in these areas and presented a report to Homeward and other community groups. Students also used the projects for their theses.

“There is this myth that service is something that you do outside of research and teaching. But this method has been completely integrated into my teaching and research,” Croteau said. “It can really be used as a basis to improve teaching and research.”

Some other faculty members who have successfully integrated teaching, research and service through the Community Service Associates Program include:

Charles Bleick, Ph.D., chair of art education, with the assistance of VCU students and in collaboration with the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, helped elementary and middle-school students in the Blackwell community develop a vision for the future of their neighborhood. He also created a six-week art program to help students design a neighborhood park which culminated in a plan for an actual park site.

Laura Browder, Ph.D., associate professor of English, worked with the Richmond Community Theatre Guild and the Carver Area Civic Improvement League to create "Sheep Hill Memories, Carver Dreams," a play documenting the history and survival of the Carver Community. VCU students conducted the interviews for the script and performed in the production.

Christina Lindholt, M.S., chair of the Department of Fashion Design and Merchandising, worked with VCU students and HOOKUPS Inc. to provide a series of product development workshops and activities for youth in the Carver Community. She and Karen Guthrie, professor of fashion merchandising, led the children in the research of product markets and design of T-shirts and tote bags. The project has been incorporated into a grant submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

CSAP now is accepting applications for fall 2001. Associates are usually assigned for one semester and are expected to commit an average of 10 hours per week to their projects. Projects can be initiated by a community agency, organization or a faculty member. For more information or to apply, call the Office of Community Programs at 828-1831 or visit www.vcu.edu/ocp/ocpdocs/csap.html.