



# Protestors brave elements to March for Science

**JULIE ROTHEY**  
Contributing Writer

The rain didn't keep a crowd of more than 200 people from gathering in Richmond in solidarity with more than 600 other marches for science across the globe on Saturday. The day started with a "teach-in" — a series of talks and discussions about science — at Gallery 5. Later, marchers met at Abner Clay Park and marched through Jackson Ward, chanting "oceans rise, we rise" and "data trumps prejudice."

"We're concerned with the current state of what science looks like in our administration right now," said Heather Caslin, an immunology PhD student at VCU. "Funding's really important for science, paying attention to the actual facts and the actual numbers over just what people want to say. We shouldn't be making political policy on things that aren't true."

Other marcher's reiterated their dissatisfaction with the Trump administration's

policies and their opposition to cutting science funding.

"Given the fact that our jobs depend on funding from NIH (National Institute of Health), NSF (National Science Foundation) and grants, it's pretty important," said Jeremy Thompson.

The Trump administration's proposed budget cuts NIH's funding by 18 percent and does not mention the NSF.

"The proposed cut to the NIH budget would go into effect this year. That affects so many people immediately," said Allyson Kennedy, another protester.

Marches for science took place all over the world Saturday.

"Through our organizing, we've seen over the past few months an incredible network of scientists and science supporters strengthen, because support for evidence-based science is a power-

—see "MARCH" page 3



News

## U.S. Dept. of Education launches investigation of Richmond Public Schools



**MAURA MAZUROWSKI**  
News Editor

The Federal Office for Civil Rights has opened an investigation into allegations of Richmond Public Schools disciplinary policies and practices unlawfully discriminating against African-American students and students with disabilities, following a complaint filed in August.

The federal office notified the Legal Aid Justice Center and the ACLU of Virginia — the organizations who filed on behalf of two middle school students and the Richmond chapter of the NAACP — of the pending investigation on April 12.

"New data has surfaced since the complaint's filing indicating that RPS continues to exclude an astonishing number of students

each school year and that troubling discipline disparities remain," the ACLU said in a press release last Monday.

African American students made up nearly 75 percent of the student population, but the lawsuit claims they account for 90.4 percent of students who were short-term suspended and 94.2 percent of students who were long-term suspended.

Students with disabilities made up 17.7 percent of the student population, but accounted for 29.8 percent of students who were short-term suspended and 37.4 percent of students who were long-term suspended, the lawsuit stated.

The complaint also alleges during the 2014-15 school year,

—see "RPS," page 4

Spectrum

## "O.J.: Made in America" director speaks at VCU

Ezra Edelman's five-part documentary won Oscar, Emmy awards

**ZACH JOACHIM**  
Sports Editor

Ezra Edelman, director of the Oscar-winning documentary "O.J.: Made in America," spoke about the filmmaking process, psychology of celebrity and cultural dynamics of the O.J. Simpson trial at VCU's Grace Street Theater on Saturday.

VCU professor Teto Elsiddique's Media Performativity and American City class — a VCUarts Painting and Printmaking topics class — contacted Edelman earlier in the semester about the possibility of speaking on campus.

"O.J.: Made in America" is a five-part mini-series that debuted at the Sundance Film Festival, aired on ABC in June and

played in select theaters. Edelman, who typically directs sports documentaries in standard format, was approached by ESPN Films and their 30 for 30 series with the idea for the project. The documentary has been widely acclaimed and won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.

"The stakes are a little different when you approach subject matter like this," Edelman said. "But the approach isn't different in the sense that I was trying to tell the story that I felt was necessary to tell. I had to figure out a way to tell the story in a way that would be worthwhile, so I gravitated towards the historical context of the case."

The film is eight hours long and does not include an interview with Simpson himself, who is currently incarcerated and eligible

for parole in October. Edelman said he wrote Simpson a letter requesting an interview and did not receive a response, but that Simpson's voice is not essential to telling a story that is about more than just the most-publicized murder trial in recent history.

"I knew this was primarily a story about race in America," Edelman said, adding that he chose to hone in on the 50-year-arc between 1965 and 2015, the "trajectory of coming where he came from."

"The juxtaposition between USC and the Watts riots, between USC and the projects that he came from — everything within that, the choices that he made, juxtaposed with the movement of black athletes at the time," Edelman said. "That became the fulcrum for me to dive into."

—see "O.J.," page 9

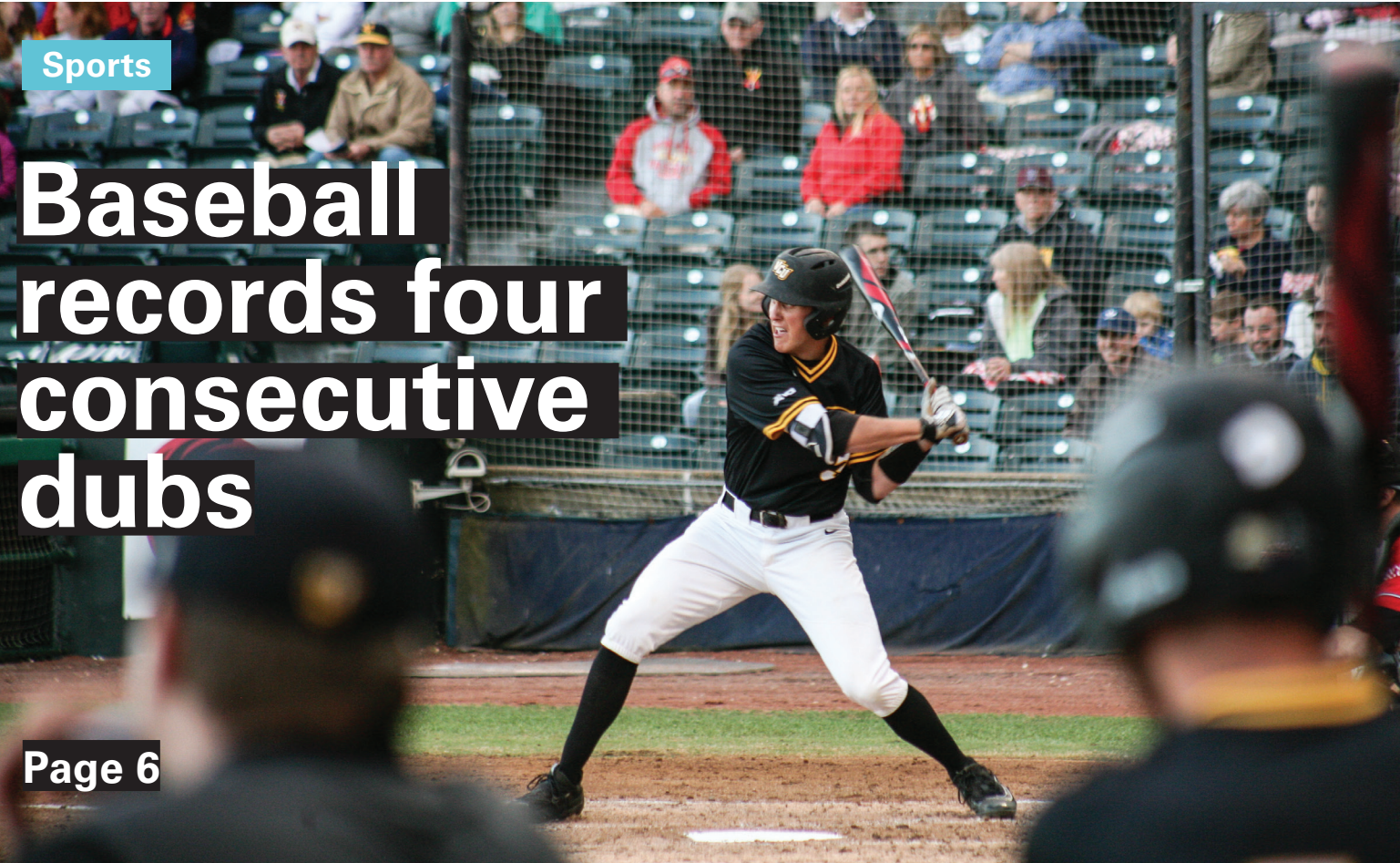


PHOTO BY ERIN EDGERTON



CRIME LOG

Sunday, April 16

Hit and Run  
Main St. Parking Deck, 801 W. Main St.  
Pending

Throw Missile at Occupied Vehicle  
500 N. Belvidere St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Hit and Run  
1500 W. Broad St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Monday, April 17

Hit and Run  
1101 W. Cary St.  
Pending

Destruction of Property - State School of Arts  
1000 W. Broad St.  
Pending

Drunkenness  
122 S. Belvidere St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Theft From Building  
701 W. Cary St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Motor Vehicle Theft  
7-11 122 S. Belvidere St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

City Code Violation - Alcohol  
517 W. Grace St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

City Code Violation - Alcohol  
517 W. Grace St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Hit and Run  
100 W. Cary St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Hit and Run  
900 W. Marshall St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Tuesday, April 18

All Other Larceny  
1100 W. Leigh St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Shoplifting  
ABC 1217 W. Broad St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Wednesday, April 19

Shoplifting  
Barnes and Noble 1111 W. Broad St.  
Pending

Theft From Building  
Child Development Center  
1128 Floyd Ave.  
Pending

False Pretenses/Swindle  
901 N. Lombardy St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Shoplifting  
Kroger 901 N. Lombardy St.  
Reported by Outside Agency

Thursday, April 20

All Other Offenses  
500 W. Franklin St.  
Pending

Stalking  
1113 Floyd Ave.  
Pending

Indecent Exposure  
Laurel/Cumberland St.  
Pending

Shoplifting  
ABC 1217 W. Broad St  
Pending

Friday, April 21

Alcohol Violation  
1309 W. Broad St.  
Closed

Download the **VCU LiveSafe** mobile app to report crimes anonymously.

**VCU PD:**  
(804) 828-1196.

# Stoney aims to decrease greenhouse emissions 80 percent in RVA by 2050

**TYLER HAMMEL**  
Contributing Writer

Mayor Levar Stoney announced RVA Green 2050, an initiative aimed at cutting greenhouse emissions in Richmond by 80 percent over the next three decades, at Great Shiplock Park last Monday.

RVA Green 2050 will kick off this summer with a summit that promises to flesh out the Community Energy Plan. Stoney, alongside Alicia Zatcoff, who was hired for the sustainability job during the Dwight Jones mayoral administration, unveiled the initiative with the promise of creating “a healthier, more vibrant, economically competitive and resilient community.”

According to the Mayor’s Office, the city’s Office of Sustainability are already taking steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by installing more energy efficient lighting and new HVAC systems inside government buildings.

“As of Dec. 31, 2015, city government greenhouse gas emissions are down 11 percent and community greenhouse gas emissions are down 15 percent,” stated a press release from the Mayor’s Office.

Zatcoff said RVA Green 2050 will involve a year-long process which will deliver a realistic plan to further reduce emissions in the community. The Community Energy Plan promises to act as a “road map” for the project, showing the city how to create more energy efficient buildings and implement

other sustainability measures.

Since 2008, the city’s renewable energy capacity has increased by over 44,000 percent, community-wide energy use has decreased 1.5 percent and community recycling rates have increased 26 percent. All this has set-up the city to fulfill 20 of the 55 sustainability initiatives set up in 2012, with 14 more expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

According to the city’s Office of Stability, the program has reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 15,533 metric tons and 30 million kilowatt hours of energy. The of-



**It’s an admirable aspiration, albeit one whose acheived is penciled in so far in the future that Stoney will never have to worry about being held to account for it.”**

Richmond Times-Dispatch  
Editorial Board

fice has additionally saved the city \$3.8 million in the last seven years and promises to save the city another \$1.7 million annually.

It’s currently unclear how the city plans on reaching its 2050 goal, with incentives and penalties expected to be outlined at this summer’s summit.

Stoney’s plan echoes a similar

one released last month by the Natural Resource Defense Council. The plan, titled 30x30, intends to reduce carbon emissions 30 percent in the state of Virginia by the year 2030.

A Richmond Times-Dispatch editorial claims the latter is more realistic than the city’s aspirations of reducing 80 percent by 2050.

“It’s an admirable aspiration, albeit one whose achievement is penciled in so far in the future that Stoney will never have to worry about being held to account for it,” states the column.

More of the RVA Green 2050 plan will be fleshed out during the summit this summer, though the date for that event has yet to be set.



PHOTO BY SARAH KING

**Mayor Levar Stoney (center) and his administration have already taking steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by installing energy-efficient lighting in government buildings.**

# VCU strives to improve CPI score

*The Campus Pride Index last scored VCU 3.5/5 for LGBTQIA-friendliness*

**MATTHEW HELTON**  
Contributing Writer

VCU has worked to improve resources and services available to the LGBTQIA+ campus community over the last five years in response to a low rating from the Campus Pride Index, a national platform that strives to establish a standard for LGBTQIA-inclusive policies, programs and practices.

According to the organization’s website, the Campus Pride Index rates campuses on eight distinctive criteria as they pertain to the LGBTQIA+ community: policy inclusion, support and institutional commitment, academic life, student life, housing, campus safety, counseling and health and recruitment and retention efforts.

“VCU is very aware of the CPI and we are diligently working to cater to the needs to LGBTQIA+ students,” said Camilla Hill, assistant director of the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs.

In 2013, VCU received a total score of three of five stars on the CPI. The university currently has a 3.5 star rating after last submitting to the CPI in 2015. According to Hill, VCU is in the process of re-submitting — a process which should be complete by the end of the summer.

The university’s two lowest scores on the index are in the areas of campus safety, which received one star, and housing and residence life, which received 2.5 stars.

VCU Chief of Police and Associate Vice President of Pub-

lic Safety John Venuti — having just celebrated his seven-year anniversary in his position — said he remembers noticing how disengaged the campus police department was from the community when he first came to VCU from the Richmond Police Department.

“Part of the job of any leader is to create a culture and environment that you want for your organization,” Venuti said.

Venuti recalls not liking the general language and joking that was commonplace within the department when he started, and as someone who looks at everything as systems, he figured it was an indicator of the culture occurring outside of the department.

The latter is why Venuti made Safe Zone training — a program that promotes greater understanding and communication with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students, faculty and staff — mandatory for all supervisors.

Venuti said initially there was a lot of “kicking and screaming,” but today there are more than 30 officers who have completed the training, and are considered allies and resources. The department even worked with the Safe Zone program to create custom pins for the Police uniforms, one of which Venuti wears daily.

“On a daily basis – this is my policing philosophy – there is not one interaction that we, as a police department, have that I am willing to push off the table as if it didn’t happen,” Venuti said. He said he is hyper-aware of the low rate of crime reporting from the LGBTQIA+ community.

Venuti also joined the LGBTQIA+ Safety Advisory Com-

mittee, and all VCU Police officers and members of the academy receive training on trans sensitivity. According to the CPI, the VCU Police also added a portal through which hate crimes can be reported on its website.

“It is my job to keep people safe and provide services to all portions of the community. I want people to be comfortable coming to the police,” Venuti said. “We will help them. We will not judge. We will be compassionate. We want to make it easier, not harder.”

Starting in the fall semester, VCU also began offering Lavender housing — a living experience specifically focused toward the LGBTQIA+ community. The university also offers an option for open housing in multiple residential communities, where individuals may choose to live together regardless of gender.

Since the fall of 2015, VCU has been implementing unisex restrooms across both the Monroe Park and Medical College campuses in common areas, dining locations, residence halls and buildings that house classrooms.

“VCU has multiple services geared towards helping students in the community feel safe. The school always asks for feedback, and programs continue to grow,” said Anna Lyon, a sophomore Resident Assistant majoring in film and art education.

Lyon made note of many services VCU provides including The Well, OMSA, Rainbow Group, Lavender Housing, Safe Zones and VCU Police sessions centered on LGBTQIA+ issues where students can give feedback on safety on campus.



Campus Pride Index, a national platform that strives to establish a standard for LGBTQIA+ policies, programs and practices.

## Categories

- Policy inclusion
- Support and commitment
- Academic life
- Student life
- Housing
- Campus safety
- Counseling and health
- Recruitment and retention efforts



## VCU 2015 overall rating



## Moving foward...

More than 30 VCU Police officers have completed Safe Zone training; each have been trained on trans-sensitivity.

VCU began offering Lavender housing and has implemented unisex restrooms.



**VCU is very aware of the CPI and we are diligently working to cater to the needs of LGBTQIA+ students.”**

Camilla Hill, OMSA  
Assistant Director

# Protestors discuss science, discrimination on Earth Day



Protestors began the day with a “teach-in” at Gallery 5, which included presentations and discussions on different science-related topics.



—from “MARCH,” page 1

ful force. The number of marches is remarkable and a reflection of how important this effort is,” said satellite organizer Kishore Hari in a press release.

The national march’s website emphasizes the long-term goals of the march: to strengthen the relationships between scientists and the public, combat discrimination in the sciences and urge legislators to enact evidence based policies.

Richmond’s march focused on discrimination in the sciences, and how the complications of reality affect science. Organizers stated in their “Why We March” release:

“Despite the goal to remain objective, science is not, and has never been, neutral. We march in a world where black, brown, trans, and women’s bodies are met with violence every day. We remind ourselves that to be ‘objective’ and ‘apolitical’ is to be complicit in the constant, evolving patterns of injustice. To this we say no more.”

# Federal budget cuts could impact Richmond’s art scene

SARAROSE MARTIN  
Staff Writer

President Donald Trump’s proposed budget eliminates federal funding of four cultural agencies, including the National Endowment for the Arts, cuts that could affect programs across the state and city.

Richmond art groups such as the 1708 Gallery, Art 180, Venture Richmond and the Institute for Contemporary Art — slated to open in late October — all receive grants from the NEA. The Virginia Commission for the Arts also receives 15 to 20 percent of its annual funding from the NEA — totalling slightly more than \$700,000.

These cuts could be especially significant for the state of Virginia, which has absorbed its fourth state budget cut in three years. The city’s Public Art Commission is funded on a tax basis, receiving a 1 percent allocation for a project that’s over \$250 thousand; the state’s cumulative balance is \$2.5 million and the Commission is working on a plan for art projects for the upcoming year.

“Budget cuts overall have impacted art funding,” said Commission Executive Director Margaret Vanderhye. “Partly because of the economy nationally and also because Virginia is unduly impacted by the effect of sequestration because we have such a large military and defense presence in our state, so when sequestration kicked in (...) Virginia lost considerable funds.”

According to Vanderhye, the Commission is a granting organization that provides funds to more than 700 nonprofit organizations in Virginia. These organizations include those for the arts as well as education and community institutions.

Larger groups like Venture Richmond are able to get funding from corporate sponsorships and donors. Other groups, like the Richmond Mural Project, are able to be totally independent with the use of spon-

sors, helping expand and maintain the art scene in Richmond.

The Institute for Contemporary Art Director Lisa Freiman said the cuts would be most harmful to rural art organizations and inner city communities that have limited access to major art institutions.

“Arts programs enhance our lives by inspiring creativity, dialogue, and self-expression.

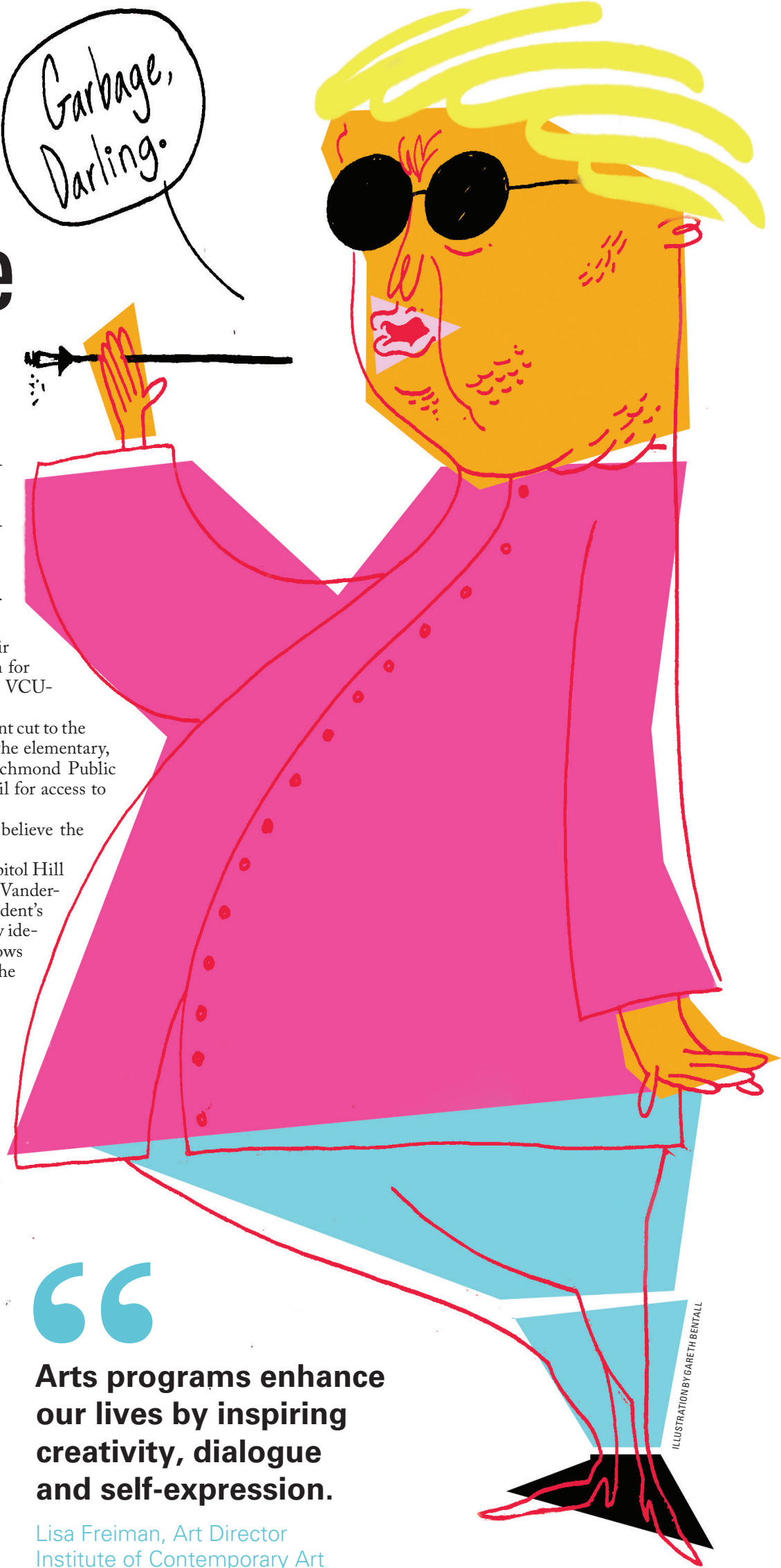
Artists and art institutions are critical to the health of our democracy,” Freiman said. “Funding from the NEA has provided essential support for hundreds of arts projects for more than 50 years.”

Freiman said the ICA will be recognized with their first NEA grant of \$25,000 to support a commission for the opening exhibition of a new media art project by VCU-arts Professor Stephen Vitiello.

The proposed federal budget also calls for a 13 percent cut to the Department of Education, meaning art programs at the elementary, middle and high school levels may be impacted. Richmond Public Schools recently voted in favor of asking City Council for access to \$8.3 million in unassigned funds.

Ultimately, though, Vanderhye said she does not believe the NEA is going to be eliminated.

“There is absolutely not the support for that on Capitol Hill except for a small, very ideologically-driven people,” Vanderhye said. “Perhaps the first drafters of the current President’s budget thought it would be a way to appeal to a narrow ideological band of people who think cutting culture shows that they’re tough on spending (but) they’re hurting the very people they purport to be helping.”



“Arts programs enhance our lives by inspiring creativity, dialogue and self-expression.”

Lisa Freiman, Art Director  
Institute of Contemporary Art



ICA Art Director Lisa Freiman said Trump’s budget cuts would be most harmful in providing access to major art institutions for students in inner-city communities. The ICA is slated to open in late October.

# Dept. of Education launches federal investigation into Richmond Public Schools disciplinary policies



ILLUSTRATION BY GARETH BENTALL

—from “RPS,” page 1

African-American students with disabilities were 12.91 times more likely than white students without disabilities to be short-term suspended, according to data from the Virginia Department of Education.

“These disparities cannot be explained by differences in student behavior,” said Legal Aid Justice Center attorney Rachael Deane in a joint press conference announcing the filing in August.

“Rather, there is overwhelming evidence that the school division’s discipline policies are excessively punitive and lack clear standards for application, leading to subjective interpretation and selective enforcement.”

During the investigation, the federal office will collect and analyze information from the complainants, RPS and any other relevant sources, according to the lawsuit.

Fourth District congressman Donald McEachin said the number of minority students suspended in comparison to the total student body is “unacceptable.”

“Our goal must be to help each and every child reach his or her potential,” McEachin said in a statement. “If a child is disrupting a classroom, then we need a solution that is not suspension where no learning possibly takes place.”

Overall, Mehta said the ACLU hopes this investigation will help shape a better school environment that will ultimately decrease “the likelihood of the school to prison pipeline.”

“Students will be disciplined for things that, when I was in school, was handled by a teacher, but it is now handled in some instances by school resource officers who are part of the law enforcement,” Mehta said.

“Something that may have been relatively minor when I was a kid is seen in a different light now and it introduces children into the penal system in ways that should instead be handled by schools, rather than setting them up to enter the penal system.”

Mehta said the ACLU and NAACP hope this investigation will also provide teachers a “toolbox” to pull better disciplinary tactics from, as well as increasing transparency between RPS and the community.

“After these students are sent home for a couple of days, they return back to the school as the same kid,” Mehta said. “Ultimately, we want to make the environment better so that the students can be benefited by being able to have consistent access to education.”

RPS said in a statement the current administration is “working diligently” to ensure disciplinary actions are fair. Under the Student Code of Responsible Ethics Handbook, faculty and staff now consider the nature of the violation, age, previous disciplinary records and other “relevant circumstances” when determining disciplinary consequences.

“We need a solution that is not suspension, where no learning possibly takes place.”

Donald McEachin  
Congressman

# Planned Parenthood gears up for the Governor’s race

MARY LEE CLARK  
Staff Writer

Planned Parenthood in Richmond held an informational meeting to inform volunteers about what is at stake in the upcoming gubernatorial elections last Tuesday.

Without current Democratic Gov. Terry McAuliffe’s protection, Planned Parenthood could be in trouble in Virginia. Ed Gillespie, a Republican leading the governor’s primary, said he would sign bills banning abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy and support targeted regulations of abortion providers, also known as TRAP laws.

“What happens at the state level is actually going to have more of an impact on our clinics and our neighborhoods than the federal level,” said Nia Bentall, who works with Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia. “So many southern Planned Parenthoods already don’t receive federal funding.”

There are two ways the federal

and state government funds Planned Parenthood. The first is Medicaid, a health insurance program for low-income individuals jointly funded on State and Federal levels. The second way is through Title X, a federal grant program dedicated to providing individuals with family planning and preventative health services.

Defunding on the state level would mean states would cut off Medicaid and Title X refunds to Planned Parenthood.

Planned Parenthood activist Jessi Coble said a lot of patients aren’t covered by Medicaid in the first place because Virginia is one of the states that has not expanded coverage. Coble said in a sense, the silver lining is that Planned Parenthood is partially protected from being defunded because so few Virginians are Medicaid-eligible.

According to the Virginia Health Care Foundation, Virginia ranks 44th in eligibility for parents in Medicaid and 43rd in children’s coverage. A working parent needs to earn less than

\$6,000 a year to be eligible for Medicaid in Virginia.

“It is just cutting off choices to people who already don’t have a lot of choices,” Bentall said.

McAuliffe echoed this sentiment after he vetoed House Bill 2264, which aimed to sever federal Title X funding for any groups that perform abortions in Virginia.

“This bill, aimed at Planned Parenthood, would harm tens of thousands of Virginians who rely on the health care services and programs provided by Planned Parenthood health centers, by denying them access to affordable care,” McAuliffe said. “Virginians, and particularly low-income Virginians, need more access to health care, not less.”

Despite common misconceptions, no federal funds go to performing abortions under a provision known as the Hyde Amendment. Instead, the money can be used for other services such as pap tests, breast exams, and other services Planned Parenthood and other clinics offer.



CT FILE PHOTO



PHOTO BY ERIN EDGERTON

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RAMAWAY



# sports

Stat of the Week:  
VCU closer Sam Donko became the Rams’ all-time saves leader after notching the 31st save of his collegiate career against Fordham.

## Rams’ Alie-Cox signs with Indianapolis Colts

NICK VERSAW  
Staff Writer

The Indianapolis Colts signed VCU basketball fan-favorite Mo Alie-Cox to a professional contract Friday, furthering the former Ram’s transition from college basketball star forward to NFL tight end.

Alie-Cox — who hasn’t played organized football since the ninth grade — will now attempt to follow in the footsteps of several notable cross-overs, including Tony Gonzalez and Antonio Gates — two future Pro Football Hall of Famers who played basketball, not football, in college.

The former Ram’s journey from shot-blocker to pass-catcher all started in 2015 when Dallas Cowboys star tight end Jason Witten urged Alie-Cox to consider making the switch after witnessing his on-court dominance over archrival Richmond.

“He just said if I wanted to make the transition, I could definitely make it based on my intangibles alone, my hands, my arm length, my body size,” Alie-Cox told FOX59 in Indianapolis. “I’m a strong, physical athlete. He said it’s probably going to be tough. Tight end’s one of the tougher positions. But he said I could definitely make the transition if I wanted to.”

Pair Alie-Cox’s 6-foot-6, 275 pound frame with his 4.75 second 40-yard dash and it’s easy to see why so many NFL scouts shared Witten’s fascination with the former VCU star after his pro-day workout last week.

Representatives from all but two NFL franchises showed up to Mechanicsville’s Sports Reality complex to watch the Alexandria, Va. product show off his physical gifts. The Colts were one of the first to bring in the former Ram for a private meeting. Alie-Cox was also scheduled to meet with a slew of other suitors, including the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Los Angeles Chargers, Philadelphia Eagles, New York Jets and Seattle Seahawks

During Alie-Cox’s visit with the Colts, the VCU star sat down for lunch with star quarterback Andrew Luck and tight ends Jack Doyle and Erik Swoope. That meeting helped convince Alie-Cox to trade the Black and Gold for blue and white.

“They were just real cool guys, easy to get along with,” Alie-Cox said.

Swoope provided Alie-Cox proof the Colts are familiar with turning college basketball stars into NFL caliber football players; the former University of Miami star went from never playing a down of football in his life to catching touchdowns from Luck.

“He was just talking about how before he got here he had never put on a pad a day in his life,” Alie-Cox said. “But he said once he got here, they just welcomed him with open arms and were willing to help him with whatever he needed. And he told me they’d do the same thing for me and coming here would be a smooth transition.”

While the former Ram holds an advantage over Swoope with eight years of playing experience from when he was younger, Alie-Cox said he understands the learning curve is going to be steep and doesn’t expect to contribute overnight.

“Hopefully I make the roster this year,” he said. “I know it’s going to take a long time to get adjusted to football in general. If I’m on the practice squad for a year and make the active roster next year, (I’m) just coming in here with open arms ready to work and get better every day.”

Alie-Cox said the Colts share a similar mindset, and aren’t looking for him to transition the same dominance he held on the basketball court to the football field right away.

“For this year and beyond,” he said, “we just talked about getting better every day and just see where I’m at by the time the season’s here.”

Alie-Cox will get his first look at NFL action when the Colts kick-off their preseason OTAs May 22, with minicamp opening three weeks later on June 13.

## Rhoades locks-in transfers, bolsters roster



In two seasons at Rice under Mike Rhoades, Marcus Evans started in all 68 games.

NICK VERSAW  
Staff Writer

Head Coach Mike Rhoades earned his first win for the Rams after highly-touted prospect Marcus Evans announced last week he will be transferring to VCU in the fall.

Evans — who played under Rhoades for two seasons at Rice — has been lauded by many as one of the top players on college basketball’s transfer market. Last season, the 6-foot-2, 195-pound point guard averaged 19 points, 3.3 rebounds and 3.7 assists-per-game under Rhoades at Rice, in addition to his 21.4 points-per-game as a freshman. He was also picked first team all-Conference USA both seasons.

As a native of nearby Chesapeake, Va., Evans chose to follow Rhoades back home over a number of attractive suitors, including the University of Arizona and the University of Miami.

While the former Owl will be forced to sit out a year due to NCAA transfer restrictions, Evans fills a massive need for the Rams in his reunion with Rhoades. Currently, the Rams have just one true point guard — rising senior Johnny Williams. The Black and Gold’s heir apparent, incoming freshman Lavar Batts Jr., demomitted from VCU earlier this month after former coach Will Wade’s departure to Louisiana State University, leaving a gaping hole for the position.

Evans will have two seasons of eligibility left once he steps onto the Siegel Center hardwood in 2018. He will join rising sophomores Samir Doughty, DeRiante Jenkins and Malik Crowfield to form a high-powered junior class for Rhoades and the Rams in the fall of 2018.

In the meantime, graduate transfer and star forward Khris Lane will help fill the void left by graduating senior and fan-favorite Mo Alie-Cox and four-star decommit Mayan Kiir.

Lane, in his second year at Longwood after a freshman season spent at Drexel, averaged 17.1 points and 7.3 rebounds-per-game this past season as a Lancer. He announced his intentions to play under Rhoades Saturday and will join rising senior Justin Tillman, fellow transfer Issac Vann and incoming freshmen Sean Mobley and Marcus Santos-Silva down low.

“It’s going to be amazing,” Lane told the Richmond Times-Dispatch. “VCU has some of the best fans in the country. They’re crazy about basketball. I wanted to go to a school that was basketball-first and really put basketball in the forefront of the school.”

Lane, like Evans, is returning home by making the move to VCU. The former Lancer attended nearby high schools Meadowbrook, Trinity Episcopal — where he played with recent graduate Torey Burston — and Benedictine.

“I just feel comfortable here with the coaching staff,” Lane said. “The fact that I had the opportunity to come home with some of the best fans in the country is going to be great.”

### PRESS BOX

## Serena Williams aces Black Excellence

SOPHIA BELLETTI  
Sports Editor

Serena Williams has been the face of tennis for more than a decade — she is a hero and inspiration to young girls and women across the board. She has the strength, drive and determination of a goddess and the physique to match.

And now, at 35-years-old she’s still at the top of her game — not only did she win the Australian Open in January, she did so while approximately eight weeks pregnant.

Now rumoured to be about 20 weeks — about halfway through a normal pregnancy — she will regain her place as world No. 1 next week. That place at the

the Australian Open, she was treated like every other woman on the tour; no seats given up, no extra help, nothing. Assuming that she is somehow a “superwoman” diminishes the the agony she likely went through.

Williams is not the first elite athlete to compete during a pregnancy, but she is definitely the most prominent, given her recent win, defeating her older sister Venus in the Australian Open. Triumphant 6-4, 6-4 in the final, she didn’t drop a single set on her way to lifting the trophy.

Following her announcement, we were once again reminded of what it means to be Serena Williams.

Ever since making a name for herself, Williams’ success has been shadowed by racist and sexist comments. Following her victory at the French Open in June 2015, Williams was compared to an animal, likened to a man and deemed frightening and horrifyingly unattractive.

These remarks don’t always take the form of explicit racial slurs or threats of bodily harm, like the ones reported at Indian Wells Masters tennis tournament did. But if Williams were to boycott every tennis event someone made dehumanizing references to her body’s size and shape, she’d have to quit the sport altogether.

Commentators speak about Williams’ athletic qualities in a way that buys into the essentialist logic of racial difference, which has long searched to brand the black body as inherently different.

Australian doctor, Peter Larkins attempted to compliment Williams and contributed his medical opinion in an interview with Australia’s Herald Sun for a 2006 piece that compared her fitness to a competitor’s.

“It is the African-American race,” he said. “They just have this huge gluteal strength. (...) Jennifer Capriati was clearly out of shape and overweight. With Serena, that’s her physique and genetics.”

It’s true: Williams is black, she’s very muscular and she’s a skilled player. We’ve seen Williams’ athleticism attributed to her ethnicity and to do so diminishes her success. Her total of 23 Grand Slam singles titles, which marks the record for the most Major wins by a tennis player in the Open Era, is not because of her blackness.

So while it’s certainly important, it’s not enough to point out that Serena isn’t “built like a man,” using photos of her in shapely, curve-hugging dresses to illustrate the point. This isn’t about the fact that Williams isn’t tall, slim and a size two. Above all else, it’s about the fact she isn’t white.

We can certainly have a conversation about how the sports world expects physically powerful women to look like dainty supermodels, but the fact remains that muscular white tennis stars like Martina Navratilova, Justine Henin, Victoria Azarenka and Samantha Tosur aren’t subject to the same disdain and body-focused critiques that Williams is.

Williams is simultaneously sexualized and exoti-

cized. Her body is a representation of her athletic skill. But rather than being celebrated, it’s been scrutinized mercilessly, turned into a kind of spectacle for white amusement.

The intersection of sexism and racism is something black women grapple with on a daily basis.

This goes beyond Williams’ body. Not only is her womanhood consistently denied, her character is deemed as dominant, aggressive and arrogant. Everything from her hairstyles to her celebratory dances have been regarded as “ghetto” or uncouth. No matter her success, her intelligence or her graciousness, her humanity is consistently denied.

### Sophia Belletti, Sports Editor & Executive Editor at Large



Sophia is a junior journalism major pursuing minors in history and gender, sexuality and women’s studies. She hopes to one day be reporting from the sidelines of game seven of the NBA Finals or the World Series press box.

“We can certainly have a conversation about how the sports world expects physically powerful women to look like dainty supermodels, but the fact remains that muscular white tennis stars like Martina Navratilova, Justine Henin, Victoria Azarenka and Samantha Tosur aren’t subject to the same disdain and body-focused critiques that Williams is.”

top of women’s tennis will be held for her if she returns to competition within 12 months of giving birth, as per the Women’s Tennis Association special ranking rule.

Williams waited five months to announce her pregnancy — so for all that time — including during

# Track & Field hurdles past the competition

JESSICA WETZLER  
Contributing Writer

VCU's performance in the two-day Georgia Tech Invitational in Atlanta on Friday and Saturday was highlighted by sophomore Drew Hess' javelin performance and sophomore Jamik Alexander and junior Kareem Payne's dominance in the 100-meter dash.

Hess placed second in the javelin throw with a mark of 58.87 meters on his third attempt. Alexander and Payne each ran top-five Atlantic 10 times in the 100-meter dash. Alexander ran a time of 10.71 seconds while Payne posted a time of 10.76 seconds.

Freshman Ian Davis narrowly missed topping his personal record in the 110-meter hurdles with a time of 14.86 seconds. The freshman finished 16th out of 27 runners.

On the women's side, the freshmen shined for the Black and Gold during day one of the Georgia Tech Invitational, as Delaney Savedge and Alexis Willis both posted personal records in their respective events. Savedge cruised to a new personal record in the 3,000-meter steeplechase with a time of 11:16.38. Savedge finished fourth out of 17 competitors and currently sits at number eight on the A-10 list. Willis placed 14th out of 43 runners in the 100-meter dash, finishing with a time of 12.02 seconds. Willis currently holds second place in the A-10.

Freshman Khoi Banks just missed her season-best in the 100-meter hurdles, posting a time of 14.64 seconds.

Freshman Dajae Goulet moved to third place in the A-10 after posting a time of 12.12 seconds in the 100-meter dash.

Junior Latasha Williams placed 12th out of 21 competitors in the shot put after throwing 12.61 meters.

Both men's and women's 4x100 and 4x400-meter relay teams had standout performances to highlight the Rams' effort in the second day of the invitational on Saturday. The 4x100 squad of Payne, Alexander, junior Nicholas Buckingham and sophomore Justin West blasted to the tape in 41.00 — the fastest by a VCU quartet outdoors since 2011 — en route to a third-place finish.

The 4x100 relay squad of sophomore Latrice Morris, senior De'Nisha Smith, Willis and Goulet clocked an Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America (IC4A) qualifying time of 46.04 to place third behind Syracuse University (45.23) and East Tennessee State University (45.38).

Meanwhile, VCU barreled to a 4x400 victory. The combined efforts of Buckingham and juniors Bigal Harrison, Kahlil Shepard and Devon Thompson clocked a time of 3:11.56 and the Rams won by more than two seconds over runner-up Missouri (3:13.83).

For the women, the 4x400-meter relay team of junior Nichelle Scott and sophomores Taylor Watkins, Ashley Greenlee and Ann Sheehy recorded a season-best time of 3:45.28 to earn a runner-up finish. That time is an IC4A qualifying mark.

Scott shattered her own school record in the 800-meter run. Scott clocked 2:08.36 to place third behind Megan Malasarte (2:06.58), a former All-American for Georgia now running professionally for the Atlanta Track Club, and Emily Buwalda (2:07.88) of Shorter University. Scott, the reigning A-10 Conference champion in the 800, lowered her previous best outdoor mark by a mere two seconds. She holds both the program's indoor and outdoor 800-meter records.

VCU recorded a number of other personal bests. Among them were Harrison's 48.04 mark in the 400, fourth-fastest in the A-10 this outdoor season. Thompson also ran to a personal record of 48.11 in the 400.

Freshman Makayla McGowan notched a pair of personal bests on the way to a top-five finish in both the shot put and discus. McGowan threw 14.41 meters in the shot put to give her a third place finish — the farthest throw in that event by a Ram this season. McGowan also placed fifth in the discus when she recorded a mark of 45.75 meters on her next-to-last throw.

Junior Taylor McCormick leaped 11.89 meters to record a third-place finish in the triple jump.

VCU will head to the 2017 Atlantic 10 Conference Championships May 6-7 in Amherst, Massachusetts.



Senior Racheed Davis' personal record for the long jump is 6.57 meters.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY VCU ATHLETICS

# Rub-a-dub-dub-dub-dub, FOUR DUBS IN THE TUB



In VCU's win over VMI, sophomore infielder Zac Ching collected a hit and a run. Ching kept the production rolling in the weekend series with a pair of RBIs against Fordham.

PHOTO BY ERIN EDEBERT ON

ADAM CHEEK  
Contributing Writer

VCU baseball had one of its strongest weeks this season, winning all four of their games against visiting Virginia Military Institute Tuesday night and Fordham University in a weekend series.

The Rams rallied in the seventh to seal the win against VMI. Senior closer Sam Donko reached a milestone in Saturday's win against Fordham, notching his 11th save of the season and the 31st of his career, officially ranking him atop the all-time saves list for the Rams. Donko passed Adam Bryant, who pitched for VCU from 1991-94, to take the lead of all VCU closers.

### Fordham - Sunday

VCU sealed their sweep of the Fordham Rams with a 4-3 win on Sunday, scoring a pair of runs early to give the Black and Gold the momentum it needed. The third inning featured a breakthrough by VCU, as senior infielder Darian Carpenter homered over the left field fence, scoring freshman infielder Paul Witt.

Fordham attempted to come back in the bottom of the fourth, scoring one run on three hits, but sophomore pitcher Michael Dailey shut them down afterwards. Freshmen infielders Steven Carpenter and Brett Willett combined to bring in another run in the fifth, as Willett singled in S. Carpenter.

The 3-1 VCU lead carried over until the bottom of the eighth when Fordham pushed across two more runs on a triple. The game extended into extra

innings but the Black and Gold finally plated a run when senior outfielder Alex Gransback pinch-ran for senior catcher Dylan Isquirdo. S. Carpenter's single up the middle scored Gransback, and senior pitcher Matt Jamer blanked Fordham in the bottom of the tenth to preserve the win.

### Fordham - Saturday

Saturday's win over Fordham featured Donko's stellar, record-breaking performance. Senior Brooks Vial set the tone for the Rams, pitching seven and two-thirds of shutout baseball.

Witt and S. Carpenter each recorded two hits, as well as an RBI and run scored apiece. S. Carpenter and Witt, with back-to-back doubles and another RBI by S. Carpenter in the top of the second gave VCU an early 2-0 lead. Willett's sacrifice fly in the top of the sixth added to VCU's lead, extending it to three runs.

Vial pitched into the eighth and was subsequently removed after a great outing for Donko. Recording the final four outs, Sam Donko inscribed himself into the school's history books with the most saves in VCU history.

### Fordham - Friday

VCU's series against Fordham opened on Friday with a close 3-2 win over the (other) Rams. Starting junior pitcher Sean Thompson hurled seven stellar innings, giving up Fordham's only two runs while striking out five.

D. Carpenter was the standout for the Black and Gold, adding his ninth home run to his season total. Fordham put themselves on the board first af-

ter VCU squandered a bases-loaded opportunity. Carpenter evened the score at 1-1 with his homer in the opening half of the sixth, but Fordham took the lead back in the bottom of the seventh.

After a single and a walk in the latter half of the eighth, Willett patiently drew a walk to load the bases. With two outs and the bases loaded, as well as a full count, sophomore infielder Zac Ching laced a liner into center for a two-RBI hit. With the lead belonging to VCU, Donko arrived to put out Fordham's fire and seal the win for VCU.

### VMI - Tuesday

The one-game series against VMI on Tuesday provided VCU with their momentum for the Fordham series. A very slow game developed for the Rams, as their offense sputtered for the first six innings, allowing VMI to plate three runs — VCU freshman starter Conor Gillispie was pulled after two innings.

However, the bottom of the seventh proved to be the saving grace for the Black and Gold, who, after threatening twice earlier in the game, finally broke through. Willett, Ching, and junior outfielder Haiden Lamb all reached on singles, and Isquirdo ended the shutout by slicing a double down the left field line, scoring all three runners.

Senior outfielder Logan Farrar grounded out to score Isquirdo, and Witt singled in another run, giving the Rams a 5-3 lead over the Keydets. VMI never fully recovered after their total collapse, scoring another run in the eighth, and Sam Donko came in to close out the 5-4 victory for the Rams.

Next, the Rams head east to Longwood University for a Tuesday night game against the 13-25 Lancers. First pitch is scheduled for 6 p.m.

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# spectrum

On this day...  
in 1961, Bob Dylan made his recording debut playing the backup harmonica for Harry Belafonte’s “Calypso King.”

## RESIST

### VCU Dance senior show explores loss, oppression



Ten graduating VCU Dance students presented works of original choreography April 19 -22 at the Grace Street Theater.

PHOTO BY CASEY COLE

GEORGIA GEEN  
Contributing Writer

VCU Dance presented “RESIST: Spring 2017 Senior Project Concert in two programs,” which showcased the work of 10 graduating choreography students from April 19 - 22 at the Grace Street Theater.

The student-selected theme, “resist,” encompassed performances about race, gender and personal experiences such as loss, among others.

“We all had a sense of community within our pieces,” said choreographer Jasmine Burriss.

“We really thought that was important and we spoke on a lot of things going on,” Burriss said her senior project evolved from grieving the loss of her brother in her Junior year.

Burriss’ piece, entitled “Engraved,” examined the grieving process and emphasized the importance of support from family and friends in challenging situations, she said. The choreography frequently grouped dancers together in pairs or small circles.

“I didn’t want anybody to be alone, I didn’t want anybody to be in any type of solitude.” Burriss said. “I wanted to show a sharing of weight,”

Burriss’ performance grew in intensity over its seven-minute duration, symbolizing the arrival of anger and depression in the grieving process, she said. The ending itself is sudden, with the music and lights cutting off without much warning.

“The abrupt ending kind of illustrated how there is no ending to grief, it never really ends and I wanted to create the idea that although this seemed like it ended all of a sudden, it’s not really over,” Burriss said.

“I didn’t want anybody to be alone, I didn’t want anybody to be in any type of solitude (...) I wanted to show a sharing of weight.”

Jasmine Burriss  
Senior, VCU Dance

Emerald Holman’s piece, “Crown Culture,” included lighthearted, energetic dialogue and laughter. It was inspired by the work of late Jean Michel Basquiat, a New York street artist. The choreography fused contemporary and house dance styles similar.

“Some works are more political than others, some are more movement-based than others Each student has their own vision of what they want their work to look like on stage,” Rivera said.

Jada Willis, another choreographer, focused on colorism and titled her piece, “The Brown Paper Bag Test.” The title is a reference to a practice in black communities where people whose skin is lighter than a paper bag are considered “pretty” and those who are darker than a paper bag are considered “ugly.”

Willis said she’s proud she was able to educate people on the “brown paper bag” issue. A small passage beneath the credits for Willis’ piece explained the test isn’t just an issue of “pretty” or “ugly.” Those whose

skin is darker than the bag are not granted the same privileges as those with lighter skin.

“I want people to know, throw it in their face, and know that this is a topic that is still (relevant) to today,” Willis said.

Willis selected audio clips from the documentary “Dark Girls,” directed by Bill Duke and D. Channsin Berry, to accompany the performance. Several performances had moments void of music where the dancers clapped their hands and slapped the stage.

VCU Dance Lighting Director, Michael Jarrett, said he based the lighting design on the costumes and music chosen by the choreographer. For this reason, he said each performance require individual approaches.

“I wanted to make sure you could see the different skin tones of the dancers (in ‘The Brown Paper Bag Test’) Jarrett said.

Throughout the performance, the darker-skinned dancers resist the effects of the “brown paper bag,” tying into the theme of the program as a whole, Willis said.

“Especially at the end, where she’s kind of pushing the brown paper bag away from her, it’s making you realize that it’s not realistic and you can’t believe this,” Willis said.

The senior project begins with a proposal written a year prior to the realization of the performances, VCU Dance Assistant Professor Eric Rivera said. After that, for dancers take place and students rehearse their pieces weekly.

“It’s a long process for a really short evening, if you think about it, because it’s many many hours of rehearsals of ideas of research, of being (at) the studio, putting things together,” Rivera said.



## Sam’s Take “Free Fire” is a comically cynical free-for-all

SAMUEL GOODRICH  
Staff Writer

As Hollywood takes a breather between the onslaught of fantastic films already released this year and the upcoming blockbuster season, some smaller movies have decided to fight for success at the multiplex.

The Martin Scorsese produced crime film “Free Fire” hopes to stand apart with its bottle film concept and unique style.

Taking place one night in the 1970’s, “Free Fire” follows multiple criminals who’ve all shown up to an abandoned warehouse for a gun trade. After some tense bravado and a violent misunderstanding, a simple

job turns into a deadly stand-off where loyalties are thrown out the window.

As a bottle film, “Free Fire” does an excellent job of keeping the scenario engaging, constantly finding new ways to escalate the stand-off. All the action takes place in a single large room of the warehouse, and somehow director/writer Ben Wheatley is able to maintain interest during the exactly an hour and a half of running time.

There’s constant tension as everyone seems to be on the same skill level and it’s established early that everyone is double-crossing everyone else, to the point where some characters even ask forget whose side they’re on. It’s at once hilarious and nail-biting, since you never know who’s going to betray who.

Part of what keeps things interesting is the script, which is full of snappy one-liners and darkly comedic moments. Everyone in the film is a scumbag, but they’re also all

glaringly human.

No one comes out of the movie unscathed - each character has at least one bullet in them by the end of the first shootout. This leads to some intense moments where characters who can barely limp have to escape from gunfire coming from a guy who can barely aim.

In fact, the gun fights themselves have a lot of weight to them. Gunshots are startlingly loud and impactful on the characters. The bullets rarely find their targets, but they still pose a threat to the already injured group of criminals.

“Free Fire” keeps to a common motif of realism where a bullet doesn’t instantly kill you and mistakes are made each time someone moves. The realistic action is not always consistent. For example, glass will cut one character’s hand but another can stick their entire arm on broken shards and be fine.

Another aspect that keeps these

characters grounded is their dialogue, which is clever but never over the top. The humor is cynical and dark, finding comedy in the shortcomings and misfortunes of terrible people.

The dialogue and tone shines even brighter with a cast of a established names and talented up-and-comers.

The standouts are the biggest actors on hand: Brie Larson, Armie Hammer, and Sharlto Copley. Larson plays the most likeable character who’s simply tired of everyone’s petty fighting, while Copley continues to show his mastery of the incompetent, crazy and egotistical archetype he’s made for himself.

Hammer in particular does a fantastic job as a money-loving gun-for-hire whose only allegiance is to himself. He gets some of the funniest lines and moments as his charisma is able to add some flair to his already likeable character.

“Free Fire” does a great job at escalating the stakes, but some of

new elements added felt unnecessary. This is especially true when a new character is introduced fifteen minutes before the end, which feels more like an excuse to have another body on set than a real game-changer to the plot.

By the time the film reaches its bloody finale, it’s clear that “Free Fire” is not for everyone. It’s a dark, intense, and claustrophobic film that never shies away from the gory details. At the same time, it’s able to find humor in the misery of ultimately human criminals, making for some bleak comedy.

**Rating:**

Not for the faint-hearted, but perfect for the cynical looking for something different.

# VCU celebrates environmental awareness

GEORGIA GEEN  
Staff Writer

The VCU Office of Sustainability and Eat Green VCU hosted the 2017 Earth Day picnic on April 21 at the Sahara lot on West Grace St.

“We’re hoping to kind of build community within the university itself,” Erin Stanforth, the Director of Sustainability at VCU, said. “Our hope is that people take time to sit down, have a wrap and just be, for a minute.”

Participants played cornhole and an oversized Jenga game in addition to visiting the stands of different organizations.

“This space (Sahara) hasn’t really been used for this before, and because it’s so centrally located I think it’s easy for people to kind of flow through,” Stanforth said.

Groups like the Office of Sustainability, Rams in Recovery, Vegans @ VCU and the Highland Support Project set up two rows of tables on the grassy areas on either side of a walkway.

“We have our standbys (organizations) that we’ve used, worked with in the past. But for this year, we wanted it to be really inclusive and approachable for anybody,” Stanforth said.

The Highland Support Project (HSP) serves indigenous people in Guatemala. The group is taking a service trip this summer to Guatemala, which they advertised at the Earth Day picnic.

“We’ll be working with organic farming and just how that contributes to their culture and how it feeds into their life and everyday needs,” HSP intern Toni Sheffield said.

The event has run since 2008, when VCU signed the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, Stanforth said.

Stanforth says she hopes participants will gain a better understanding of “local avenues of sustainability.”

“We continually push education about sustainability, behavior change is for sure our biggest driver about any action we’re doing within the university and that is apparent in things we’re giving away,” Stanforth said.

Reusable water bottles were given away in order to encourage students to stop using disposable ones. In addition, volunteers showed participants how to make a sustainable cleaner from water, vinegar and essential oils.

“The principal is to get less waste out of your typical home cleaning program,” intern at the VCU Office of Sustainability Michael Barber said. “The idea is you don’t have to go out and buy a separate container for every cleaning venture.”

Barber said the cleaner is effective for most surfaces, but isn’t ideal for places like bathrooms.

Wraps from Ellwood Thompson’s, a natural foods grocery store, were available in addition to water infused with herbs from the Office of Sustainability’s garden where produce is grown for Ram Pantry and the Center for Healthy Hearts.



ILLUSTRATION BY SKYE ALI

## “O.J.: Made in America” director speaks at VCU

—“O.J.,” from page 1

“O.J.: Made in America” is the longest documentary to ever win an Oscar and includes more than 60 interviews. Edelman said the weight of the endeavor was overwhelming at times, and he was forced to improvise during what turned out to be an unconventional filmmaking process.

“The story is about this incredibly divisive situation in such a divisive time,” Edelman said. “It was about two groups of people — black and white — who saw the same situation so differently. And the last thing I wanted to do was have a voice of God to say like, ‘this is how it is.’ I’m not writing this history. The audience had to hear competing voices as much as possible.”

The film is also eligible for the Emmy Awards, as it toes what Edelman said is a blurred line between films and documentaries. The Academy narrowed its classification of documentaries after Edelman’s film received the award, partially in an effort to differentiate between television and theatrical productions.

Edelman did not appear to harbor any resentment regarding the Academy’s decision, rather, he was enthused that the “wild-wild West” of television documentaries was more narrowly defined.

“There were a lot of conversations about how people wanted to categorize our film,” Edelman said. “The thing is, so many documentaries are commissioned by television companies — HBO, Netflix, Amazon, CNN, ESPN — so they are all eligible for Emmys, and you only have to be released in a theater for a certain amount of time to be considered by the Academy. So the discussion became, what’s TV and what’s film.”

Edelman, 42, was born in Boston, Massachusetts to children’s rights activist Marian Wright Edelman and Georgetown University law professor Peter Edelman. His mother, who is African-American, worked for Martin Luther King Jr. during the civil rights era and his father, who is Jewish, worked for the government under the Clinton Administration. Edelman graduated from Sidwell Friends School in Washington D.C. in 1992 before going on to earn his bachelor’s degree from Yale University.

Edelman is also known for his work on the ESPN special “Requiem for the Big East” as well as on three HBO Sports documentaries: “Magic & Bird: A Courtship of Rivals,” “The Curious Case of Curt Flood,” and the Emmy Award-winning “Brooklyn Dodgers: Ghosts of

Flatbush.”

Edelman said his parent’s political background has had a heavy influence on the perspective he brings to his sports documentaries.

“I think I probably absorbed plenty of lessons and my worldview from them,” Edelman said. “I certainly absorbed a work ethic from them. I’ve had to figure out a way to tell stories that are worthwhile and have social and political relevance within the medium I work in.”

Although the O.J. saga encompasses such a wide social and political spectrum, Edelman said he still sought to narrow his focus to a sports-based perspective and elucidate the psychological nuances of one of the most polarizing athletes the world has known. For Edelman, O.J. is a perfect case study of the mental impact of the societal “hero-worship” many celebrities are consistently exposed to.

“These people make us feel good, and so when you’re connected to them like that it ends up being a referendum on yourself,” Edelman said. “You don’t want to believe that these people are capable of evil. That’s what the film is about — that we were all complicit in creating this person in the first place.”

““

**You don’t want to believe that these people are capable of evil. That’s what the film is about — that we were all complicit in creating this person in the first place.”**

Ezra Eldeman  
Director, “O.J.”

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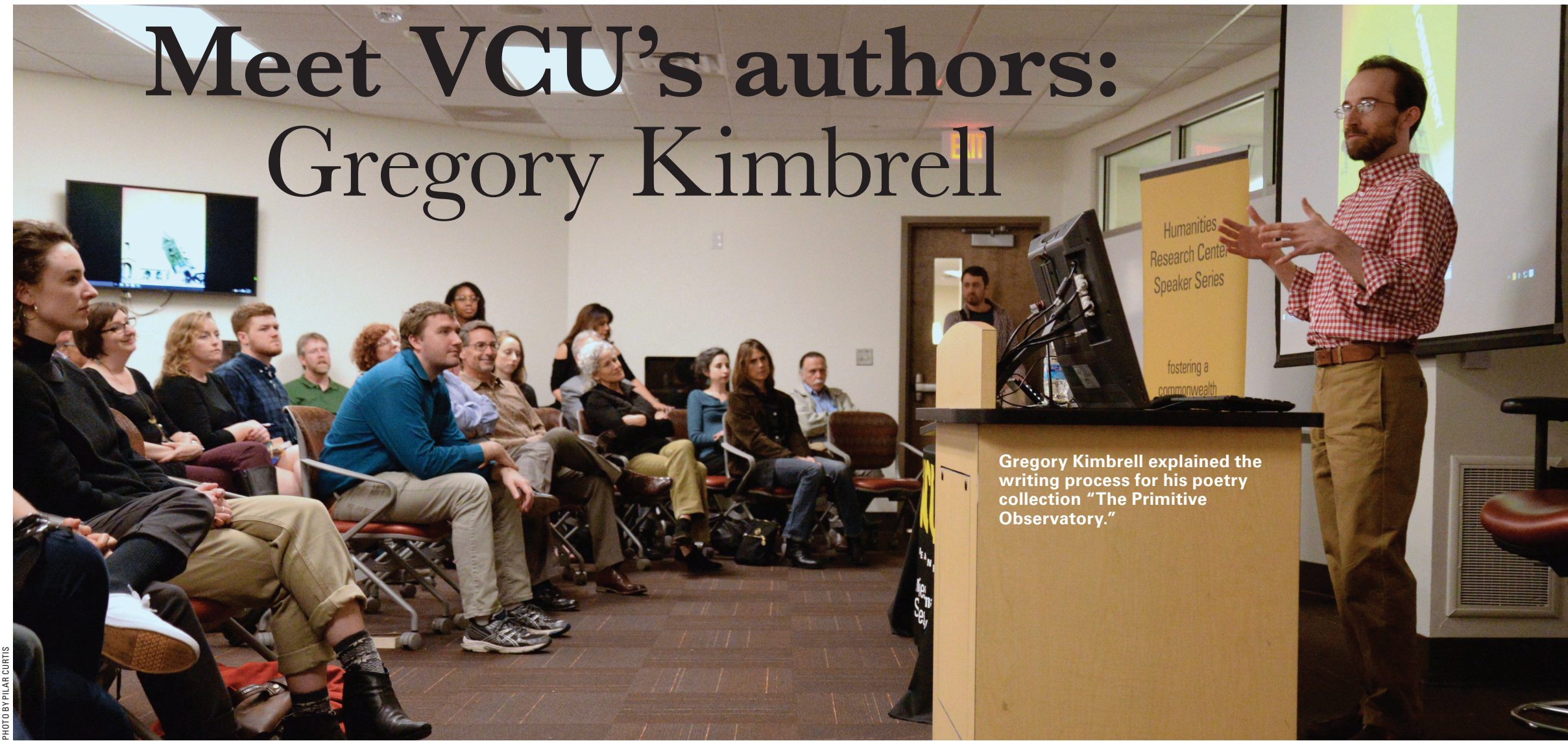
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**SIONA PETEROUS**  
Spectrum Editor

Gregory Kimbrell is usually behind-the-scenes skillfully coordinating events at James Cabell Library, but on April 19 he was front and center for a reading of his poetry book, “The Primitive Observatory,” for the VCU Humanities Research Center’s monthly “Meet VCU’s Authors” lecture. “The Primitive Observatory” was published by Southern Illinois University Press and was awarded the 2014 Crab Orchard Series in Poetry First Book Award. The book has also been featured in Parentheses Journal, Blackbird, The Laurel Review and the Abaculi Project. Kimbrell opened the hour-long lecture with a description of his process to curate the theme for the poetry collection. Though “The Primitive Observatory” takes place in a fictional, apocalyptic gilded age, Kimbrell said when he first started the project in spring 2010 he expected the collection to fall in-line with “traditional” forms of poetry. “They had several key features that made them more aligned with some the major trends in contemporary poetry. Number one, they had a

nonfiction basis. They were set in the actual world and they dealt with actual word topics. They were all my own thoughts in the actual world and I was the narrator essentially,” Kimbrell said. “The poems that brought me to the world of poetry all had this feature but thing is, all the poems I wrote with these features I hated.” Kimbrell explained that he first thought this feeling of dislike towards one’s work was “the condition of the artist,” but Kimbrell thought that if he wanted other people to pay attention to his work then he should, at the very least, not hate his own poems. “It became to be a problem for me,” Kimbrell said. “I started to ask myself, ‘How can I write poems that I will actually be okay with sharing with people?’ ‘What do I really love? What can I learn from things that matters to me most? How I could bring those together for poems I like?’” Kimbrell’s list covered several genres, including period dramas — which he said defamiliarizes people with the familiar — and horror movies, for their ability to escalate the human fear of unknown. His loves and influences also included an appreciation for creativity in “B movies,” the

role of language in films which are translated to English and the nuances of graphic literature. “All of those things that we looked out, none of them are set in the real world. None of them are set in the present day. None of them are set in my sphere in the United States,” Kimbrell said, “So I thought if I don’t want to write about my world let’s just skip the actual world and do a fantasy world or some kind of alternate reality.” Kimbrell said he realized his interests heavily involved the pleasure of the imagination, which did not require him to be an active part of the poems. The result is a collection of what he loosely described as “speculative poems,” which are defined by a focus on science fiction and horror influence themes; they rely on the voice of an omniscient narrator. Despite several technological malfunctions interfering with screen shots of his presentation, Kimbrell was able to engage the audience with funny stories of his writing process — including a peek into a notebook of earlier versions of “The Primitive Observatory.” He also read three of his favorite poems, “Ruin at Drax End,” “1900 Gibbons Street” and “The End of Time at Four

Heaths Schools.” The Primitive Observatory is written in prose stanza, which resembles traditional paragraph structure seen in stories, but retains the style characteristics of poetry. Kimbrell’s notebook depicted how he curated specific words to fit the prose stanza and achieve his signature strong right edge in his poems. They also shed light upon Kimbrell’s overall process to develop the narrative voice of each poem. Kimbrell described his work as capturing two juxtaposing topics: the methodical execution of the Observatory’s visual aesthetics combined with the fantastic nature of the collections’ speculative, post-apocalyptic almost un-human world. “The question I get the most is ‘why are you writing poems?’” Kimbrell said. “Asking a poet why he or she is writing poems is sort of like going up to a painter and saying ‘why did you render this particular scene as a painting rather than making a movie or producing a video game?’ Sure, I have had a little bit of training writing short stories, but poetry is simply what I like doing.”

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# opinion

Quote of the week:

“The question remains: should a person be able to live-stream someone else’s actions without their consent?” —Sriteja Yedhara

## Is live-streaming a right?



**SRITEJA YEDHARA**  
Staff Columnist

On Easter Sunday in Cleveland, Ohio, 37-year-old Steve Stephens committed murder as millions of people watched when he killed a random Cleveland resident Robert Godwin, 74, while filming himself on Facebook Live. Stephens continued live-streaming his day, vocalizing his intent to kill again, and consequently leading the Cleveland Police on a three-day manhunt which culminated in his suicide. The disturbing attack has since reignited discussion on the controversial aspects of live-streaming services, but Godwin's live fatal shooting is unfortunately not the first of its kind. In July 2016, the shootings of two black men — Alton Sterling and Philando Castile — similarly went viral on social media.

On July 5, two white officers were arresting Sterling, 37, after responding to a call about an armed man. The officers had Sterling pinned to the ground when at least one of them shot him, The New York Times reported. In the days that followed, Sterling's death aired repeatedly on television and social media. Similarly, on July 6, Castile, 32, was shot and killed in his car by a police officer outside St. Paul, Minn. while his girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds, live-streamed the aftermath of the shooting on Facebook.

Lehigh University Media Relations Associate Lauren Stralo reported Castile's murder was viewed by 5 million people within days. These shootings (along with others) inspired Lehigh Assistant Professor of Journalism Jeremy Littau and Associate Dean Daxton Stewart to investigate further into the privacy laws — or lack thereof — in tact for live-streaming services users and those featured in their videos.

The question remains: should a person be able to live-stream someone else's actions in a public space without their consent? Practically speaking, live-streaming video content could be beneficial to law enforcement agencies and the public in cases like Castile and Godwin's.

Stewart and Littau go as far as describing live-streaming's strength as being able to "bridge the gap between the creation of content" and the "distribution of that content."

In contrast, a more concerning theory regarding live-streaming was publicized by J. Weston Phippen, a reporter for The Atlantic, who argues violent live-streamers are encouraged by the online response they receive, and therefore go on to intensify the violent acts they are perpetuating. This idea, while terrifying, could hold some truth and could be a reason Stephens was inspired to find another victim after ending Godwin's life.

Stewart and Littau used Castile's death to show there are consequences to taking videos of police interactions — live-streamed or otherwise. Though law enforcement agencies have sought to strip the right of civilians to capture videos of police officers in recent years, that act has been struck down as unconstitutional.

Yet, the live-streamed video in Castile's case played an important role in providing the public with an authentic portrayal of his death. This ultimately led to an indictment for manslaughter while

spreading national awareness on police brutality against the African American community.

Live-streaming is proving to be one of the turning points of the seemingly-imminent revisions to privacy laws in the age of constantly-evolving technology. Cases like Godwin's death put current privacy statutes in America — and around the world — under a shifted scrutiny.

The Bowen Law Group helped break down privacy laws for live-streamers, explaining that live-streaming people in public places is legal, but it is illegal in private spaces like people's homes or doctor's offices.

These laws suggest that in order to begin creating comprehensive laws in regards to live-streaming, the judiciary system must find a way to address something that could not even have been imagined when the current approaches to privacy were developed, according to Stewart and Littau.

The implications of rewriting what is considered "private" and what isn't is a long and convoluted road. Live-streaming, though a relatively new concept in the courts of law, has thus far been considered constitutional as it is protected under the First Amendment. This service, once improved, could potentially be helpful in fighting crime, and therefore should be encouraged but regulated.

As bigger companies like Facebook and Google build and add to live-streaming services, we can expect a more comprehensive regulatory aspect to live-streaming and, ultimately, a useful product rather than just another attention-seeking gimmick.

Letter to the Editor

### The history behind the Hofheimer

"Stunning" was the first thought that came to mind when I walked into the Historic Hofheimer Building.

My eyes were drawn to the wooden architecture, starry lighting and a sign reading, "Please watch your step, I'm old." With tiles scaling the front of the building, exposed beams inside and natural lighting pouring through the skylight, the three-story structure was breathtaking. But as I toured the building and admired its exotic yet modern feel, I began questioning how "historic" it really was.

For example, Peter Chang, an award-winning chef, plans to open a restaurant on the first floor of The Hof this summer with the goal of opening the rooftop for drinks on the weekends and to keep the second floor open as an event space.

"The Hof's ability to create an exotic modern vibe while maintaining the history of the building and land is what ensures a continually successful future for Scott's Addition," said Richmond bartender Bobby Kruger.

The addition of the rooftop has been a huge benefit in the past couple years as rooftop bars have exploded in Richmond. If Hofheimer didn't expand the building to the roof, it would not be accessible today because of the historical preservation laws.

Before the Hofheimer Building was constructed, the land was just one section of the Mayo Family Plantation. Scott's Addition, now the name of the Hof's neighborhood, used to be General Winfield Scott's 600-acre estate in the 1800's, and the majority of its buildings were built in the early 1900's.

General Winfield Scott, born in 1786, was a war hero. He is famously known for his contributions to the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War and his "Anaconda Plan," which helped end the War Between the States. In 1817 he married Elizabeth Mayo and was given a dowry

of 600-acres, which they called "Scott's Addition."

The inherited estate included the Mayo Family Plantation, and the land stayed in Scott's family until the late 1800's. The undeveloped area gained visitors quickly when the Broad Street Station opened in the early 20th century. Soon thereafter, Harold R. Hofheimer established the Hofheimer Rug Cleaning and Storage Company in 1928. As more railroads were built, Richmond continued to develop.

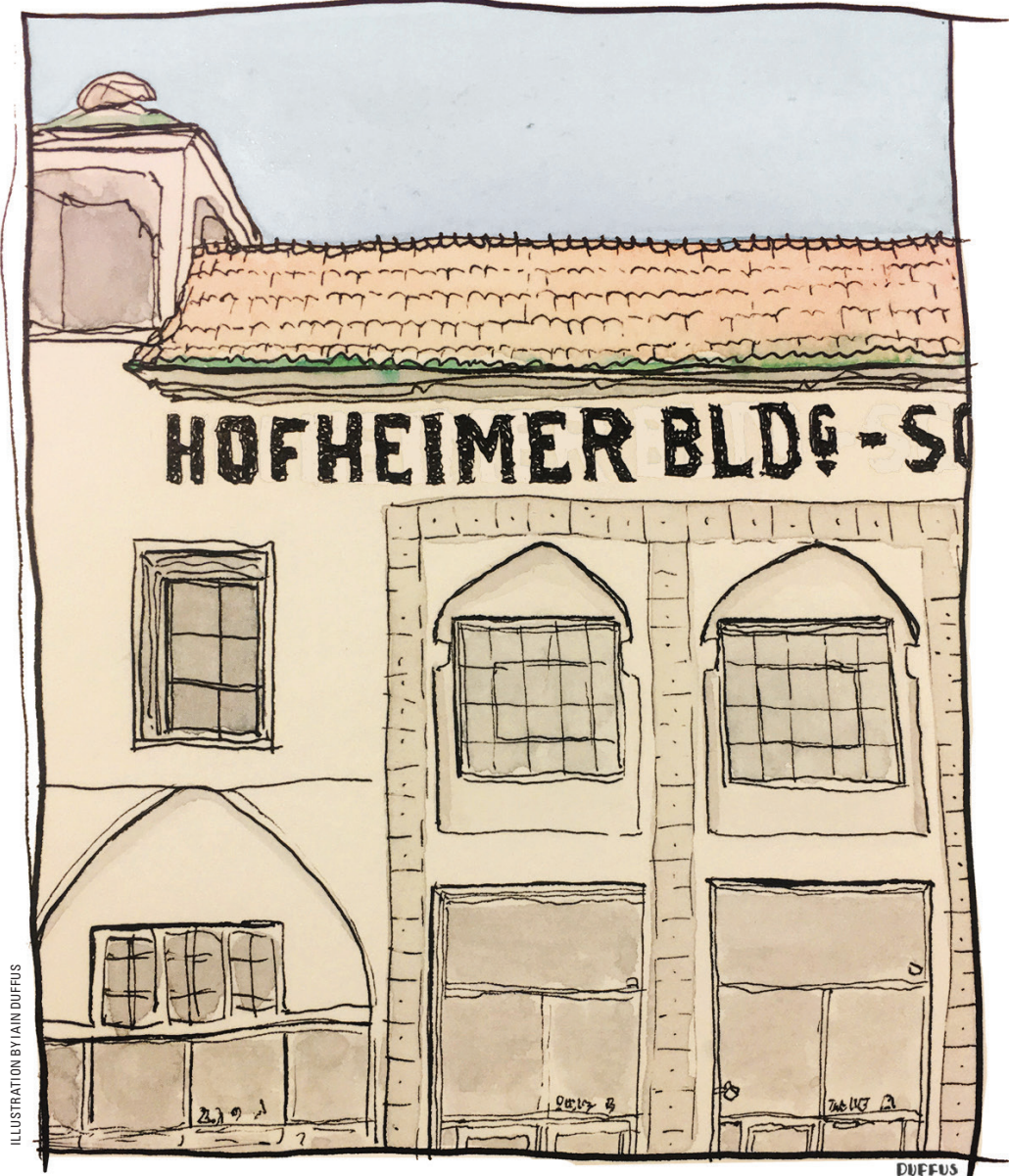
Harold R. Hofheimer built the beautiful Hofheimer Building in 1928. The building was constructed with Middle Eastern inspiration to complement the oriental rugs that were stored and cleaned there. In 1937, it was renovated to include a freight elevator and massive third floor and rooftop for space to let the rugs air dry. This industrial district commonly followed a classical and exotic revival style during this time, which can still be seen in Scott's Addition today.

In 1950, Hofheimer sold the plot to the Rudlin family who instituted Adam's Camera Shop. Around 2007, the father of the Rudlin family passed away and Annie Snipes was contacted to help the family rent out the space.

After a few years, Snipes and her husband, Carter, saw the potential and bought the building in 2015. Annie and Carter now own Snipes Properties and rent out different parts of the building as a pop up art gallery, office, in-the-works restaurant and event space.

"We're allowed to do restorations, but we have to keep it physically and aesthetically similar to how it was when it was originally built," Snipes said.

As a part of the Scott's Addition Historic District, the Hofheimer Building is protected by the National Park Service and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. This means there are limits on renovating the building in order to preserve its history



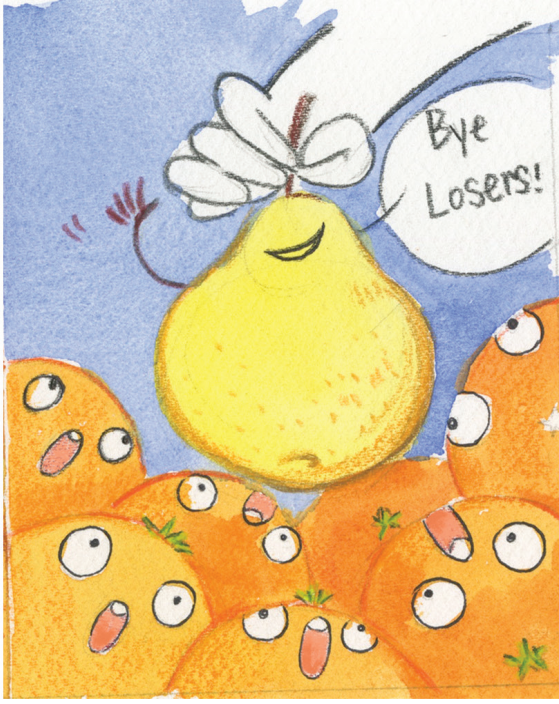
and original structure. The Snipes utilize tax credits on this building and in turn have to abide by state and federal historical building laws.

The Hofheimer Building is a true asset to the Scott's Addition. The National Park Service sees the continuing potential in this neighborhood, along with its location and access, the size, variety and afford-

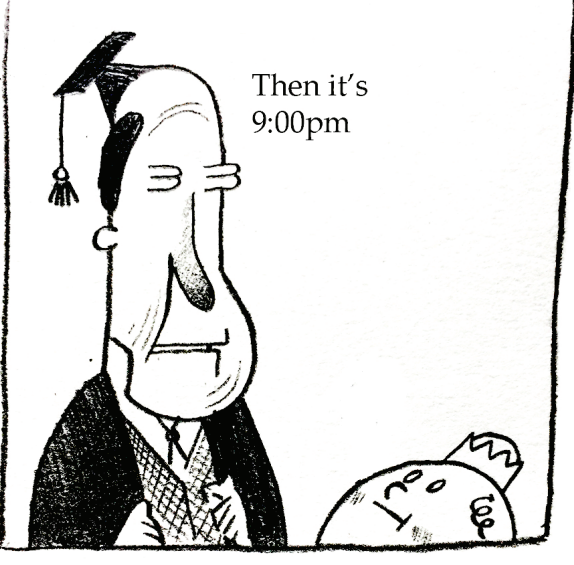
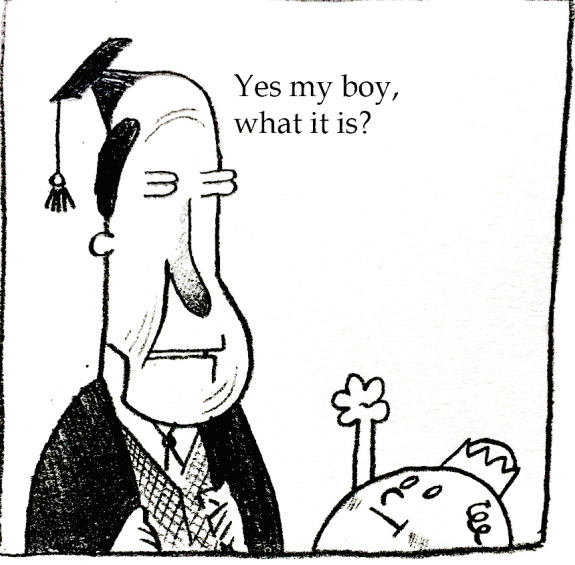
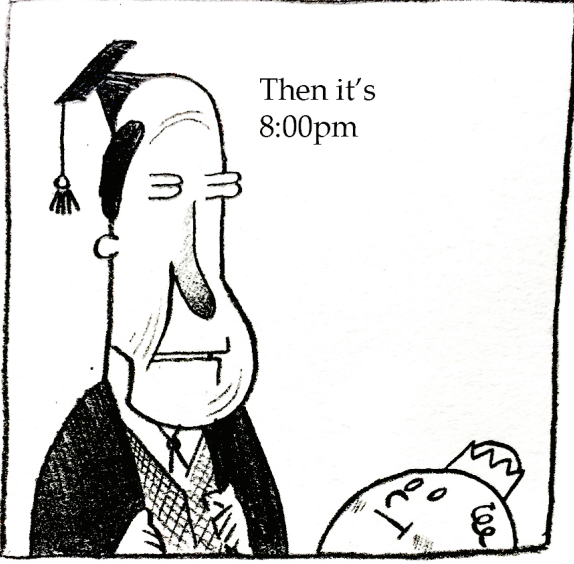
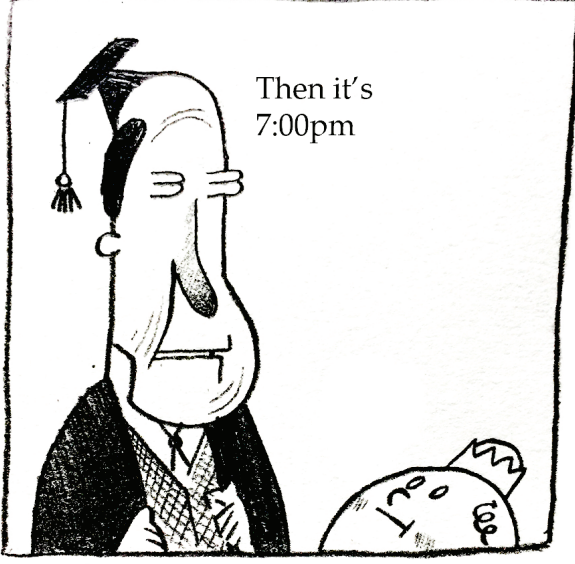
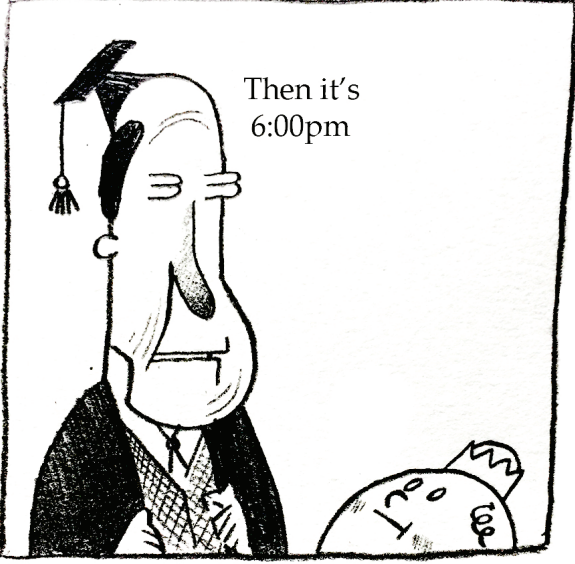
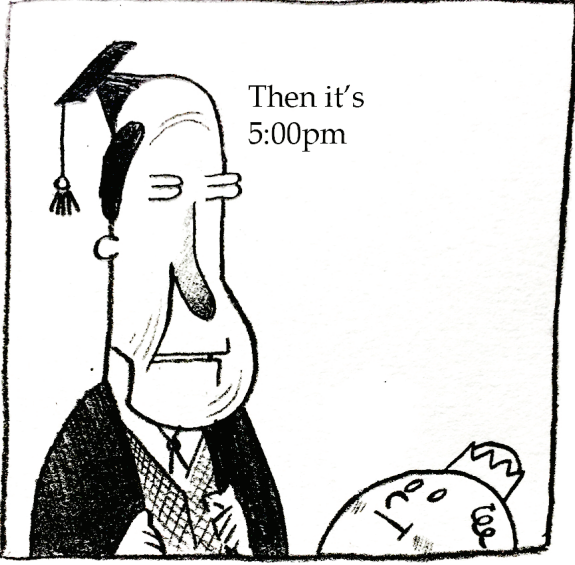
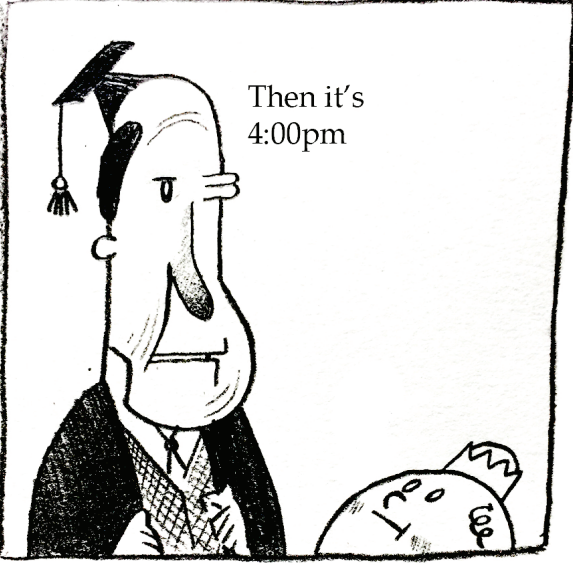
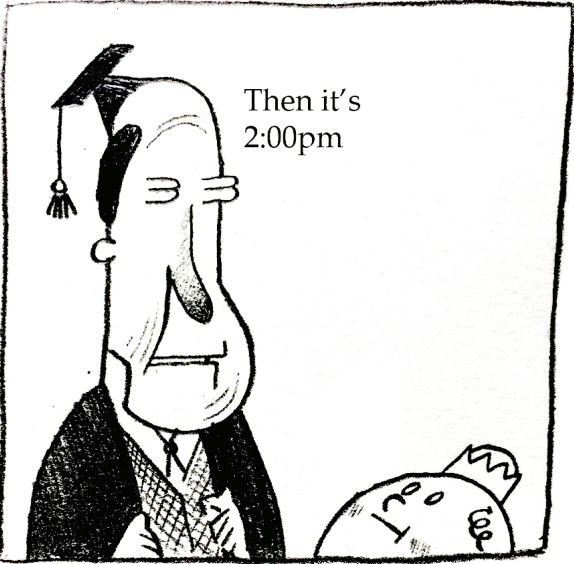
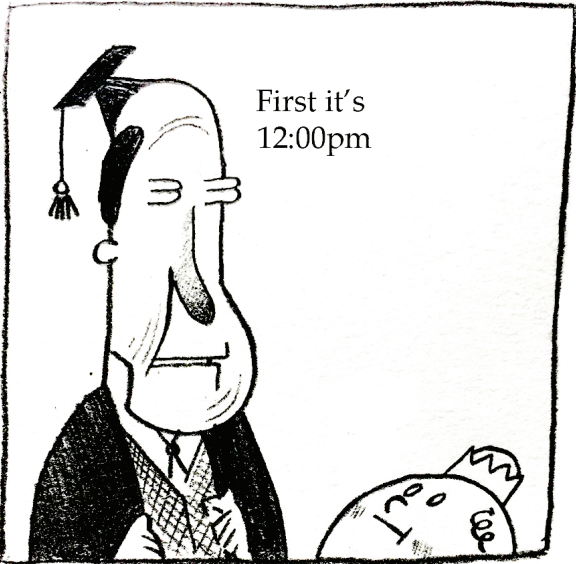
ability of buildings in the area make the district as attractive today for new businesses as it was 50 years ago.

—Shannon Burns

Pear Pressure by Jiaqi Zhou



An Exciting Journey Through Time! by Gareth Bental



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