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BRIEFS

On the cover:

Oregon Hill Halloween Parade starts its march in Monroe Park Wednesday night.

Photo by Amber-Lynn Taber

Local & VCU

Romney to campaign Thursday in Caroline, Roanoke and Virginia Beach; First Lady to appear at VSU

Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney and first lady Michelle Obama will return to Virginia this week, with Romney holding events Thursday in Caroline County, Roanoke and Virginia Beach, and Obama visiting Chesterfield County and Hampton on Friday.

Obama will visit Virginia State University on Friday afternoon, according to an Obama campaign official.

Romney last campaigned here Oct. 17, holding events in Chesapeake and Leesburg. Five days earlier, he held a rally in Chesterfield County.

As Hurricane Sandy wreaked havoc along the East Coast, President Barack Obama canceled a campaign stop Monday in Prince William County with former President Bill Clinton, and has also nixed stops in Ohio today to stay in Washington and monitor the response. The Obama campaign says Clinton will campaign in Virginia this week.

Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch

New poll shows presidential race in Va. nearly a dead heat

Less than one week from Election Day, the presidential contest in Virginia is a virtual dead heat, with President Barack Obama leading Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney 49-47 percent, according to a Quinnipiac University/New York Times/CBS News poll released this morning.

The two-point advantage is within the poll's margin of error of plus or minus three percent.

It shows a tight race down to the wire as both campaigns battle for the state's 13 electoral votes.

An October poll by the same groups showed Obama with a 5 percentage point edge, 51-46.

"After being subjected to what seems like a zillion dollars' worth of television ads and personal attention from the two candidates reminiscent of a high-school crush, the key swing states of Florida and Virginia are too close to call with the election only days away," said Peter A. Brown, assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute.

"President Barack Obama clings to a five-point lead in Ohio, but Gov. Mitt Romney has narrowed the president's lead that existed in Florida and Virginia before the first debate."

Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch

Local jobless rate differs based on seasonal factors

The Richmond region's unemployment rate dropped to 6.2 percent in September from 6.4 percent in August.

Last month's rate also declined from 7 percent in September 2011, according to a report Tuesday by the Virginia Employment Commission.

Those rates are not adjusted for seasonal factors.

Yet many economists use seasonal adjustment to get a better sense of long-term trends by removing short-term patterns such as the opening of schools and students entering or leaving the job market.

When adjusted for seasonal factors, the region's rate rose slightly from 6.3 percent in August to 6.4 percent in September, according to calculations by Chmura Economics & Analytics in Richmond.

"The September report shows little change in the pace of economic growth in Richmond," said Christine Chmura, president and chief economist with Chmura Economics & Analytics.

Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch

National & International

East begins to stir after 2 days of hunkering down

Wednesday is the new Monday for thousands of workers and schoolchildren as the East Coast begins coming back to life after superstorm Sandy.

New York is still largely paralyzed, but Mayor Michael Bloomberg planned to ring the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange.

Residents noticed an uptick in traffic and people waiting at bus stops.

The Brooklyn Bridge was closed a day earlier because of high winds. But on Wednesday, joggers and bikers made their way across before sunrise. One cyclist carried a flashlight. Car traffic was brisk but slowed going into Manhattan.

In Pennsylvania, Gov. Tom Corbett cited reports that Amtrak and Philadelphia's mass transit system were slowly coming back.

In Washington, the Smithsonian Institution's museums and National Zoo are reopening after shutting for two days

Brief by the Associated Press

Obama to visit storm victims as campaign rolls on

President Barack Obama put campaign battleground travel on hold to tour the ravaged New Jersey coast Wednesday, while under-the-wire campaigning resumed in swing state Florida that is critical to Republican Mitt Romney's victory plan.

Obama is emphasizing his incumbent's role for a third straight day, skipping voter contact in the handful of states that will decide the election to visit victims of Hurricane Sandy around Atlantic City in a state he's confident of winning. Obama planned to resume campaign travel Thursday with gusto, making stops in Nevada, Colorado and Wisconsin.

The president's actions have forced Romney to walk a careful line and make tough choices. The former Massachusetts governor must show respect for the superstorm's casualties all along the Eastern Seaboard. But Romney can ill afford to waste a minute of campaign time, with the contest virtually deadlocked in several key states and the election six days away.

Florida is among the most closely fought and the biggest prize among the swing states, with 29 electoral votes. Without victory in Florida, Romney will have an uphill and limited path to electoral victory.

Romney has stops scheduled with former Gov. Jeb Bush and Sen. Marco Rubio in some of the most populous areas of the state - Tampa, Jacksonville and Coral Gables in the Miami area. The Obama campaign dispatched Vice President Joe Biden to play defense in Florida Wednesday, with stops in smaller more conservative markets of Sarasota and Ocala aimed at narrowing the margin where Republicans usually fare well.

Brief by the Associated Press

Greece's major labor unions call 48-hour general strike

Greece's two main labor unions covering civil servants and the private sector have called a 48-hour strike to protest austerity measures due to be voted on next week.

The unions said today that the strike on Nov. 6-7 will be accompanied by demonstrations in central Athens on both days. Previous such protests have turned violent.

The strike call came as the finance minister submitted an amended 2013 budget that raised the country's debt and deficit forecasts for next year.

It also came as lawmakers approved a privatization bill in a fractious vote that saw dissent from members of the two junior partners in the three-party governing coalition.

Brief by the Associated Press



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

ALLISON BRAZELTON
Copy Editor
copyeditor@commonwealthtimes.org

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
multimedia@commonwealthtimes.org

CHRIS CONWAY
Photography Editor
conwayc@vcu.edu

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

MARGO MAIER
Copy Editor
copyeditor@commonwealthtimes.org

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

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

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817 W. Broad St., P.O. Box 842010
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NEWS

In this section:

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Richmond, VCU escape Sandy unscathed

Liz Butterfield
Assistant News Editor

From Sunday night to early Tuesday morning, the Richmond community held its breath as Hurricane Sandy swept northward and did little of the anticipated damage to the downtown area.

Gov. Bob McDonnell issued a state of emergency Friday, and Richmonders stocked up on water and nonperishable foods. Sandy's heavy winds and rain did not have the anticipated effect on central Virginia, however, and hit northern states like New Jersey and New York hardest.

Vickie Connors, a meteorologist and assistant professor at VCU's Center for Environmental Studies, said Sandy did not affect Richmond as expected.

"We didn't have a lot of the physical damage from winds that I think people were concerned about," Connors said. She noted that before the storm, high winds and heavy rain were expected in Richmond and the city was lucky to have avoided worse conditions.

"The impacts for Richmond were fairly modest ... Knowing what could have been and what we got, this was pretty benign," Connors said. The storm was responsible for two traffic related fatalities in central Virginia.

In a VCU alert sent early Monday evening, the university decided to open at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 30. The alert said that based on the expected impact of Hurricane Sandy on central Virginia and VCU, the university would open and the VCU Health System and its clinics would operate on a normal schedule.

"The safety of all of the VCU community is of utmost importance," the message said. "Please use discretion and prudence in decisions to travel to campus as conditions may vary within the region."

Jason Magill is a VCU history major and a commuter. Despite the minimal damage, he still felt that VCU should have closed on Tuesday.

"I do not think that they took into account those that do commute," he said, although he believed VCU did what was in the university's best interest.

Magill, also a father of two, felt that having the university open while all surrounding public schools closed puts stress on parents who work or



Vickie Burnett, a VCU student, said she didn't prepare for Hurricane Sandy because she "just had a feeling it wouldn't hit Richmond that hard."

take classes at the university.

"It opens up a whole different can of worms," he said.

Magill said he expected downed trees and power lines, but did not know anyone who lost power during the storm. Dominion Virginia Power's Tom Jewell said that over the course of the storm, a total of 10,000 Richmond area customers lost power at some point, but that as of Tuesday night, almost all had been restored.

John Bernier, adjunct meteorology professor at VCU and chief meteorologist for WRIC TV 8 in Richmond, said that what made Sandy different from other hurricanes was its merger with a major winter storm headed east. The storm was unable to move back out through the East Coast due to a fair-weather storm over Greenland, he explained.

"The worst part of the storm didn't ... get far enough inland to affect us here," Bernier said.

During the storm, Richmond only received 2.20 inches of rain, according to Bill Sammler, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service. Winds only reached 40 mph during the storm's peak. In contrast, during Hurricane Irene, maximum wind

speeds were over 70 mph and rainfall totaled 5.37 inches.

Mayor Dwight C. Jones ended Richmond's state of emergency declaration at 7:46 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 30, and closed the Emergency Operations Center at noon on Tuesday. Emergency shelters at Linwood Holton and Blackwell elementary schools closed at noon and libraries and community centers reopened at noon, said a statement issued from the mayor's press secretary.

"Our city received no significant damage of note, and is resuming normal operations," Jones said in the statement. "I would like to extend our deepest thoughts and concerns to our neighbors to the north who were significantly impacted by this weather event."

During a press conference Tuesday afternoon, McDonnell said the commonwealth saw minimal damage.

"Sandy was not as bad as we expected," McDonnell said. "But we still faced high winds, heavy rain and snow and flooding. Virginians worked together to get through this storm, and looked out for one another." **CT**

Muslim Students Association community service strengthens interfaith bonds

Amir Vera
Staff Writer

Every Friday afternoon, a group of students can be seen handing out tuna sandwiches and lemonade to the underprivileged in Monroe Park. Community service is a large part of many student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, but this group isn't Greek.

These students are a part of the Muslim Students Association (MSA) of VCU and they feed those in need as part of an MSA initiative known as Project Downtown.

The program was created not just as a way to feed the hungry, but also to fulfill the students' religious duty. One of the five pillars of Islam, a set of tenets that all Muslims live by, is Zakat. Zakat, or almsgiving, says one must be charitable to those in need and distribute their wealth equally. MSA participates in Project Downtown in order to fulfill their requirements for Zakat.

"Project Downtown is important to MSA because it is aligned with Islamic beliefs of giving to the poor and giving to the community," said junior engineering major Raheel Ahmed, a member of the MSA. "MSA wants to get involved with the community as much as possible."

MSA doesn't work alone. The Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM), a Christian student organization, helps to provide the MSA with the resources they need to make those tuna sandwiches, including a place to make them.

According to Nathan Elmore, Virginia Baptist collegiate minister and director of The Center at VCU, the BCM provides a kitchen for the MSA to make their sandwiches and drinks for Project Downtown at The Center, a space at 819 S. Cathedral Place owned by the BCM.

A large group of Muslim students comes together to practice Friday prayers, known as Jummah, every week in the Interfaith Room in the Student Commons. Immediately after the prayers, MSA members go straight to The Center to get to work for Project Downtown.

"Every Friday, there is always a big turnout (to Jummah) because the closest mosque to campus is 20 minutes away," Ahmed said, noting that there are some-

Continued on page 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF VCU

Muslim Student Association members Shafiq Hashimi (left) and Muhammad Quraishi (right) carry a cooler during a Project Downtown event in Monroe Park on Sept. 28.

Continued from page 3

times hundreds of students who turn up for the prayers.

Elmore said the partnership between the MSA and BCM is one built through years of cooperation, and has spawned more than community service efforts — it's opened a dialogue about faith.

"Significantly, this interfaith relationship between the BCM and the MSA stems from a consciously developed mutual relationship over the last three years," Elmore said. "Among other things, (The Center) has hosted interfaith text studies, film viewings and common meals between Christian and Muslim students."

According to Ahmed, the two groups have also had discussions on interfaith disputes and work together closely. After the release of the anti-Islamic film called "Innocence of Muslims" and related violent protests in the Middle East, the two organizations held a common meal to discuss interfaith relations.

According to senior political science major and MSA member Hamza Mahmud, this meeting of religions is important because the world is multicultural and ethnic environment.

"Other organizations may have more knowledge (about) certain facets that we could learn from. We strive to build unity and brotherhood within the MSA as well as within the VCU community," Mahmud said. "Our relationship with the Baptist Collegiate Ministry allows us to foster brotherhood between two faith-based organizations on the VCU campus."

Ahmed agrees that this religious unity helps to build tolerance in the VCU community.

"It promotes understanding of one's beliefs," Ahmed said. "It gives us a chance to focus on what we have in common versus what makes us different." **CT**

CRIME LOG

3/29 - 4/2

10/25/2012

Grand larceny Cary Street Gym, 101 S. Linden St. - A male student advised that an unknown person(s) removed items from a secured location.

Grand larceny Cary Street Gym, 101 S. Linden St. - A female student advised that an unknown person(s) removed items from a secured location.

Grand larceny Grace Harris Hall, 1015 Floyd Ave. - A male visitor advised that an unknown person(s) removed an item from an unsecured location.

Hit and run 900 block of West Franklin Street - A female student advised that an unknown person struck a motorcycle and caused damage.

Petit larceny Barnes and Noble, 1111 W. Broad St. - A female student was arrested for petit larceny.

Weapons violation North Belvidere and West Cary streets - A male visitor was arrested for possession of a concealed weapon.

Grand larceny Shafer Court Dining Center, 810 N. Cathedral Pl. - A male student advised that an unknown person(s) removed an item from an unsecured location.

Drug violation 1110 W. Marshall St. - A male visitor was arrested for possession of marijuana.

Drug violation 402 W. Grace St. - A male student was arrested for possession of cocaine with intent to distribute and possession of marijuana with intent to distribute. A second male student was arrested for possession of marijuana.

Sexual assault 1111 Grove Ave. - A female visitor advised that she was sexually assaulted by a known person.

10/26/2012

Fraud offense Rhoads Hall, 710 W. Franklin St. - A male student advised a known person fraudulently received U.S. currency from him.

Alcohol violation 1123 Grove Ave. - A male student was arrested for being drunk in public.

Weapons violation NN-Lot, 500 N. Harrison St. - A male visitor was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon.

Theft From Motor Vehicle 1300 block of West Broad Street - A victim advised that items were stolen from a vehicle.

10/27/2012

Alcohol violation Floyd Avenue and North Cherry Street - A male visitor was arrested for driving when the right to do so is deprived.

Weapons violation West Broad and Lodge streets - A male visitor was arrested for possession of a concealed weapon.

Sexual assault West Grace and Monroe streets - A female student advised that she had been sexually assaulted by a known person.

Alcohol violation 1025 W. Grace St. - A male student was arrested for underage consumption of alcohol and a female student was arrested for underage consumption of alcohol and being drunk in public.

Assault 7-Eleven, 1101 W. Main St. - A male student advised that an unknown male punched him in the face.

10/28/2012

Alcohol violation Brandt Hall, 710 W. Franklin St. - A male student was arrested for being drunk in public and underage consumption of alcohol.

Alcohol violation West Main and South Lombardy streets - A male student was arrested for underage possession of alcohol.

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

Drug violation West Grace and Harrison streets - A male visitor was arrested for possession of marijuana.

Alcohol violation 00 block of North Morris Street - A female visitor was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Alcohol violation West Main and North Linden streets - A male visitor was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

10/29/2012

Harassment Gladding Residence Center, 711 W. Main St. - A female student advised that a known person is harassing her.

Drug violation Brandt Hall, 710 W. Franklin St. - A male student was arrested for possession of marijuana.

Damage to state property Gladding Residence Center, 711 W. Main St. - A male student was arrested for damaging state property.

Alcohol violation 100 block South Harrison Street - A male visitor was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

10/30/2012

Weapons violation/Drug violation 1200 block of West Marshall Street - A female student was arrested for possession of a concealed weapon and possession of marijuana.

Alcohol violation/Disorderly conduct 12 S. Harrison St. - A male student was arrested for underage consumption of alcohol and obstruction of justice.

Drug Violation Eagle Mill Lofts, 1418 W. Marshall St. - A male visitor was arrested for distribution of marijuana and distribution of marijuana within 1000 feet of a school.

Alcohol violation South Jefferson and West Canal streets - A male visitor was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Robbery 100 block of North Plum Street - A male victim advised that two unknown black males robbed him.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELLEN ROBERTSON

Ellen Robertson

Age: 61

Political Affiliation: Independent

Political Experience: Richmond City Council member (four terms), current City Council vice president, chairwoman of the Richmond City Council Finance Standing Committee

Current Employment: Retired

Robertson runs unopposed in 6th District

Jessica Dhalberg
Contributing Writer

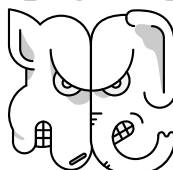
When voters from Richmond's 6th District go to the polls on Election Day, they'll see a familiar name running to represent them in City Council — and no one else.

Councilwoman Ellen Robertson is running unopposed for her fifth consecutive term as 6th District representative. She has been the district's councilwoman since 2003, when she won a special election for a one-year term.

The 6th District includes the entirety of the MCV campus, as well as part of Monroe Ward, which is near the southeastern end of the Monroe Park campus. The neighborhood contains the 8 1/2 Canal Street development, a 540-resident building marketed for students.

Robertson is currently the vice president of the City Council. She serves as the chairwoman of the council's Finance Committee and is also a member of many of the City Council's committees, including the council's Government Operations Committee and Organizational Committee.

Robertson has been a resident of the 6th District for 27 years. She attended

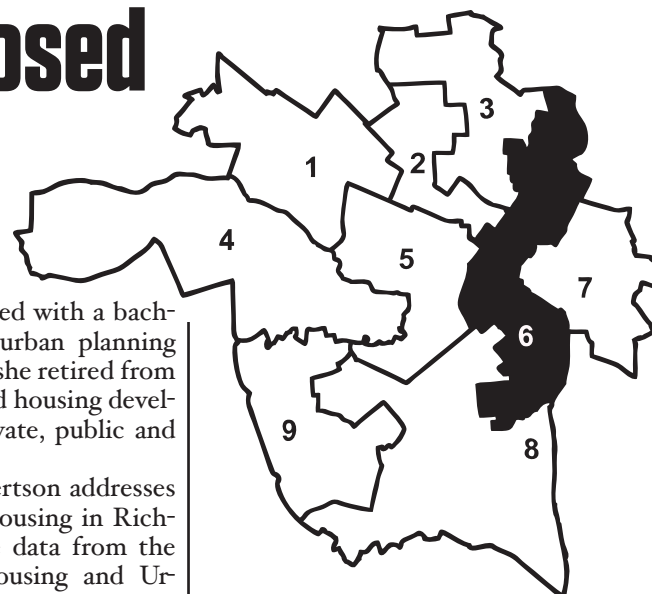


ELECTION 2012

VCU, where she graduated with a bachelor's degree from the urban planning program. After 30 years, she retired from work as a community and housing developer. She worked in private, public and nonprofit professions.

On her website, Robertson addresses the issue of affordable housing in Richmond. According to the data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the average monthly rent of a one-bedroom apartment in the greater Richmond area rose by 55 percent between 2000 and 2008, from \$537 to \$779 per month. According to her website, Robertson believes poverty "is a scandal in the richest nation on earth," but everyone who is able to work should. Her website also says that people who cannot care for themselves should be given assistance without degrading them and in a manner that promotes responsibility.

Robertson holds meetings on the second Saturday of every month to involve her constituents directly in the governance of their district. Meetings are held at the Bank of America located at 1111 E. Main St. beginning at 10 a.m. **CT**



6th District Geography:

Between Broad and Byrd streets, the 6th District extends east from North Adams Street, except on Canal and Byrd streets, where the district line extends to South Belvidere Street. North of Broad Street, the 6th District is bounded for the most part by North Second Street, except where the district line extends to the overpass where First Street crosses Interstate 64. The 6th District extends far into South Side, as well as north of the highways, and includes much of the city center, including City Hall, the campus of MCV and the Virginia State Capitol Building.

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SPORTS

In this section:

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Men's basketball draws motivation from preseason rankings



PHOTO BY CHRIS CONWAY

Darius Theus (right) started every game at point guard last season and recorded the second most minutes on the team.

Jim Swing
Sports Editor

Players and coaches don't like to dwell in the past; they'd rather tell you about how they've moved on.

But that doesn't mean that certain losses don't stick or hang around in their minds and ultimately throughout their careers. VCU head coach Shaka Smart has shared that sentiment over the past two years after suffering heartbreaking losses at the NCAA Tournament in back-to-back seasons.

Last March VCU drove Indiana down to the wire, even leading by as much as nine points in the second half, before falling one Rob Brandenburg 3-pointer short of making the Sweet 16 for the second straight year.

"Coaches never really get over close losses," Smart said. "I'm always going to remember that game, there's other games I'll always remember, but it's the past there's nothing I can do about it, we've moved on."

The reality is VCU had a Hoosier team, which is being considered the No. 1 team in the country by many preseason polls, beat on a mutual court and then let it slip away. But if the past is going to be the past you can at least draw experience from it, right?

"We really haven't done that, but we could if we chose to look at it that way," Smart said. "Every time we take the floor we believe we can win, it doesn't matter who we're playing."

Yet many top 25 polls are hanging the Rams out to dry. The team, which

returns all but one starter from last year's NCAA Tournament team, was expected to be in at least one of top 25 polls.

The USA Today Coaches' Poll released its preseason rankings and VCU received 40 votes, but didn't break into the top 25. The Associated Press let fly its rankings with the Rams receiving 48 top 25 votes but again, no dice.

"I'd say it's definitely something that's in the back of all of our minds," center DJ. Haley said. "We really came out and attacked what we had to do during the summer and really made strides, we're just really excited to get back on the court."

The same goes for some of VCU's players. Point guard Darius Theus in

particular, who was arguably the Rams most improved player last year, was left out of a list of the top 50 point guards in the nation.

Theus more than doubled his minutes from his sophomore to junior year after taking over for previous point guard Joey Rodriguez. Theus dished out 170 assists and posted 71 steals with a 2.1 assist to turn-over ratio. He has also showcased his niftiness in driving to the basket and finding a way to score, most evident in his game-winning floater over Wichita State in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

"I just want to show that I belong up there," Theus said. "So I've got to prove that this season." **CT**

Outside shooting to join defense as Rams' identity in 2012-13



Quinn Casteel
Sports Editor

Last season, a new look and extremely youthful VCU team won the CAA and advanced to the third round of the NCAA Tournament with a heavily defensive identity not known for lighting up the scoreboard on a nightly basis.

Freshman Briante Weber and junior Darius Theus were each among the top 40 in the nation in steals per game and as a team the Rams had the 19th best scoring defense in college basketball giving up 59.8 points per game. They consistently kept opponents out of rhythm on offense, keeping their shooting percentages low and not allowing them take shots on 15-20 possessions throughout a game by forcing turnover after turnover.

Forcing turnovers would also become the key to the VCU offense as the Rams' fastbreak created open looks or layups in transition, which often made up for cold shooting nights from long range for some of the team's relied on scorers like Rob Brandenburg and Bradford Burgess, who both had career low shooting percentages. Brandenburg dropped down to .354 after shooting over 40 percent in a breakout freshman season and Burgess shot .368 as a senior after always making at least 48 percent

ing the 2010-2011 squad produced, particularly on their record setting run to Houston with players like Brandon Rozzell and Joey Rodriguez hitting transition threes coming off steals and rebounds at will.

The defense will always be a constant for VCU, but this year all the stars are aligned for a team-wide phenomenal year beyond the three point line. ESPN Top 100 recruit Melvin Johnson has had his trey ball admired by everyone around the team to this point, while sophomore Treveon Graham and senior point guard Darius Theus said they spent a great deal of the offseason trying to become more comfortable with theirs.

"I think we'll be great behind the line," said Graham at VCU media day. "With Melvin, he's a great shooter, Troy (Daniels), and everyone else is trying to pick up their three pointer. Me, Bri, everybody is trying to stay more consistent behind the line this year and I think I've personally improved."

"I think I'll still shoot the same amount of threes, it's not really my game but if I'm open I've been working on it and I have the confidence to make that shot," said Theus. "If I'm open then I'll shoot it, but if I have Troy Daniels wide open for three that's automatic so I have to pass him the ball."

"...EVERYBODY IS TRYING TO STAY MORE CONSISTENT BEHIND THE LINE THIS YEAR AND I THINK I'VE PERSONALLY IMPROVED."

- TREVEON GRAHAM

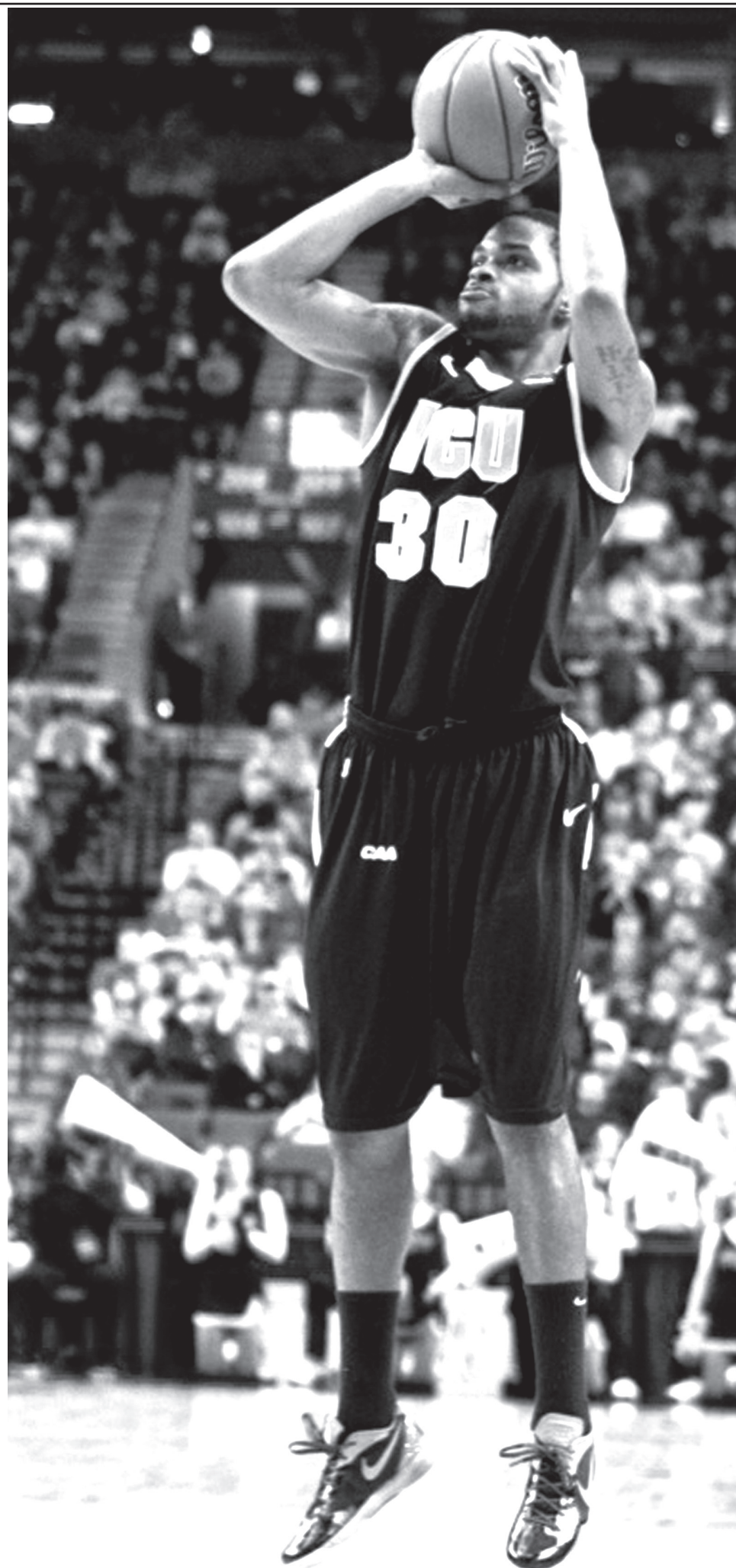
of his shots in his first three years.

Despite frustrating, sometimes seemingly puzzling performances from normally high-quality players like Burgess' 1-15 in a two-point home loss to Georgia State, and Brandenburg's baffling three-point slump in the middle of the season which he said was the worst of his career, VCU's defense always seemed to have an answer until the final minutes of the season-ending loss to Indiana in the Tournament.

This year however, expect a rebirth from VCU's shooters as the Rams revert back to some of the great outside shoot-

Daniels, VCU's leading three point shooter from a year ago, is back for what should be a big senior year from the Roanoke native.

One more productive campaign for Daniels, along with a fresh start for Brandenburg, Johnson and the rest of the Ram guards, just may be what the program needs as they try to revert back to the sharpshooting days of Rodriguez and Rozzell. **CT**



(Top left) Darius Theus answers questions at VCU basketball media day.
(Above) Troy Daniels hit 94 three pointers last season which broke a VCU record.



Fall sports weekend schedule

WOMEN'S SOCCER
 THURSDAY, NOV. 1: VS. SAINT JOSEPH'S
 AT KINGSTON, R.I.
 (ATLANTIC 10 QUARTERFINALS), 7:30 P.M.

FIELD HOCKEY
 FRIDAY, NOV. 2: VS. NO. 16 RICHMOND
 AT AMHERST, MASS.
 (ATLANTIC 10 TOURNAMENT), 11 A.M.

MEN'S SOCCER
 FRIDAY, NOV. 2: AT RICHMOND, 7 P.M.

VOLLEYBALL
 FRIDAY, NOV. 2: VS. XAVIER, 7 P.M.
 SUNDAY, NOV. 4: VS. DAYTON, 1 P.M.

MEN'S BASKETBALL
 THURSDAY, NOV. 1: VS. VIRGINIA UNION,
 7:30 P.M.

OAP: Upcoming Events



NOVEMBER

- Thursday Rides: 11/1, 11/8, 11/15, 11/22, 11/29
- Belay Clinics: 7pm weeknights
- Women's Backpacking Weekend: 11/2-11/4
- Kayak Pool Sessions (held at MCV Campus Aquatic Center):
 11/6, 11/13, 11/20, 11/27
- Climbing Skills Clinic: 11/7, 11/14, 11/21, 11/28
- Mountain Biking Weekend: 11/9-11/11
- Fall Colors Hike: 11/10
- Ski The Rockies Winter Break Ski Trip Info Meeting: 11/13
- Wilderness First Aid: 11/16-11/18

DECEMBER

- Day Hiking in the Blue Ridge Mountains: 12/1
- Mountain Biking Day Trip: 12/2
- Road Ride: 12/2
- Belay Clinics: 12/3-12/7
- Kayak Pool Sessions: 12/4
- Climbing Skills Clinic: 12/5
- Thursday Rides: 12/6
- SOLO Wilderness First Responder: 12/15-12/22

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SPECTRUM

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YEAR LONG AUDITION



PHOTO BY AMBER-LYNN TABER

Brooke Marsh has a work study job in the Pollak building as an office assistant, in addition to her classes for AFO.

Yearlong Audition | Brooke Marsh strives for the "impossible A"

Michael Todd

Assistant Spectrum Editor

For Art Foundations student Brooke Marsh, the first two months of the semester were as socially difficult as they were academically successful. The past few weeks, however, have brought a positive change in her social life.

"Lately I've been hanging out with the people on my floor more and I'm having a better time," Marsh said. "We all work on art work together and give each other feedback."

Because Bowe Street Parking Deck - where art foundation classes and studios are held - is such a hike from the dorms, Marsh often works in her dorm room. She discovered she was not alone when she decided to work out in the hallway one night when she first began to connect with her fellow residents of the Johnson "art colony." The art colony is a nickname given to the third floor that is traditionally inhabited by female art students.

Working in the hallways has since become a regular occurrence for Marsh and her floormates. Besides working on projects, the group also eats meals and

watches movies together.

Despite the recent increases in attention to her social life, Marsh said she is still able to maintain her academic excellence.

Though her studio classes are going well and her workload isn't too strenuous, in the midst of midterms, Marsh finds her studio classes are becoming more demanding in terms of time commitment, constraints and project intensity. Somehow, she has to find the time to juggle other classwork.

"AFO has gotten a little more intense (recently)...but I really love that because I'm focusing most of my time on art now, more so than I was before," she said.

Because Marsh's Surface Research Studio class seems more design-oriented than other classes of the same subject, her projects tend to be more tedious and time consuming, taking two to three weeks to complete. Similarly, Marsh has completed about four major projects for her Time Studio class due to time and effort demands.

While Brooke enjoys each of her studios equally she said Time Studio appears to be most challenging for her.

Time Studio allows her to make use of her more technological background involving cameras and computers.

"I'm trying to get the ... almost impossible A in at least one of my studios," Marsh said. "I think it may be possible."

Her classes are currently involved in a collaborative assignment in which Time Studio students altered the function of miniature walls constructed by Space Research students by placing them around Richmond. Brooke's group is currently adding sound to the documentary-style video taken of their set.

Though Brooke is doing well in her academic classes, she continues to push them to the back burner in favor of devoting her focus to her studio classes. The only required academic classes Brooke looks forward to are art history and math.

"I loved math in high school because it was like a puzzle to me. I'm really bummed I only placed into pre-calc here, and I just want to take Calculus again," she said.

In addition to her schoolwork, Marsh spends her spare time exploring Richmond through bike rides and wants to join the school club lacrosse team, even

though it's about halfway through the current season. Marsh was a member of her high school team and misses the exercise, fun and sense of achievement the sport gave her.

Marsh is also involved in a number of volunteer efforts, such as cleaning up cemeteries and preparing for the InLight Festival on Nov. 2. While volunteer work is mandatory for her Focused Inquiry class, Marsh enjoys it and said she is researching the ASPiRE program with hopes to join. The program, which includes volunteer work, would permit her to participate in events geared toward her art major.

With midterms over and studio classes running smoothly, the end of the semester is in sight, and Marsh already finds herself looking forward to next semester. She said she is looking forward to her final AFO studios, Drawing and Space, with much enthusiasm.

"I think next semester will come a bit easier," said Marsh. "I'm excited...but a little nervous. I've never done 3D design but I want to break out of my shell and go crazy." **CT**

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YEARLONG AUDITION UPDATE



PHOTO COURTESY OF TRICIA WILES

TRICIA WILES
Theater Performance

Tricia Wiles has been keeping busy with various theater projects. She has been working on "Croaker," which is a theater performance raising money on Kickstarter to be recorded. The recording will be sold to theater companies around the country. The Kickstarter for "Croaker" had two days left as of Thursday. Wiles is also working on the SPARC production of "The Little Mermaid Jr.," as a production intern for her work study job.



PHOTO BY AMBERLYNN TABER

REX KENNEDY
Dance

Rex Kennedy's VCU dance classes have been going well. With his improvisation classes, Kennedy has been going to the Compass and performing structured but improvised flash mobs, which Kennedy is enjoying. "Dance classes have just been going awesome," Kennedy said. Kennedy is also finishing rehearsals for a senior project he has been working on with Rachel Brady. Kennedy will perform in Brady's piece later this month.



PHOTO BY AMBERLYNN TABER

ANDREW KEARNS
AFO | Graphic Design

Andrew Kearns has settled into his classes and schedule within the AFO department. He did well on his midterm reviews in both Space and Drawing, and said his most recent Space project was one of the favorite he has done. Kearns is also going to meet with an adviser in the Global Education office to plan on a study abroad trip. "I definitely plan on doing another year overseas," said Kearns, who spent his senior year of high school in France as part of a rotary exchange program.



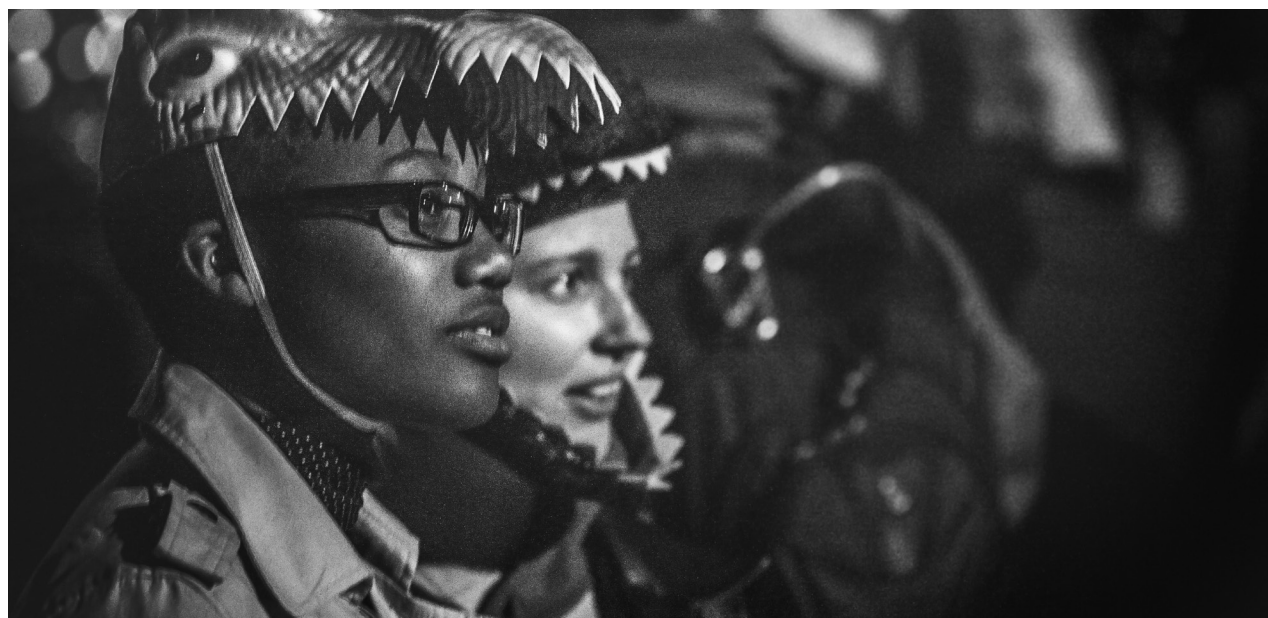
PHOTO COURTESY OF KATE RANCA

KATE RANCA
Voice

Kate Ranka has started to plan her second semester of VCU, with a few more obstacles than average students. She placed out of her first semester of music theory and her first semester of piano, so she has been working around the manual class additions and prerequisites. Ranka is continuing to participate with the Commonwealth Chorus and completed her first choral concert, the VCU choral classic.



All Saints Theatre Company encourages people to create art out of trash, including this pumpkin mask made of cardboard at the Oregon Hill Halloween Parade.



The 7th Annual Oregon Hill Halloween Parade started this Halloween night in Monroe Park and continued to the Oregon Hill neighborhood.



PHOTO BY AMBER-LYNN TABER

Many various costumes were represented at the Halloween parade, including both scary costumes and adorable.

Ghosts and ghouls spook Oregon Hill

Michael Todd
Assistant Spectrum Editor

The 7th Annual Oregon Hill Halloween Parade was small but enthusiastic Wednesday night.

The parade began its New Orleans style funeral march at 7 p.m. on Wednesday evening, continuing through Oregon Hill down North Laurel Street from its starting point in Monroe Park.

Organized by the All Saints Theater Company, the Halloween Parade, which is open to all Richmond residents, is one of the company's events that aim to keep history alive through art, puppetry and theater. With a majority of the parade's attendees in costumes and yielding homemade banners and puppets, made sure to encompass all goals.

Headed by a band of drums and various other instruments, the parade was organized in segments, with signs encouraging participants to "find your tribe."

Following parade sections included various attendees waving homemade flags and banners, one of which proclaimed, "It won't be the witches that are burning this time."

A section of human-sized ghost and skeleton puppets overlooked the crowd, displayed at the end of poles held by paraders of various costumes. Some puppets were so large, and with movable limbs, that they took multiple parade participants to operate.

Dogs paraded alongside their owners, who were dressed as anything from surgeons to ghouls. A "clan" of paraders dressed as unicorns, with giant paper-mache heads, stampeded with the parade, followed closely by the parade's tail, a make-shift pirate ship towed by a truck.

For VCU student Rachel Ludwig, the Oregon Hill Parade is but one more reason for the junior sculpture major to go all-out for her favorite holiday of the year.

Ludwig first participated in the 2010

parade, when she was a freshman in the Art Foundations program, marching as part of a functional sculpture created in one of her project classes. Project classes are abbreviated studio classes that are meant to give AFO students a preview into potential majors of their interest.

Taught by professor Johnston Foster, Ludwig's sculpture project class created a giant cardboard dragon that was separated into different body segments. The students, each under a different body segment, then marched together in the parade, giving the dragon an illusion of life and movement.

Ludwig did not attend the previous year's parade due to inclement weather. While this is not Ludwig's first time actually marching in the parade, it is, in a sense, her first time seeing it.

"I actually didn't see any of the parade (freshman year) because I was underneath the dragon's butt the entire time," Ludwig said of the experience.

With this year's Halloween occur-

ring in the middle of the week, many students are taking full advantage of the weekends both before and after much loved holiday in order to fully celebrate.

Besides the expected slew of parties, the weeklong event provides the perfect excuse for an holiday enthusiasts to execute an entire collection of costumes.

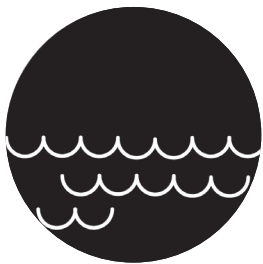
Ludwig's parade costume this year, "glow in the dark," is but the third in an unfinished series the sculpture major has planned for this year's unofficial weeklong Halloween celebration, with more to come this weekend. Her prior costumes included a 90's goth girl and a zombie groupie, for no particular band.

While Ludwig has yet to decide how many more costumes she'll use this year, she has been saving at least one additional guise for the holiday's final weekend.

"The (costume that) I'm most excited for is Paula Dean," Ludwig said. "I've been practicing (her) voice. Hopefully it lives up to (her) standards."

HOROSCOPES

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AQUARIUS
Jan. 20 – Feb. 18

VCU makes the tough decision to discontinue your major this month, shattering your dreams of a B.A. in plate balancing.



PISCES
Feb. 19 – March 20

Your description of the relationship between you and your best friend since middle school as “inseparable” will be proven faulty this month by nothing more than a giant, highly specialized centrifuge.



ARIES
March 21 – April 19

You've thrown away many years, perhaps even most of your life, putting up emotional walls to keep people at a distance. This month, you realize the error of your ways, purchasing six bags of cement and a pallet of bricks.



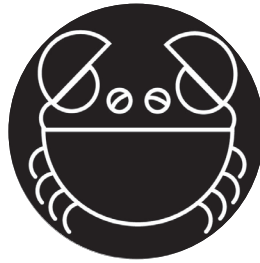
TAURUS
April 20 – May 20

You may have found Hurricane Sandy's performance in Richmond, with its light drizzle, mildly inconvenient cold and two-hour school delay, underwhelming at best –but how do you think Sandy would feel if she heard you say that? You evil monster.



GEMINI
May 21 – June 20

Halloween is over, and finally you can put away the soul-crushing six-inch heels component of your “sexy parakeet” costume.



CANCER
June 21 – July 22

A window shopping excursion to Short Pump will be irrevocably ruined by the sight of your own reflection.



LEO
July 23 – Aug. 22

You've taken to wondering as of late whether you're already dead or whether the life you're forced to endure is your personal hell. This is absolutely the case.



VIRGO
Aug. 23 – Sept. 22

Take a moment out of your busy day to step outside, admire the natural fireworks of Richmond's autumn foliage, take a full, deep breath of crisp November air and develop pneumonia.



LIBRA
Sept. 23 – Oct. 22

It may well take a village to raise a child, but as you will soon prove, it only takes one child to raze a village.



SCORPIO
Oct. 23 – Nov. 21

This month, a calm and orderly single-file evacuation from a burning building reduces you and hundreds of others to a pile of smoldering ash.



SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22 – Dec. 21

As British boy band One Direction member Niall Horan always says: “I think it better to do right, even if we suffer in so doing, than to incur the reproach of our consciences and posterity.” However, Irish-born, blond-haired Horan has never said this.



CAPRICORN
Dec. 22 – Jan. 19

A series of missteps will result in five minutes of your life spent reading a back page column in the Commonwealth Times instead of studying your chosen major, working for the well-being of others, culling enlightenment and enrichment from any of the world's countless brilliant artworks, or otherwise accomplishing any sort of meaningful task.

TheatreLab's "The Antigone Project" offers a different view of a classic

the ANTIGONE project

PHOTO COURTESY OF THEATRELAB



Samantha McCartney
Staff Writer

The somewhat low lighting and old-fashioned interior of Gallery 5 doesn't initially give the impression that a theater performance is about to take place despite the small stage in the center of the room.

TheatreLab, an educational outreach program for Firehouse Theatre Project, took those surroundings and made it into an innovative stage for their modernized performance of the classic Sophocles piece "Antigone," which they have dubbed "The Antigone Project."

The play follows a corrupt family, who possess a large amount of power but has no idea what to do with it. As the play continues, corruption ensues.

There were no cushioned auditorium seats or carefully placed stage lights in Gallery 5 for this performance. There were a few rows of fold out chairs around three sides of a large square of newspapers laid in the center of the floor.

On the stage, there were wires everywhere. Old TVs were stacked on top of each other with black and white static on the screens. A large projector screen served as the backdrop to the stage, playing distorted black and white images.

"We wanted to bring into the play the idea of the media attack on society and how we are constantly bombarded with images of celebrities but we don't necessarily know the truth behind those

images," said TheatreLab's artistic director DeeJay Gray.

Of course in Sophocles' time, there were no cell phones or internet, yet in this adaptation, those elements were of great importance.

The cast wrote "The Antigone Project" as a group, with each actor writing their own lines with their co-stars in particular scenes. The cast also explained that to write this adaption of the play, they first read through three different versions of "Antigone" and blocked the whole play with different perspectives.

During the play, the confused, yet inquisitive looks on several of the audience members' faces were not without reason.

Between the set design and the untraditional blocking, it was easy to get a bit confused by what was going on. However, the interaction between the actors and the audience allowed for a better understanding of the concept that they were trying to portray.

"I never felt like this was a play, (it was) much more of a performance piece," DeeJay said.

The choral odes, well-known in Greek theater to portray the emotional state of the audience, were re-written from the original "Antigone" and pre-recorded by the actors. The recordings played during intervals of the play, along with 2 second video clips and flashing images of celebrities, cultural icons and well-known YouTube videos. **CT**

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OPINION

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Whether rain or crime, students complain

Shane Wade
Opinion Editor

I'll risk my reputation as one of the foremost critics of our university to say this: VCU cares about its student body.

Our university is the first public university within the state of Virginia to hire a full-time emergency planner and is headed by an administration that has consistently engaged the student body. Their desire for student feedback has become so pervasive, it's a wonder that President Michael Rao doesn't run through the bleachers at basketball games, screaming "You get an iPad! You get an iPad!" in an Oprah-esque manner while Rodney the Ram jumps up and down on a nearby couch.

It's disheartening and frustrating to see the student body's reaction, in the form of Facebook statuses, blog posts and tweets to the administration's decision to cancel classes on Monday and delay the university's opening by two hours on Tuesday.

For an administration responsible for more than 5,000 students housed in on-campus residence halls, a bustling medical center and thousands of commuter students, closing the university is no arbitrary manner. In addition to our full-time emergency planning director, key staff members keep in contact with public and private weather experts, attend storm readiness training with the National Weather Service in Wakefield, Va., and monitor updates from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

What students don't understand is that being an administrator at VCU is more than a full-time job or a career. It's part of a person's life. Not only is it ignorant to say that VCU doesn't care about its students, it's a brash affront to the individuals that work around the clock to ensure this institution works for you.

The ignorance of this vocal minority is even more evident in the matters of safety at VCU. Being a resident of Jackson Ward, I know that crime around the Monroe Park campus is a serious

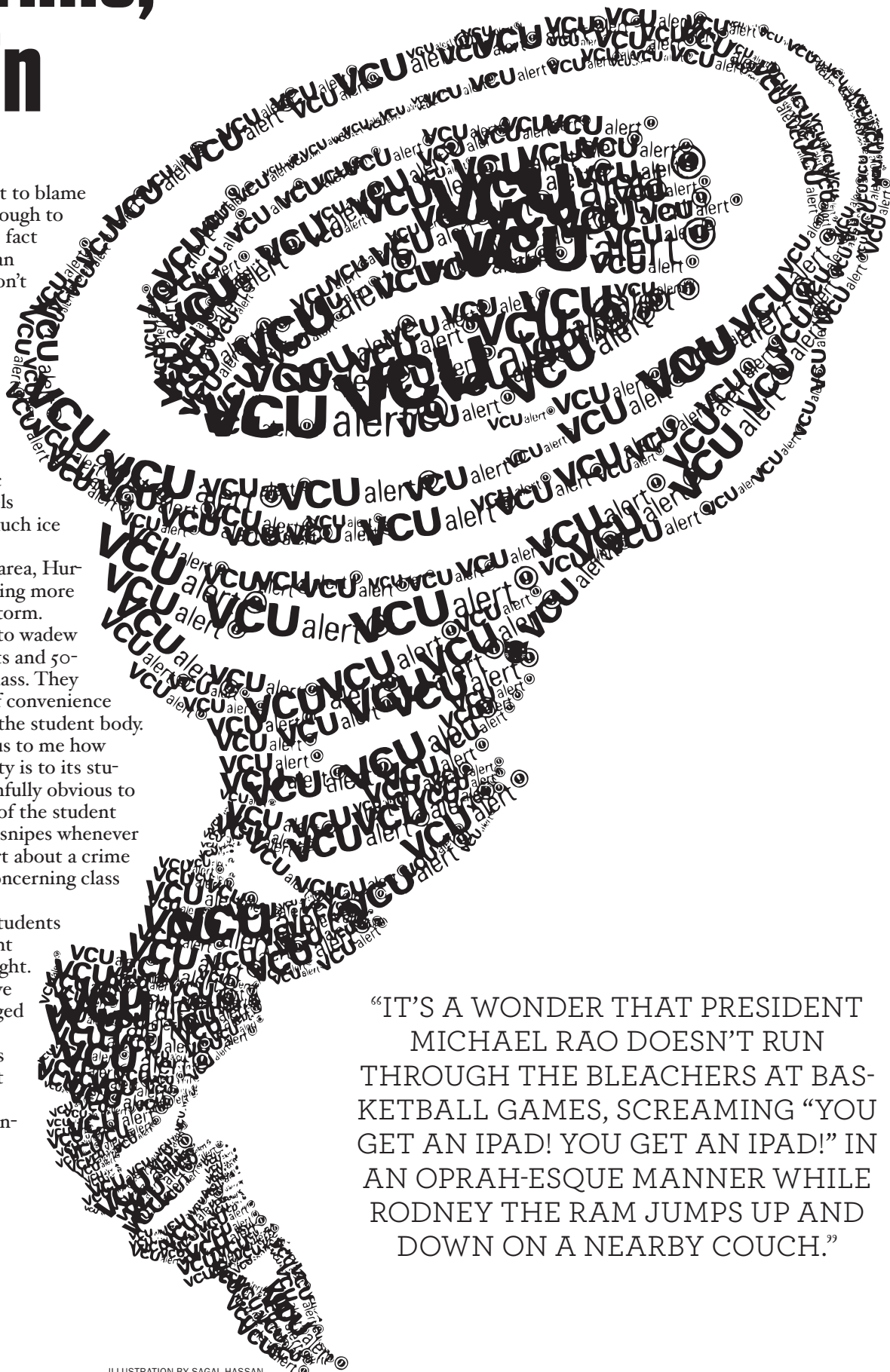
and alarming issue. But to blame VCU for not doing enough to stop crime ignores the fact that we live on an urban campus and that we don't live in a police state.

VCU is more than a simple school. It's a research university and a business that employs thousands of people in the local Richmond area alone. We're not some public high school that cancels classes if there's too much ice on the sidewalk.

For the Richmond area, Hurricane Sandy was nothing more than a windy thunderstorm. VCU didn't want you to wade through flooded streets and 50-mph winds to get to class. They canceled classes out of convenience and consideration for the student body.

It's painfully obvious to me how dedicated the university is to its students, but it's also painfully obvious to me that there's a part of the student body that offers petty snipes whenever they receive a text alert about a crime or a timely message concerning class cancellations.

VCU cares for its students and the proof is evident every day and every night. We're fortunate to have a responsive and engaged administration and it would benefit students to remember that next time they feel inconvenienced by well-intentioned procedures. **CT**



"IT'S A WONDER THAT PRESIDENT MICHAEL RAO DOESN'T RUN THROUGH THE BLEACHERS AT BASKETBALL GAMES, SCREAMING "YOU GET AN IPAD! YOU GET AN IPAD!" IN AN OPRAH-ESQUE MANNER WHILE RODNEY THE RAM JUMPS UP AND DOWN ON A NEARBY COUCH."

ILLUSTRATION BY SAGAL HASSAN



ILLUSTRATION BY SAGAL HASSAN

Proposal would link tuition to major

Shane Wade
Opinion Editor

If you think about it, universities are a bit socialistic in nature.

Despite all other factors, including our major, we all pay the same amount for our education. It's been that way since the beginning of higher education in America and, for better or for worse, it's worked.

Except Florida wants to change that.

Florida's governor, Rick Scott, in his pursuit to decrease the cost of college for the state, has established a task force to recommend changes to the current education system. One of their recommendations is to adjust the cost of college by majors: The more needed a major is, as relayed by the forces of the invisible hand and supply and demand, the less students would have to pay for their expenses. Students who choose to major in liberal arts, however, would find their tuition cost increased.

In a conventional sense, they're spot on. The less independent a student is, the more reliant on government aid

they'll be and the less marketable your academic major is, the less marketable you are. It all makes sense, if you approach the issue from that rather myopic scope.

But Gov. Scott, in his quest to quench the thirst of the free market's need for marketable college graduates, ignores a host of factors that level the job market for college graduates, regardless of their major.

A major is just a declaration of a student's field of study; English majors can do math and take hard science courses, but they choose to formalize their studies within the English language and literature. Furthermore, there's numerous research studies that show a person's major isn't correlated with their post-graduate level success.

A study by PayScale Inc., for example, found that, on average, history majors that pursued jobs in business fields earned just as much as their business major counterparts. In fact, where a student goes to school might be more indicative of their success. The same study found the English majors who

graduated from Harvard University earn a median of \$44,500, compared to English majors from Ohio State University, who earn a median of \$35,000.

A U.S. News article from earlier this year listed the top seven factors employers consider in hiring new graduates. Those factors include communication skills, various types of experience and "a good attitude."

What's not on that list?

Any insinuation that your major matters.

In asking, "How many jobs do you think there are for anthropologists in Florida?" the governor highlights his own ignorance of how academia works and mischaracterizes the liberal arts as an academic vestigial. Majors mean nothing if the student doesn't learn to market themselves as unique for an employer and apply their major and their education in a marketable manner.

In our increasingly globalized world, we can not risk our moral and cultural standing by punishing those that choose to major in less profitable fields. **CT**

Mechelle Hankerson
Executive Editor

Shane Wade
Opinion Editor

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FOREST THROUGH THE TREES | By Jordon Fust



I'm a ferocious Bear... 50000 Agile...



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