

the  
ct

“There  
are no  
winners  
here.”

ED RILEY, VICK CHAHAL'S LAWYER

Former student sentenced to 15 months for fatal accident

## News

Rao breaks ground on new MCV  
children's facility · 4

## Sports

Men's soccer turns up defense · 7

## Spectrum

Yearlong Audition update with  
Andrew Kearns · 10

## Opinion

Campus security again  
an issue · 14

# BRIEFS

## On the cover:

Chahal's attorney Ed Riley, speaking about the sentencing of his client in the manslaughter case.

## Local & VCU

### West Nile virus kills Va. resident

An older adult living in the northwest region of the state is Virginia's first death this season from the West Nile virus.

That person and eight other people in Virginia have been sickened this year by the virus, which is transmitted to people from the bite of infected mosquitoes.

Nationally, cases of the virus are approaching record numbers, with 1,993 human cases of West Nile virus disease reported, including 87 deaths.

Virginia's nine human cases include four people in the northwest region of the state, two in the northern region, two in the central region and one in the southwest region.

Those numbers are not unusual. Virginia reported nine human cases of West Nile virus disease in 2011, with one death.

In 2010 there were five cases, including one death, reported.

Experts say that most people bitten by infected mosquitoes will not get sick or will become only mildly ill. However, the infection can be debilitating and deadly in some, affecting the nervous system and the brain.

"It's a disease that is not well-treated; in other words, there is no antiviral or specific medication to treat West Nile virus," said Dr. Gonzalo Bearman, an infectious disease expert at VCU Medical Center.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### U.Va. retains No. 2 spot in U.S. News ranking

With the dust-up still unsettled and state lawmakers weighing their role in the dispute, the University of Virginia at least won't see its national standing diminished as a result of the summer's attempted coup.

U.S. News & World Report's ranking of best colleges for 2013, released today, keeps U.Va. in the No. 2 spot among national public universities.

But if the reputation of the state's flagship university was unblemished, that could be more the benefit of timing than a measure of the repercussions resulting from the governing board's unsuccessful ouster of U.Va. President Teresa Sullivan.

Peer assessments and rankings by high school counselors had largely been completed by June 10, when the board announced Sullivan's resignation.

The board of visitors, which meets Thursday and Friday, is scheduled to name a vice rector to replace Mark Kington, who resigned from the board at the height of the turmoil.

Helen Dragas, who led the ouster attempt, remains as rector, although a group of alumni is pressing members of the General Assembly not to confirm her reappointment to the board.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### Romney and Ryan to campaign in Va.

GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney will hold a rally in Fairfax City Thursday morning, and his vice presidential nominee, Paul Ryan, on Friday will attend a rally in Harrisonburg and headline a fundraiser in Roanoke.

Romney, fresh off campaign stops Saturday in Virginia Beach and Richmond, will lead a rally at Van Dyck Park at 11:35 a.m., according to campaign officials. Doors open at 9 a.m.

On Friday, Ryan will attend a "Victory Rally" at 2 p.m. at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds, 4808 S. Valley Pike. He will then host a fundraiser in Roanoke, according to the Roanoke Times. Tickets for the dinner at Hotel Roanoke are \$10,000 per person, according to the paper.

In September 2008, Republicans John McCain and Sarah Palin made their first Virginia campaign stop together at Van Dyck Park.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

## National & International

### Census Bureau says U.S. poverty rate unchanged for 2011

The Census Bureau reports the number of Americans in poverty stood at 15 percent in 2011. About 46.2 million people, or nearly 1 in 6, were in poverty. That is not statistically different from the 15.1 percent who were impoverished in 2010.

In all, the number of poor remained at record highs. The figures were better than the expectations of analysts who had predicted an increase due to persistently high unemployment.

The unemployment rate improved modestly in 2011, but wage growth was weak.

University of Michigan economist Sheldon Danziger calls the poverty figures surprising and a sign that expiring unemployment benefits were able to help workers for much of the year.

The median — or midpoint — household income was \$50,054. That's a 1.5 percent decline from 2010.

*Brief by the Associated Press*

### Al-Qaida releases 9/11 anniversary video

Al-Qaida's leader claims in a video posted on the anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks that his warriors "defeated America in Iraq". Ayman Al-Zawahri's message was posted on militant websites late Tuesday, to coincide with the anniversary.

The 57-minute video, titled "Truth has Come and Falsehood has Perished," included remarks by Adam Gadahn, a spokesman for Osama bin Laden and old footage of bin Laden and other al-Qaida figures.

Gadahn assails President Barack Obama for his statements that the Unites States is not at war with Islam.

He says "America is crystal clear about its opposition to Islam as a political system, Islam as a ruling system ... and the essence of Islam."

He then asks: "So, how can America say that it is not at war with Islam?"

*Brief by the Associated Press*

### Fla. ex-Gov. Jeb Bush working on immigration book

Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush is a working on a book about one of the Republican Party's most contentious issues: immigration.

Bush has a deal with Threshold Editions, a conservative imprint of Simon & Schuster, for "Immigration Wars: Forging An American Solution."

Threshold announced Wednesday that the book is scheduled for next spring and will be co-authored by conservative attorney and activist Clint Bolick. Financial terms aren't being disclosed.

According to Threshold, Bush hopes to "bridge the partisan divide" on immigration.

The 59-year-old ex-governor has been urging his fellow Republicans to take on a more moderate tone, saying hard-line policies have led to lost elections. The son and brother of former presidents, Bush has been widely discussed as a 2016 GOP contender but has disputed having such ambition

*Brief by the Associated Press*

the  
**ct**

MECHELLE HANKERSON  
Executive Editor  
editor@commonwealthtimes.org  
757-323-2773

MARK ROBINSON  
Managing Editor  
managing@commonwealthtimes.org

JACOB MCFADDEN  
Advertising Coordinator  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
804-828-6629

RYAN MURPHY  
News Editor  
news@commonwealthtimes.org

JIM SWING and QUINN CASTEEL  
Sports Editors  
sports@commonwealthtimes.org

SAMANTHA FOSTER  
Spectrum Editor  
spectrum@commonwealthtimes.org

SHANE WADE  
Opinion Editor  
opinion@commonwealthtimes.org

TOMMY LOPEZ  
Multimedia Editor  
ctonline@commonwealthtimes.org

CHRIS CONWAY  
Photography Editor  
conwayc@vcu.edu

AMBER-LYNN TABER  
Assistant Photography Editor  
taberal2@vcu.edu

MASON BROWN  
Copy Editor  
brownmt7@vcu.edu

YING CHENG  
Lead Graphic Designer  
designers@vcustudentmedia.com

ALEXANDRA FULTON  
Graphic Designer  
designers@vcustudentmedia.com

SAGAL HASSAN  
Graphic Designer  
designers@vcustudentmedia.com

SAMANTHA WITTWER  
Graphic Designer  
designers@vcustudentmedia.com

ADAM NACCARATO  
Associate Advertising Representative  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
980-875-7325

PETER PAGAN  
Advertising Graphic Specialist  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
804-828-6629

#### SMC STAFF

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

LAUREN KATCHUK  
Business Manager  
827-1642

MARK JEFFRIES  
Production Manager  
mjeffriesVCU@gmail.com

*The Commonwealth Times strives to be accurate in gathering news. If you think we have made an error, please call Executive Editor Mechelle Hankerson at 828-6516 or email her at editor@commonwealthtimes.org. 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**



# NEWS

## In this section:

VCU breaks ground on region's largest pediatric outpatient center • 5  
Transit services to introduce larger buses • 6

# Former student sentenced for fatal drunken driving accident

Ryan Murphy  
News Editor

Former VCU student Varinder Chahal has been sentenced to 15 months in prison and a \$1,000 fine after a February car accident that led to the death of fellow student Carolina Perez.

The full sentence is five years with four years suspended for the manslaughter charge and 12 months with nine months suspended for the DUI. The \$1,000 fine also accompanied the DUI charge.

"Clearly nothing that happened in court will reverse the tragic events that caused the loss of this very smart and caring person who meant so much to so many," the Perez family said in a statement relayed through their attorney. "While the sentence delivered was less than expected, (we) hope that people will take notice of this tragedy and make better choices than the defendant."

Chahal, who will turn 24 on Friday, pleaded guilty in July to charges of involuntary manslaughter and DUI. The accident, which occurred at South 2nd and East Canal streets, resulted in the death of Perez, who was 19 and pursuing a biology degree at VCU. Chahal never returned to VCU to complete his final semester.

"One life's been taken, another one's been ruined. There's no winners here," said Ed Riley, Chahal's defense attorney.

Tearful friends and family filled both sides of the courtroom on Wednesday, Sept. 12, with almost two dozen of Chahal's friends and family as well as a dozen friends and family members of the Perez family. Chahal's relatives and acquaintances testified to his character and to his remorse over what they called a "terrible accident."

"What we have here is inevitable. It's not an accident. It's a wanton, reckless disregard for life," said Chris Toepp of the Commonwealth Attorney's Office, who was prosecuting Chahal. The office was seeking a five-year prison term for the involuntary manslaughter charge. The sentencing guidelines for the offense, considering Chahal's criminal record, range from probation to 6 months. The maximum punishment is 10 years.

"I don't think he will understand the loss of what Carolina's family is going through until he has a child himself," said Gabrielle Atkins, who had been in the accident with Perez. "When he watches his daughter grow up, graduate college,

get married, he'll always remember that he took that away from someone."

Chahal admitted to the police that he had been drinking before he drove through a red light and T-boned the Toyota Yaris containing Perez, Atkins and Jan Garcia. Chahal and the four passengers in his vehicle were not hurt. Richmond police said one of their officers witnessed the crash.

"Carolina was a very forgiving person. If she was here, she would bear no ill will," Garcia said. "He did something very wrong and when we do wrong things, there are consequences that we have to step up and accept."

Chahal was charged with involuntary manslaughter, driving under the influence and refusal to take a breath test in the Feb. 22 crash. At a hearing in March, prosecutors raised the charge to aggravated manslaughter, which carries a maximum 20 year prison term. Through a plea deal that dropped the refusal charge and reduced the manslaughter charge to involuntary manslaughter, Chahal faced up to eleven years in prison.

The CT reported in February on the crash, and prompted the VCU community to come together after Perez's death to establish "Carolina's Pledge," a denouncement of drunken driving in the student community. **CT**



The Perez family exits the courthouse after the sentencing. They later issued a statement saying, "(Chahal's) sentence was less than expected."

PHOTO BY AMBER-LYNN TABER

## TIMELINE

### FEB. 22:

At approximately 12:37 a.m., a Richmond Police officer witnessed a Mazda 6 run a red light at the intersection of 2nd and East Canal streets. The Mazda T-boned a Toyota Yaris which spun into a nearby building after the collision.

VCU sophomore Carolina Perez was in the backseat of the Yaris at the point of impact. She was taken to VCU Medical Center, where she died a few hours later from her injuries.

VCU students Gabrielle Atkins and Jan Garcia were pulled from the Yaris and taken to MCV for injuries that weren't life-threatening and were released from the hospital two days later.

Varinder Chahal, a senior accounting major at VCU is the accused driver of the Mazda that collided with the Yaris. He was charged with felony involuntary manslaughter, driving under the influence and refusal to submit to blood and breath tests.

### FEB. 25:

Family and friends gathered at St. Luke's Catholic Church in Virginia Beach for Perez's funeral. More than 420 people attended, including about 40 VCU students. The university provided free transportation to the noon mass.

### FEB. 27:

Chahal's bail was set at \$25,000 at the Richmond General District Court with the intent to allow him to finish his degree at VCU. Chahal

surrendered his passport and driver's license.

A university spokesperson confirmed his enrollment at VCU but could not confirm whether he would return to VCU to finish the semester.

### MAR. 22:

Prosecutors raised Chahal's charge from involuntary manslaughter to aggravated involuntary manslaughter at a hearing in Richmond Circuit Court. He faced a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

### APR. 18:

Mourners gathered in the Commons Plaza to establish "Carolina's Pledge," a denouncement of drunken driving in the VCU community.

### JUL. 11:

Chahal pleaded guilty to the charges of involuntary manslaughter and DUI one week before his trial was set to begin. The charge for refusing to take a breath test was dropped as part of the plea deal. Chahal faced up to 11 years in prison.

### SEPT. 12:

Chahal was sentenced to serve 15 months in prison. The full sentence was five years, four suspended for the manslaughter charge and 12 months, nine suspended with a \$1,000 fine for the DUI.





VCU President Michael Rao, Richmond Mayor Dwight Jones and others symbolically break ground on the new facility.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS CONWAY



Dr. Sheldon Retchin, CEO of the VCU Health System, speaks at the groundbreaking ceremony for VCU's new children's facility.



# VCU breaks ground on new children's facility

**Nicki Czaja**  
Contributing Writer

The Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU is set to begin the construction of a facility to concentrate on outpatient pediatric services at MCV.

The university held a groundbreaking ceremony for what will be called the Children's Pavilion on Monday, a ceremony that included statements from VCU President Michael Rao and Dr. Sheldon Retchin, CEO of the VCU Health System. The facility will be on the 1000 block of East Broad Street, between 10th and 11th streets.

"The new pavilion reinforces VCU's significant commitment as a research university to human health, especially in advancing children's health care," Rao said during the ceremony.

The new building is set to be the largest medical facility dedicated to children in central Virginia. The new facility, which will be 640,000 square feet and cost roughly \$168 million, is set

to include 72 examination rooms and a surgical space that will contain two operating rooms and two procedure rooms in the same area. Specific areas for diagnostic exams, imaging, and laboratory services will be included in the new building, as well as a 600-space parking garage. Funding for the project is coming from VCU Health System Reserve funds and bond sales.

John Duval, CEO of MCV Hospital said one of the main goals of the facility is to create a more comfortable treatment environment for children.

"At the end of the day, it's all about the patient," Duval said. "And when your patient population includes some of the smallest and most vulnerable among us, it's not only about the patient, but about the family as well."

Pediatric services are currently spread across the medical campus.

Some students were unaware of what the new building would hold.

"I've heard it's pretty much the parking deck," said Mimi Richardson, a

current nursing student on the women's health track. "I've heard [the construction] is coming up but I don't know of any opportunities [to get involved]."

VCU officials were unable to say whether it would be possible for medical students to get involved at the facility. Information on opportunities for current and future medical students will be made available in the coming weeks, after the groundbreaking is complete and construction has started.

The new facility is set to be opened during the summer of 2015. Construction will be completed by Skanska USA Building Inc., and the architecture design is from HKS, Inc. **CT**



Rao breaks ground on the new \$168 million facility.v



The new facility will be the largest pediatric outpatient center in Central Virginia. It is set to open in 2015.



**SHOCKOE VALLEY LOFTS** 209 No. 19TH Street  
Contemporary, loft-style condo in historic Shockoe Bottom, **close to MCV & VCU**. Open floor plan features wide, wood plank floors, remodeled kitchen/dining room combination with granite countertops and stainless appliances. Master Bedroom with high ceiling & large bathroom with walk-in shower. Building entrance and entire condo **upfitted for handicap, wheelchair access**. Tax abatement. \$150,000. e-mail: [steve.lapkin@Inf.com](mailto:steve.lapkin@Inf.com)



**Lapkin  
Team**

804-931-2345

[LapkinTeam.com](http://LapkinTeam.com)

Long & Foster Realtors



# VCU To Debut New Buses Nov. 1

**Sam Isaacs**  
Contributing Writer

Full-scale buses will replace the shuttles currently ferrying students between campuses starting Nov. 1, giving riders a much more spacious experience.

The Commonwealth Times reported in August that a fleet of Groome Transportation shuttle vans began running this summer, covering the Campus Connector routes and taking over from the Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC). The current shuttles seat 34. The new buses will seat 59.

"VCU's contract with GRTC ended June 30 so a few months earlier, we issued a Request for Proposal," said Robin Mack of Parking and Transportation. A Request for Proposal is an invitation to private vendors to fulfill a specific need, which for VCU was a new line of buses to take over all the campus stops.

"As a public agency, GRTC was not allowed to take part in the bidding," said Joan Straszewski, GRTC's public relations manager. "VCU compared the pricing responses to GRTC's existing price, and decided to accept the proposal of a private vendor."

VCU took bids from various companies for the opportunity and settled on Groome Transportation.

With the launch of the new buses, VCU will be working closer than ever with the fleet with hopes of offering

students a greater sense of accessibility and convenience. "There will be GPS tracking on all the buses that allows students to use a phone app to track the buses and routes at all times," Mack said.

Visually, the buses will sport custom branding, allow students to easily discern the campus buses from the white, grey and purple GRTC vehicles. The buses will have a GPS unit built in so students can track the routes and bus locations at all times.

"The app is something I would definitely use," said Iris Davis, a student and frequent Campus Connector rider.

The new fleet also offers a card reader, which reads and records every swipe a rider makes to get on the bus, giving the university an insight on route volume and frequency. This data gives the university insight into ride volume and frequency, which enables informed decisions to be made regarding the stops, Mack said.

Out of all the stops on campus, the Route 84-Campus Connector shuttles the highest volume of riders. The CT informally surveyed 40 random riders last Thursday and Friday (Sept. 6 and 7) and Tuesday, Sept. 11 about the new transit system. The CT asked a series of questions regarding the new busses. 25 out of 40 noticed a difference in the speed in which the buses arrived since the switch to Groome Transportation shuttles on July 1. 30 said they liked



PHOTO BY AMBER-LYNN TABER

The current 34-seat Groome shuttles will be replaced by 59-seat buses Nov. 1.

the idea of a smartphone app and would use it to track their routes. 15 were frustrated with the smaller sized vehicles and felt cramped on the ride between campuses, an issue that should be alleviated once the new, larger buses arrive in November.

Students will still be able to ride for free on any GRTC bus with the use of their VCU ID cards. This comes from a separate "swipe card" contract that VCU recently renewed. **CT**

## CRIME LOG

## 9/6-9/10

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

**Petit larceny** Cary St. Gym, 101 S. Linden St. - A male visitor advised that an unknown person(s) removed an item from a location.

**Petit larceny** Cabell Library, 901 Park Ave. - A female student advised that an unknown person(s) removed an item from an unsecured location.

**Theft from motor vehicle** 1400 block of Parkwood Avenue - A victim advised that an unknown person(s) removed items from a vehicle.

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

**Drug offense** 1200 block of West Franklin Street - A male visitor was arrested for possession of marijuana.

**Drug offense** 1100 block of West Broad Street - A male visitor was arrested for possession of marijuana.

**Hit and run** West Broad Street Deck, 1111 W. Broad St. - A female victim advised that an unknown person(s)

in an unknown vehicle hit her vehicle causing damage.

**Vandalism** HB Lot, 1201 W. Broad St. - A female advised that an unknown person(s) vandalized a state owned vehicle.

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

**Fire alarm** Gladding Residence Center, 711 W. Main St. - A male employee advised that a fire alarm was activated.

**Alcohol violation** West Cary and Randolph streets. - A female student was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

**Alcohol violation** West Franklin and Shafer Streets - A male visitor was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

**Alcohol violation** Broad and Belvidere Dorm, 700 W. Broad St. - A female student was arrested for underage consumption of alcohol.

**Alcohol violation** Rhoads Hall, 710 W. Franklin St. - A female student was arrested for underage consumption of alcohol.

**Drug offense** Rhoads Hall, 710 W. Franklin St. - A male was arrested for possession of marijuana.

**Aggravated assault/Breaking and entering** 1019 Park Ave. - A male victim advised that four unknown males broke into his home and assaulted him.

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

**Alcohol violation** 1011 W. Marshall St. - Two male students were arrested for underage consumption of alcohol.

**Alcohol violation** 208 N. Lombardy St. - A male visitor was arrested for drunk in public.

**Damage to state property** 938 W. Grace St. - A male employee advised that an unknown person(s) damaged a state-owned vehicle.

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

**Alcohol violation** Goshen and West Clay streets - A male student was arrested for underage possession of alcohol.

**Alcohol violation** Grace Street Housing, 835 W. Grace St. - A male visitor was arrested for underage possession of alcohol.

**Weapons violation/Drug offense/Promiscuous shooting** West Broad and North Shafer streets, West Grace and North Belvidere streets - A male visitor was arrested for possession of a concealed weapon. A second juvenile male visitor was arrested for possession of a concealed weapon, possession of a firearm by a minor, and possession of marijuana.

**Attempted robbery** 1125 W. Clay St. - A victim advised that four to five unknown juveniles attempted robbed him.

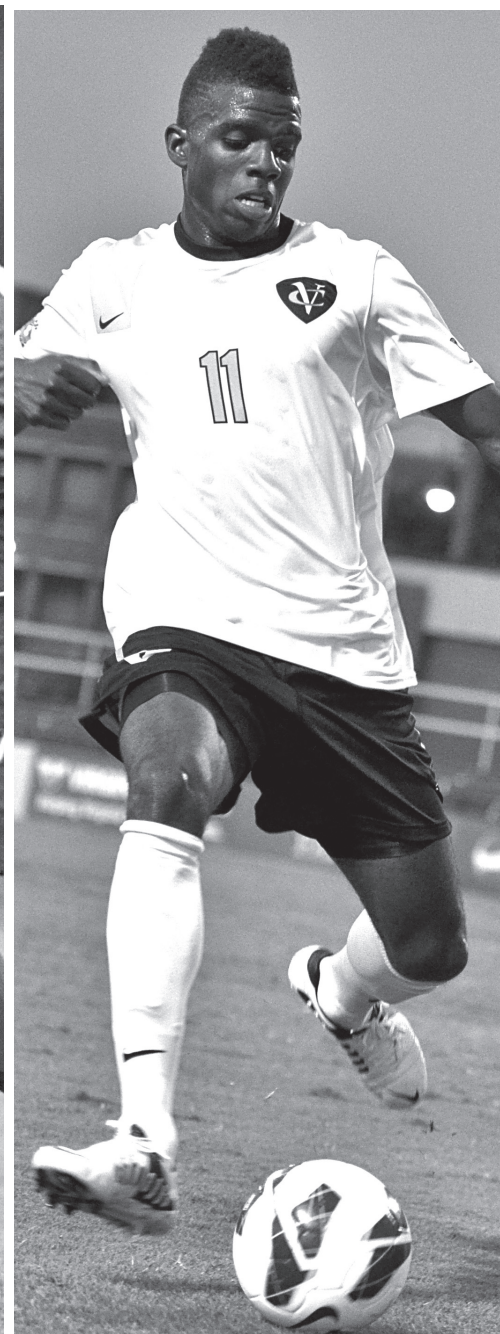


## SPORTS

In this section:

Club football founder James Tait shares his story • 8  
Fall sports weekend preview • 9

## Men's soccer gets defensive



PHOTOS BY CHRIS CONWAY

The men's soccer team takes a two-game winning streak into a match against Florida Gulf Coast Friday.

Neil Raetz  
Staff Writer

Goal scorers may get the glory and the headlines but it's the defense that really captures the success of a team, as is the case with VCU men's soccer this season. With three wins and two ties to account for, VCU's men's soccer team's solid back line has recorded two shutouts and only three goals in the first five-game stretch.

Junior striker Jason Johnson may have garnered himself the A-10 player of the week honors but without the hard work of the defense, his success won't always produce a win.

A main component of the defense is that of Costa Rican freshman Dennis Castillo. Not only is he the starting center-back but he was also elected by the team to be one of the three cap-

tains of an experienced squad. Castillo joined the Rams in the spring, learning the in-and-outs of the program and his hard work has been rewarded with the respect of his teammates.

"Dennis is a very strong-willed, tough player with great intelligence on the back line who is a very hard worker," third-year head coach Dave Giffard said.

Maybe some of the success is partially contributed to by the depth they have, with players continuously challenging each other for playing time. "Dennis is just one of several who is important, we are very, very deep on the back line," Giffard said.

Some complements to Castillo are the two outside backs and fellow Costa Ricans Juan Salano, a CAA all-freshman pick and first-team selection last year as well as his counterpart Juan Arbelaez. Not only are these two key defenders,

but their constant penetration on the offensive end is a nightmare for opponents.

A component of the Ram's play that Giffard outlined is that "we defend with 11 and attack with 11." This is still something that they're working on and when they have their game where they want it to be, it will be difficult to stop.

"We are improving every week but still have to work on our transition game," Arbelaez said on the effort so far.

The last pieces to the wall in the back are Assane Keita and Brad Seymour. Keita started the season in the back with a very solid effort before a hard driven ball to the head in the season opener against Bucknell sidelined him with a concussion. Seymour replaced him and has displayed relentless defense while being rewarded with an honor on the all-tournament team

when the Rams traveled to UMBC the other weekend.

The Rams will look to continue their five-game unbeaten streak when they head to Florida for a game against a quality Florida Gulf Coast team. In coach Giffard's first year with the Rams, Florida Gulf Coast made a visit to Sports Backers Stadium, taking down the Rams on the last play of overtime on a 55-yard free kick.

"They are a very good team, Top 25, played in the NCAA tournament last year, so it will be a good tournament style game," Giffard said. "They have a similar style of play as we do, a possession game. We're excited to get down there and test ourselves."

Giffard will look to get some revenge when the teams take the field at 7:30 on Friday night. **CT**



# Club football ambassador James Tait dedicates career to his grandfather



PHOTO BY CHRIS CONWAY

James Tait now serves as the club football team's treasurer.

**Daniel Park**  
Staff Writer

Ladies and gentlemen, do not be duped by the one-two combo of this man's broad grin and friendly light brown eyes.

Because in the next two seconds and a blink of an eye, he will pick you up, drive your hopeless body into the grass, and guarantee, that sweet boyish-look you had imagined four seconds ago will forever be tainted. Eye contact might just be as painful as full contact, the main reason James Tait founded the first-ever club football team at VCU.

"I love that it's a team sport that combines violence and strategic planning," Tait said.

Born and bred in the neighborhoods of Richmond, Tait was raised on a foundation of football – a blueprint meticulously drawn out by his grandfather, Jim Tait. In 1974, Tait's mentor and biggest influence coached at the University of Richmond. After the Spiders won a

championship in 1975, Jim was awarded the Southern Conference coach of the year later that year. Eventually, Jim was hired by Virginia Tech as an offensive coordinator.

Out of the 33 years Jim coached, his

Jim would talk with James about football games and taught him and his brother the mechanics of throwing the ball properly and discussing strategy and fundamentals of each position.

James brought his passion for

and Jules Charles.

"We knew each other personally, but weren't the closest of friends. But once we started classes, we knew that we had to start a team here," Tait said.

The three friends took nine long months to turn their dreams of bringing football to VCU into a reality.

James attributes most of his success forming the club to his grandfather, who suffered Alzheimer's in the last years of his life. James said he knows his mentor would have been extremely proud if he only knew how much work he invested into the creation of the team. He also hopes to take up a football coaching opportunity later in life.

Prior to this season, the club football team was given a \$500 donation from Jeff Cook, owner of Frontier Couriers, a cartage business located in Richmond. According to James, the team wouldn't have a season this year without it. **CT**

## "I love that it's a team sport that combines violence and strategic planning,"

**-James Tait**

23-year-old grandson was fortunate to douse himself in the deep wisdom the coach obtained from his tenure.

"Football has been a big part of my life since I was young," James said.

All the memories of his deceased grandfather are now stored in the cheerful backyard of his childhood.

football with him to VCU from Old Dominion, a school which celebrated its first year with an NCAA football team in its long 82 year history last fall. The fact that VCU didn't have a football team, varsity or club, upset him enough to reach out to two of his James River High School teammates, Cole Ransom



# Weekend Preview

## Staff Reports

### Men's soccer

The VCU men's soccer team (3-0-2) has started hot out of the gates once again, having not lost a match in the opening three weeks of the season. Led by Jason Johnson's three goals in the last two games, the Rams have exploded to a 3-0 win over Winthrop and a 5-1 torching of Seton Hall in their last two outings.

Defensively, VCU has been stout as well. The team's back line has yet to allow more than one goal in a match and already have two shutouts to their name.

The Rams will travel to the Sunshine State this weekend to face Florida Gulf Coast of the Atlantic Sun conference on Friday at 7:30 p.m. Gulf Coast finished 2011 as the 44th ranked program in the RPI, putting them in the top 25 percent of the country.

The match will be an important tune-up for the Rams' huge match-up with James Madison, which takes place just four days later. The Dukes took down No. 1 North Carolina 1-0 on Tuesday night.

### Women's soccer

With a dramatic win over a solid team in Pittsburgh last Sunday afternoon, the VCU women's soccer team has now

gone unbeaten in their last nine home matches.

Courtney Conrad's game-winning goal in overtime lifted the Rams over the Panthers and above the .500 mark for the first time since they lost to Akron on Aug. 24. VCU will seek to ride the momentum from Conrad's goal and keep the dominant home streak alive on Friday when they host UMBC at Sports Backers Stadium.

The Retrievers are 1-6-1 on the season and have lost three straight matches by virtue of shutouts, losing 1-0 to Long Island, 3-0 to Bucknell and 1-0 to Longwood. UMBC has not found the net since they pounded St. Peter's 5-0 on Aug. 31.

### Volleyball

There is no VCU team hotter than the volleyball squad at this point in the season. Eighth-year head coach James Finley has had the team playing in mid-season form since day one, and the Rams have won nine of their first 10 matches in 2012.

This season is a campaign of revenge in some ways for VCU volleyball, as Finley and the upperclassmen have come in on a mission after losing in heartbreaking fashion to Delaware in the CAA Championship last year.

VCU will have a chance to extend

their five-game winning streak to as many as eight this weekend, as they are slated for a doubleheader with Army and Albany on Friday followed by a date with Sacred Heart on Sunday. The Rams will try and capture their third tournament crown of the season at the Army Invitational at West Point.

### Field hockey

The undefeated (4-0) VCU field hockey team will take the field against Davidson on Friday evening in their third straight road match. The Rams are a perfect 2-0 so far on their current road swing, coming off a 2-1 win at Longwood and a 3-2 win over Monmouth.

Senior Haley McBee's four goals and two assists are good for the team lead in points with 10, while captain Kelsey Scherrer is close behind with eight points on three goals and two assists. Emilie Soares scored her second goal of the young season last time out against Monmouth, and will likely be a center piece of the offense moving forward alongside fellow veterans McBee and Scherrer.

VCU's scoring trio will look to remain hot against Davidson on Friday when they take on the 2-3 Wildcats. After their bout with Davidson, VCU still has three more road matches ahead of them before they finally return to Richmond to face Hofstra on Sept. 28.

## VCU SPORTS WEEKEND SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY

MEN'S SOCCER AT FLORIDA GULF COAST  
- 7:30 P.M.

WOMEN'S SOCCER VS. UMBC  
- 7:30 P.M. AT SPORTS BACKERS STADIUM

FIELD HOCKEY AT DAVIDSON  
- 6 P.M.

VOLLEYBALL AT ARMY  
- 11 A.M.

VOLLEYBALL VS. ALBANY  
- 7 P.M. IN WEST POINT, N.Y.

SATURDAY  
-NO GAMES-

### SUNDAY

FIELD HOCKEY VS. APPALACHIAN STATE  
- 7:30 P.M. IN DAVIDSON, N.C.

VOLLEYBALL VS. SACRED HEART  
- 10 A.M. IN WEST POINT, N.Y.

## Minute 2 SWIM IT

Reach your fitness goals one minute at a time in the pool! This self-directed program allows you to choose how much or how little to swim each week. Record the minutes you've exercised in the pool (swimming, water exercise, walking in the vortex) and email your total number to [minutetoswimit@gmail.com](mailto:minutetoswimit@gmail.com) to receive your prize! The best part is this program is beneficial for all skill levels and abilities!

Receive prizes for 780 minutes (13 hrs), 2,340 minutes (39 hrs) and 3,900 minutes (65 hrs).

**Cost:** Free

**Program Dates:** August 23- December 7, 2012

**Registration:** Ongoing

To register, email your name and T-shirt size to [minutetoswimit@gmail.com](mailto:minutetoswimit@gmail.com).

**Location:** Cary Street Gym and MCV Campus Recreation and Aquatic Center



**VCU RECREATIONAL SPORTS**  
www.recsports.vcu.edu

804.827.1100

## WATER EXERCISE CHALLENGE

Always wanted to try Water Exercise classes but needed motivation? Here is your chance! Receive prizes while reaching your fitness goals. You can choose any of our Water Exercise classes and receive prizes for the first 15 and 30 classes that you attend. If you attend 15 Water Exercise classes you will receive a beach towel or mug; those who attend 30 water exercise classes will receive a T-shirt.

**Cost:** Free

**Program Dates:** August 23-December 7, 2012

**Registration:** Ongoing

You can register at both the Cary Street Gym and MCV Campus Recreation & Aquatic Center with the instructor when you attend your first class.

**Location:** Cary Street Gym and MCV Campus Recreation and Aquatic Center



**VCU**  
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY



# SPECTRUM

## In this section:

Music Review | "Coexist" and "Love This Giant" • 12

Food Review | Moshi Moshi • 12

Rachel's Mailbox • 13



PHOTO BY AMBER-LYNN TABER

## Yearlong Audition: AFO studio classes begin to take toll on Andrew Kearns

**Mechelle Hankerson**  
Executive Editor

In his first week of classes, freshman Andrew Kearns' Space Research professor, Jack Wax made it clear to the aspiring graphic designer that he couldn't be an artist unless he could be confused.

If that's all it takes to be considered an artist, Kearns is well on his way after his first few weeks in the VCUarts program.

It's been up and down for the freshman studying art foundations from Salem, Va. He received a job in the graphic design department's media lab but cut his finger and had to wear a bandage on his hand in the first week. His finger is still healing and he said it makes some tasks, like typing, difficult.

"(I've had) a little bit of a rough start," Kearns admitted.

His drawing class, his biggest fear before classes started, turned out to be manageable (so far) with the help of his professor, Robert Foster, but there are still about 10 more weeks until the class ends.

"I don't want to do art, I want to study graphic design," Kearns said.

Before Kearns moved to Richmond to begin in the AFO program, he knew his required foundations classes weren't going to be his favorite thing to do for a year. He said he's trying to power through, but it's not easy.

"I kind of feel like no matter how hard I try to have a good attitude with these projects, they're still going to be

fine arts projects that I don't have the skill level to do and that I'm not really going to enjoy," he said.

His first assignment in his Space Research class was to create a free-standing structure that was taller than him but took up less floor space than he does. The structure had to be made out of baling wire, which is generally pliable and easy to use but with an injured hand, Kearns had a hard time creating his structure.

"It was not fun," he said. "I just felt stupid, I didn't really know what to do, there wasn't any instruction, it was just kind of 'do it' but there wasn't anything specifically to do...it wasn't structured enough for me."

In high school, Kearns was involved with his school's theater department and spent his junior year (his last year in American high school, as he spent his senior year as an exchange student in Rouen, France) as a designer for his school's yearbook.

He was taken by the designing of the publication and decided to pursue graphic design at VCU. Besides his experience with the yearbook though, Kearns didn't do much besides performance art prior to this year.

"I'm trying to stay positive about it by thinking, 'This is what will get me to next year,'" he said.

The art foundations website says that the four freshman studio classes are meant to benefit all students, regardless of what major they choose to pursue.

"The exciting first year provides an

intellectually rigorous, studio-based experience in the fundamental issues of art and design," the website says. "The program exposes students to a vast forum of ideas and concepts preparing them for a wide range of disciplines."

In addition to his Drawing Studio and Space Research classes, Kearns will have to take Time Studio and Surface Research next semester.

"It's kind of like any other major where you have to take gen-eds first. You have to do the basics first, it just sucks that our basics are a lot more ... intense and time-consuming," Kearns conceded.

"(I'VE HAD) A LITTLE  
BIT OF A ROUGH START,"  
KEARNS ADMITTED.

Kearns has a strong social support system, but he said most of his friends agree with him about the foundations classes. Even when he seeks advice from upperclassmen, he said he found most of them agree that the foundation classes aren't fun for anyone.

He said he and some of his friends came to the conclusion that the four foundations classes were "like a necessary evil."

"After the first week of classes I wasn't loving any of it so I was like 'Am I going to be able to do this? Am I going to the right place?'" Kearns said. "But having the project class for graphic

design... (is) what's keeping me going through the program."

In the AFO program, students take two project classes over the course of their first year (one in each semester). Project classes focus on the majors offered in VCUarts and are meant to give students an idea of what to expect once they get into their majors.

Kearns has two more class meetings left before his graphic design project class is over. Next semester, Kearns plans to be enrolled in a photography and film project class.

Even though academically, Kearns is having a rough start, he said his first weekend in Richmond with the rest of the VCU community in town went surprisingly well. He moved in a week earlier than other freshman to complete a condensed orientation since he missed normal orientation programs while he was finishing his trip in France.

Kearns and his friends were invited to a party, where he met upperclassmen who he said were willing to help him through his freshman year by offering to introduce him to new places and events in the area.

In the meantime, the countdown to the end of Kearns' graphic design project class has started. After that, he'll have to find new motivation for sticking it out through his year of foundations classes.

"I'm trying to stay positive about it," he said. "This is what will get me to next year." **CT**

Continued on page 11

\*Freshman Andrew Kearns works on a project for his Space Research class (above).



Continued from page 10



Andrew Kearns is currently enrolled in Drawing Studio and Space Research, two of his required studio classes for his freshman year.



PHOTOS BY AMBER LYNN TABER

## AFO UPDATE

### Tricia Wiles Performance Theatre

Wiles auditioned for her first Shafer Alliance Laboratory Theatre production, "Proof" by David Auburn. She received a call-back, but was not cast in the play. Wiles also started rehearsals for "Croaker - In Concert," which will be performed in the Sara Belle November Theater at the SPARC Center on Sept. 22.

### Kate Rancka Voice

Rancka seems to have fallen into a routine. "I think some weeks, you just have to go through the motions. Class, rehearsal, rehearsal, class, rehearsal. Sometimes finding the motivation to go through your routine every day can be harder than the exciting things like auditions and performances," Rancka said.

### Brooke Marsh AFO [photography]

Marsh recently received a work study job in the Pollak building as an office assistant, but has yet to begin her job. Marsh also met with her adviser and will technically have enough credits in the spring semester to be considered a sophomore. She will also start working toward a media studies minor next semester.

### Rex Kennedy Dance

Last week, Kennedy began rehearsals for Rachel Brady's senior project and continued rehearsals for Nikolai McKenzie's junior composition class. Kennedy started rehearsals for a duet which Courtney Harris is choreographing for the VCU Dance Now concert in February. Kennedy is also hoping to begin choreographing his own piece for the Student Choreography concert, which is Jan. 25 and 26.



## VCU alumna opens exhibit at the Visual Arts Center

Patrick Maguire  
Contributing Writer

This past Friday the Visual Arts Center opened the exhibit, "Where We Meet," which featured the work of local artist Andrea Donnelly.

This was one of the many exhibits that opened during this month's First Fridays Art Walk. Donnelly earned her MFA in Fiber from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2010 and recently completed a residency at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts to assist in the formation of work by Chinese artist Xu Bing.

Donnelly lives in Richmond and currently runs a hand-woven scarf business that is run out of her apartment.

Her exhibit at the Visual Arts Center features ample sized woven textiles. One of her pieces of work, "Peer," features a rather enormous figure's shadow upside down.

Donnelly said she chooses to make her figures of work on a large scale.

"I believe emotions are bigger than our physical bodies," she said.

One of her pieces, "Blot #4: Partners" is a woven version of folding an inkblot. Donnelly started by weaving the cloth and then knocking over cups

of paint onto it which created a dye stain on her completed fabric. She then wove two pieces of cloth together and creating a binary blot that reveals the story of its making.

"Woven by hand, the cloth I create is both a physical and metaphorical record of my own body," Donnelly explained in her artist's statement.

Donnelly claims to be inspired by Japanese textile aesthetics. She is inspired by her own life through self-reflection and her figures act as a representation for an emotional and mental state.

Gerry Nixon, who attended the opening of the exhibit, said about three pieces of work, "Veiling #1", Donnelly pointed out that her time spent at Penland School of Crafts in N.C. studying metals made her realize that she wanted to focus on weaving and textiles.

"This medium has been really fruitful for me," she said. **CT**

*Donnelly's work will remain on display until Oct. 21, 2012. Donnelly's next exhibit will be displayed at Green Hill Center for NC Art in Greensboro, NC and will be called "Two Artists One Space." Her hand-woven scarves can be viewed online at [www.littlefoottextiles.com](http://www.littlefoottextiles.com).*

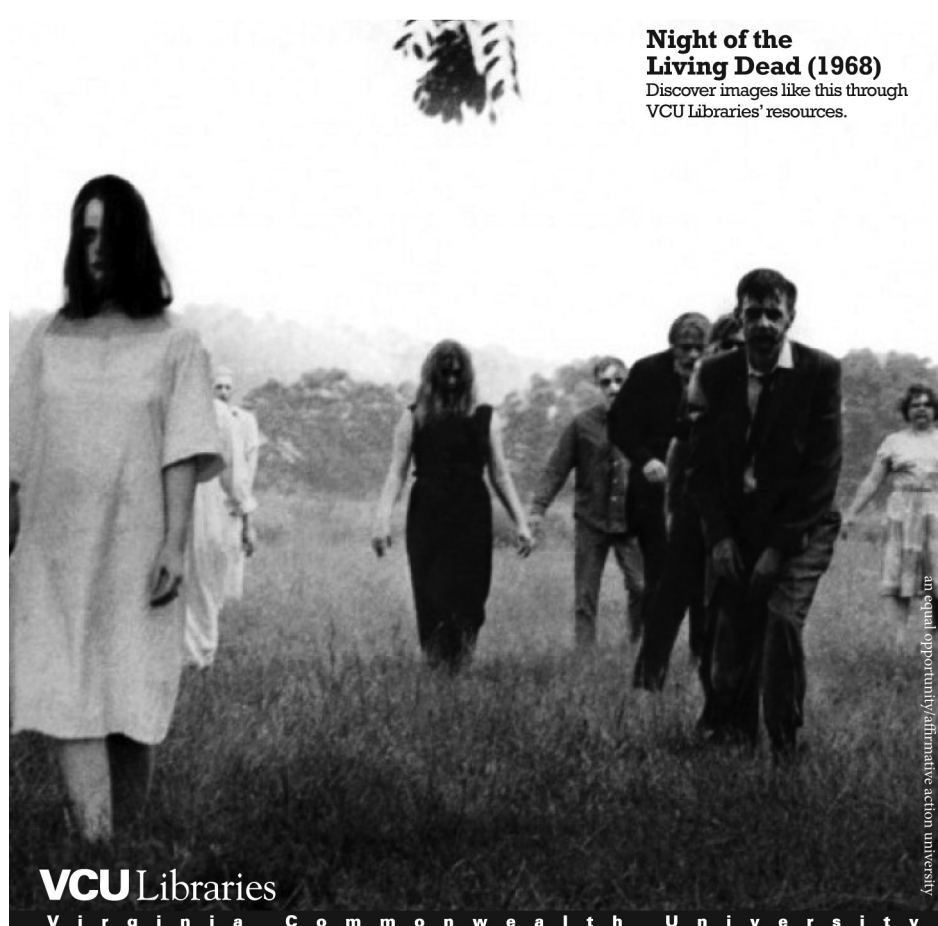
## Losing sleep over research? Ask Us.

Reach VCU's librarians by phone, email or chat or in person.

[library.vcu.edu/askus](http://library.vcu.edu/askus)

### Night of the Living Dead (1968)

Discover images like this through VCU Libraries' resources.



VCU Libraries

Virginia Commonwealth University

an equal opportunity/affirmative action university



# COEXIST | Music for dancing alone

The xx

Coexist

Young Turks record label

Grade | **B-**

**Richard DiCicco**  
Staff Writer

The xx have a lot to live up to. Their self-titled debut from 2009 not only earned them critical praise and a Mercury Prize but also the open arms of the modern dance scene.

The band's synthesized beats have been a popular source of sampling over the past three years, appearing at one point in Rihanna's 2011 song "Drunk on Love." The British quartet's first album was incredibly refined, showing admirable restraint and control over their dark and silky R&B.

In just one record, The xx famously established themselves as masters of subtle tension and powerful silences. First impressions are everything, and debuts like "xx" are precious and rare.

Enter 2012: The xx had arrived fully-formed, which has only made their creative progression harder for them to manage. In the three years since their debut, they deliberately ejected fourth member Baria Qureshi from the group, and the band's beat maker Jamie Smith kept himself busy with highly-regarded remix and production jobs under the moniker of Jamie xx.

Each of these developments, as well as the band's rekindled relationship with the dancefloor, shape the The xx's second LP "Coexist," which is, unsurprisingly, very similar to their debut.

Lithe guitars with just a touch of reverb still hover over every manufactured drum beat, and Romy Madley Croft and Oliver Sim still trade softly-sung words of unrequited love

Yet it works, and that's okay. To his credit, Jamie xx's beats do have a lot more heft to them this time around, in part a result of him stretching his legs in the interim between albums.

However, The xx will most certainly take flak for this. It is true that the record is even more skeletal than its predecessor, eschewing dynamics for a quiet rumble and pitter-patter club beats. But, to me, the band's hesitance to alter their unique aesthetic reflects fear more than confidence. Hopefully, history will prove me wrong.

Heavy-handed career criticisms aside, "Coexist" is achingly beautiful. If, like the bells of a clock, the music could evoke a time of day, it would be the darkest, quietest moments of solitude in the after-midnight hours. Hazy lyrics hover over each song with whispers of longing and spoiled romance, such as in "Chained" ("We used to be closer than this; is it something you miss?").

Though the album as a whole is strong, few tracks really stand out on "Coexist," and that does bother me. Sophomore records can generally only go in one of two ways, and The xx chose to go for refinement over expansion.

"Coexist" does not deviate from the group's debut in many significant ways, but for now, that's okay. The record still managed to resonate with me in the same way as their debut. The xx will always be the perfect "dancing alone" music: delicate, intimate and barely there, like the best-kept secret. **CT**

# LOVE THIS GIANT | A melding of two minds

David Byrne and St. Vincent

Love This Giant

4AD | Todo Mondo record label

Grade | **B+**

**Richard DiCicco**  
Staff Writer

Say it out loud: "David Byrne and St. Vincent." Let it sink in. On paper, this collaboration could not seem more lopsided, but the two artists actually fit together much better than expected.

Taking even a cursory glance back at their respective discographies reveals an obvious link between David Byrne and Annie Clark, St. Vincent's sole songwriter and front woman. Byrne's legendary run with the Talking Heads in the 1970s and '80s, where he merged punk with funk, tribal music, minimalism and New York avant-garde, set the stage for artists like Miss Clark to liberally play with the rules of pop music. Like Byrne, Clark packs a symphonic range of dynamism into every song she writes and manages to retain that crucial 3 to 5 minute running time.

"Love This Giant" is the result of Byrne and Clark's deep musical connection and it shows brilliantly, almost erasing the wide age gap between the two artists in the mind of the listener.

The album most certainly has its own distinct voice - not quite as stiff as David Byrne's work but more driving and rhythmic than Annie Clark's lush chamber pop - and this helps to displace the record from the more idiosyncratic work of either musician.

The first half of the record shakes and shimmies around, drawing heavily from funk and early New Wave. As singers, Clark and Byrne mesh beautifully, and the mix of traditional rock instruments with brass and woodwinds really

lets the compositions breathe. While "Love This Giant" is very energetic and excited (even fun, let's be honest), the wonky drum machines and ever-present horns begin to grow a bit monotonous halfway through.

Thankfully, the record opens up around the tracks "Lazarus" and "Optimist," where the rigid funk of the album loosens and allows the songs to billow and build patiently, rather than jitter all over the place. It never loses its pace though. This is a well-structured and wisely-crafted pop record. The album's untraditional and fragmentary composition sees each song shape-shift and transform in wild and captivating ways.

However, I cannot talk about "Love This Giant" without discussing the infamous horns. Perhaps the record's most important musical element, every single track of the album prominently features brass of all kinds.

Admittedly, I found the horns to be somewhat taxing to endure. The brass certainly has character, but it only tends to express itself as weird and obtuse. Nevertheless, they serve a practical purpose: they help to give these two artists a common ground, running a sonic thread throughout the record that helps to unite the disparate tracks.

"Love This Giant" is far better than I anticipated and is one of my favorite surprises of 2012. However, though it feels like a labor of love, it lacks the power of either David Byrne or Annie Clark's individual work. It's a fantastic footnote, though. **CT**

## FOOD REVIEW

**Samantha McCartney**  
Staff Writer

A mix of scents from countless restaurants and the occasional live musicians all describe Carytown's upbeat, eclectic atmosphere. When walking down the street in Carytown, there is a wide variety of choices, from the high class, French cuisine of Can Can, to the classic cheese burgers of Carytown Burgers and Fries.

Moshi Moshi, a sushi restaurant in Carytown, was my destination of choice. Offering the regular choices for sushi, one may think there's no difference between this place and all of the others, but one look at the menu changes that assumption.

Most notably, their specialty rolls gain the most attention. Tempura fried rolls that can include combinations of

# Moshi Moshi | The sushi equivalent of comfort food

two or more different kinds of seafood within one roll are some of the most popular. Not only does one have the option of actual fried sushi rolls, but for non-seafood eaters, Moshi Moshi offers steak, stir fry, noodles and rice. They even serve tofu for vegetarian customers.

When faced with the substantially difficult choice of what to order, my waiter recommended his favorite, the crouching tiger roll. Filled with avocado, shrimp tempura, spicy mustard, eel sauce and Sriracha sauce and topped with tuna sashimi style, it was the clear winner. This, along with a lighter sweet potato roll, would be my meal of choice.

Within the tavern-like atmosphere there were a few Asian influences spread throughout the restaurant. The walls were lined with photographs of Richmond in the early 1900's and late 1800's,

and there was a fireplace situated in the center of the downstairs level. For a more intimate feel, one could venture upstairs where there is more available seating. On a nice day, the option of eating outside is also available, but indoors seemed more suitable to get the full effect of the restaurant.

In less than thirty minutes, the food was on the table. The waiter's recommendation proved true. The crouching tiger roll was full of many different flavors due to the combination of the shrimp, avocado and three different sauces. The lightly seared tuna balanced the crunchiness of the tempura shrimp within the roll and the sauces were unlike any kind of sushi I had ever had.

However, not even halfway through the meal, I was full. After three pieces, all of that seafood and all of those sauces became overwhelming and what

was supposed to have been a "lighter" meal became as heavy as if I was eating comfort food. It would have been more appropriate for Moshi Moshi to offer fewer pieces for the crouching tiger roll, as it does for other rolls.

The sweet potato roll was a nice break from the wide array of flavors offered to me with the crouching tiger, but without soy sauce tasted a little bland.

If you go into Moshi Moshi and expect a normal, light meal of sushi, the specialty rolls are not recommended. Stick to the regular choices, or even dare to get a "hand" roll which is one large piece of seaweed rolled into cone with the contents of whatever roll you have chosen. **CT**





ILLUSTRATION BY PHIL WHISENHUNT

## Rachel's Mailbox

Dear Rachel,

*I'm a single guy who has harbored feelings for one of my best friends for a number of years, yet I've never said anything to her regarding them. Recently, she has begun seeing someone and I'm happy for her, but at the same time I'm not. Should I speak up and take my chance with her?*

**Ben, 20**

Ben,

I don't know if you've seen "The Graduate" (if you haven't it's been out since 1967 so there's been plenty of time for you to grow a good taste in movies), but the glorious message of the film is that if you wait until her wedding to tell her you love her, it'll probably work out for the best. My first golden nugget of advice to you is a simple one: be Dustin Hoffman

Sadly, that falls on deaf ears because you're obviously not Dustin Hoffman as you had to write to me to ask for advice on this, so I have a question for you: how do you want this story to end? If I were you I'd take the sound, realistic advice from other films and apply them to your life. It can only work out for the best, I assure you. You can't go wrong if you take drastic measures. Women LOVE drama, even when they say they don't. Here are some leading men who get their women that you could take notes from:

+ Lloyd in "Say Anything": He is a super underachiever with nothing going for him except good taste in music and shoulders that could carry a boom box.

He is honest and makes his intentions obvious to the woman he loves.

+ Noah in "The Notebook": He's initially flat-out, WWF smack-down rejected by Allie, but he doesn't give up.

He freaks her out by hanging from a Ferris wheel and essentially forcing her to go on a date with him. From the start, he is honest and makes his intentions obvious to the woman he loves.

+ The Phantom in "The Phantom of the Opera": He wears a mask to cover up a hideously disfigured face. If it weren't for his voice, he'd probably be super gross, but he still finds a way to coach and sing beautifully to Christine because he's in love with her. In his own strange way, he is honest and makes his intentions obvious to the woman he loves.

+ Kong in "King Kong": He is an ape. Kong kidnaps a woman, climbs up the Empire State Building and holds her over New York because he's in love and wants the world and the U.S. Army to know. He is honest and makes his intentions obvious to the woman he loves.

Ben, roll all these character's experiences into one and go for it! Carry a boom box and play the backing track to "Music of the Night" while hanging from a Ferris wheel in a gorilla suit. The worst she can say is no, right? You could reap major benefits from being gutsy and honest for once in your life. If things don't work out, get back to me and I'll tell you I'm sorry.

**-Rachel**



**VCU**

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

# NEW FREE AQUATIC CLINICS

WEDNESDAYS 8-9PM @ CARY STREET GYM

NO NEED TO REGISTER, JUST SHOW UP!



Breast stroke – September 12

How to Circle Swim – September 26

Treading Water – October 10

Freestyle/Front Crawl – October 24

Backstroke/Back Crawl – November 7

How to Circle Swim – November 21

Survival Swimming – December 5

Freestyle/Front Crawl – December 19

**VCU RECREATIONAL SPORTS**  
www.recsports.vcu.edu

804.827.1100



# OPINION

## In this section:

Security alert guidelines needed • 14  
Where Romney loses the student vote • 15  
Comic-Fanatics • 15

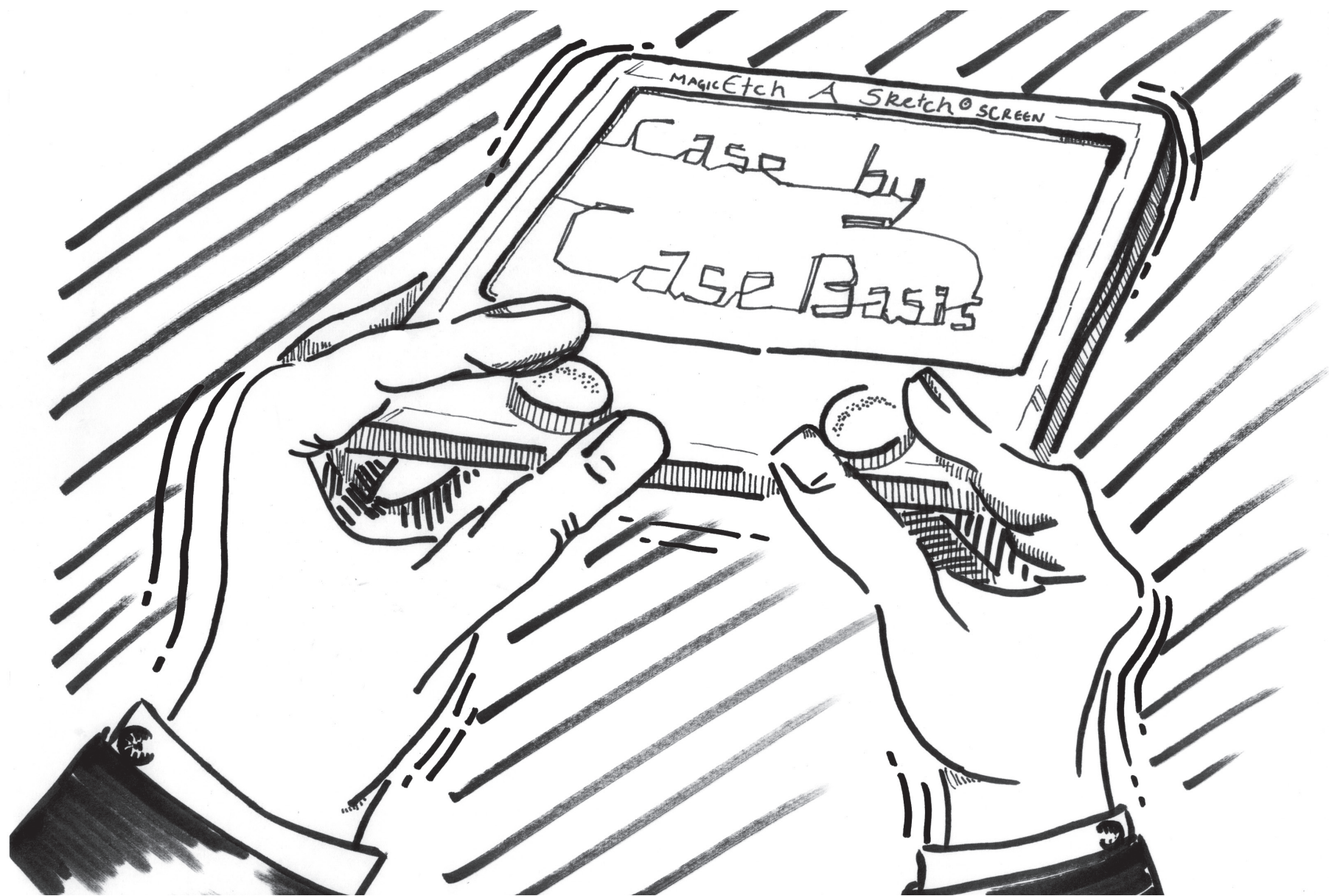


ILLUSTRATION BY SAMANTHA WITTEWER

# Reporting of crime should be more consistent

**Shane Wade**  
Opinion Editor

This will be the third opinion piece I will have written about campus security at VCU this semester and I hope it will be my last.

Last Saturday, there was a shooting outside the Qdoba frequented by students on Broad Street around 2 a.m. Around the same time, West Grace South and GRC residence halls were evacuated because of fire alarms. No security alert was sent out to students.

In fact, there have been a startling low amount of security alerts/messages this semester compared to other semesters. Normally, that would make me feel safer, but, as an informed member of the populace, I can't help but wonder how artificial that security might be and how much under-reporting the VCU Police department is engaging in.

Possibly as a response to students' concerns over the amount of e-mail alerts they received in the past, it seems VCU police have become more selective as to which particular off-campus crimes should students be alerted to. While student input is important, it shouldn't be the deciding factor when determining how informed students should be.

The Jeanne Clery Act, which governs the reporting of campus crime, only requires that students be alerted to crimes that occur on-campus. Oftentimes in the past, VCU Police went further than the law required and sent out security alerts for crimes that occurred on off-campus locations within close proximity to campus. The police have a responsibility and accountability to students and, while we do applaud them for going above and beyond the call of duty in sending out off-campus e-mail alerts, it would be more prudent

of them to be consistent and logical.

When a little over 459 students are standing outside at 2 a.m., a single street and less than 100 yards away from a shooting, it's reasonable to assume students would like to know of said incident. I would go as far as to say that not relaying that information on to students is an act of serious ethical neglect. At the least, it's inconsistent with VCU Police's past willingness to share information about crime with students. Although the police operated within the bounds of the law and were not required to inform students of the incident because it wasn't an ongoing danger and it's distressing that we weren't informed. The fact that the suspected subjects were arrested within a timely manner does not relieve the police of their responsibilities to the student body. The absence of suspected individuals does not refute the action's occurrence.

Sending less alerts doesn't make students feel like campus is safer if there are still crimes occurring in close proximity to campus; it actually makes students feel less safe and less secure in their police forces competency when they hear about a shooting across the street from them from a friend's tweet rather than an official e-mail by the police department.

More than anything, VCU Police, we ask from you consistency. Develop a guideline (that isn't on a "case-by-case basis") by which you qualify whether or not to send an alert for an off-campus crime and stick to it. Doing otherwise confuses students, especially when the solution to the problem is so blatantly obvious. Prioritize incidents and act accordingly.

Allow us to be adults and make our own, individual decisions as to whether we're going to ignore a security alert or not. **GT**



# Romney's stance on student debt alienating

Shane Wade  
Opinion Editor

When it comes to assisting college students with mountainous amounts of debt, Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney made it completely clear at a campaign stop in New Hampshire on Monday that as students, we're on our own if he is elected.

"It is very tempting as a politician to say, 'You know what, I will just give you some money. The government is just going to give you some money and pay back your loans for you,'" he said. "I am not going to tell you something that is not the truth, because you know, that is just taking money from your other pocket and giving it to the other pocket."

It's important to remember that, as governor of Massachusetts, Romney cut funding to his own state's universities. According to the Boston Indicators Project, a civic community project, Massachusetts' per capita funding for public universities decreased from \$158 to \$137. In 2003, under Governor Romney's education plan, higher education institutions faced \$100 million in budget cuts, \$50 million in tuition increases and an increase of only \$44 million financial aid. The Boston Globe and Massachusetts Board of Education also found that students at state university and colleges faced a 63 percent increase in fee cost over the '03-'07 reign of Romney.

It should surprise no one when he openly admits that he's not out to make life at all easier for students. Romney needs to know that if he wants to be president, it would behoove him to have a concise platform to stand on, especially at a time where 18-29 year

olds graduate into an economy of 12.7 percent unemployment.

The student debt crisis isn't going to resolve itself and it's not an issue that can even be solved by ensuring students can get jobs once they graduate. It's also a mistake for him to equate confronting the student debt crisis with offering government handouts, while simultaneously promising to create jobs so that

**Romney will let American students and families drown in debt just to prove to a disinterested populace that he's a true, dyed-in-the-red-state-wool conservative.**

students will be able to pay back those loans.

If he wants to "get the government off (my) back, so (I) can keep more of what (I earn)," then he can propose and pass legislation that addresses, decreases, or manages the amount of debt students have to pay back, rather than making vague, pandering promises of "more jobs."

With more than 37 million Americans in the grips of \$1 trillion worth of

student loan debt, inaction is not a logical or defensible course of action.

Under President Obama's "Pay As You Earn" plan, which caps monthly federal student loan repayment at 10 percent of monthly discretionary income, I'll be paying, at most, \$103 per month, as opposed to the standard 10-year payment of \$690 when I graduate. That's getting student debt off my back so I can keep more of what I earn. That's promising me a future.

Romney will let American students and families drown in debt just to prove to a disinterested populace that he's a true, dyed-in-the-red-state-wool conservative. What's his solution? "Borrow money from your parents."

With the number of solid economic ideas and thinkers at the Republican National Convention two weeks ago, you'd think at least one of them would step up and challenge Romney's plan to cold shoulder college students.

Make no mistake - President Obama could be doing more than asserting vague and disconcerting utterances about cutting federal funding to colleges that don't lower tuition rates and overall college cost, but it's a great deal more progressive and comforting than anything Romney has proposed. **CT**

*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.*

the  
ct

Mechelle Hankerson  
Executive Editor

Shane Wade  
Opinion Editor

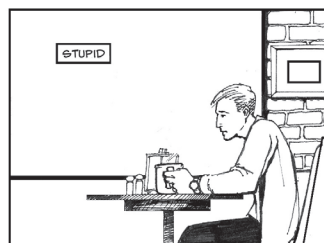
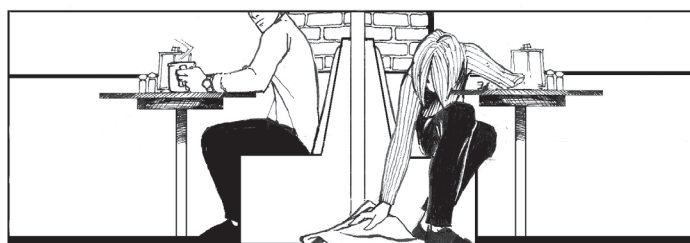
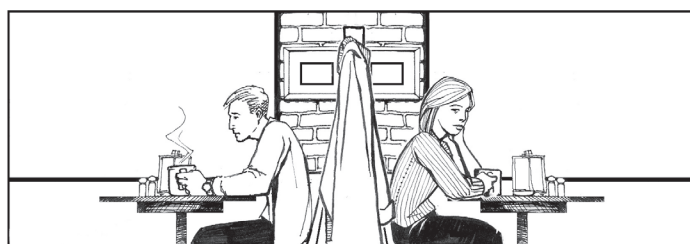
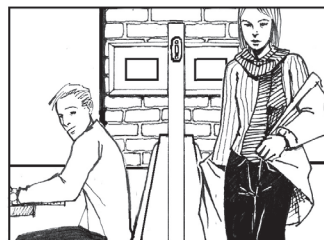
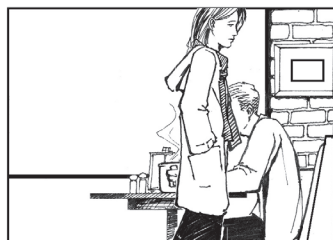
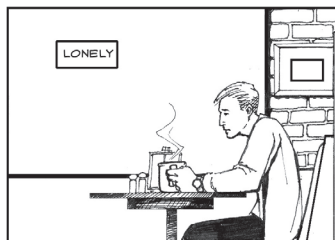
Opinions expressed are those of individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Commonwealth Times or Virginia Commonwealth University. Unsigned editorials represent the institutional opinion of The CT.

## Add Your Voice

The opinion pages of The Commonwealth Times are a forum open to the public. Clear, concise and compelling contributions are welcome by e-mail at [opinion@commonwealthtimes.org](mailto:opinion@commonwealthtimes.org), by mail or in person at 817 W. Broad St., Richmond, Va. 23220-2806.

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. Letters to the editor can be sent to [editor@commonwealthtimes.org](mailto:editor@commonwealthtimes.org)

FANATICS | By Eman Kim





# VCU Parking & Transportation

**We Tweet, Facebook & Blog!**

**Stay up to date with the latest news on parking and  
alternative transportation at VCU!**



[www.twitter.com/vcuparking](http://www.twitter.com/vcuparking)

**It's simple.  
Just click to like!**



[www.facebook.com/vcuparking](http://www.facebook.com/vcuparking)



**Check it out for important updates!**

[blog.vcu.edu/parkingtransportation](http://blog.vcu.edu/parkingtransportation)

*Mention this advertisement on one of our pages!*