

We are gathered

THE

CT

day to

celebrate this

NEWS

Lavender Graduation • 2

SPORTS

Hyatt still hot • 6

SPECTRUM

Rest in Purple • 7

OPINION

Prince Tributes • 10

City Council moves RPS funding vote:

“Separate but unequal is still the name of the game”

ANDREW CRIDER

Online News Editor

The Richmond City Council vote to potentially close eight public schools in light of an \$18 million budget shortfall has been delayed to April 25 due to city-wide protests and a school walk-out.

City Council issued budget amendments, varying from \$5 million to \$18 million, to increase funding for Richmond Public Schools.

The proposed closure caused concerned parents, teachers and students to protest the April 11 City Council meeting. The protest included student walkouts from local high schools, which ended outside City Hall and overflowed the meeting’s auxiliary rooms during the public comment section.

—continued on page 3

Citizens protested outside City Hall on April 11 and demanded City Council avoid potentially closing up to eight area schools due to city-wide budget cuts.

OPINION

Hanging on

by a thread

MONICA HOUSTON

Opinion Editor

In the past year alone, VCU has done more wrong for its students than right. A lack of diversity in students and staff, displacing more than 1,000 upperclassmen from dorms and many Richmond residents from their community and an increase in tuition and the president’s income. These factors, along with competitiveness, economy and campus crime, are the leading stress producers on college campuses.

So why care about the stress factors college students face? According to College Degree Search, six percent of undergraduates and four percent of graduates in a four-year university have seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year alone. 1.5 out of 100 students have actually attempted suicide. Although the specific factors that led to his suicide are unknown, a student on VCU’s campus committed suicide just this month.

—continued on page 9

## Office of Sustainability debuts learning garden

**SOPHIA BELLETTI**  
Staff Writer

Students, staff and faculty visited the new Monroe Park Campus learning garden on April 21 for an open house. The Office of Sustainability opened the garden for anyone to gather information to visitors without having to commit to volunteering.

The learning garden is dedicated to growing produce for Ram-Pantry, a food collection service which provides food for in-need

The learning garden is located on 1218 Parkwood Ave.

Third RVA Street Art Festival

takes on Manchester

JESSE ADCOCK

Contributing Writer

The RVA Street Art Festival returned to Richmond April 22 - 24th, featuring two-day mural paintings centered around the Southern States silos and the Manchester neighborhood, accompanied with as live music, local food and an artisan market.

—continued on page 7

The third Richmond street art festival clad the Southern States silos and Manchester neighborhood in murals from April 22-24.

## Lambda Chi Alpha hosts vigil for senior lost to suicide

**AUSTIN WALKER**  
Managing Editor

VCU senior criminal justice and psychology major Corey Randall, 22, took his life on April 15 at about 6:18 a.m., according to Richmond Police.

According to the Richmond Police Department, officers responded to a person down from a gunshot wound to the head on the 1300 block of W. Broad Street the morning of April 15.

Randall would have graduated this May, and the university said he will be awarded his degrees posthumously.

“I hope you all take care. I love y’all,” reads a Facebook status posted at 6:04 a.m. on April 15 from Randall’s page.

Randall was a member of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity at VCU. The organization hosted a candlelight vigil on April 21 in the Commons Plaza. Lambda Chi Alpha declined comment out of respect for Randall and his family.

Randall was born Oct. 19, 1993 and graduated from Stafford Senior High School, where he volunteered with Stafford County Fire Engine Company 1 in Falmouth, Virginia. He is survived by his sister, mother and father.

Randall’s family started a fundraising page for the American Founda-

tion for Suicide Prevention in Corey’s name, which had nearly reached its \$5,000 goal within a week of his death. His mother, Rachel, asked people donate to the page instead of sending flowers.

Sydney McDonald, interim director of University Counseling Services, said it’s important for students to remember their mental health needs to be a top priority.

“If any student is feeling really distressed or having suicidal thoughts or is worried about a friend they can absolutely use us as a resource and consult with us and get support,” McDonald said.

According to McDonald, warning signs for a person who might be considering suicide including comments about hopelessness, increased drug and/or alcohol use, giving away personal possessions and extreme mood swings.

Students struggling with anxiety, depression or other mental health concerns, or are worried about another person, are encouraged to visit the University Student Counseling Services — a free clinic specializing in student mental health that is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

For more information regarding self help and helping others, visit the University Counseling Services website, or call the Monroe Park Campus office at 828-6200, the MCV Campus at 828-3964 or the after-hours emergency line at 828-1234.





**In this section:**  
RPS funding. Learning garden. Twitter study. Lavender graduation. Diversity survey. Students against sweatshops. Funeral for the james. UMW divestment.

AP briefs

NATIONAL  
The Latest: 911 caller reports finding 2 of 8 Ohio victims

A woman who called 911 to report two of the eight slayings of an Ohio family says in a recoding that she found her brother-in-law dead and “blood all over the house.” Ohio’s attorney general released audio of two calls on Saturday.

In one made Friday morning, the out-of-breath caller says another person in the house also appears dead, and it looks like someone had “beat the crap out of them.”

Authorities have released few details about the case. They say investigators are still processing evidence from the four crimes scenes where the members of the Rhoden family were found in a rural Pike County. The victims include seven adults and a 16-year-old boy.

Another 911 caller reported finding his cousin with a gunshot wound. No arrests have been made.

North Carolina GOP’s careful plan could be in jeopardy

N.C. Republicans may face their biggest test with House Bill 2, approved during a one-day special session last month.

The law limits LGBT anti-discrimination rules by state and local governments. It also says that in public schools, universities and government buildings, transgender people must use the restrooms and locker rooms of their gender at birth.

The law has drawn criticism nationwide from equality advocates, corporate executives, movie stars and musicians like rock star Bruce Springsteen, who canceled a concert in protest. Civil liberties groups and transgender plaintiffs are suing to overturn it.

A federal appeals court ruling this past week in a separate lawsuit would, if allowed to stand, prove fatal to a key portion of North Carolina’s law. It says a Virginia high school discriminated against a transgender teen by forbidding him from using the boys’ restroom.

The Latest: Prince to be honored in New Orleans jazz funeral

Prince fans in New Orleans have organized a jazz funeral for the music icon.

The jazz funeral march set for Monday was organized on Facebook and will include mourners clad in purple, marching bands and a release of white doves just as the sun’s setting on the historic Treme neighborhood.

Tributes nationwide to mark Prince’s death have included national monuments tinged purple and public vigils. His hometown of Minneapolis also is preparing a final send-off.

Twenty-two years after its release, Prince’s “Purple Rain” is back in theaters following the musician’s death.

AMC Theatres announced Friday that 87 of its U.S. theaters will play Prince’s 1984 cult classic film beginning Saturday and running through Thursday.

LOCAL  
Richmond shop thriving with American products and throwbacks

Church Hill corner store owner Drew Dayberry, 30, wears overalls to work and is a model of old-fashioned hospitality.

Dayberry is the owner of the newly opened Roaring Pines corner store, a business specializing in high-quality American-manufactured home goods located in an inconspicuous brick building in Church Hill.

The shop contains a mix of old-fashioned and modern products — some with roots that date back more than a century — designed in part to showcase the finest of American manufacturing.

Norfolk police shoot 2 men, killing 1, in separate incidents

Authorities say Norfolk police shot two people, killing one and wounding another, in separate incidents. Virginia State Police are investigating both shootings.

State police say a 30-year-old white man wanted on felony warrants barricaded himself inside a house at about 6 p.m. Friday. After hours of unsuccessful negotiations, the man fired an assault-style weapon at police, who returned fire.

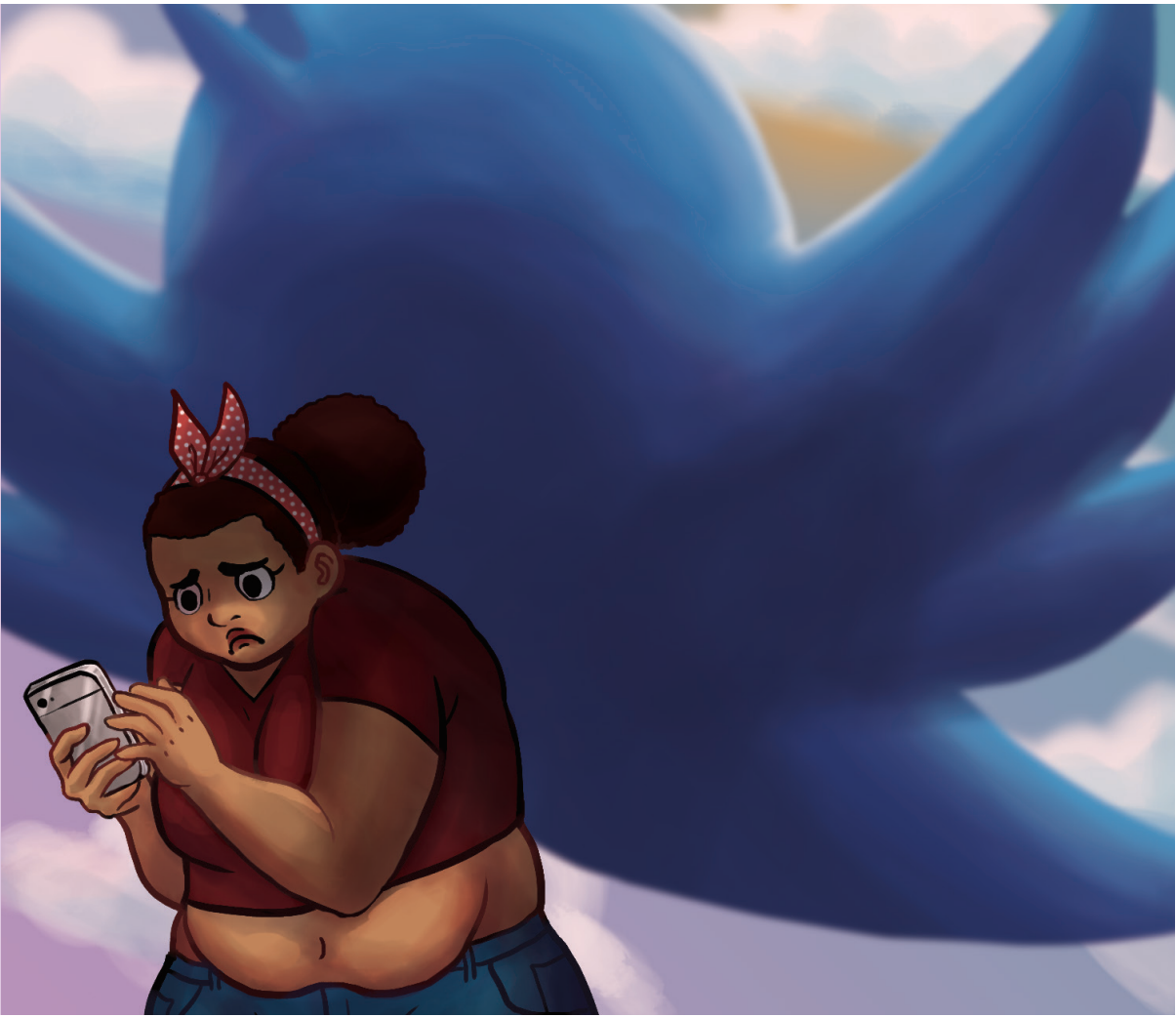
About 7 p.m. Friday, city police responded to an unrelated fatal shooting. State police say an officer shot an armed man who was standing near the victim. The 45-year-old black man was taken to a hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

Jurors unmoved by former Va. governor’s appeal arguments

As former Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell’s public corruption case goes before the U.S. Supreme Court, three of the jurors who convicted him say they remain certain they did the right thing.

They say they aren’t buying McDonnell’s core argument: that he only extended routine political courtesies to the former vitamin executive who gave him and his family more than \$165,000 in gifts and loans, and that his conviction — if allowed to stand — would make virtually every public officeholder a potential target of overzealous federal prosecutors.

# Study says Twitter body shames, stigmatizes women



MARY LEE CLARK  
Contributing Writer

Body shaming and weight stigmatization often appears on Twitter and can have a negative impact on mental health, according to a study by experts at VCU in conjunction with the Yale School of Medicine and American University.

The study, “Does this tweet make me look fat? A content analysis of weight stigma on Twitter,” analyzed 4,596 different tweets which contained the word “fat” within four-hour period.

Postdoctoral Associate at the Yale School of Medicine and VCU alumna, Janet Lydecker, was a researcher in the study. Lydecker and her team aggregated 5,000 tweets containing the word “fat”, then went back and removed tweets that weren’t in English or were retweets.

Of the 4,596 tweets the researchers analyzed, they found that 56.57 percent were “negative” and 32.09 percent were deemed “neutral.” Of the “negative” tweets, themes associated with fatness included gluttonous, unattractive, not sexually desirable, sedentary, lazy and stupid.

Linda Hancock, the director of the Wellness Resource Center at VCU, said fat shaming is all over social media and it’s a “no-brainer” this sort of stigma contributes to negative body images and eating disorders.

“Culture affects everything that we do,” Hancock said. “Any message, whether it’s TV, online, comments by other people or social media—they all affect our self-image.”

Hancock said people are more likely to believe in messages they read or comments they hear than believing in themselves. She said if someone is a victim of shaming or bullying the best thing for them to do is to talk to someone about it.

“What you keep in the dark has power over you. What you bring into the light, you have power over,” Hancock said.

Lydecker said it is important to be aware of weight stigma and where it is likely to show its face. She believes her research will help psychologists realize weight-stigma is not limited to television and magazines, but is common in social media sites like Twitter as well.

“When people are aware of weight stigma and know it is unacceptable, that can take some of the power away from hurtful attitudes and words,” said Lydecker.

To get more information about body image or cyberbullying, contact the Wellness Resource Center [thewell@vcu.edu](mailto:thewell@vcu.edu) or 804-828-9355. To seek counseling on body image or eating disorders call the counseling center at 804-828-6200.

## Student survey intended to gauge VCU diversity climate

ANDREW CRIDER  
Online News Editor

The VCU administration is asking students to assess VCU’s diversity climate in a new online survey which began on April 11 and concludes on April 29.

Students who complete the survey will be entered to win a \$10 Starbucks gift card, or one of two grand prizes of a free semester of on-campus parking.

In an email sent to students and faculty, President Michael Rao introduced the survey and encouraged students to participate. Rao cited the initiative’s potential “tremendous dividends for all VCU students.”

“We are committed to creating and sustaining a welcoming climate for diversity, where individuals of differing perspectives, life experiences and cultural backgrounds are welcomed, valued and supported,” Rao said in the email. “Because your voice is an important part of that commitment, we are announcing two opportunities for you to help shape the next Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan for VCU.”

Vice President of the Division for Inclusive Excellence, Wanda Mitchell, said after the response window is closed, the survey will go through thorough analysis before conclusions can be found.

“We will be looking at the data and we will probably follow up the data in the fall with focus groups,” Mitchell said. “The focus groups will let us better understand the why, where the survey lets us understand the what.”

VCU conducted a similar survey in 2013 which only collected staff members’ input. Mitchell said the new survey was designed to be inclusive to students as well.

“We want to expand that now to have a broader view of our climate because students are so important to us and their success here at the university,” Mitchell

said. “It relates to what goes on for students inside the classroom and the campus community, how they engage across differences and experiences at the university.”

Mitchell said that VCU is looking to make sure students feel they matter in order to improve the chances they succeed at the university.

“The survey is designed to measure specifically the climate for diversity, including experiences with discrimination, cross-racial interactions and a sense of belonging here,” Mitchell said. “And we know based on various student development theories that if people matter they tend to be successful.”

According to Mitchell, VCU has done well to include students of a diverse socio-economic background, but there is still work to be done due to the ever changing nature of diversity.

“We see that we still have work to do, there have been addressed around African American faculty, the need to improve those numbers here at VCU,” Mitchell said.

Mitchell said even if the survey indicated the highest degrees of satisfaction, VCU would continue to work to address community engagement and inclusion outside the classroom and stressed that before the division can determine what areas of diversity and inclusion need to be addressed, input from students is necessary.

“We want to know their perception, we want their voice to count — but it can’t count unless they express it,” Mitchell said.

In November, Rao hosted a diversity forum that overflowed the Salons ballroom in the University Student Commons.

The week before the forum, a group of student activists shared a list of demands with Rao pertaining to the number of tenured black faculty, safe spaces and counseling services for black students and cultural competency training for students and staff.



President Michael Rao hosted VCU’s first diversity forum in November following student demonstrations in the Compass and at his office calling for implementation of inclusion initiatives.

## Lavender grad ceremony honors LGBTQ+ seniors

LOGAN BOGERT  
Contributing Writer

VCU celebrated its fourth annual Lavender Graduation, a ceremony dedicated to celebrating the achievements of graduating gender and sexual orientation minority students and their allies, on April 22 in the Cabell Library.

The university is one of 93 higher institutions in the country that holds a Lavender Graduation. In 2012, VCU’s first Lavender Graduation celebrated three students. The 2016 graduation ceremony celebrated 37 graduates and cumulatively more than 200 VCU alumni have been recognized in the ceremony.

“Forty years from now our kids are going to be the ones telling us we aren’t progressive enough and I can’t wait to see that change.”

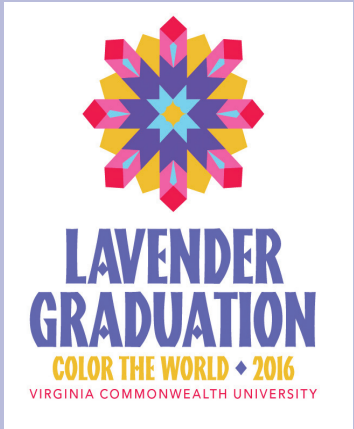
— JEZ WOOD  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION GRAD

Elementary education graduate Jez Wood gave the opening speech, in which she discussed the history of the ceremony including where the event began in 1995 on the University of Michigan’s campus.

According to Wood, the color lavender is a symbol for the LGBTQIA+ community from when gay men were forced to wear a pink triangle in Nazi concentration camps and the black triangle which lesbians were forced to wear as political prisoners in Nazi Germany.

Camilla Buchanan, who graduated first in her class and was one of only two mothers who graduated from the VCU School of Medicine in 1976, spoke next.

Buchanan is now a clinical professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Sci-



ences at the College of William and Mary and said she has lived as an openly gay woman since 1982. Buchanan discussed the differences in the LGBTQIA+ community in the last four decades.

“(Lavender Graduation) means progress because as Dr. Camilla Buchanan said, 40 years ago this wouldn’t have been possible,” Wood said. “Forty years from now our kids are going to be the ones telling us we aren’t progressive enough and I can’t wait to see that change.”

The theme of the 2016 Lavender Graduation was “Color the World.” Each of the 37 lavender graduates were presented with a coloring book and a rainbow cord to wear at their regular commencement activities.

“The world is changing and it’s changing in a great way,” Kelly said. “For us to be able to do this for students who don’t have anybody they can share their sexuality with or what they’re living and going through, this is a way for them to celebrate and be recognized.”

Lavender Graduation’s allied partners are the Office of the Provost and the Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies.

Sponsors include Amendment Literary and Art Journal, the Division of Student Affairs, Equality VCU, the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, the Office of the Vice President for Health Sciences, University Student Commons and Activities, the Wellness Resource Center, the Alumni Association and VCU Libraries.





Students from the recently-formed student organization USAS marched to VCU president Michael Rao’s office on April 21.

# United Students Against Sweatshops drop off letter of intent to President Rao

JOE JOHNSON  
Contributing Writer

Student-activists from the VCU chapter of United Students Against Sweatshops marched to the doorstep of the office of VCU President Michael Rao to deliver a letter of intent on April 21.

Students from the USAS chapter at VCU have attempted to gain support from administrators to affiliate with the Worker Rights Consortium, an independent factory monitoring organization that investigates garment factories producing collegiate apparel.

Sonia Lutostanski, a junior sociology major and member of USAS, said VCU’s administration has been slow to show support for the organization’s goals.

“I think some of them have (been cooperative), but most of them are not necessarily shutting us down, but stalling us as much as possible,” Lutostanski said.

As an official form of communication and

protest, students delivered their demands in writing to the president’s office.

“We really just want support from (Rao) honestly, and to go ahead and give the OK to affiliate with the Worker Rights Consortium,” said chapter president Erin Tucker. “I’m not sure that it will happen. I think what will happen is that we will have some more discussions.”

Prior to last week’s march, USAS affiliates participated in Fashion Revolution Day in the Commons Plaza. The worldwide event was designed to bring awareness to VCU students and educate them to make more ethical shopping decisions.

At the event, an array of educational props asked the question “Who made my clothes?”

The activists had a table set up for those interested in supporting the cause by petition for VCU to affiliate with the Worker Rights Consortium the garnered over 400 signatures before the day of the event.

Tucker said the USAS event was meant to show students that it is possible to make a difference simply by considering where their college apparel was manufactured.

“This has really allowed me to feel like I can make a difference. I can do something. I can impact the world and even though it may feel small, it’s really big,” Tucker said.

One main goal of the group is to bring more Alta Gracia apparel to campus. Alta Gracia, a former sweatshop, is now a fair trade clothing company.

According to Tucker, most students are not aware that VCU’s campus stores carry the brand. The cost for Alta Gracia apparel is often the same or cheaper than other brands carried by the university.

USAS affiliates mentioned that last week commemorated the third anniversary of the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh that killed 1,133 garment workers.

“It’s so heartbreaking to see these stories like Rana Plaza,” Lutostanski said. “So if we could just ... make even a very small impact on people it would be awesome to know that.”

## Activists wear fish masks during James River “funeral”

MARY LEE CLARK  
Contributing Writer

Students dressed in all black shed tears in sorrow, sang mourning songs and carried a coffin to a symbolic funeral for the James River in response to Dominion Power’s anticipated dumping of coal ash wastewater into the river, set to begin this month.

“This is not a march, it’s a procession,” said Michael James-DeRamo, a member of the Environmental Coalition at VCU.

Before the funeral procession, protesters walked from the General Assembly building to Great Shiplock Park, passing the Dominion Human Resources Center on the way.

This performance was put together by the Trillium Collective, an art collective that brings art and performance to activism.

To play the part, students were dressed in mourning clothes and carried signs of dead fish and chanted “Death by Dominion.” They wore paper mache masks fashioned like dying fish and skulls.

The procession ended at the Earth Day Festival at Great Shiplock Park. A coffin was placed by the James River as students, as well as people who were attending the festival, gathered around in remembrance of the river. Students shared stories of memories they had made at the river and what it meant to them.

“We are doing (this) to reclaim Earth Day because what Dominion does a lot with coal ash is clean-wash it, saying that it’s fine and saying it’s clean when it is definitely not,” said Kate Holcomb, a member of the VCU Environmental Coalition. “A lot of people hear

Students dressed in mourning clothes, carried signs of dead fish and chanted “Death by Dominion.” They wore paper mache masks fashioned like dying fish and skulls.

that and trust Dominion.”

On Dominion’s website, Dominion states that it is committed to keeping the waterways in Virginia clear and that no ash will be discharged into the waterways at any time during the closing of their coal ash ponds, where they currently store coal ash waste.

“Dominion has a strong commitment to protecting the environment and will have a long-term, ongoing responsibility to monitor groundwater at the sites. We will meet or exceed all regulations,” reads the statement on Dominion’s website.



Dominion is set to begin dumping treated coal ash into the James River this month.

# City Council set to vote on public schools funding today

—continued from page 1

“If I had more money, I’d be willing to give it to them, But the money simply doesn’t exist,” said Mayor Dwight C. Jones said during an April 15 press conference.

Jones said city services would be cut if the council approved the budget increase. In January, Jones recommended citizens vote in a referendum to decide how to pay for the school district.

“We are in a budget crisis so we have to explore all options, so unfortunately you have to look at school closures as a cost saving measure,” said 4th school district Kristen Larson. “(But it’s like) implementing facility closures and consolidations with a hatchet rather than a scalpel.”

Larson said a task force selected the schools for potential closure based on an 18-month study conducted by community and school board members and industry experts.

“The facilities task force made their recommendation based on growth data that spans over the next 10 years,” Larson said. “Recommendations were made to the school board, and the school board adopted a plan to consolidate old schools and build new schools.”

Larson said the city needs to shift those resources into areas like the Southeast side of Richmond, where there is the most projected growth over the next decade.

Chad Ingold is a mayoral candidate and teacher at Open High School in Oregon Hill. Ingold’s school was one of the high schools responsible for organizing the city-wide protest.

Ingold said the school closures will have a disproportionate effect on the City of Richmond because the public school system is disproportionately attended by African American youth.

Some of the student protestors emphasized statistics, such as 75 percent of RPS students are African American and 75 percent utilize the free or reduced lunch



Mayor Dwight C. Jones stressed that the city could not afford to provide more funding for public schools in the area.

program.

“In regard to school segregation — separate but unequal is still the name of the game,” Ingold said. “Political and personal conflicts within city government are being played out, and have historically been played out, with schools, jobs, and the future of the children of our City as pawn pieces in that game.”

According to Ingold, the problems within the school system were confounded by the process of white families leaving the public school system for years due to lacking resources.

“Education in the city of Richmond for the past several decades has disproportionately af-

fects African American communities, and oftentimes, actually benefitted the white citizens of that same city,” Ingold said.

Ingold said that people measuring the effect of white flight don’t take into account the private schools in Richmond’s West End.

“There is a large percentage of the population of the children of the city of Richmond who do not attend public schools, yet do attend school within the city,” Ingold said. “The West End of the city contains many private schools that were created at a time when many supporters of school segregation were looking for ways to maintain the status quo.”

“Education in the city of Richmond for the past several decades has disproportionately affected African American communities, and oftentimes, actually benefitted the white citizens of that same city.”

— CHAD INGOLD  
OPEN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

## UMW first Va. school to divest

LOGAN BOGERT  
Contributing Writer

The University of Mary Washington Board of Visitors decided in a meeting on April 13 to be the first institute of higher education in Virginia to publicly declare a commitment to remove its investments from the fossil fuel industry.

The BOV passed legislation to make divestment from fossil fuel companies an official policy with the majority voting in favor. This legislation states the UMW Foundation will revise their investment policy to limit discretionary fossil fuel investments to be between 1 and 4 percent. UMW will be between 96 and 100 percent free from the largest 200 companies profiting from fossil fuels — also known as the “Carbon 200.”

The new fossil fuel legislation is largely due to the efforts of Divest UMW, a student-run campaign launched in 2013 to encourage the university to change their fossil fuel investment. 2015 UMW alumn Zakaria Kronemer, helped launch the campaign three years ago.

Kronemer said the group went through several phases, one which included taking a more bureaucratic route of advocacy that involved meeting with administrators and using petitions.

“In the fall of 2014, we decided to take an action-based route. We began escalating the campaign with a statewide march with over 200 students and a 21 day sit-in. We had to ensure there was no neutral stance from the administration.”

In the fall of 2014, Kronemer said the group began taking a more action-based route, which led to a controversial event in April of 2015, about a year prior to the board’s decision, when students held a sit-in at President Rick Hurley’s office demanding an end to fossil fuel investments. The 21 day sit-in led to the arrest of two UMW students and one Fredericksburg resident. The charges were later dropped.

“A year before passing this, the administration was arresting students,” Kronemer said. “Seeing where it started to where it ended has really proven even more deeply the power that we have to transform our institutions.”



# VCU learning garden now open to the public



The garden grows food for RamPantry and other non-profits in the Richmond community.

—continued from page 1

-term solution to a problem rather than just donating produce,” said Hannah Wittwer, the learning garden coordinator at VCU’s Office of Sustainability.

Freshman Taylor-Skye Mojica, a member of the class and said she had never gardened until this year.

“I’ve learned a lot from Hannah (Wittwer),” Mojica said. “I would love to continue next semester. They’re really great. They help with RamPantry, they provide produce for students who are lacking and insecure with their food.”

Wittwer said the open house was a way for people to learn about the garden without the pressure of signing up.

“I’m hoping our volunteer pool will be not just students, but staff and faculty too,” Wittwer said. “I met a lot of new people and people who are just genuinely interested.”

In January, gardeners built plant beds and placed mulch in the garden. Five months later, the garden is fully functional and all spring crops are planted and growing.

Wittwer said she expects the garden to be fully functional by the end of the summer, as there are still

plants to add a wooden boardwalk and table-top style beds that are wheelchair accessible.

“I want to show people there are a lot of things that don’t seem ideal in urban space, but we’re working with our space and we’ve done it with very little money so to show people gardening doesn’t have to be prohibitive,” Wittwer said. “It can be easy, fun and inexpensive. I want to give people a sense of the satisfaction you can get from growing your own food.”

While a majority of the funding for the garden came from the Office of Sustainability’s budget, the garden also received a grant from Council for Community and Engagement and smaller internal grants from local businesses and nurseries, according to Wittwer.

UNIV 112 professor Kristy Byrd’s class has spent the semester potting and creating the learning garden since the project started as part of their service learning unit.

Students can walk through the garden at anytime and sign up to volunteer through the Office of Sustainability’s website or Facebook page.

The Learning Garden is located at 1218 Parkwood Ave. next to the W. Cary St. Parking Deck, the space belongs to VCU Parking and Transportation.



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# sports

## Wade's World

—continued from page 1

**After an exciting first season as head coach at VCU, what were some of the highlights of the season for you?**

“Number one was watching our team grow. As a coach, you want your team to get better as the season moves along and I think we were certainly better at the end of the season. Personally, I thought the win over Oregon State in the NCAA tournament was a highlight. That was a great for us to get back to the tournament, not only to get back but to win a game in the NCAA tournament.”

**Speaking of the NCAA tournament, the first half was a little rough. Coming into the second half, what was the mentality of the team? What did you say to them to let a fire under them to get things going?**

“I thought we played on our heels. We're not very good when we're not aggressive and going at people and I thought we were on our heels too much in the first half of the Oklahoma game. If you're gonna go down, you better go down swinging with everything you got. I didn't think we were doing that especially in the first half of the game, but I thought second half we did that. Even in the last 10 minutes of the first half we were a little bit more competitive and fought a little more harder, but that second half we certainly fought.”

**What did you learn last season that worked for the program that you want to**

**continue to implement moving forward?**

“Our attention to detail was better. I thought we did a better job handling the little things off the court. We need to continue to handle the little things off the court better with all the minor details and own those everyday. We did it for an extended period of time last year but now we need to do that everyday, it's a daily challenge to do that.”

**What are aspects of the game that you want to improve on over the summer?**

“We want to continue to work on our shooting, we need to become a better shooting team. We're going to spend a lot of time on defense. I think we left some points out there defensively. We gave up too many easy baskets. There's some things in the half court, especially in our three-point defense, toward to the end of the year that took a little of a nosedive. And then we want to work on our half-court offense execution. We were tremendous in transition. We were a good offensive rebounding team. We need to be good when we're playing against a set defense. We were right on the average about 1.02 points per possession when we're playing against a set defense so we can improve that and get better there.”

**How will the new practice facility enhance summer workouts and the offseason?**

“It's great we have everything in one place. In the past we've had to eat in one place, practice one place, rehab in another place but here we've got practice, we've got

## Q&A



PHOTO BY BROOKE MARSH

**At 33-years-old, Wade was the youngest coach in the 2016 NCAA Tournament.**

weights, we've got eating, we've got film, we've got the training room, we have everything on one roof. We're not bouncing around like before to four or five different places. Now we've got grand central station here. That will certainly help our guys consolidate their schedule, it will be more timely for them and we'll be more efficient with what we do.”

**Besides the usual lifting and practice, how else will the team be practicing this summer?**

“We're going to Spain on a foreign tour so we're going to use some

of that time for team bonding exercises in addition to practice. We're trying to keep our comradery good, be a tight, connected, close team. We're going to spend some times continuing to develop some bonds with our team this summer.

**Besides team bonding, why is Spain beneficial for the team?**

“It's a great educational experience for our guys. They get to go overseas and learn a different culture and foods and visit in a different country for ten days so it's a tremendous educational opportunity.”

“Secondly, it gives us the opportunity to practice ten times here

which will give us a head start with our team and it gives us the opportunity to play against professional teams over there who will give us good competition. It's different when we practice against each other than when we're facing live bullets with someone else.

**What did you find enticing about Malik that made you want to sign him?**

“One he can really shoot the ball. Anytime you have someone who can make shots, that's a positive. Second thing is he's a very good rebounder. He goes and rebounds outside of his area, he can

make plays out of his area. The third thing is he's versatile. He can play multiple positions and guard multiple positions on defense. He's long, he's athletic. When you have someone who can make shots and rebounds, that's a pretty good combination.”

**At what point will Malik be introduced into the practice routine and begin working out with the team?**

“He'll be here for summer school at the end of May and then we'll start weights and workouts at the end of May. He'll be part of the team and be ready to go.”



Senior Michal Voscek went 79-49 overall in his career and 44-15 in men's No. 1 seed matchups.

## Men's tennis falls to GW in A-10 rematch

**NANCY GABALDON**  
Contributing Writer

The VCU men's tennis team concluded its season at the Atlantic 10 Tournament with plans to take home the winning title, but unfortunately they were unable to clinch it.

The tournament took place April 14-17 at the Boar's Head Inn in Charlottesville, Virginia, where the Rams took on last year's rival, the George Washington University.

After a solid season, the team said they went into the semifinals ready to take on their opponents.

“As a team, we had big expectations. We were ready to play every match,” said senior and No. 1 seed Michal Voscek.

VCU came out strong, sweeping George Mason University out of the A-10 with a 4-0 win. Voscek led the team against Mason with a match score of 6-1, 6-0.

On the second day of the semifinals, the team led straight set victories against Dayton, winning 4-0. The Rams advanced to face GW in the championship match for the fourth straight year.

“We won against George Mason and Dayton. We won pretty easy before,” said freshman Brazil native Vitor Lima.

The Rams have reached the A-10's championship match each of the last nine seasons, and has made an appearance in 20 of the last 21 years.

VCU did not go out quietly against the Colonials. Lima made a comeback with a 1-6, 6-2, 6-4 win. They rallied late, but ultimately loss against GW. Lima and freshmen Arvid Noren said they were happy with the season and know what to look for in the future years.

“It's me and Vitor's first time at the A-10. You can feel that there was a lot of tensions in the atmo-

sphere and it was a great experience for us,” said Noren, a native of Sweden. “Hopefully, we get more of those in the future.”

**“As a team, we had big expectations. We were ready to play every match.”**

— MICHAL VOSCEK  
SENIOR, No. 1 SEED

Still, they say they owe a lot of their encouragement from Voscek, who has been helping them transition into the hectic schedules off and on the court.

“I think that Michal (Voscek) as a senior guided us really well,” Noren said. “We had a good season.”

Voscek is the only senior on the team and has led the team as the No. 1 seed since the end of the 2013-14 season.

“It was disappointing at the end. To end my career like this,” Voscek said. “It would be nice to finish off with a title, but things happen.”

Voscek, approaching his second year of graduate school, and said he hopes to continue helping his teammates succeed in the future.

“For me, as a senior, I went through different emotions,” Voscek said. “First year when we came we lost three seniors as well, so from that standpoint it was a little weird for me to see.”

Voscek added that seeing people come in and play well makes him proud, but is also upsets him because he will not be able to hand down his experiences and offer as much support as before.

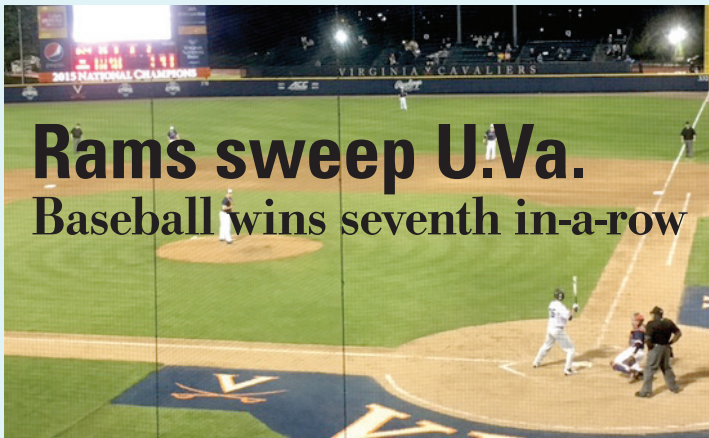


PHOTO BY ZACH JOACHIM

**ZACH JOACHIM**  
Contributing Writer

VCU baseball defeated the University of Virginia Cavaliers in Charlottesville on April 20 by a final tally of 11-5, marking a season sweep against the defending national champions.

The Rams rocked 14 hits en route to their seventh consecutive win, four of which found the outfield bleachers of Davenport Field. Junior right-hander Luke Crabb was credited with his second win of the year in relief action.

Wednesday's win was VCU's second over U.Va. this season after dropping 16 contests in a row to the in-state rivals.

Black and Gold junior short-stop Matt Davis got the offense started in the top of the second inning. His solo home-run off of Cavaliers starting pitcher Holden Grounds scraped the top of the left field wall.

The Hoos responded by taking a two-run lead with a three-run bottom of the frame. The Cavs sophomore infielder Justin Novak highlighted the rally with a two-run homer to left off of Rams junior starter Jonathan Ebersole.

Both sides traded runs in the third inning. Novak chalked up another RBI on a ground-out with a runner on third and VCU junior first baseman Darian Carpenter lined a solo-shot to left field.

The Black and Gold's relentless offense came alive in the top of the fifth. Sophomore second baseman Daane Berzozzo and senior outfielder James Bunn both reached on base on walks, setting up a prime scoring opportunity with junior

center fielder Logan Farrar at the plate and one man down.

Farrar scalded a liner off of the pitcher's foot and it deflected into shallow right field. The play scored Berzozzo to cut the lead to 4-3 and Farrar reached second thanks to an intuitive read.

After Carpenter flew out for the second out of the inning, the Rams caught a big-time break. Cavaliers hurler Kevin Doherty threw a wild pitch to the backstop in his attempt to intentionally walk Davis, which allowed Bunn to score and tie the game and Farrar to advance to third.

Junior Jimmy Kerrigan, senior Cody Acker and senior Walker Haymaker hit three consecutive RBI singles after the miscue to give VCU a 7-4 lead.

Sophomore Tanner Winter relieved Ebersole on the mound for the Rams in the bottom-half of the fifth. The right-hander posted a pivotal 1-2-3 frame to get his club back in the dugout after their offensive explosion.

Carpenter kept the mojo rolling in the top of the sixth. The imposing power-threat blasted a moonshot to the deepest part of the yard in straight-away center field with a runner on to give his side some insurance runs and a 9-4 advantage.

Sophomore Mitchel Lacy picked up an RBI single in a pinch-hitting appearance with two outs and Kerrigan on third in the top of the seventh, swelling the VCU lead to 10-4—the Rams had no trouble holding on to pick up the big road win.

The sweep of U.Va. was the first for the Rams in 13 years.



# Women’s lax drops the ball twice to conference rivals at Cary Street Field

**ZACH JOACHIM**  
Contributing Writer

Women’s lacrosse lost a pair of conference home matches over the past weekend to Saint Joseph’s University and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

**Saint Joe’s**

The Lady Rams squared off against the Hawks on a rainy Friday afternoon at Cary Street Field. Redshirt freshman midfielder Sky Hyatt recorded her second consecutive hat trick, but it wasn’t enough for the team as VCU fell by a score of 15-4.

The Black and Gold began the first half with the majority of possession, but were held goal-less by the Hawk’s impenetrable defense.

Freshman midfielder Mackenzie Galli almost put the Rams on the board four minutes into the game with a free-position shot that beat the keeper but, sadly, it skipped left of the goal.

The Hawks were able to push the pace on counter-attacking opportunities, thus dictating the tempo of the game while outshooting VCU 36-18. Hawks junior attacker and leading scorer Nora McCallion scored the game’s first goal in the 26th minute.

SJU freshman Rebecca Lane found McCallion in front of goal from the back-line on a nifty dump-off pass for the first point on the board. The duo exhibited similarly strong chemistry all day, which gave the Rams’ defense fits

— McCallion scored the game’s first four goals, three of which Lane assisted.

Hyatt put VCU on the board a mere 19 seconds into the second half by converting a free-position shot, followed by an unassisted score three minutes later.

Consecutive goals by freshman attacker Molly Barcikowski and Hyatt closed out the contest. Hyatt leads VCU in scoring this season with an impressive 37 goals and has been on fire recently with five hat tricks in six games.

**UMass**

Lacrosse looked to bounce back the following Sunday on Senior Day against 19th-ranked UMass. VCU played at Cary Street Field for the last time this season,

where the Rams succumbed to the Minutemen by a score of 18-3.

UMass took command of the match by establishing a 2-0 lead in the first three minutes of play.

VCU responded by cutting the lead in half in the 26th minute. Barcikowski threaded the needle on a pass to Blaire Langley in front of the net, which Langley converted despite heavy traffic to put VCU on the board.

The Minutemen were the Black and Gold’s first ranked opponent on the season and they did not disappoint. UMass responded to Langley’s goal with a long sequence of sustained possession and seven consecutive scores, ultimately out-shooting VCU 40-11.

Hyatt scored a pair of unassist-

ed goals late in the first period, but the Minutemen took a commanding 11-3 lead into halftime.

UMASS barred down defensively in the second half to shutout Hyatt and the Rams, while putting another seven into the net themselves.

Sunday was VCU’s final home

match of the year, and seniors Bonnie Corrigan and Zohra Allen were honored prior to the contest.

Women’s lacrosse will conclude its inaugural season in Fairfax on April 30 at 2 p.m. against George Mason University.



The Rams are 3-13 on the season and 1-6 in A-10 play.

what’s happening



program details, rates, and locations at [recsports.vcu.edu](https://recsports.vcu.edu)

- Adult Private & Buddy Swim Lessons**  
[registration ongoing]
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- ARC Lifeguard Certification**  
[May 16 – 20, register by May 16]
- Climb**  
[April 30, register by 4/26]
- Cave**  
[April 30, register by 4/26]
- Whitewater**  
[4/30 - 5/1, register by 4/26]
- ARC FA/CPR/AED Certification Course**  
[April 30, register by 4/27]
- AHA Heartsaver First Aid CPR/AED**  
[April 30, register by 4/27]



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PRESS BOX

## It’s a man’s world; we just play in it

**MALINKA WALTERS**  
Contributing Writer

If you had to choose between girls and guys sports, which would you rather watch?

Which would you prefer to spend an egregious amount of money on? Which would you embrace? Which would you attend and expose to the public?

Realistically, the overwhelming consensus would be male sports. The only reason your typical fan would choose to watch women would not be because of a well-played game or athletic prowess, but because of what they get to witness the ladies wearing.

For example; the spandex in volleyball, the short skirts in cheer competitions and field hockey games, the leotards in gymnastics, or the tight pants in softball.

As we all know, male sports have been around for ages and women were once not allowed to partake in any physical activity because it was beyond them to act anything less than ladylike.

My issue is, it is the 21st century and the status quo has not changed, still, the only thing society likes to use women for is to

sexualize them.

Take Rhonda Rousey for instance. Yes, there are some magazine covers of her in action, but when she’s outside of the ring what pictures do you see of her? All dolled up looking seductive. Or, if you are a true die-hard fan, you might find some pictures of her nearly-nude.

Let’s not get too frisky now America.

We’ve been given the opportunity to play a female version of all the male sports in the world. But when it comes down to it, male sports bring in the most publicity, the most fans, and above all, the most money.

According to USA Today, US Men’s National team soccer players make 17,625 dollars per win and 5,000 for a loss. In contrast, the dramatically more successful woman bring in 13, 050 each win they earn and do not receive a bonus for a loss or tie. This difference constitutes a 40 percent drop in overall pay based on sex.

A big issue raised in the debate over women playing the same sports as men was that they supposedly required disproportionate protection from injuries.

“Women have another purpose — to have children, to do housework, to create hearth and home,” said Alexander Arefyev, in a 2014 Washington Post article.

The Russian men’s ski jump coach has expressed strong opposition towards women’s ski jumping events. His prejudice comments along with others is what helped in delaying the event from being allowed in the Olympics.

Little did he know, the female biology actually represents a more advantageous body for ski jumping and if he could’ve gotten past his self ridden ways, he could’ve potentially appreciated women for their mutually beneficial success in a sport he loves.

Women’s soccer is a rough sport; those girls play with heart, soul, broken fingers, broken wrists and broken noses, and still don’t complain. While in men’s soccer, a dude could get tripped by accident and he rolls around in agony as all hell breaks loose and the world seems to be coming to an end. But then again, it’s none of my business.

So, at the next sporting event you attend, just take note of who you’re watching and why.

But don’t get too frisky.

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# Street Art Fest adds more color to the River City



Locally and nationally-renown artists painted parts of the Canal Walk April 22-24.

—continued from page 1

Started by Councilman Jon Baliles and artist Ed Trask, the RVA Street Festival has given new life to the historic buildings of Richmond twice before, first in 2012 at the power plant on the Canal Walk, and again at the GRTC Bus Barn in 2013.

“The Southern States silos are so iconic to Richmond, and there is a lot of energy in Manchester right now,” Baliles said in a 2015 press release. “Our goal is for this festival to build on the enormous success of the previous ones — and to create an amazing and unforgettable experience for the City.”

Proceeds from the festival benefitted local arts outreach organizations Art 180 and Art on Wheels, as well as Studio Two Three, a co-working space which offers studio utilities and art instruction to Richmond residents.

“It’s always such a neat experi-

ence to watch an artist’s process,” said festival-goer Will Gilbert. “Artists bring attention to their work, businesses are able to make some money and new patrons and the people attending have fun.”

The RVA Street Festival draws both local and nationally-renown artists to create murals on historic buildings over the course of the weekend.

This year, the festival worked alongside community organizers to teach attendees about the Richmond Slave Trail, which borders the silos.

Originally, the festival was scheduled for September 10 - 13, just before the UCI World Championships. It was postponed for logistical reasons, according to Baliles.

“To make this happen, however, we recognized that we needed more time and resources to bring it all together,” Baliles said in the press release.



## Ram Reverb

### “OUT OF THE GARDEN” BY TANCRED

JOSHUA BUCK  
Contributing Writer

We have entered a golden era of female guitarists.

Last year saw new releases from Colleen Green, Courtney Barnett and Waxahatchee — just to name a few — all of whom are reviving and evolving that iconic mid 90s sound of Juliana Hatfield and PJ Harvey.

With the release of “Out of the Garden,” the stellar third album from her solo project Tancred, Jess Abbott ensures that the movement will stay strong in 2016.

Combining top-shelf shredding with frank lyricism, Abbott works her way into your head with songs that sound great at lunch, but come back to haunt you at midnight.

“Poise” illustrated this with its shout-along middle finger of a chorus: “I would kill for some goddamn noise/ I would kill, but the girl’s got poise.” It’s cathartic and invigorating ... until you dig into the song’s verses of dark obsession.

# VCUarts archives student, faculty stories

SAMUEL GOODRICH  
Contributing Writer

VCU’s initiatives to increase diversity measures on campus has lead to an interesting problem — how can you hear the stories of each faculty member, instructor and thousands of students?

This sparked VCUarts’ efforts to record and archive student-arranged interviews through the Storycorps.me app, which allows users to view suggested questions and share their interviews on social media.

“Everybody is interesting,” said VCUarts director of communications Suzanne Silitch, who helped get the idea off the ground. “You just need to sit them down and get them to talk.”

Silitch said she believes these interviews will be the foundation for a more meaningful web of interpersonal connections within the school.

“I thought it would be really fantastic to get stories from around VCUarts about our community, students, faculty and alumni,” Silitch said. “We

really are a diverse and interesting group of people, so why not collect those stories?”

Silitch said she and her colleagues hope to continue this project for many years, using this first year as a test run. She also said she hopes more students get involved with interviewing their peers and others who inspire them.

“It seemed a perfect fit to encourage students to ask their peers or professors to tell their story and give those people a chance to talk about what experi-

ences shaped their life, while also practicing listening to what other people have to say,” Silitch said.

While the faculty can help interviewers in getting their subjects to do just that, Silitch said the hope is that students will come in with their own ideas and questions.

“We’re not doing this project to provide questions that interviewers have to ask, we’re doing this to get people together in a room and let the stories be what they are so that they can be authentic,” Silitch said.

For further information, students can e-mail Erika Boltz, one of the main coordinators of the project, at [boltzef@vcu.edu](mailto:boltzef@vcu.edu).

The Storycorps organization came to life in 2003 and is world-renowned for preserving an oral history of the human experience.

Storycorps is also presented in a radio program regularly hosted on National Public Radio, with some notable interviews preserved in the Library of Congress.

## Rest in purple, dearly beloved

MUKTARU JALLOH  
Staff Writer

For the past few days, I’ve been thinking about perhaps the greatest musician to have ever lived — Prince.

On April 21, the legendary singer passed away at his Paisley Park residence. With tears falling from my eyes upon receiving the news, my first question was, “Is today the day music died?”

Of course, music will always live on — but in the sense of music at its purest form, it’s possible that death accompanied Prince’s last breath.

No artist in the history of modern music took their art as far as he did.

With the ability to play 21 instruments, Prince was arguably the sole organ of modern music. Where the funk of James Brown and fury of Jimi Hendrix left off, Prince extended the spirit of both luminaries. He is undoubtedly the most influential artist, ever.

Emotionally, his musical catalogue evoked every honest feeling the heart and mind have to offer. A proud black man, he never conformed to the boxes that were constantly placed on him, and he eradicated obsolete interpretations of masculinity.

While it was an unwritten rule for any man to not bring his female partner to a Prince concert (by way of the fact that you could possibly lose her to him), no male artist ever had more male enthusiasts.

Perhaps Prince’s greatest strength was his most humane: his uncanny ability to show all the sides that encompassed him.

Whether it was his vulnerability in songs like “The Beautiful Ones,” his self-awareness in

“When Doves Cry,” his concern with social unrest in “Sign O’ The Times,” sexual passion in “Adore” or the selflessness in “If I Was Your Girlfriend,” he always gave you something real that you could viscerally feel.

For a man that seemed so remarkably elusive, he was every bit as human as the next man, and all of what every human should strive to be.

His audacity was unquestioned. His fearlessness spewed from the sparkles of his stilettos. At five-foot-seven, his presence stood amongst the giants of the world.

Throughout his career, he was often pit against the “King of Pop” Michael Jackson during their paralleled reigns.

While Michael sold and broke the most records, Prince was the rock star of the ’80s. When Michael painted the canvas of an imaginary world, Prince provided a sense of authenticity that was both unapologetic and jarring.

Throughout his nearly 40-year music career, never once did Prince come off trite — because he was the freest of them all.

When asked about the meaning of the song “Purple Rain,” Prince responded:

*When there’s blood in the sky, red and blue equals purple... Purple Rain’ pertains to the end of the world and being with the one you love and letting your faith or God guide you through the purple rain.*

Thus, tasked with living in a world where Prince Rogers Nelson is no longer breathing, I guess it is true — sometimes it snows in April.

*Rest in Purple, Prince.*

## Richmond Food Co-op underway to provide locals with organic groceries

KRISTEN LAIR-BAKER  
Contributing Writer

In a city that’s been designated as a “food desert” and is rife with poverty, a new initiative is nearing its launch that will provide low-cost, locally-sourced groceries to its members sometime in the coming months.

Hundreds of Richmond investors became joint-owners of a local co-op that aims to provide organic produce and foods to locals, while giving them an opportunity to put money back into their community.

Richmond, despite its many grocery stores, is still one of the country’s largest food deserts for a city of its size, meaning entire communities lack adequate transportation and income to maintain a healthy diet — a phenomenon that was outlined in a Richmond movie last year titled “Living in a Food Desert.”

The Richmond Food Cooperative was co-founded by locals Michele Lord and Susan Hill. Hill, who had been previously affiliated with the Park Slope Food Co-op in Brooklyn, met Lord while living in New York.

The Richmond-natives discussed their shared interests for quality organic food and food justice issues, and when they returned to Richmond, they

found an opportunity to bring a similar project to their hometown.

“They have a bigger impact on the local economy and do a better job of offering local products and spending revenue locally,” Lord said. “In fact, for every \$1,000 spent at a co-op, \$1,600 goes into the local economy.”

Co-ops are member-owned businesses in which members pay an annual fee and receive portions of the business’ revenue. The Richmond Food Co-op will purchase organic products from local farms and vendors, aimed at stimulating Richmond’s economy.

There are more than 1.3 million consumer members of co-ops across the nation. According Co-op Stronger Together, 89 percent of meat products are sustainably raised and 82 percent of the produce is organic. Co-ops also recycle 81 percent of their plastics, 96 percent of their cardboard and 74 percent of their food waste.

The typical co-op purchases from 51 local farms and 106 local product producers. On average, co-ops spend 6 percent more of their revenue on employee wages than conventional grocery stores. This averages out to employees being paid a dollar more every hour.

For the Richmond Food Co-op to open, they need to reach 1,000 members. Currently, only 800 people have signed up.

“The board of directors and Site Search Committee are working hard to find the co-op’s home. We will be in the City of Richmond and are looking for a 1,000 square-foot space with plenty of parking and food retail synergy,” Lord said. “Once we have found the right location, we will finish capitalizing and set a timeline for opening.”

The co-op currently offers a discounted \$25 membership fee for students, which will have an annual installment over six years. Anybody can become a member or partial owner of the Richmond Food Co-op, and information can be found through their website or Facebook page.



**SOUNDS LIKE:**  
A joyous midweek freakout.

**PERFECT FOR:**  
Longboarding when you should be studying for finals.





London Perry, a.k.a Dazeases, describes her sound as “Lo-fi doom pop.”

## Dazeases releases “Baby” video

**JESSE ADCOCK**  
Contributing Writer

Under the stage name “Dazeases,” pop-artist London Perry premiered her music video “Baby” April 17 at Strange Matter during a show hosted by the creative collective ANIMAL.

The performance opened with sets by Zooanzoo and the B.ACKWARDS HAUS Collective featuring MNLV (Minnie Love), Chi and Jake Barkley.

“The beautiful thing about film is that it’s rarely an individual process,” Perry said, who described her sound as “Lo-fi Doom Pop.”

“Baby” was directed by Reeni Bowers, produced by Laura Ruschak and shot by Kyra Kilfeather, with lighting and sound by Greg Golter — all of whom graduated from the VCUarts cinema department.

Taking place during a one-day-session back in October, the video was shot in the century-old Harrisonburg house of Chad Williams, a mutual friend of all involved.

“The video was a cotton candy dream nightmare,” said Zach Williams, whose stage name is Zooanzoo. “London is really good at drawing a scene and sinking you into it like quicksand, but you enjoy it the whole way. She owns her own existence, and as (she) performs her powers of

suspense and build are masterful.”

During the concert, the walls of Strange Matter shook with Perry’s intense music, and its effect on the audience was visible.

“The anger was tangible,” said show-goer Maurice Vellas. “(Perry) really shined in the explosive parts of her performance.”

In addition to her explosive performance, Perry’s stage presence was highlighted by the intimate venue and the supportive crowd.

“She nailed down her aesthetic with the lighting,” said VCU graduate Hyekang Shin. “Especially in her genre, a lot of people can hide behind a laptop or a keyboard. Not Dazeases. Her stage presence is magnetic, and inspires other artists with her content.”

Perry’s fans are already crediting her with impacting the music scene in Richmond and the U.S.

“London’s music is pushing everything forward,” said show-opener Barkley. The pop scene is finally sparking up because of artists who push as hard as her, Barkley says.

Ruschak, who produced “Baby,” said she was inspired to work with Perry because of the intense, intimate relevancy of her music.

“She makes people feel excitingly interrupted,” Ruschak said.

## Good Clear Sound ranks top-10 at CUPSI

**SOPHIA BELLETTI**  
Staff Writer

VCU’s slam poetry team Good Clear Sound ranked ninth in the 2016 international College Union Poetry Slam Invitational.

The competition took place April 6 - 9 at the University of Texas at Austin, with 67 teams participating. VCU recieved the fifth-highest cumulative score.

In addition to a strong team performance, VCU received its first individual superlative with senior Marvin Hodges earning the award for Best Poet.

Good Clear Sound has ranked in the top 10 since the team began participating in CUPSI. They ranked third in 2013, second place in 2014 and in 2015, when the finals were hosted by VCU at the Altria Theater, the team ranked second again.

The selection of judges had an impact on this year’s results. When VCU hosted last year, people associated with Good Clear Sound and faculty at the university helped find judges. This year in Austin, CUPSI organizers selected judged instead of the host university.

“With Richmond in general, there’s a huge poetry scene and there are judges and people who listened to poetry before and knew how competition goes and all the specifics for what it takes to be a judge,” said VCU junior Maiya Pittman. “In Austin, they didn’t have that kind of experience.”

Pittman said she also felt this year’s competition had a lot of moving and powerful slams that needed to be heard.

“Some other stories need to make their way to the stage and I think it was just the case that happened this year, as far as the competition goes,” Pittman said.

Pittman said she typically slams about being a woman, her blackness, the Black Lives Matter movement and mental health.

“I get on the stage and I get to complain in a very artistic way,” she said.

The award-winning Hodges said he didn’t begin taking writing seriously until last year.

“Two years ago, a friend had been talking to me over the summer, and he was like ‘I feel like you write,’ and I was like, ‘Nah,’” Hodges said. “He pushed me to start slamming and from then on it became a really important thing

in my life that I had no idea could be.”

Sophomore Em Allison said she grew up with an interest in poetry, and when she was 16 she joined Teens With a Purpose in Norfolk, which held a teen version of CUPSI over the summer.

Allison said Teens With a Purpose helped her focus more on poetry by expressing herself and discovering who she was.

Allison said she spent two years as a member on the team and one summer as a coach, but said she plans on taking a break from slam-ming next school year.

“I needed to slam until I got everything I needed to get out of it,” Allison said.

Next year, Allison said she hopes to work more with the administrative aspect and focus on the hosting and planning of events.

“I think it’s really cool to make it happen for others who love the art as well,” she said.

Good Clear Sound holds free open mic nights every other Monday in the Commons Underground, which are open to dancing, singing, poetry, rap, monologues and other forms of artistic expression.



VCU’s Good Clear Sound slam poetry team members pose in Austin, Texas at the College Union Poetry Slam Invitational finals. They landed in ninth place this year against 67 teams.

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# opinion

## Hanging by a thread; your life is not over

— continued from page 1

Suicide is completely preventable and there are always people to talk to, no matter how alone you feel. There are many communities that are solely dedicated to improving mental health. For example, Project Semicolon is a global non-profit movement dedicated to presenting hope and love for those who are struggling with mental illness, suicide, addiction and self-injury. Project Semicolon exists to encourage, love and inspire individuals to remember they are never alone and their life is important.

In the top five most stressful colleges, with Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania among the list, the highest number of undergraduates is 11,852 students. VCU houses 24,051 undergraduate students alone. On a campus of more than 30,000 students, along with the pressure to keep up with students who are seemingly successful, symptoms of depression and anxiety can quickly sneak up on a student.

More people suffer from anxiety and depression than discussed in society with nearly one in ten students realizing their symptoms but half refusing or denying help.

I transferred to VCU as a sophomore. By the time I got to my junior year, several on-campus factors contributed to my desire to dropout. Once I reached fall semester of my senior year, the desire to dropout had dwindled because I was almost at the finish line -- but a whole new demon surfaced: depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts. Not only did I want to quit school, but I wanted to quit life. Escape from all the bullshit and pressures of life and school.

As students, we often feel like the only way to be successful is to do everything on our own. Society has placed this ever-shadowing cloud over students, requiring them to feel that the only way to be proud of their accomplishments is to have completed them on their own, without much help from others. Students

A semicolon is used when an author could've ended a sentence but chose not to.

You are the author and the sentence is your life.

who feel this pressure often also fall into depression because they do not want to seem like they are complaining or ungrateful.

I have never been diagnosed with a mental health issue, but I also grew up in a culture where asking for help wasn't really an option. Blacks often face the stigma of having to be extremely resilient and strong in this country and any type of mental health issue is seen as a weakness.

This is an issue that many other cultures struggle with as well. However, as I look at my life in relation to the black community, my life could be taken any day by the very person who is supposed to protect and serve me. A year full of police brutality majorly targeted in the black community, subconsciously affects your mentality and adds anxiety to an already increasing depression.

On a campus of more than 30,000 students, no student should ever feel alone. While the counseling centers on campuses are available, many

remain understaffed. VCU's counseling center is receiving a portion of funding to hire more counselors -- which is crucial in correlation with our student population. There are about 30 counselors, including current employees and trainees, to our growing 30,000 student population. VCU should take this opportunity to hire a more diverse counseling staff as well. Students feel more comfortable when they can relate to people who share the same cultural issues.

It is crucial that students seek help whenever they are feeling stressed. Nearly one out of 10 students who went to counseling on campus said they tried to kill themselves at some point. More than 1,000 college students kill themselves every year and suicide is the third-leading cause of death for people ages 15 to 24, according to a report by Emory University.

"A semicolon is used when an author could've ended a sentence but chose not to. You are the author and the sentence is your life."

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

#### Quizbowl at VCU attends two national championships, finishes 15th in North America

Successful year capped off by return to international Top 25

Quizbowl at VCU, a premiere academic competition club based at Virginia Commonwealth University, recently finished its national championship season with two notable finishes at the national championship events of collegiate quizbowl.

College quizbowl is a fast-paced, challenging activity in which players compete using a buzzer system to answer questions about science, history, literature, philosophy, art, popular culture, and other topics.

On April 9, the club sent a four-person team to compete in the Intercollegiate Championship Tournament, an event run by National Academic Quiz Tournaments. At the ICT, VCU played in "Division II," a side of the tournament reserved for players making their first national appearance. VCU's team consisted of Akhil Garg (Class of 2016, Bioinformatics), Nathaniel Boughner (2017, Business), Najwa Watson (2016, Biology), and Cole Metz (2018, History and Theater). VCU qualified for one of the 32 available spots in the tournament field by its high placement among the 156 teams who competed at NAQT Sectionals sites around the U.S. and Canada in February.

VCU's ICT team finished 15th overall, in a tournament that the University of Chicago ultimately won. VCU's best match was a 285-280 chessmelter won by the smallest margin possible in the quizbowl scoring system over Gettysburg College, a year-long rival in Division II. The tournament was held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare, a conference hotel in the Chicago area.

The second tournament, held on April 16 and 17, was the Academic Competition Federation's national championship. At ACF Nationals, where all teams compete in one field, Garg, Boughner, and Watson were joined by Casey Bindas, a first-year M.S. student in Forensic Science. Playing against the top teams from other schools, VCU finished 34th, after qualifying for one of 44 slots in the tournament field by its high finish among 139 teams who competed at ACF Regionals sites in January. VCU finished ahead of schools such as the University of Pennsylvania and Duke University at ACF Nationals, which was won by the team from the University of Michigan, who also hosted the event on their campus.

Teams from the United Kingdom and Canada joined the top universities in the U.S. at both tournaments. Quizbowl at VCU, a club founded in fall 2002, has previously finished as high as fourth at Division II ICT, third at Division I ICT, and fourth overall at ACF Nationals. The club is open to any VCU student and travels to several tournaments per year.

**For more information, contact club alumnus and advisor George Berry at [georgeberry.vcu@gmail.com](mailto:georgeberry.vcu@gmail.com) or 804-201-3212.**

## There's Richmond ... and there's VCU's Richmond

**SIONA PTEROUS**  
Contributing Columnist

A few days ago I tweeted, "as VCU students we should all be uncomfortably aware of the central (role) our campus plays in the gentrification of Richmond."

My tweet was prompted by the ongoing battle over the status of Richmond's public education system following Mayor Dwight Jones' announcement about his proposed budget plan for the 2017 fiscal year. According to Richmond Times-Dispatch, Jones' plan calls for an increase in city fees, such as "street parking, garbage collection, vehicle licenses and business licenses." Yet, the main source of contention was that Jones' plan denied the Richmond School Board's request for an \$18 million increase, and instead, called for closing of eight schools.

As a result, just a few hours before City Council's first public hearing regarding the proposal, on April 11 students from Richmond high schools led a student walkout toward Richmond's City Hall to protest the budget cuts. They were supported by parents, faculty, educational advocates and community organizers who believe that these budget cuts - or the budget stagnation would -- further hinder an already struggling school district.

Despite the enormity of the situation and the multiple protests happening in areas just a few

blocks away from Monroe Park, many of my peers were either unaware or uninterested. Regardless, it was a sign of privileged negligence: a disconnect from what the majority of people are experiencing outside our own relatively secure campus hub. It's a type of disconnect and inherent privilege which comes from attending a university which, despite all their best efforts of community integration, has shielded students away from the local population.

We should actively be aware of what is happening and use the uncomfortable reminder of socioeconomic disparities between our campus and local areas to mobilize change.

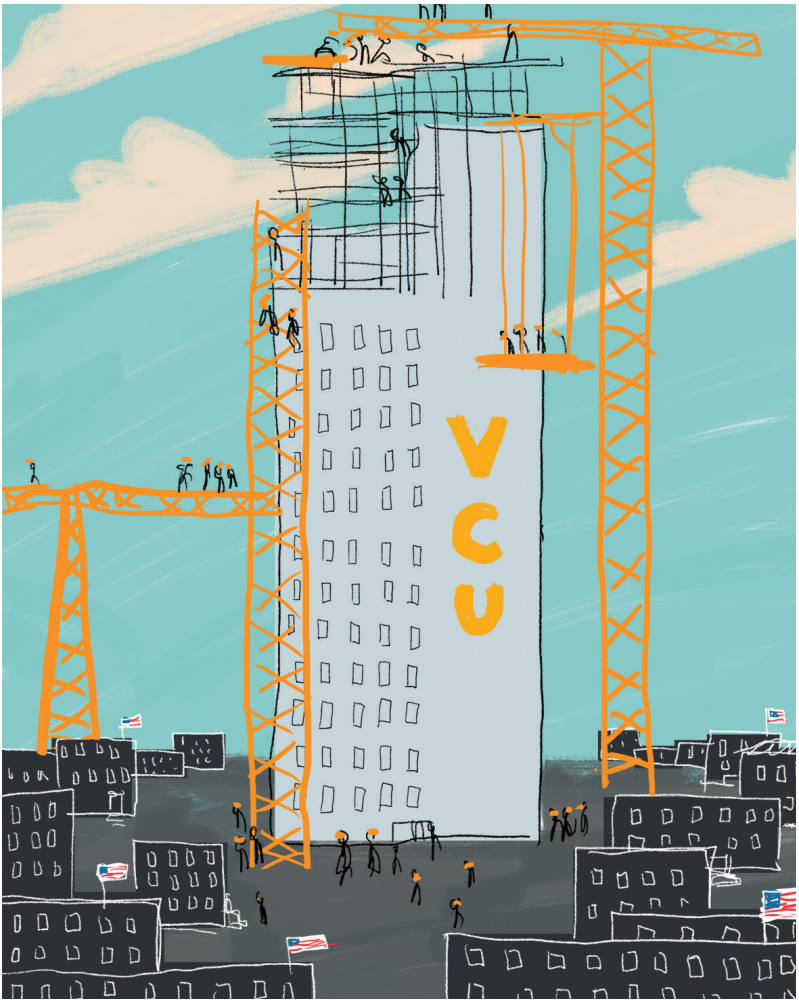
According to the National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund Institute, VCU's market value jumped from \$438,140 in 2012 to \$1,326,915 in 2013 - a 203 percent increase. That same school year, 12 of the 37 schools which the Virginia Department of Education considered to be in danger of failing were located in Richmond.

The disparity between the

income VCU is receiving and generating, while our campus is located in a city with a 25 percent poverty rate and, according to the VDOE, has the highest dropout rate in the state, as well as an abnormal amount of failing schools is sickening. It illustrates the socioeconomic burden for Richmond citizens that many students simply have very little contact with.

Richmond students and other local citizens are clearly aware of how the lack of proper funding limits students' opportunities to pursue further education or any sort of career. The initiative these students are taking to actively secure their future and to demand something better is the epitome of leadership. Maybe VCU students, myself included, could learn a thing or two from them.

It may feel that students, have little influence on the ins and outs of our educational opportunity. To an extent, that may be true: there may not be much we can do right away to change the socioeconomic game of the educational system. However, at the very least, we can understand the privilege we have to be relatively sequestered in a stable haven while Richmond and it's citizens are going through various economic, social and political transformations. By understanding this privilege, we can then use our various platforms within our university to help magnify the voices of local Richmond students.



We should realize that ignoring the numerous activist-led movements in the Richmond area is irresponsible, mainly because many of us at VCU have either consciously or subconsciously divided "Richmond" and "VCU" across very gentrified and stereotypical lines of poverty and blackness.

After all, VCU is part of Richmond and even if it's for a short time, we should actively be aware of what is happening and use the uncomfortable reminder of socioeconomic disparities between our campus and some local areas to

mobilize change.

If we are pursuing higher education in a growing university, then local Richmond students deserve the basic right to a well-funded education. Simply being aware of this concerning disparity can help mobilize enough concern, and eventually can influence a movement towards change. This is the strongest foundation possible in order to fully break down the divide between Richmond population and VCU students.

### VCU PD COP CORNER

#### Leaving your apartment? Here are six ways to have a green move-out plan.

Most off-campus student leases end in May, June and July. Starting the summer break is exciting for students, but for permanent Richmond residents, it isn't always a pleasant time of year.

Unfortunately, VCU students are known for leaving furniture, trash, clothes and other household items in streets and alleyways when they leave apartments. Moving out can be rough, but dumping unwanted items in alleyways literally creates a mess for landlords, neighbors and permanent residents.

Richmond's Code of Ordinances addresses "unlawful accumulation," which prohibits one from piling up discarded items in the street or alley that are not in containers provided by the city. Your

landlord could get fined for your mess, and the costs may be passed on to you.

Simply put, as an off-campus resident, it's your responsibility to keep the streets of Richmond clean. Don't be a good neighbor, be a great (and green) neighbor.

VCU officials are actively working with the City of Richmond to set up dumpsters in the Fan and to help clean alleys through Project Clean and Green Move.

Here are tips to help you move out and -- most importantly -- collect that security deposit. (Yes, a landlord may withhold a portion or all of that deposit if you've failed to move out properly.) For more move-out resources, visit [offcampus.housing.vcu.edu](http://offcampus.housing.vcu.edu).

- |  |   |  |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| <b>1</b><br>Make a plan  | <b>2</b><br>Start early   | <b>3</b><br>Think about larger items   | <b>4</b><br>Organize smaller items   | <b>5</b><br>Separate recyclables  | <b>6</b><br>Dispose of trash properly  |
| Start thinking about what personal items, furniture, books, clothing and food will need to be taken, disposed of or donated. Keep a to-do list to track what you'll need to take care of before leaving the apartment, including shutting off utilities. | Your focus is on finals, but if you're cleaning for an hour or two to take a study break, use that time to get rid of what you know needs to go. Create bags of clothes and smaller items that can be reused and donated to Goodwill, Diversity Thrift or other local agencies. | Will you need that couch, mattress, chair or dresser? If you're not taking them, make arrangements to have them picked up by an organization that can reuse them, such as the Salvation Army or Vietnam Veterans of America. Habitat for Humanity also takes furniture donations. If furniture is too beat-up to be reused, call 311 to schedule a bulk pick up with the city. | Not going to need that old lamp, those books or kitchen supplies? Put them in a box and prepare to donate them. Yes, someone else can and will gladly use them! (And used bookstores may even give you money for books.) | Magazines, cans, bottles, plastic containers and cardboard boxes can be recycled. Start collecting those in bags and take them to recycling bins. | Rotting food and hot weather are not a good combination. Leaving trash bags in the alleyways can attract bugs and rodents. Dispose of trash in proper receptacles. |

## VCU tuition increases should reflect student needs

**HIBA AHMAD**  
Contributing Columnist

Pursuing a higher education is perceived to be a choice, but in reality it is a necessity in a society where so much weight is placed on having a degree. Student debt is a crippling reality in the United States. In 2013, many students graduated with an estimated \$29,000 in debt. Tuition and fees at public universities across the nation steadily increase while financial aid decreases.

VCU is no stranger to this trend.

The 2015-2016 academic school year left many students unpleasantly surprised when they realized that their financial aid packages had suffered major cuts and a \$910 increase in tuition and fees was tacked on to their student bill. The upcoming 2016-2017 school year also looks grim with another \$358 increase in tuition. It sets tuition at \$13,130, the highest in VCU history.

Why is it that higher education is still perceived to be a com-



modity when our society makes it almost impossible to survive without a bachelor's degree? If a degree is becoming less of a choice and more a necessity, then it should be regulated so everyone has equal access to it -- without the burden of tens of thousands of dollars of debt.

Universities argue that in order to make up for state budget cuts on education, pay professors and maintain the institution's facilities, they have to raise the cost of attendance. If not, cuts will be made to services offered to the students, which may hinder the student experience.

However, if the university was actually using the increase in

tuition in fees to improve the student experience on campus, then students wouldn't have a problem with the increases.

Yet even with an \$910 increase in tuition for the 2015-2016 school year, student organizations still suffered major funding cuts. This increase caused clubs and organizations on campus to cut popular events or find funding elsewhere -- ultimately hindering the student experience.

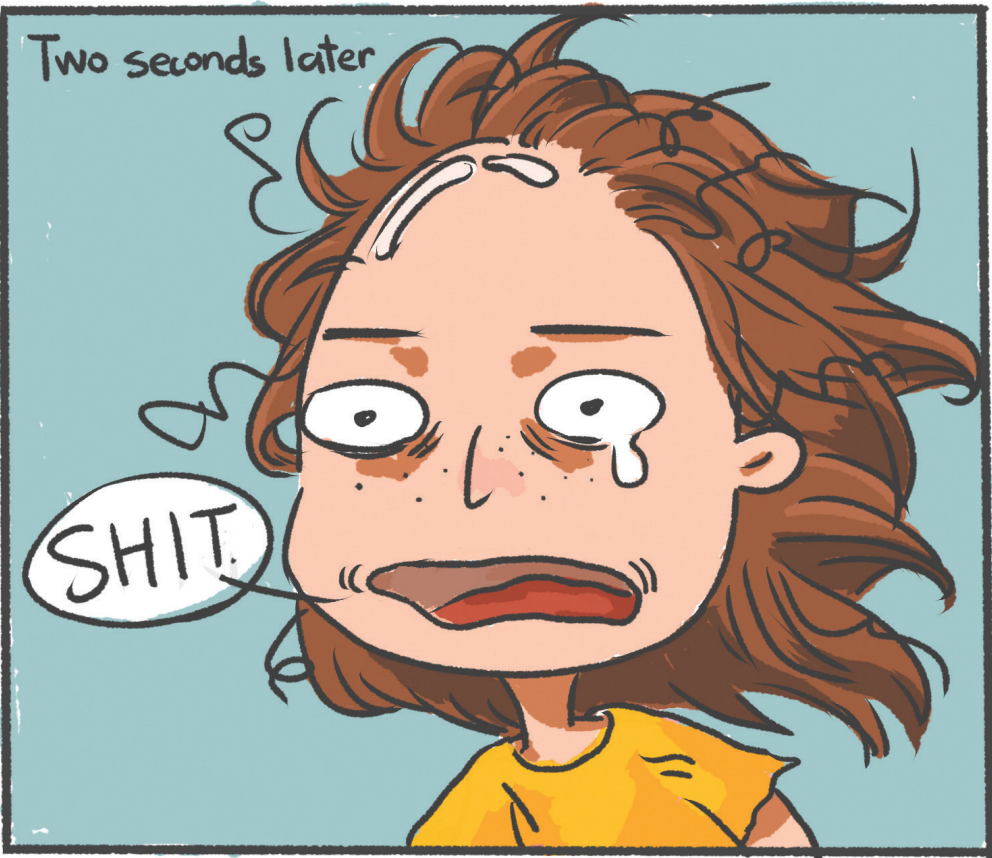
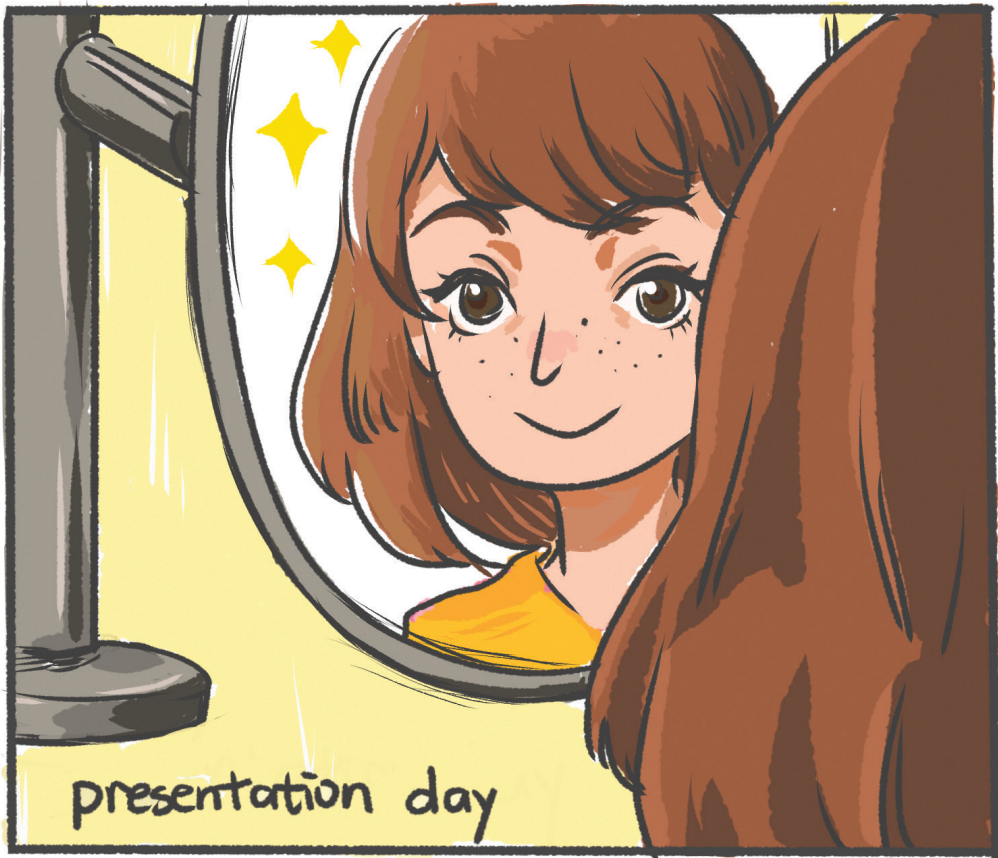
If higher education is becoming less of a choice and more of a necessity in America then tuition should be put towards improving programs and professors -- things that directly affect the students on a day-to-day basis.



Prince Tribute by Gareth Bentall



Thank you, wind by Jiaqi Zhou



In Remembrance by Shannon Wright

"Dearly beloved,  
we are gathered  
here today to  
get through this  
thing called  
life."  
-Prince



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