

# Step teams battle for fame and glory

## News

Commons Theater filled for Westboro Baptist debate · 3

## Sports

Soccer struggles in conference-opening weekend · 6

## Spectrum

Cinema students to screen films · 15

## Opinion

Taking responsibility in avoiding crime · 18



# briefs

## Local and VCU

### Va. Christian activist hopes to distribute Qurans

Florida Pastor Terry Jones canceled his Sept. 11 Quran burning, but what has become of the Islamic holy books since the international controversy has subsided?

The answer rests with the Rev. Patrick Mahoney, a Christian activist from the Fredericksburg area.

Mahoney traveled to Gainesville, Fla., to pray on the grounds of Jones' Dove World Outreach Center in the days before Sept. 11, trying to convince the preacher to cancel the burning.

Facing mounting pressure from politicians and religious leaders, Jones relented.

Mahoney returned to Florida last week and collected some 225 Qurans. He now expects to distribute them to Christian churches and missionary groups as a tool for interfaith dialogue.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### Westboro members picket at Richmond churches

Five members of the Kansas-based hate group Westboro Baptist Church picketed at two Richmond-area churches Sunday morning.

About 10 counterprotesters picketed at Trinity Baptist Church in Richmond. The Westboro group's protest at West End Assembly of God in western Henrico County got little attention from churchgoers and no counterprotests.

The anti-gay, anti-semitic group made waves when members came to Richmond in March, drawing hundreds of counterprotesters.

Albert Snyder, the father of a soldier killed in Iraq whose funeral service in Maryland was picketed by Westboro Baptist Church, is suing the group and its pastor, for allegedly disrupting the service.

Snyder won a \$5 million verdict in district court, but an appeals court reversed the decision, saying the protesters were exercising their right to free speech. The case is before the U.S. Supreme Court.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

## National and International

### Judge orders lesbian reinstated to Air Force

A federal judge ruled Friday that a decorated flight nurse discharged from the Air Force for being gay should be given her job back as soon as possible in the latest legal setback to the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

The decision by U.S. District Judge Ronald Leighton came in a closely watched case as a tense debate has been playing out over the policy. Senate Republicans blocked an effort to lift the ban this week, but two federal judges have ruled against the policy.

Maj. Margaret Witt was discharged under the "don't ask, don't tell" policy and sued to get her job back.

A judge in 2006 rejected Witt's claims that the Air Force violated her rights when it fired her. An appeals court panel overruled him two years later, leaving it to Leighton to determine whether her firing met that standard.

Witt, of Spokane, joined the Air Force in 1987 and was suspended in 2004, just short of retirement, after her commanders learned she was in a relationship with a civilian woman.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

### Ga. megachurch pastor pledges to fight accusations

The famed pastor of a Georgia megachurch said Sunday that he will fight allegations that he lured young men into sexual relationships, stressing that he'd be back to lead the church the next week.

Addressing a New Birth Missionary Baptist Church sanctuary packed with thousands, Bishop Eddie Long neither discussed specifics of the lawsuits filed against him nor flatly denied the accusations. But he drew thunderous applause when he addressed his flock publicly for the first time since the first lawsuits were filed several days ago.

Four young men have filed lawsuits in the past week — three who live in Georgia and one from Charlotte, N.C., who attended one of Long's satellite churches there. Two claim they were members of the church's Long-Fellows Youth Academy, a program that taught teens about sexual and financial discipline, when Long gave them gifts and took them on trips to seduce them.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

### Richmond bike panel wants feedback

A commission appointed by Richmond Mayor Dwight C. Jones to make the city more accommodating to bicyclists and pedestrians is seeking feedback on preliminary recommendations.

The commission envisions a city with an extensive network of on and off-road trails, as well as trail maps and bike racks and bike-sharing programs.

"Mayor Jones established the (commission) to give him advice on making Richmond a more pedestrian-friendly city," said Carolyn N. Graham, deputy chief administrative officer for human services. "We recognized that the mayor's vision could not be realized without due consideration being given to bicycles and other clean-energy modes of transportation."

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### Kenya says West wasting money on anti-piracy ships

Kenya's foreign minister said Saturday the millions being spent to fight pirate attacks off the coast of Somalia should be spent instead on helping the country become a functioning state.

Moses Wetangula said in an interview with The Associated Press that Uganda has offered troops to expand the African Union force in Somalia from 7,100 to 20,000 to support the restoration of law and order.

But he said that nobody is stepping up to help with much needed money and equipment.

"Piracy is not born at sea. It's born on land. And if you are able to patrol and protect your coastline, it's unlikely that pirates will find a way to the high seas to cause the menace," Wetangula said. "Instead, what are we seeing? Fifty-two warships patrolling ... the waters of the Indian Ocean, but piracy is still going on."

Wetangula said the flotilla should be disbanded and the money should be used instead to help Somalia "become a state."

*Brief by The Associated Press*

the  
ct

ERICATERRINI  
Executive Editor  
editor@commonwealthtimes.com  
828-6516

MEL KOBRAN  
Managing Editor  
managing@commonwealthtimes.com

FLETCHER BABB  
News Editor  
news@commonwealthtimes.com

ADAM STERN  
Sports Editor  
sports@commonwealthtimes.com

NICK BONADIES  
Spectrum Editor  
spectrum@commonwealthtimes.com

ROBERT SHOWAH  
Opinion Editor  
opinion@commonwealthtimes.com

KYLE LAFERRIERE  
Photography Editor  
photo@commonwealthtimes.com

DOMINIC BUTCHELLO  
Art Director  
graphics@commonwealthtimes.com

MARLEIGH CULVER  
Graphic Designer  
graphics@commonwealthtimes.com

HANNAH SWANN  
Graphic Designer  
graphics@commonwealthtimes.com

TRENT REED  
Webmaster  
multimediaeditor@commonwealthtimes.com

JACOB MCFADDEN  
Advertising Manager  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
828-6629

MICHAEL LARSEN  
Associate Advertising Representative  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
827-4562

MONIQUE WILKINS  
Associate Advertising Representative  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
827-4562

JOHN MCWHORTER  
Advertising Graphics Specialist  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
828-6629

#### SMC STAFF

GREG WEATHERFORD  
Student Media Director  
gowweatherfor@vcu.edu, 827-1975

LAUREN GEERDES  
Business Manager  
827-1642

MARK JEFFRIES  
Production Manager  
mjjeffriesVCU@gmail.com

*The Commonwealth Times strives to be accurate in gathering news. If you think we have made an error, please call Executive Editor Erica Terrini at 828-6516 or e-mail her at editor@commonwealthtimes.com. Corrections will appear on the Opinion page.*

*Limit one CT per person. Additional copies may be purchased through the Student Media Center for \$1 a copy.*

817 W. Broad St., P.O. Box 842010  
Richmond, VA 23284-2010

Monday, September 27, 2010



# news

## Mock Supreme Court hears Westboro Baptist case



PHOTO BY BRANDON HAMBRIGHT

**Hillary Huber and Zarmeena Waseem**  
*Contributing Writers*

A mock Supreme Court hearing of the upcoming Snyder v. Phelps case was held Sunday Sept. 26 in the Student Commons Theater.

In conjunction with the First Freedom Center and the University of Richmond School of Law, VCU's Wilder School and Religious Studies department hosted the mock hearing in the VCU Student Commons to an audience of about 250 people.

The hearing imitated the case of Snyder v. Phelps, which will be heard by the Supreme Court on Oct. 6. The case deals with the funeral of Marine Lieutenant Corporal Matthew Snyder, who died in March 2006.

Seven members of the Westboro Baptist Church held a protest outside Snyder's funeral, bearing its trademark signs like "God Hates Fags" and "Thank God For Dead Soldiers."

Snyder's father sued the Church and was awarded \$5 million in punitive damages. However, the case was heard by the 4th Circuit of Appeals and the previous ruling was overturned. Judges on the 4th Circuit ruled that the Westboro Baptist members were protected by the First Amendment.

The case's central question: can the First Amendment shield protesters at a Funeral from liability for intentionally causing emotional distress on the family members of the deceased?

At the hearing's opening, University of Richmond School of Law's Dean John Douglass introduced the case.

Five students from the School of Law at the University of Richmond served as justices in the hearing.

Monday, September 27, 2010

Snyder, the petitioner, was represented by William Hurd, former Solicitor General and partner at Troutman Sanders, LLP. Arguing for the Respondent was Margie Phelps, who serves as legal counsel for the Westboro Baptist Church and is herself a member.

The role of "petitioner" in a Supreme Court hearing is much like that of the "Plaintiff." The defense is known as the "Respondent."

Much of Sunday's debate hinged on the nature of the soldier's well-publicized funeral.

According to Hurd, the seven members of the Westboro Baptist Church who picketed Snyder's funeral "carried out their plan of intentionally targeting in order to emotionally harm and that makes the act inexcusable."

His argument hinged on the notion that Albert Snyder was a private citizen attending a private service, despite his comments to various media outlets and the very public nature of his son's funeral.

Margie Phelps argued that because the Westboro Baptist Church were on public ground and 1,000 feet away from the actual funeral, the protestors were not breaking any laws. She also argued that the protests did not target Snyder's funeral specifically, but addressed national issues.

"(The protestors) did so with fervent belief, and religious conviction, that they had to participate in the debate and had to do so at that location," Phelps said.

As a result, counselor Phelps maintained that "there was no impact on the funeral due to location and distance."

Members of the church attended Snyder's funeral to protest gays and lesbians in the military, and held signs with messages like, "Semper Fi Fags,"

"You're going to Hell," and "God hates you."

After the hearing, the hearing's organizers held a public Q&A session.

Ben Fehl, a VCU forensic science, chemistry, and biology graduate, said he had to leave the mock trial early. "I'm transgendered, so this is very important to me, especially when they protested at a soldier's funeral who wasn't even gay. I just didn't want to sit and listen to (Phelps) anymore," Fehl said.

Elsie Swale, a freshman pre-nursing major, said she comes from a military family. "I know the trouble that military families go through, and the sacrifices soldiers have to make. To know that (the Westboro Baptist Church) does horrible things to those families makes me so angry," Swale said. "I know they stay in America because they are allowed to say the stuff they do about (gays in) the military, but why would they hate the people that fight so that she can have the right to say those types of things?"

On Oct. 6, the Supreme Court will hear the case, at which Margie Phelps will argue on behalf of the Westboro Baptist Church.

University of Richmond student Clayton LaForge, who served as one of the "justices," said that this debate was held due to its popularity and media attention. He added that "it is likely that the Supreme Court will rule that the Westboro Baptist Church deserves valid protection." **CT**



# Va. to allow students in military more time to finish school

Nan Turner  
Staff Writer

Young veterans will now be given more time to complete their college studies.

The State Council for Higher Education recently decided to approve a movement that gives students on active duty in the military up to five years to return to their institution of higher learning without having to reapply for admission. This would allow college-aged veterans more time following their return from deployment to come back to their university and continue pursuing the education they planned on before being sent overseas.

The five-year extension is up from the previous 12-month deadline. This is the first time the rule has been updated since 1991. Students must tell their schools that they intend to re-

turn no later than three years after their deployment is completed. Public schools are being required to put the act into effect, and private schools are expected to follow, according to The Richmond Times-Dispatch.

When the topic was brought up at the General Assembly, Del. G. Manoli Loupassi, R-Richmond, was particularly vocal in his support of the law. He believes the five-year extension is a fair alteration.

"It's an important issue because people were serving our country and then coming back, and they had to reapply to the college or school that they'd already gotten into," Loupassi said. "I think the five-year resolution is an excellent resolution to the situation, and it's obvious that ... a person that is willing to serve our country should not be penalized for having done so by having to reapply."

Students around campus weighed

in on the council's decision and how it would affect their potential classmates.

"I think it's a good thing that it's five years rather than 12 months," said Justina Hwee, a sophomore at VCU. "I mean they're just out there, and they're fighting for so long, and education may not be the first thing on their mind when fighting a war and when they're in the middle of a battlefield, but when they come back, I'm pretty sure that they want to pursue future careers and ... start families. Education is very important in helping with that."

Fellow sophomore, Ankana Sarkar, has similar feelings.

"It's an amazing thing that they extended it," Sarkar said. "I mean, if you're a veteran, you deserve the better stuff in life. In case they retire before their age, I guess it's good that they have an education so that they

can get a job aside from the army or the military or whatever they're in."

While still skeptical about what the costs of allowing veterans to return to school after five years would impose on the state, freshman Carson Anthony believes that the extension could also benefit the mental health of those who have served.

"With post traumatic stress syndrome and all that stuff, the extended time might make it a little easier," Anthony said. "Veterans have it a little rough; they have to leave, and it stops their life for a while. It's a good thing to get them re-acclimated and get things back the way they were." **CT**

## Parents offer dim hope for missing VCU student

Hillary Huber  
Contributing Writer

Parents of VCU exchange student Jonathan Dorey came to VCU on Friday Sept. 24, the six-month anniversary of their son's disappearance, to speak to the press.

Dorey was reported missing March 4. His remains have not been found, but it is suspected that he committed suicide due to severe, undiagnosed clinical depression.

"We found Jonny's clothes and a half-quart bottle of gin by the riverside," said Debbie Dorey, Jonathan's mother. "That, combined with the information we got from the internet sites and writings that were found by the police on Jonny's computer, leads us to believe Jonny died of a suicide or a reckless act, as a result of a mental breakdown."

Dorey's mother said that their mission during the trip was to spread a message to young people and to thank everyone for their participation in the search for Jonny.

"Our message is particularly to young people, to young men. Please talk about your feelings. Share things — do not bottle it up, and if possible, get professional and confidential help," Debbie Dorey said.

Danielle Hoffman, a senior international studies major, said that she's witnessed friends who have gotten too stressed from school and turned to alcohol and drugs as a coping method.

"(Drugs and alcohol) put you in a different state of mind and it can lead to pretty bad decisions," Hoffman said.

Other students have said they use different methods to cope.

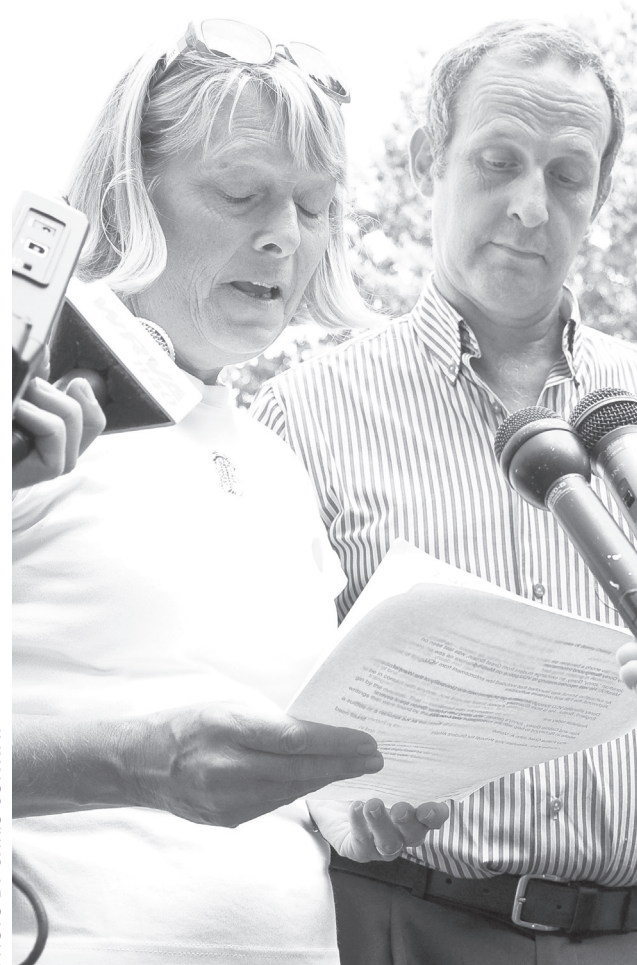
Jonathan Bowser, a freshman criminal justice major, said, "I try to get my work done early. I go to the movies and try to have a good time ... I don't know anyone that copes (with stress) by doing drugs or alcohol, but I do know people that go to therapy, and it seems like a pretty good release for some."

Dorey's parents said that although he was the friend who "was the one organizing the parties, the one helping others make the decisions, the solid one, the life and soul of the group," he obviously had another problem, that not even those closest to him could recognize.

"With him not saying anything to the contrary, we had no idea that he was this depressed, and neither did his student friends in America. If the people living with Jonny had no idea how depressed he was, how could we?"

Both Debbie and Alan Dorey encouraged students to get help if they need it.

"The one hard lesson we learned from this is, if any of you ever feel that your life is not worth living, please tell somebody. Please ask for help. Please get professional help," Debbie Dorey said. **CT**



Debbie (left) and Alan (right) Dorey

PHOTO BY CHRIS CONWAY



COMPARISON OF STUDENT LOAN DEFAULT RATES AMONG VIRGINIA SCHOOLS

NAME	CITY	2008 default rate	2007 default rate	Difference
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University	Blacksburg	0.65%	1.23%	-0.58%
Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond	2.30%	2.77%	-0.47%
College of William & Mary	Williamsburg	0.68%	1.02%	-0.33%
Old Dominion University	Norfolk	2.47%	2.32%	0.15%
George Mason University	Fairfax	1.98%	1.66%	0.32%
James Madison University	Harrisonburg	1.67%	1.15%	0.51%
Radford University	Radford	2.88%	2.26%	0.62%
University of Virginia	Charlottesville	1.55%	0.74%	0.81%
Longwood University	Farmville	2.62%	1.69%	0.93%
Christopher Newport University	Newport News	3.62%	2.56%	1.06%
University of Mary Washington	Fredericksburg	2.84%	1.39%	1.45%
Virginia State University	Petersburg	12.93%	11.26%	1.67%
Norfolk State University	Norfolk	9.61%	7.32%	2.29%

GRAPHIC BY MARK JEFFRIES

SOURCE: US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VCU students make good on loans

Veronica Garabelli  
Contributing Writer

Anam Kamal could have moved out of her parents' house after she graduated from VCU in May. Instead, she chose to keep living at home so she could pay off her student loans.

"It didn't make sense in my head to live on my own and have to pay rent and still have the student loans sitting," Kamal said. "I didn't want to carry that burden."

Just as Kamal is making sure she doesn't miss her student-loan payments, other VCU students are doing the same. At a time when the national student-loan default rate increased, VCU's default rate fell – from more than 2.7 percent in 2007 to 2.3 percent in 2008, according to new statistics released this month by the U.S. Department of Education.

According to a Commonwealth Times analysis of the data, VCU's lowered default rate was one of the biggest drops among the large public schools in Virginia and among VCU's peer institutions nationwide.

The analysis showed that VCU compared favorably with:

- The 13 other public schools in Virginia that offer master's and doctoral degrees. Only one school – Virginia Tech – had a bigger decrease in its default rate. At 10 of the schools, the default rate increased. Virginia's largest public schools had a combined default rate of 3 percent in 2008.
- The 25 schools that VCU considers as its peer institutions. Only one of those schools – the University of Chicago at Illinois – had a bigger decrease in its default rate. The default rate rose at 15 Monday, September 27, 2010

of the schools, such as the University of Southern California and the University of Nevada at Reno. The peer schools had a combined default rate of 2.9 percent.

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan said the statistics captured a snapshot in time: About 3.4 million borrowers were due to make their first loan repayments between Oct. 1, 2007 and Sept. 30, 2008; about 240,000 of them defaulted before Sept. 30, 2009.

"This data confirms what we already know: that many students are struggling to pay back their student loans during very difficult economic times," Duncan said in a press release.

He said the default rates increased from 5.9 percent to 6 percent for public institutions, from 3.7 percent to 4 percent for private institutions and from 11 percent to 11.6 percent for for-profit schools.

Duncan noted that students at proprietary schools are most likely to default. They represented 26 percent of all borrowers and 43 percent of all defaulters. For example, Tidewater Tech, a for-profit school in Norfolk, had a student-loan default rate of more than 30 percent.

"While for-profit schools have profited and prospered thanks to federal dollars, some of their students have not," Duncan said. "Far too many for-profit schools are saddling students with debt they cannot afford in exchange for degrees and certificates they cannot use."

He said the data underscored the need to expand Pell grants and other student loan programs. The Obama administration hopes to do that, Duncan said.

Jane Glickman, a spokesperson for the U.S. Department of Education, said that when schools have

lower default rates, it's probably because students are getting jobs after graduation – so they can pay off their loans. Glickman said these schools probably did a good job counseling students on their loan obligations.

Brenda Burke, VCU's interim director of financial aid, said the more successful students are in college, the more likely they are to repay their student loans.

"With all else being equal, students who are successful in their studies tend to have lower default rates than students that are not," Burke stated in an e-mail.

"Student success variables include such things as college major, academic achievement, transferability options, educational goals of the student, financial support and degree completion. Other variables that affect default rates include such things as unemployment, income-to-debt ratios and knowledge of loan repayment options."

Burke said students should look to student loans as a last resort. They should consider all options of financial aid before borrowing money.

"The Financial Aid office encourages students to only borrow the amount of funds they need to cover their educational costs," Burke said. "Student loans should not be looked at for funding non-education related expenses."

Since graduating, Kamal has reduced her student-loan debt from \$25,000 to \$20,000.

She hopes to pay off her student loans by this time next year.

"People don't realize you end up paying more money if you defer or don't pay," Kamal said.

"It's better to scum up a little bit and pay off that amount." **CT**



# Move your career forward

AT BOSTON'S LEADING HEALTH  
SCIENCES GRADUATE SCHOOL

Direct-entry graduate programs:

- ▶ nursing
- ▶ physical therapy
- ▶ medical imaging
- ▶ speech-language pathology
- ▶ plus, non-degree courses & science prerequisites



**MGH INSTITUTE**  
OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
A graduate school founded by Massachusetts General Hospital

*Visit our booth and learn more*

VCU Graduate and Professional School Fair  
Monroe Park Campus  
University Student Commons  
Commonwealth Ballroom  
Thursday, September 30  
10 A.M. – 2 P.M.

[www.mghihp.edu](http://www.mghihp.edu)



## NON-FICTION

The series on YouTube looks real...  
because it *is*.

Emily  
ADF client 2006  
Episode 7 & 8

[Facebook.com/SpeakUpU](http://Facebook.com/SpeakUpU)

Every episode is based on  
actual ADF case files



**ADF**  
ALLIANCE DEFENSE FUND  
Defending Our First Liberty





# sports

## Briefs

### Volleyball:

Volleyball split their opening weekend of CAA play, getting shut out 3-0 by Northeastern Friday, Sept. 24 and beating Hofstra 3-1 Saturday, Sept. 25. The matches were played at Hanover and Cosby high schools, and the Rams record now stands at 3-14 overall.

### Field hockey:

Field hockey won both their match ups this weekend — on the road — and ended a long losing streak in the process. An overtime goal from sophomore forward Kelsey Scherrer gave the Rams a 2-1 win, their first victory over the Blue Hens in eight tries. Sunday, VCU downed Towson 2-0 behind two more goals from Scherrer.

### Golf:

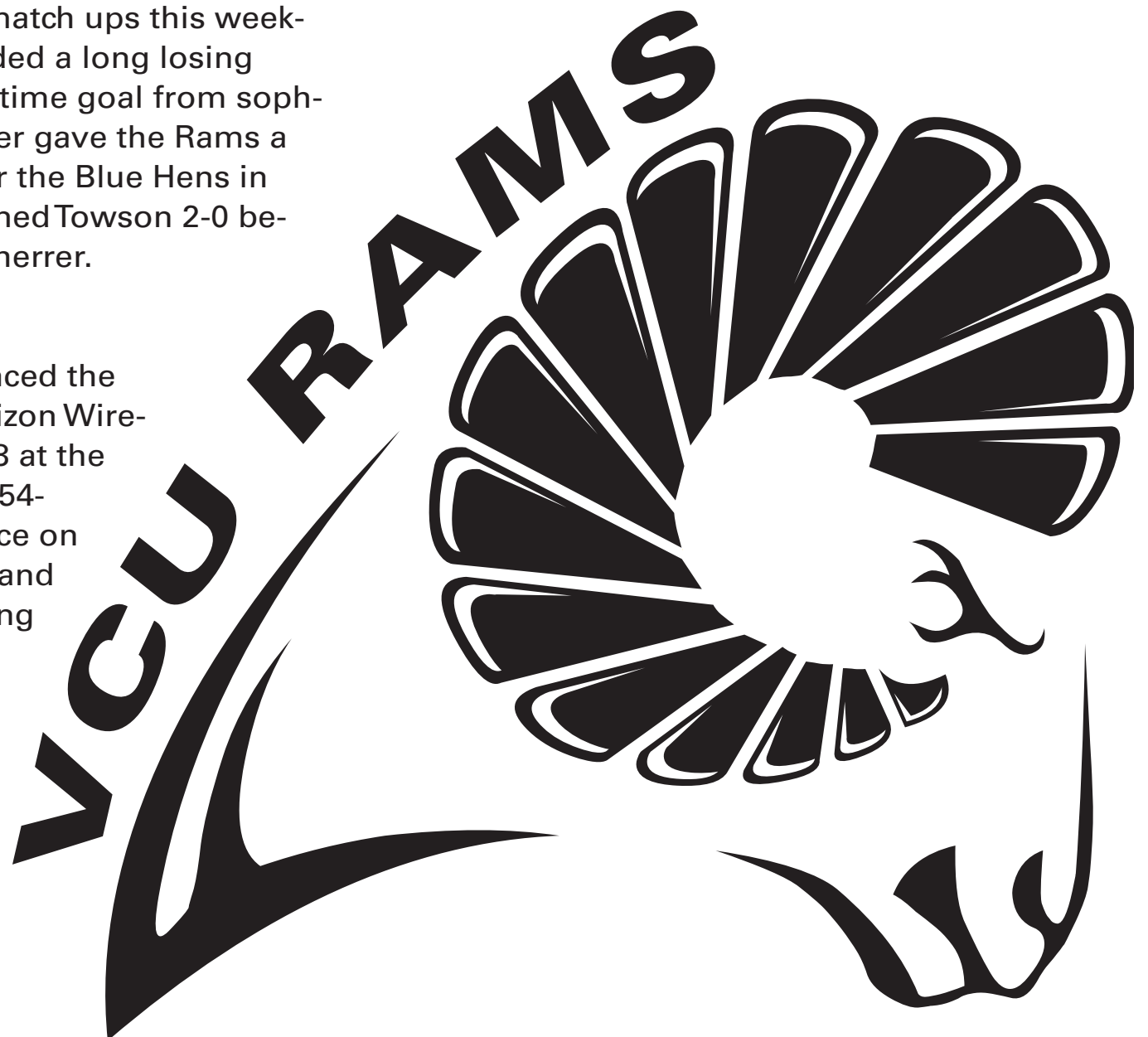
VCU's Athletics Office announced the school will be hosting the Verizon Wireless VCU Shootout Sept. 27-28 at the Hermitage Country Club. The 54-hole tournament will take place on Hermitage's Manakin Course and will field teams including UNC Wilmington — who won the 2009 tournament — and other CAA rivals James Madison and Old Dominion.

### Men's basketball:

Former VCU forward Kirill Pischalnikova signed a professional contract with Russian side Spartak St. Petersburg. Pischalnikova played in nearly 100 games for the Rams during his tenure, tallying 301 points and 319 rebounds.

### Track and field:

Senior Piotr Dybas led the way for VCU's track and field team this past weekend at the Hagan Stone Park Invitational. Dybas led the Rams in a sweep of five of the top spots.







# SEND US YOUR PICTURES

PHOTO OF THE WEEK AT  
THE COMMONWEALTH TIMES

SEND SUBMISSIONS TO:  
[commonwealthtimesgraphics@gmail.com](mailto:commonwealthtimesgraphics@gmail.com)

**VCU Graduate School** presents

## GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL FAIR



**\* Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup> \* 10am – 2pm \***  
**\* Commonwealth Ballroom & Richmond Salons \***  
(2<sup>nd</sup> floor – University Student Commons)



**\* Open to VCU & Richmond-area college students – *student ID required* \***

Contact Whitney Carswell for more information: [wcarswell@vcu.edu](mailto:wcarswell@vcu.edu)

### VCU

Bioinformatics  
Department of English  
Department of Health Administration  
Department of Psychology  
Graduate Studies in Business  
Masters of Interdisciplinary Studies  
Preparing Future Faculty Program  
School of Education  
School of Engineering  
School of Medicine  
School of Medicine - Graduate Programs  
School of Pharmacy  
Wilder School of Government & Public Affairs

### Institutions

American University  
American University International Service  
Corcoran College of Art + Design  
Duke University Fuqua School of Business  
Elon University  
George Mason University  
Hofstra University  
James Madison University International Programs  
James Madison University

### Kaplan Test Prep

Marymount University  
Midwestern University  
New York University Silver School of Social Work  
Old Dominion University  
Radford University  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Savannah College of Art & Design  
Shenandoah University  
The College of William & Mary School of Business  
The College of William & Mary School of Education  
University of Mary Washington  
University of North Carolina at Charlotte  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public & International Affairs  
University of Pittsburgh School of Information Sciences  
University of Richmond School of Continuing Studies  
University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science  
Virginia Tech  
Virginia Tech MBA Program  
Wake Forest University School of Business  
Walden University

### Law Schools

American University Washington  
Appalachian School of Law  
Boston University  
Campbell University  
Chapman University  
Elon University  
George Mason University  
George Mason University School of Public Policy  
Mercer University  
Penn State  
Regent University  
Seton Hall University  
Stetson University  
Temple University  
The College of William & Mary  
The Ohio State University  
Tulane University  
University of Baltimore  
University of Florida Levin  
University of Maryland  
University of Maryland School of Public Policy  
University of Richmond  
University of South Carolina  
Washington & Lee University  
Western New England College  
Whittier Law School

Widener University  
University of the Pacific  
Vermont Law School  
Villanova University  
Wake Forest University

### Health-Related

Columbia University School of Nursing  
Drexel University College of Medicine  
Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine Admissions  
Georgetown University Biomedical Graduate Education  
Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences  
MGH Institute of Health Professions  
Northeastern University Bouve Graduate School of Health Sciences  
Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine Student Affairs  
Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine  
Universidad Autonoma De Guadalajara School of Medicine  
University of Maryland School of Nursing  
University of Pittsburgh Biomedical Graduate Programs







sports

PHOTOS BY CHRIS CONWAY

# Women's Soccer Faces Tough Defense, Comes Away Empty



**Above: Sophomore Gabby Wilson has tallied six shots so far this season**



Monday, September 27, 2010

Jim Swing

*Assistant Sports Editor*

Co-head coach Tiffany Roberts Sahaydak refers to every women's soccer game in the Colonial Athletic Association as a "dogfight." The Rams found themselves in the middle of one Sunday as they fell 2-0 to the Hofstra Pride, who currently stands at No. 1 in the CAA.

The Pride (8-1, 2-0) jumped ahead in the 32nd minute when forward Krysti Rodriguez jumped on a juicy rebound from four yards out off of a shot placed by forward Grace Hawkins.

"Hofstra did a good job pouncing on a second ball and we got caught sleeping," Roberts Sahaydak said. "We need to be plugged in all the time on second balls and we just had a lack of focus." Hofstra would follow up just nine minutes later in the 41st minute with a late first-half goal by forward Ruby Staplehurst, who used her speed to break away and take a long pass from Hawkins and bury it in the left corner. "We had a lack of communication in the back," Roberts Sahaydak said. "If both goals were set up to happen again, I feel like we would be able to deal with it, but at that moment there was a lack of focus."

VCU struggled to find the back of the net all afternoon, even with the help of three first-half corner kicks. Hofstra utilized its resilient defense halting any opportunity the Rams were given during possession at midfield. The Pride out-shot the struggling VCU offense 11-3, producing three shots on goal, as opposed to the Rams one. VCU's offense was stifled by a Hofstra squad that has given up just four goals in the past eight contests. "Up until the goals I think we had the better of the game," Roberts Sahaydak said. "We came out with more energy, and we were pressing and had more of the attack, but once the goals were scored, our mentality switched."

The Rams were forced to play without leading scorer Bre White (Manassas, Va./C.D. Hylton High School), who was knocked out with a concussion Friday night against Northeastern late in the game. "We missed Bre, but it was not the reason why we couldn't produce a result today," Roberts Sahaydak said. "We need every single player, but we can play without one."

Sunday's match marks the Rams second in-conference loss following Friday's 1-0 loss to Northeastern (6-3, 1-1). "We need to get our spark back; we're missing a little bit of our excitement and energy factor," Roberts Sahaydak said. "We are a young team who's facing a struggle with getting our spark of energy back." **CT**



**Freshman Brianne Moore dribbles past a Hofstra defender**

sports · commonwealthtimes.org · CT9







PHOTOS BY LOGAN WHITTON



VCU defenders prepare to face one of the two corners Northeastern won on the night

# Dawn of a new era, draw of a game for men's soccer

Adam Stern  
*Sports Editor*

VCU men's soccer head coach Dave Giffard has seen the dream. Giffard — in the midst of his first season as a head coach after more than a decade-long run as an assistant — came to VCU after a four-year stint with the Akron Zips. Akron, a fellow mid-major university, rose in just a few years from relative obscurity in the national soccer scene to a team that went an absurd 23-0-0 last season, tied an

CT10 • commonwealthtimes.org • sports



NCAA record for consecutive wins and was denied a National Championship only through penalty kicks in the final.

So though Giffard was a bit frustrated after the Rams twice gave away a lead to settle for a conference-opening 2-2 draw with Northeastern Saturday night, the first-year head coach acknowledged afterwards that the odyssey to their ultimate objective, a national championship, is more of a marathon than a sprint.

"I need to remind myself sometimes that we're

just getting started," Giffard said. "Sometimes I maybe come across as negative with our performance and what we're doing, but it's because my expectations are very high, and I understand the level we need to be at in all areas for us to compete for a national title."

The match — which featured four goals, two penalties and a few glorious opportunities to win it in overtime that went begging — stretched VCU's unbeaten streak to six games out of seven. Even for a man with high expectations, the new coach was content.

"For where we are, we're doing OK," Giffard said. "Would I like to be further along? Absolutely. Would it be realistic to think that we ought to be? Probably not, and my friends try to remind me of that every day."

The match started well enough for the Rams; VCU had the first legitimate chance to score in the 8th minute — a chip by sophomore striker Yoram Mwila (Lusaka, Zambia/Akron) — and had the game's first goal in the 15th. A long ball by sophomore defender Brad Seymour (Mechanicsville/Hanover) put senior midfielder Jake Van Yahres (Charlottesville/American) in behind the defense, and Van Yahres uncorked a bending beauty from 25 yards out to put the Rams up 1-0.

Van Yahres — a senior speedster who plays in an advanced midfield role just behind the striker — burnt

STORY CONTINUED ON CT11

Monday, September 27, 2010





# sports

his marker nearly every time he had possession. And even though he could have had a hat trick come game's end, Van Yahres was still pleased to get his first of the season.

"It's taken a while, longer than I wanted too," Van Yahres said of his first finish. "At least I got it, so now the pressure's off a little bit."

Listless and lethargic before they scored, Northeastern pegged their way back into the match in the 39th minute — their first good chance of the game — with a goal by senior striker Nick Lueders. The Huskies then nearly took the lead minutes later with a blast from junior midfielder Mike Kennedy that blasted from off VCU's crossbar but didn't cross the line.

A halftime talking seemed to do the trick for VCU, who came out and won a penalty a mere 40 seconds into the second half. Mwila wiggled and weaved his way into the box before being bundled down by a defender. Senior midfielder C.J. Gehin Scott Chesapeake/Hickory—a player who, prior to this season, had amassed a total of three goals and two assists in his entire VCU

career — stepped up and finished the penalty kick, already his fifth goal of the campaign.

Northeastern received a penalty call of their own to knot things up once and for all. Senior center back Thomas Hupper Olpe, Germany/St. Franziskos Gynasium Olpe— one of only three players starting on the day who were on the squad last season — hip checked a Husky before Kennedy scored his second of the match to tie it up at 2-2.

VCU had a few quality chances in overtime — specifically freshman striker Jason Johnson (Saint Anne, Jamaica/Manchester), who is still looking for his first goal as a Ram — no goals were to come.

Though rueful that the team didn't get off to the best start possible, Giffard understands progress is a slow process.

"One thing we've really focused on since I got here in January is the culture and the honesty," Giffard said in reference to the team's emphasis on hard work. "That mentality is something we've been working on a lot and ... it's not something that happens overnight, but it is something that's happening." **CT**

PHOTOS BY LOGAN WHITTON



**Senior attacking midfielder Jake Van Yahres had five shots and his first goal of the season against the Huskies**

Monday, September 27, 2010



**Even the best medical schools  
can't prepare you for what comes next.**

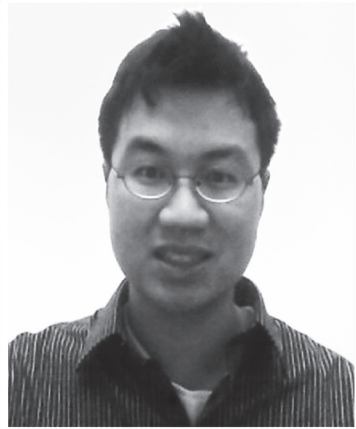
Nobody can teach you about challenge and adventure. But you can experience them for yourself, serving part-time as a health professional in the Air Guard. Whether you're currently in school or working in the medical profession, you can find success as a vital member of our exceptional medical team. The opportunities are limitless, and could involve everything from providing in-flight care to sick or injured patients, to helping to save countless lives in a field hospital. All while receiving excellent benefits and the chance to work a flexible schedule. Most important, you will experience the satisfaction that comes from serving your community and your country. Talk to a recruiter today, and see how the Air Guard can help you take the next step.

**PART-TIME BLUE. FULL-TIME YOU.**  
GoANG.com ► 1-800-TO-GO-ANG



sports • commonwealthtimes.org • CT11





*Don Nguyen can give you 10,000 reasons you should be a part of...*



Congratulations to **Don Nguyen**  
for winning the **\$10,000 Grad Scholar Award.**

Golden Key is the world's premier collegiate honor society, leading the way in Academics, Service and Leadership. Membership is by invitation only.

UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL



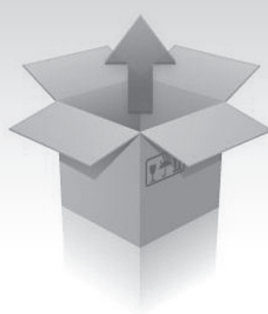
[WWW.JOINGOLDENKEY.ORG](http://WWW.JOINGOLDENKEY.ORG)

V i r g i n i a C o m m o n w e a l t h U n i v e r s i t y

**VCU FILEDROP**  
REALLY SIMPLE FILE TRANSPORT



**SEND**  
A FILE



**GET**  
A FILE

VCU FileDrop allows you to easily share large files (or large numbers of files) with other people inside and outside of the VCU community via email. You can upload your files to FileDrop and send them to anyone with a valid email address. You can track who has downloaded the files you send and delete them from FileDrop when your recipients have downloaded all of them.

**filedrop.vcu.edu**

VCU  
technology services

*Read the CT*

*every monday  
& thursday*







# spectrum

## Greeks step it up for Fall Block, pack Siegel Center

Nick Bonadies  
*Spectrum Editor*

A massive crowd stifled the entrance to the Siegel Center this Saturday evening awaiting entrance to this year's Fall Block Step Show. Fall Block, a staple of the VCU fall semester and the biggest and most-attended step show in the state, celebrated its 25th anniversary this year.

With this year's theme, "Stepping Through the Decades," the participating National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternities and sororities – the "Divine Nine" – paid tribute to the event's history, as well as to their NPCH alumni forbearers.

The crowd glowed in the dim blue light of a few thousand glow sticks. Decked out in this year's Fall Block colors – silver, for the 25th anniversary, and teal – The Siegel Center was packed with Greek supporters, many of who would later take the free shuttle service to the Fall Block after party at the Greater Richmond Convention Center.

By the end of the first set, a '90s hip-hop throw-back by guest team "Men of Step," the crowd was already dancing and singing to the music in the stands and in the aisles, and hardly stopped for the rest of the night.

Each team incorporated their organization's own traditions, moves and stepping style into a 10-to-15-minute performance that included, in addition to the step routines, skits, singing and custom videos. Crowd favorites included Iota Phi Theta, whose routine acted out R. Kelly's "Contagious," Zeta Phi Beta, who set their 1965 time-travel segment to a performance of "We Shall Overcome," and Sigma Gamma Rho, whose team donned gray wigs in a reenactment of the opening sequence to "The Golden Girls."

In the end though, by deliberation of a panel of judges from each of the fraternities and sororities, Delta Sigma Theta's "Resurrection at the Fall Block Museum" won first place for females, and Kappa Alpha Psi's time-traveling mobster heist routine won first place for males. Each team won a cash prize for their chapter and an impressive trophy – as well as, of course, bragging rights.

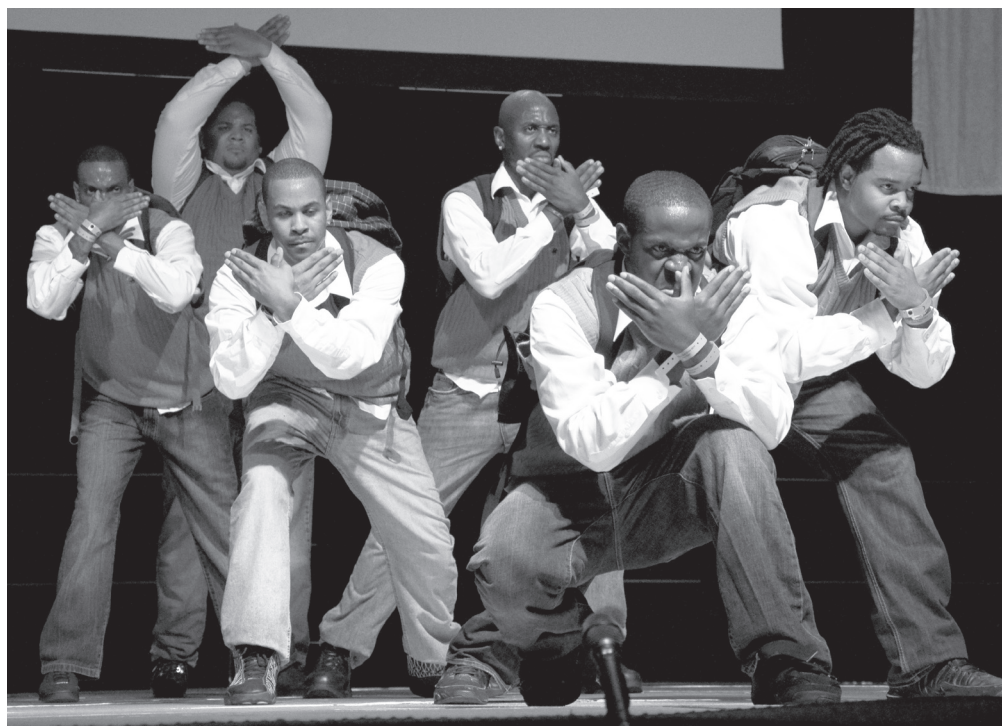
The Greeks weren't the only ones to leave Fall Block with prizes: one lucky audience member, in a pre-awards raffle, won a ticket to the 2010 BET Hip Hop Awards. MCs Sean Anthony and Keith Jones, from WCDX FM Power 92.1, were quick to clarify that the prize did not, in fact, include airfare – "You're gonna have to get a *ride*."

Check out these photos from the show for an up-close and personal look at each of the Divine Nine's performances at this year's stellar 25th anniversary Fall Block. **CT**



### Sigma Gamma Rho

The lovely ladies of Sigma Gamma Rho opened with a video recreating the opening sequence and theme song from "The Golden Girls," dressed to the nines in gray wigs and bifocals. But there was nothing old about the stepping that followed, which included a treacherous segment with walking canes, blindfolds and expertly-timed dodging.



### Phi Beta Sigma

"We're gonna go back. – Way back. – Back into *time*." Replete with school-kid uniforms and book bags, Phi Beta Sigma stepped to a retrospective of '90s old-school hip-hop, including Guy's "Teddy Jam."

PHOTOS COURTESY CHRIS CONWAY



### Omega Psi Phi

Revealing a trend that would continue the rest of the evening, Omega Psi Phi observed that removal of shirts equals instant crowd points. (For part of the audience, at least.) Their strobe-lit routine climaxed at a slow-motion sequence to the theme from "Chariots of Fire."





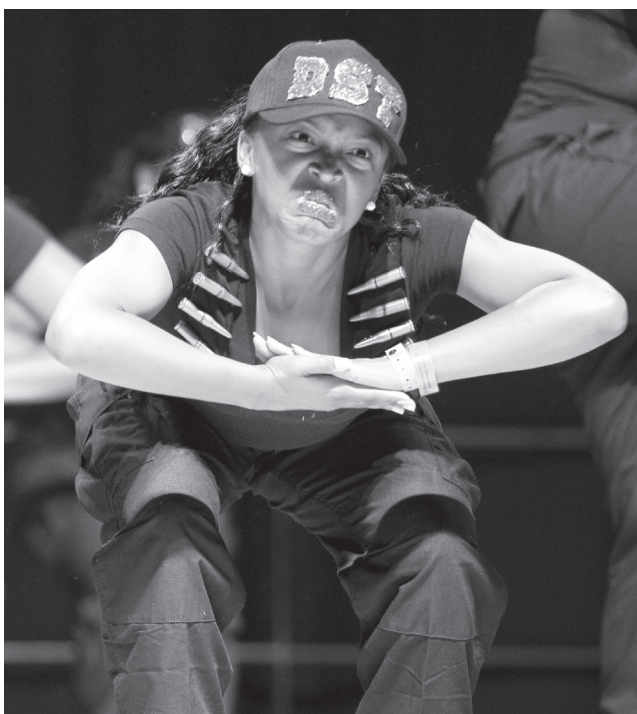


### Zeta Phi Beta

Taking a futurist bent, Zeta Phi Beta traveled back in time from 2025 on “Mission Z,” traveling to various decades to “learn harmony, precision, attitude and swag – through step.” The audience particularly loved the segment set in 1965, set to the team singing “We Shall Overcome” and featuring a routine done entirely sitting down.



**Kappa Alpha Psi** Easily the most rhythmically infectious set, Kappa Alpha Psi - in classy mob vests and ties – worked around video segments of a time-travelling heist to steal various step techniques from the past three decades.



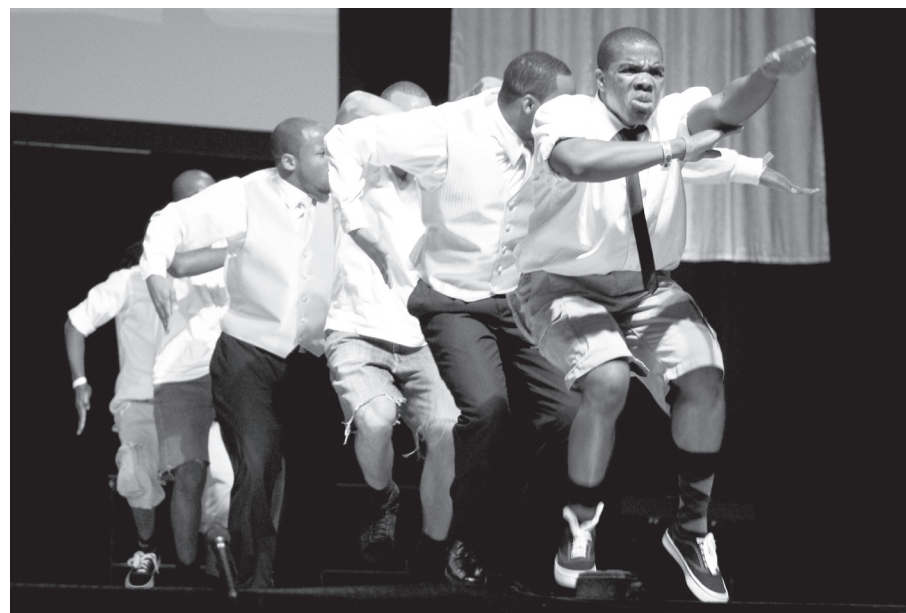
**Delta Sigma Theta** To a dance remix of the theme from “Mission Impossible,” Delta Sigma Theta breaks into the heavily-guarded “Fall Block Museum” to bring the VCU tradition back from the dead, headed by an intense lead solo stepper.



PHOTOS COURTESY CHRIS CONWAY

### Iota Phi Theta

This set followed the tale of a young man who discovers his lover cheating on him – the crowd sang along throughout, especially the climactic confrontation danced to R. Kelly’s “Contagious.” An impressive “fight” routine followed between the young man and the “other man,” wielding wooden canes.



### Alpha Phi Alpha

Fall Block does “Inception.” A frustrated Alpha Phi Alpha member, with an hour before showtime and no routine planned, makes a call to a team of dream infiltrators to plant the perfect choreography in his Stepmaster’s brain, à la Christopher Nolan. “Is this a dream or am I awake? ... Whatever it is, I’m about to make something crazy.”

### RAMZ HALL

933 W. Broad St.

**2 BdRm 1 Bth**

All utilities included, parking avail., onsite laundry  
Individual leases, wifi, controlled access.

Receive a FREE MONTHS RENT with Lease Signing  
(888)566-5460

 a campus apartments community

### Capital Garage

1301 W. Broad St.

**2 BdRm 2 Bth**

All utilities included, parking avail., onsite laundry  
Individual leases, wifi, controlled access.

Receive a FREE MONTHS RENT with Lease Signing  
(888)566-5460

 a campus apartments community

### 24 N. Boulevard

**3 BdRm 2 Bth**

Hardwood Floors, Balcony, Washer/Dryer  
No Application Fees or Security Deposit!

Receive a \$100 AMEX with Lease Signing  
(877)372-9586 • [Richmond.leasing@campusapts.com](mailto:Richmond.leasing@campusapts.com)

 **PIERCE ARROW**  
PROPERTIES  
a campus apartments community

### CANVASSERS NEEDED

**Articulate, Clean-Cut, Dependable Individuals:** We are looking for you! You can reach \$12-\$15/hr possible w/BONUS. No experience needed. Free Training! Must have clean background, no felonies. Full or Part time. Call Michele or Israel @ 804-726-6900 between 10am-4pm Mon.-Fri. for an interview.







# 'First Cut' to premiere fresh works from VCU Cinema

Nick Bonadies  
Spectrum Editor

The VCUarts Cinema Program will screen the premieres of six student-made films this Tuesday and Wednesday at "First Cut," a juried program at the Grace Street Theater.

"First Cut" will feature the finished results of the Cinema program's summer intensive sequence, an eight-week, 15-credit session consisting of full time hands-on film production at locations around and outside of Richmond. Students in the program handle every aspect of the film-making process, including scriptwriting, directing, set and costume design, working with actors, scouting locations, operating complex equipment – and even catering. Over a typical cinema student's degree, he or she works in some capacity on at least ten finished short films.

The panel of judges for "First Cut" includes renowned film critic Jonathan Rosenbaum, visiting assistant professor in the VCU Department of Art History and past selection committee member for the New York Film Festival, as well as Peter Kirkpatrick, professor of French at VCU and founder of the French Film Festival.

The panel will select award winners among six categories to be screened on Sept. 28 at 7 p.m. at Grace Street Theater, with the other films – with a special repeat screening of a selected winner – to be shown on Sept. 29 at 7 p.m. Both screenings are free and open to the public, though seating at the theater will be limited.

"You can look forward to one really exciting evening," Program Director Rob Tregenza said. "All of

this work is really uniformly excellent."

When VCU's Cinema program began just three years ago, Tregenza was the only full-time instructor – but since then, the department has grown to include Kirk Kjeldsen, a writer, and Mary Beth Reed, a writer/director. The program also includes the insights of visiting cinematographers, directors and sound engineers active in the field. In 2010, the Cinema program saw its first graduating class.

Among the Cinema program class of 2010, many graduates are already involved in various film and commercial work, and others – like Nate King, winner of the Virginia Screenwriting Competition – are making big names for themselves in the film world. Andrea Murphy won an award at the Female Shorts: Film and Video Showcase in Alexandria; at the Virginia Student Film Festival, Steven Vagias won awards for Best in Show and Best Narrative. **CT**

The lineup for "First Cut" this week will include:

**Small Steps** directed by Jasce Burrow, written by Brooks Finnie;

**But Daddy Loves Momma** directed by Katie Baumgart, written by Abe Smith;

**Xanadu Undone** directed by Harrison Colby, written by Danny Caporaletti;

**My Fourth Wife Drove Me to My Fifth** directed by Brooks Finnie, written by Dylan Frayser;

**Gutted** directed by Steven Vagias, written by Michael Leonberger and Steven Vagias; and

**Bloom** written by Kurt Bailey.

Both screenings at the Grace Street Theater at 934 W. Grace Street, on Tuesday the 28th at 7p.m. and Wednesday the 29th at 7p.m., are free admission and open to the public.

Monday, September 27, 2010



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHARLIE HARRIS

## CIGAR SMOKERS

Participate in a tobacco-related research study

## EARN UP TO \$400

- Men & Women 21 - 54 Years of Age
- Must Smoke Popular Brands of Cigars
- Study Scheduled to Start: October 1st

**TEXT "COC" TO 94797 or  
CALL 1-800-9267-COC TODAY!**

visit us at [www.consumeropinioncenter.com](http://www.consumeropinioncenter.com)

**Call Us:**  
Monday thru Friday  
8 am - 8 pm

**consumer  
opinion center**  
600 block of n. 5th street  
richmond, va 23219

commonwealthtimes.org · CT15



# 'In the Groove': Anderson to host live broadcast from WRIR

spectrum

Julie DiNisio  
Contributing Writer



On Sept. 29 at 6 p.m., Anderson Gallery will host "In the Groove: Collecting and Curating African Music," a collaboration between South African artist Siemon Allen and 97.3 WRIR, Richmond Independent Radio.

David Noyes and Bill Lupoletti, both broadcasters with the non-profit, volunteer-operated radio station, will join Siemon Allen at the gallery on Wednesday for a live broadcast discussion panel on their passion for African music.

Anderson Gallery has exhibited Allen's latest collection, "Imaging South Africa: Collection Projects," since the end of August and will continue to until Oct. 31. "Records," one of his main projects, displays an array of vinyl records by South African artists in a variety of configurations, sizes and media. Allen was particularly interested in the music of Miriam Makeba, a singer and anti-Apartheid activist.

97.3 WRIR is a non-profit Richmond radio station that broadcasts an eclectic mix of music and a variety of talk shows. Their website declares the station a "fresh, new voice" that broadcasts music "you DON'T hear on the radio dial." WRIR is run solely by volunteers from the community and operates on donated funds.

David Noyes is the host of "Ambiance Congo" on WRIR, and co-host of another program called Motherland Influence. He has been working with WRIR for years, before it moved from internet to radio in 2005. He has a particular interest in African music, saying that years ago, "I discovered Congolese rumba – to this day my favorite music – and from there, a huge variety of music from all over Africa." His interest spawned, he said, around the time that "Jimi Hendrix was dead — and American popular music was taking a pretty awful direction."

Bill Lupoletti, WRIR's World Music Director and host of "Global A Go-Go," will also participate in the panel. He stated as his goal "(to) make music of the rest of the world more accessible to a general audience." He continued, "I'm quite interested in the relationship between music and the broader culture and society."

Like Noyes, Lupoletti has been with WRIR since its pre-radio days; he plays all types of world music on his program, particularly African music. As he put it, "There's so much African music to choose from, it's almost embarrassing for me not to play more of it." **CT**

In addition to the radio broadcast, "In the Groove: Collecting and Curating African Music" at the Anderson Gallery will welcome a live audience, free open to the public at Anderson Gallery on 907 ½ W. Franklin Street.

## Chrisette Michele



**THURSDAY OCTOBER 7 2010 8PM  
LIVE IN CONCERT  
@Landmark Theater**

**GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!**  
from any Ticket Master Outlet or  
[www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) ticketmaster

## JAGGED EDGE



**Special Performance  
from  
Peterburg's Own  
Rodney "Soulsinger" Stith**

**WITH GUEST HOST  
DEE DEE RENEE &  
MITCH MALONE**

**Special Appearance by Comedian Antoine Blackman**  
Tickets from \$25



**Tickets On Sale Now  
[www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)  
JADUBB Enterprises**

**Visit us online [www.jadubbenterprises.com](http://www.jadubbenterprises.com). For ticket purchases call (800) 745-3000**





# Film Review: 'Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps' a great director's mediocre effort

Jordan Wilson  
Contributing Writer

Director Oliver Stone's 1987 film "Wall Street" concerned a young, ambitious stockbroker's involvement with insider trading through a ruthless corporate crook named Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas,) whose life motto was "Greed is Good."

Now, Douglas again fills the role that won him the Academy Award for Best Actor 23 years ago. Gordon Gekko returns in "Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps," and his timing couldn't be better.

The film opens with Gekko getting out of prison. No one comes to pick him up, and he is left standing outside the prison yard with his possessions, which include an empty money clip and a mobile phone, circa 1987.

Stone immediately establishes that, although there will be drama, there will also be a lot of fun and toying around with Gekko's social status following his release.

Gekko is fascinated to find that Wall Street has essentially adopted all of the greed and immorality that he served time for, and now exploits it openly, legally and on a regular basis. He is older, wiser and more contemplative about time. This change in his character is the most interesting thing about the movie.

Seven years after his release, Gekko arrives in NYC, selling his new book "Is Greed Good?" He also adopts the title as his new motto. Attending the lecture is Jake Moore (Shia LaBeouf,) a young, ambitious stockbroker who somehow admires Gekko—sounds familiar—and who plans to marry his daughter, Winnie (Carey Mulligan.) Winnie severed ties with her father after her brother died of a drug overdose years earlier.

Jake is left jobless after his boss and mentor Louis Zabel (Frank Langella) throws himself in front of a train following a sharp drop in his company's stock. He introduces himself to Gekko, and they soon develop a mentor-protégé relationship. They also begin a regular business transaction that involves Bretton James (Josh Brolin,) who caused the downfall in Zabel's company and Zabel's suicide.

Jake wants revenge for the fatal rumors James spread, and in return for his help, Gekko asks Jake to assist in mending his relationship with Winnie now that he is reformed. Gekko pleads for his daughter's forgiveness in one scene that is brilliantly acted by Douglas, and he reminds the audience that he really is human at his core.

Shia LaBeouf and Carey Mulligan are actually quite good, but they are greatly upstaged by Douglas, who once again proves that he was born to play this character. He performs effortlessly and with grace. Carey Mulligan, whose work was stunning in last year's "An Education," seems to cry in every scene here. It becomes somewhat distracting, but she and LaBeouf form a convincing couple and share some good scenes together.

"Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps" has a fairly strong first half, containing some terrific performances from Frank Langella and Michael Douglas. As expected, Stone weaves fact in and out of fiction and blends the story into our current unsteady economic climate. But what will take audiences by surprise is how withheld the script is from aggressively grabbing the current financial

Monday, September 27, 2010



institution by the collar. In this respect, the film loses a lot of the poignancy established by the 1987 original.

At 133 minutes, there is plenty of time to develop an excellent story, but because the script is so restrained, few of the interesting ideas presented are ever addressed in a satisfying manner, with the ending being the case in point.

It's almost as if Stone has thrown in the towel and decided that greed has melded so deeply into our culture that it is now the status quo. He goes with the flow rather than being the incisive rebel who made the great "JFK," "Born on the Fourth of July" and "Natural Born Killers."

It's a middling outing for Stone, who hopefully will turn out some more interesting and challenging projects in the future. **CT**

## Grade: C-

commonwealthtimes.org · CT17







# opinion



ILLUSTRATION BY HANNAH SWANN

## If Crime is up, awareness should be too

Karey Harrigan  
*Opinion Writer*

The public tends to see crime as a black and white issue; it is simply right or wrong, victim versus criminal. Instead, maybe the best way to be able to help prevent crime is to understand there is a gray area as well. We can't control a criminal's intent but something we may have the ability to change is whether or not we become the target. Because of the spike of robberies and of-

fenses that have left VCU's students as victims, we need to take in to consideration what we are doing to allow ourselves to become vulnerable to these crimes. Two years ago, VCU was able to argue that despite the university's place in an urban setting, it was capable of separating itself from its environment with its low level of crime, even in comparison to suburban or rural universities. Instead, this semester a string of robberies reaching up to five separate

incidents in a two-week time frame has helped to strip away VCU's title as Virginia's safest school. VCU was a university that students used to feel was exempt from the violence other schools have been experiencing. Now with its rise in crime numbers, it has potential to be a part of that group. VCU police are serving in an area of high demand since Richmond is well-known for its position on a list of The Nation's most dangerous cities. According to Crime Statistics,

The murder rate in the city is over six times the national average, and its robbery is almost three times as much. With these type of surroundings students are constantly urged to never walk alone, travel in groups and stay in well lit areas. Yet students still walk home alone at times when infractions are at their peak, walk with headphones on after dark, and stray into areas recognized for their violence. These careless ac-





tions make students unaware to any forewarning, allowing themselves to become open to the type of robbery and assaults that have become apparent on our campus. VCU Police Chief John Venuti explains; “Criminals are tempted to come to areas that are close to campus because they think students have items of value. When a crime oc-

curs we respond rapidly and aggressively to deter crime. We will continue to do this each and every time.” Although we are promised this safety at VCU, ignorance to your surroundings or disbelief that this can be you is only an excuse to become the victim. With security up and alerts sent out, students understand their safety is valued regard-

less of the negative impact that criminals have had on the campus in recent weeks. Criminals and crimes are inevitable, so it’s important to understand that the choices and precautions you take separate you from being a casualty. **CT**

# Education is not what it used to be

Francis Conway  
*Opinion Writer*

The College Board recently published a study stating that paying for higher education is a smart investment. People who invest in higher education enjoy more success in society, have more earning premiums and continually demonstrate a higher participation in voting. Their overall point seems to be that the cost of college is well worth it, no matter the cost ... but is it?

One has to wonder if it’s actually possible to put a monetary value on a degree. To say that a degree is worth a certain amount of money is a bit ambiguous, because a degree isn’t a consumer product. It’s a documentation that allows an individual to gain opportunities, which can be obtained in many different ways.

College Board’s study entitled “Education pays,” unlike the headline of a Washington Post article “Some say bypassing a higher education is smarter than paying for a degree,” is a blanket

statement that implies a college degree is always a prerequisite to success. In a culture that does not acknowledge any alternatives after high school other than the investment of a four-year degree, one must take into account the value and determine whether education truly does pay.

The article in the Washington Post discusses how the managing director of Formula Capital James Altucher sees how people make bad investments all the time and one of the biggest ones is college. Altucher claims college is “overrated” and “that there are better ways of obtaining an education.” He also does not plan to send his two daughters to college, a view a great number of Americans would have trouble comprehending.

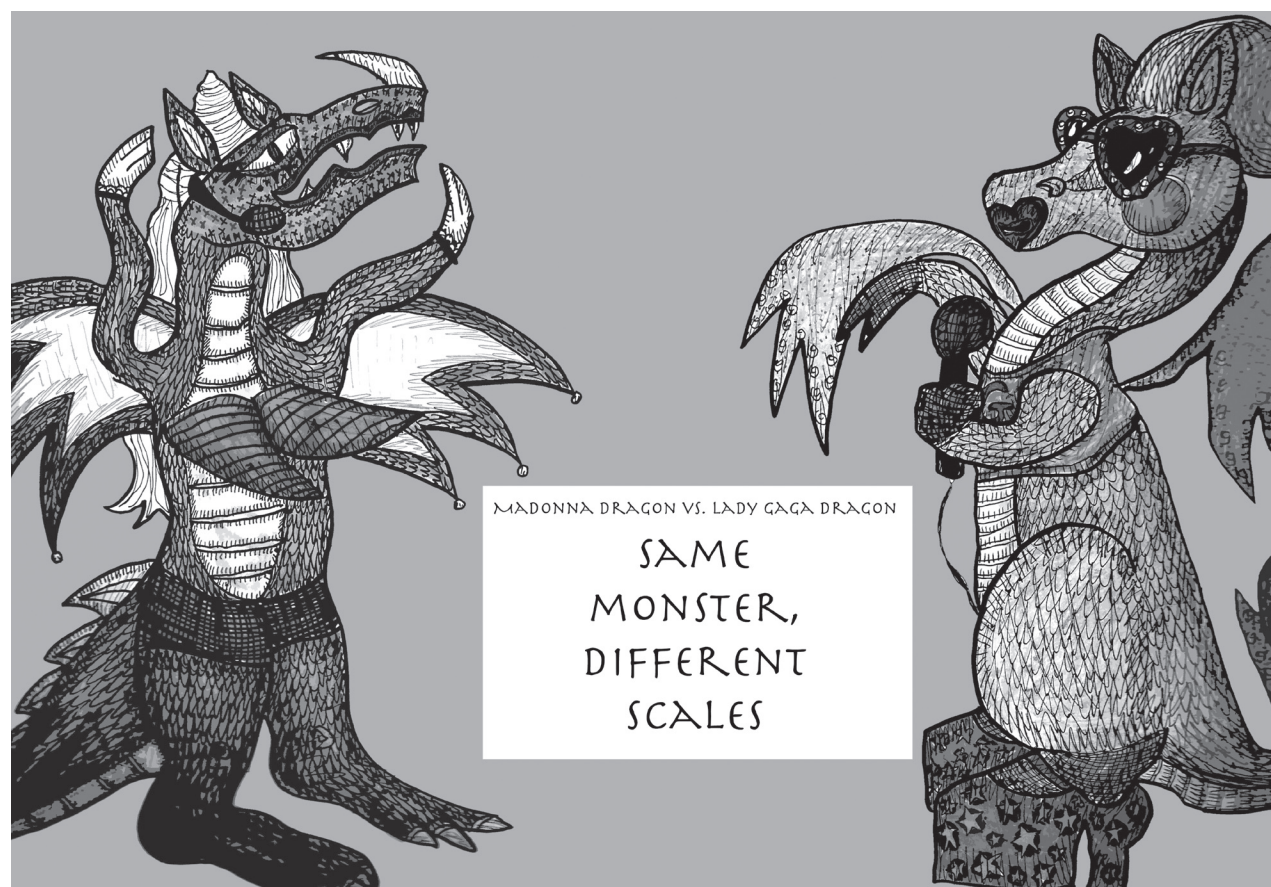
College is not entirely synonymous with success; it is only a small portion. The education one receives is not what makes up the value of the degree. Connections play a huge role, much like

the old phrase “it is not what you know, but who you know.” Often connections and how much one actually applies themselves to their interests rather than being judged entirely by their disinterests is what counts. It is an idea I think many parents and students forget when they are considering an investment in college.

I read articles like those of College Board and wonder why I can find numerous other articles that suggest there are equal or better alternatives than dropping tens of thousands of dollars on college. Of course, one must keep in mind that while College Board labels itself as a “non-profit” organization, its primary goal is to get more students to apply to college and thus likely be required to take the Board’s famous SAT standardized test. At the end of the day, college is a business and some consumers might just decide that the product is just not worth it. **CT**

## comics

### Forget Fairytales Christine Stoddard



Monday, September 27, 2010

**the**  
**ct**

**ERICA TERRINI**  
Executive Editor

**ROBERT SHOWAH**  
Opinion Editor

Opinions expressed are those of individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Commonwealth Times or Virginia Commonwealth University. Unsigned editorials represent the institutional opinion of The CT.

**Add Your Voice**

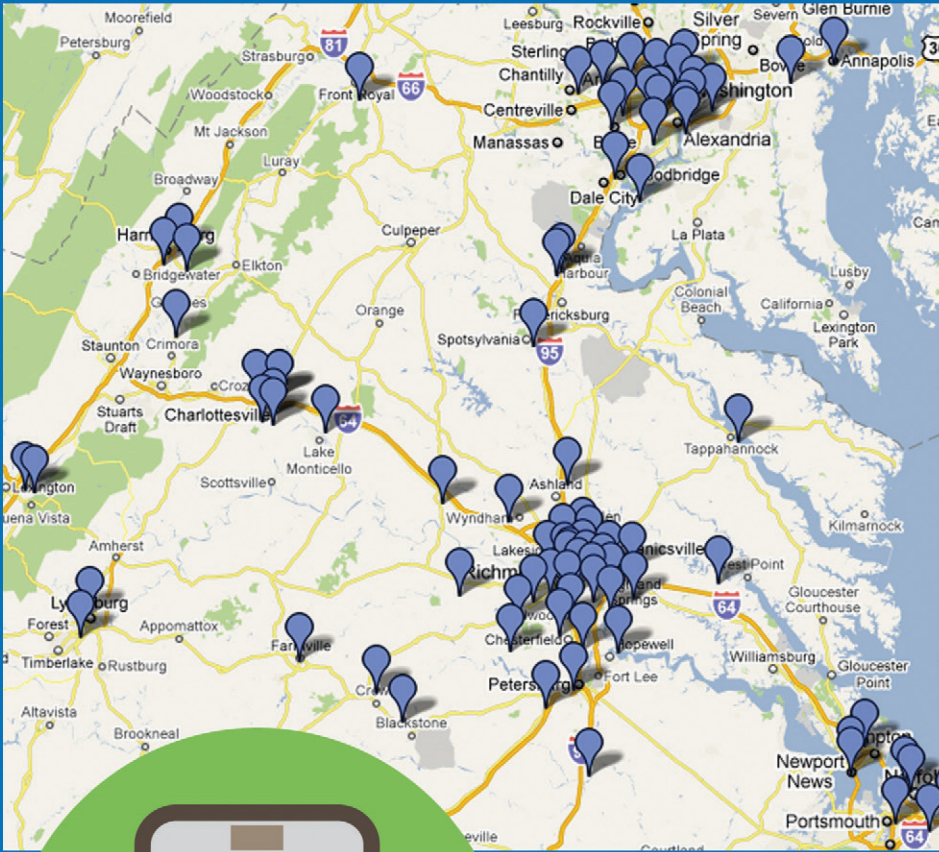
The opinion pages of The Commonwealth Times are a forum open to the public. Clear, concise and compelling contributions are welcome online at our Web site, by e-mail at [opinion@commonwealthtimes.com](mailto:opinion@commonwealthtimes.com), or by mail and in person at 817 W. Broad St., Richmond, Va. 23220-3806. Letters must be sent from a valid VCU e-mail address or signed with daytime and evening telephone contact. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, style and space.

[commonwealthtimes.org](http://commonwealthtimes.org) · CT19





# VCU's social network for carpooling and road trips!



# VCU



## Have a car?

Zimride lets you offer the empty seats in your car to other students looking to share a commute or road trip. Just post your ride and Zimride does the matching. You save money and help the environment at the same time!

## Need a ride?

Zimride is a private network for VCU, and it's free to use! Whether it's a ride to campus or a trip to the beach, Zimride will match you up with a VCU Ram driving the same direction. Post where you need to go today!

COMING SOON

<http://zimride.vcu.edu>

COMING SOON

Call Miriam Maddux, ombudsman and transit services coordinator at 804.828.2421 for more information.