



Local Richmond bookstore *will no longer sell textbooks* *after 37 years of business*

VARSHA VASUDEVAN
Staff Writer

The Virginia Book Company will no longer sell textbooks to customers, according to general manager Sarah Vaughan.

The store is convenient to the VCU dining hall, library and freshmen dorms, though independent from the university.

VBC has been in the business of selling secondhand and used copies of books to students since 1986, according to Vaughan.

Vaughan said she operates VBC but the owner of the store is actually her father Ernest Mooney, and she took over for him after his retirement 10 years ago.

The trend of most things shifting on-line for convenience is greatly expanding, putting the textbook industry in danger, according to Vaughan.

“Textbooks are actually becoming a thing of the past,” Vaughan said.

Popular textbook publishers said at a trade show she attended that they wanted students purchasing textbooks directly from them instead of stores like VBC, according to Vaughan.

“They told us a while ago they were going to put the used books out of business,” Vaughan said. “They do not want you to have a used book. They do not want to have any alternatives.”

COVID-19 caused students and professors to turn to more online textbook alternatives when they were not able to access physical copies during the pandemic, Vaughan said.

Vaughan said competition between VCU’s official bookstore, Barnes & Noble,

was another discouraging factor for business at VBC.

“It’s [VBC] always been a VCU bookstore,” Vaughan said. “It was an alternative to the on store campus because we were trying to offer affordable solutions.”

VBC employee and 2010 VCU graduate Amanda Lewis said VBC is currently doing a “liquidation sale” where they sell as many textbooks to students as possible. Lewis said after that, VBC will try to sell them back to wholesalers, who handle used books.

Lewis has been working at VBC as a full-time employee since 2011 and was an on and off seasonal temporary employee in college.

Lewis said selling textbooks while there were increasing alternate online versions, was no longer a “profitable business model.”

“I’ve been here for so long and have gotten to know the textbook industry that I knew this day was coming,” Lewis said.

Vaughan said VBC will now be shifting focus into selling VCU merchandise and common school supplies.

“More than half the business is gone,” Vaughan said. “So yeah, it’s going to change significantly how we look at things.”

Vaughan said decisions about staffing needs and extra space in the store are yet to be made.

Lewis said one of the most important things VBC is yet to do is reevaluate the organization of the retail space.

Lewis handles online orders to VBC and said her role as an employee will adapt to VBC’s new focus on merchandise.

“We definitely get a lot of online orders for merchandise, gear and apparel,”

Lewis said. “But I’ll probably take a more active role in doing some of the merchandising displays.”

VBC employee and sophomore political science student at VCU John Scharetg said he believes students should still have access to secondhand textbooks because it is more “financially plausible.”

“I think it’s a little outrageous that our tuitions are being raised every single year, and yet we can’t get books for any cheaper,” Scharetg said. “The fact that VCU doesn’t want to help VBC at all is kind of funny to me.”

Although most of VBC’s sales come from merchandise, providing cheaper textbook options was what it was known for, according to Scharetg.

“I think that there will be complaints about it, but overall, it is what it is,” Scharetg said. “I don’t think it’ll be the end of the world, but it does suck that it’s happening.”

VCU sophomore philosophy of law and political science student Ramsey Cooper said VBC’s decision to no longer sell textbooks will make textbooks “less accessible” to students.

“Especially in college, we don’t really have the money to spend on brand new books,” Cooper said.

Senior psychology student Hiba Nakhlawi said she has rented textbooks from VBC in the past and found the store convenient with friendly employees, books and supplies always in stock.

“I remember going there freshman year with my parents and picking out merch and stuff,” Nakhlawi said. “It feels like a staple of VCU, so it’s kind of weird to see it go.”

Stories of the week

NATIONAL: President Joe Biden will end COVID-19 emergencies on May 11.

INTERNATIONAL: Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva called for emergency action to protect indigenous Yanomami people amid hunger crisis.

Richmond ranked fourth on list of ‘loneliest cities’ by Chamber of Commerce

JACK GLAGOLA
Contributing Writer

Topping the “loneliest cities” list are Washington, D.C., St. Louis, Missouri, and Alexandria, Virginia, followed by Richmond.

The list ranks these cities by the total number of “lonely” people. Someone is defined as “lonely” if they are living in a one-person household, according to the Chamber of Commerce.

28% of females and over 18% of males in Richmond live alone — altogether, 46.2% of Richmond’s residents, according to Census data published by the Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber of Commerce analyzed over 170 places designated by the Census with a population of at least 150,000, according to the study. Richmond City resident, Kate Berinhout, said she is not originally from Richmond, but moved here because of the demographics and size.

“I like to be able to go home and have my own space. I like to be able to control whether or not I have people there,” Berinhout said. “Alone time is really important to me.”

Lower housing costs are a draw, especially for Northern Virginia residents, who have come to the Richmond area in increasing numbers, according to Axios.

Richmond has the fifth-highest percentage of renters seeking to move here from other places, according to a Apartment List study.

Chris Purvis, an engineer at Civica Rx, said his experience in college was the reason he lives alone.

“I had lived with roommates all through college, for seven or eight years, and just wanted to not have random roommates,” Purvis said.

Purvis is also not originally from Richmond, having come here from Charlottesville to live closer to his girlfriend.

Collin Czarnecki, a researcher at the Chamber of Commerce, said that the pandemic was one of the reasons the study was put together.

“We are sort of seeing a big change in migration patterns, people moving to a new

town or city. The pandemic has also seen an increase in flexibility with work — a lot of people are able to work remotely now,” Czarnecki said.

Migration and the disruption of the pandemic are not the only drivers of living alone. Since the 1990s, the median age to get married has increased, currently at 30 years old for men and 28 years old for women, according to Czarnecki.

“I think marriage plays another factor in terms of living situations, living environments, how people are choosing to live and who they’re choosing to live with,” Czarnecki said. “This is why we wanted to look at, over the past several years, has living alone seen an increase due to the pandemic and factors such as putting off marriage at a later age?”

The data could be a good way to examine the long-term effects of the pandemic, whether it only reflects changes resulting from the pandemic or is indicative of a larger trend of more people living alone, according to Czarnecki.

Living in a one-person household does not necessarily mean one is socially alone, but more research is needed to determine a correlation, according to Czarnecki.

“Obviously, you could have lots of friends and just choose to live alone,” Czarnecki said. “Does living alone really correlate with being emotionally lonely?”

There was no geographic trend in the prevalence of men versus women living alone, according to Czarnecki.

“We didn’t specifically look at the reasons why males and females might choose to live alone. But, going back to the median age to marry, for females it is slightly lower than males. There would be more females living with a spouse,” Czarnecki said.

A quarter of women and over a fifth of men in Washington, D.C. live alone, according to the Chamber of Commerce.

“The metro D.C. area, including some of those cities in Virginia, are pretty transient. People either work in D.C. and live outside the area, or come from time to time throughout the year. Just knowing that a lot of people live in and out of the city, it isn’t too surprising,” Czarnecki said.

While the study did not look at age demographics, Czarnecki said it was worth examining how Baby Boomers, those born between 1946-1964; Millennials, those born between 1981-1996; and Generation Z, those born between 1997-2012, compare.

Czarnecki said a follow-up study was possible in the coming years as more Census Bureau estimates come out to determine whether this is an effect of the pandemic or a longer-lived trend.



Illustration by Kirsten Sturgill

Project ADAM Heart Safe School Program Checklist

- 1. AED equipment location makes it possible to retrieve an AED.
- 2. AED has clear signage.
- 3. The AED is checked for performance readiness at least monthly.
- 4. First responder kit near or attached to the AED.
- 5. A CPR-AED Site Coordinator is identified.
- 6. There is a designated Cardiac Emergency Response Team.
- 7. CERP that is reviewed annually.
- 8. Have a cardiac emergency communication code to notify responders.
- 9. Local emergency medical services have been notified of the CPR-AED program.
- 10. CERP has been shared with any outside groups and organizations who utilize the school's facility.
- 11. CPR-AED training for the Cardiac Emergency Response Team is updated at least every two years.
- 12. All faculty and staff know where the AED are located and how to access them.
- 13. All faculty and staff have annual education on sudden cardiac arrest awareness.
- 14. Conduct at least one annual cardiac emergency response drill.

VCU Health joins Project ADAM to help schools become ‘heart-safe’

KATIE FARTHING
Contributing Writer

The Children’s Hospital of Richmond at VCU has become the first Project ADAM — Automated Defibrillation in Adam’s Memory — partner in the state, according to the CHoR website.

Project ADAM is currently active in 29 states, with affiliations in progress in four states and Washington, D.C., according to their website.

Project ADAM was founded in 1999 after the death of 17-year-old Adam Lemel. Lemel suffered from a sudden cardiac arrest and died while playing basketball, according to its website. Lemel’s parents and Children’s Wisconsin Pediatric Hospital combined efforts to honor Lemel.

Project ADAM has saved over 200 lives throughout the country, according to Dr. John Phillips, the medical director of the CHoR affiliation of Project ADAM.

CHoR became an official affiliate in November 2022 and is hoping to designate the first “heart-safe” school in Virginia within the next three to six months, according to Phillips.

“It is very rare for these events to happen, but when they do happen, obviously it’s devastating to the family, but it’s also devastating to the school and to the community,” Phillips said. “So if we

can put a little time and effort into being prepared for the events, then that will make a difference.”

Anywhere from one to 8.3 children out of 100,000 per year are affected by a sudden cardiac arrest. The likelihood of surviving a sudden cardiac arrest outside of a hospital in an area with no sudden cardiac arrest awareness plan is only about 10%, according to Phillips.

“What we’re shooting for is making that number, that percentage of survival, even greater,” Phillips said.

Anyone can get the program started at their local school, including faculty, students and parents, according to Phillips.

To be deemed “heart-safe,” schools must meet 14 criteria. This includes ensuring schools have the proper equipment, like automated external defibrillators, or AEDS, proper CPR training and education and that they pass a sudden cardiac arrest drill, according to Phillips.

The process is fairly easy, according to Kelsey Schaefer, an athletic trainer at Matoaca High School.

“It just takes a little bit of work, which I think everybody’s capable of doing,” Schaefer said. “I do think that the schools will be very on board with it when they realize the benefits of the program.”

CHoR has the resources to help schools come up with a plan to be “heart-safe”, according to Lexi Stevens, the program coordinator for Project ADAM at CHoR.

“There is no barrier that we can’t get past getting towards the 14 requirements.” Stevens said.

Project ADAM aims to have about five to 10 faculty and staff members that know how to respond to a sudden cardiac arrest code, according to Stevens.

“It can be anybody. It can be somebody who works in the cafeteria. It can be the math teacher, it could be one of the athletic trainers, any group of people, even students that want to be involved in the program,” Stevens said.

They are working towards every school becoming “heart-safe,” according to Stevens.

“We’re just trying to make a safer and happier and healthier Virginia,” Stevens said.

Project ADAM recently released a statement regarding NFL player Damar Hamlin’s sudden cardiac arrest and repeated the desire for every area that youth gather to have cardiac emergency action in place.

“This approach can, and will, continue to help save lives as was so beautifully demonstrated on the football field in Cincinnati,” according to the press release.

Those interested in becoming “heart-safe” or learning more about Project ADAM can contact Dr. John Phillips at john.phillips@vcuhealth.org or Lexi Stevens at Alexis.Stevens@vcuhealth.org or visit the Project ADAM website.

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CT Sports

St. Bonaventure ends VCU's winning streak, 61-58

BERSABEH KEMAW
Contributing Writer

The St. Bonaventure Bonnies defeated VCU after a close back and forth battle that ended the Rams six-game winning streak.

This loss for the Rams resulted in them falling to second in the Atlantic 10 conference, according to Fox Sports.

VCU junior point guard Adrian “Ace” Baldwin Jr. led the team in scoring 15 points and six assists. VCU sophomore forward Jalen DeLoach had a double-double with 12 points and 12 rebounds, according to Statbroadcast.

VCU won the jump off but struggled to make a point with a missed jumper by sophomore guard Jayden Nunn.

DeLoach then secured a layup, putting up the first point of the game on the board after both teams were unsuccessful in doing so within the first two minutes of the game, according to Statbroadcast.

The Bonnies responded with a three point jumper, but the black and gold quickly fired back and went on a 7-0 run, their largest in the game, making the score 9-3 at the 13-minute mark.

Although the black and gold had free throw opportunities throughout the game, they ended with 56% at the free-throw line,

which is 23% less than their recent game versus the George Mason Patriots, according to Statbroadcast.

After the Rams turned the ball over with a few seconds left on the clock, St. Bonaventure freshman forward Barry Evans ended the first half with a buzzer beater layup. Nonetheless, VCU remained in the lead, entering into halftime at 23-18.

Upon their return, both teams put up a fight resulting in a few fouls and missed throws.

VCU graduate student forward Brandon Johns Jr. went to the free throw and successfully completed both and put up the first points for the second half. Johns later scored after a turnover, making the score 27-18, according to Statbroadcast.

The Bonnies had their first lead of the entire night at the 13-minute mark of the second half after redshirt sophomore forward Chad Venning drove into the paint, making a layup that put the game at 36-35.

The black and gold and the Bonnies went shot for shot after the lead was taken. The Rams then went on a 6-0 run to try and get the lead back.

As the ball was in VCU's possession, the crowd began to roar and cheer, loudly chanting “V-C-U!”

VCU sophomore guard Nick Kern Jr.

then went into the paint, making a layup that put the Rams back in the lead, making the score 43-41.

Unfortunately, the Bonnies took back the lead at the three-minute mark and kept the lead until the final seconds on the clock winded down.

VCU junior guard Zeb Jackson said the team had a lot of defensive breakdowns during the game.

“A lot of stuff that we practiced on we didn't really do today,” Jackson said. “We didn't convert on the defensive end like we wanted to.”

During the second half, the Rams got into some foul trouble, however Jackson said they take accountability for the outcome of the game, regardless of the calls that were being made.

“It was everything that we did,” Jackson said. “There's no way refs should be in the equation for who wins the game.”

DeLoach said they will refocus for the next game, as they are set to face St. Louis University this week, which are both away games.

“We're going to practice harder than we ever have,” DeLoach said.

VCU men's basketball head coach Mike Rhoades said the team didn't do enough to win the game.

Stat of the week

VCU senior Gordon Smith was named Atlantic 10 Field Performer of the Week, according to VCU Athletics.



“When it's a close game, everything counts,” Rhoades said.

Rhoades also said the team didn't have a good practice the day before their match up, but moving forward in practice, they will work on balance in the post.

“There's a lot of good basketball left in these guys,” Rhoades said.

The Rams will play against the St. Louis Billikens on Feb. 3 at 7 p.m., at the Chaifetz Arena.

Top: VCU redshirt sophomore guard Jamir Watkins drives to the basket in a game against St. Bonaventure.

Bottom: VCU graduate forward Brandon Johns Jr. elevates for a dunk in a game against St. Bonaventure.
Photos by Alessandro Latour

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**RICHMOND
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All-male practice team helps women’s basketball at VCU

BERSABEH KEMAW
Contributing Writer

The all-male practice team at VCU, also known as The Squad, helps the women’s basketball team during practices.

Although The Squad are not Division I players themselves, they are a huge part of the program and show up everyday to help the team and players get better, according to VCU women’s basketball head coach Beth O’Boyle.

“It gives us an advantage,” O’Boyle said. “They can run their offense and their defense and really help our players build confidence of what the game plan is.”

Most guys are bigger, faster and stronger, so having an all-male practice team allows for the players to compete against high level athletes everyday, which helps them get better overall, according to O’Boyle.

The practice team has been present since O’Boyle took the job nine years ago, she said.

“There was a little break while we were in COVID with all of the protocols,” O’Boyle said. “But we have always utilized the male practice team since I’ve been here.”

Along with being great players, the practice team is filled with great students who are pursuing a variety of careers while also dedicating their time to help the team, according to O’Boyle.

Paul Akilo, the team’s junior small forward and health, physical education and exercise sciences student, stated that being a part of The Squad has helped him improve

his own basketball skills.

“When I go shoot, I’m a lot more confident in the gym,” Akilo stated. “It helps me expand my game.”

The Squad has positive impacts on the team, such as pushing them everyday to work harder, which benefits them for their games, according to Akilo.



Practice player Da’Ron Stuvaints drives to the basket. Photo by Guy Enkh

“Our strength and speed makes them push themselves more,” Akilo stated.

Jovannie Arroyo, the team’s point guard and health, physical education and exercise sciences student, said if the player is a driver, they will drive, if she’s a shooter, they will shoot. It’s kind of like a cheat sheet

“Let’s say we’re playing George Mason, we would act like we’re the girl players,” Arroyo said. “We’ll study them and then we’ll act like them.”

The Squad also plays in-game scrimmages with the team, according to Arroyo.

“We also sometimes do cone work,” Arroyo said. “So instead of having a cone, you

“Sometimes you’ll play against more athletic males than you would females,” Arroyo said. “If you can do that against them, it’ll make it easier in the game.”

To be part of The Squad, there is a two-day try out process in the beginning of the year, where prospective members try out in front of both the coaches and players, according to Arroyo.

Although there are tryouts, if not many people show up, The Squad will scout people from VCU Cary Street Gym and bring them in, according to Arroyo.

Members of The Squad do receive benefits for their participation, according to Arroyo.

“You get gear, they feed you after practice and you get to watch the games courtside,” Arroyo said. “If you’re a major like me [HPEX] you could get internships, shadow the personal trainers here and get a good recommendation.”

Balancing school along with being a member depends on the player as well as their schedule, according to Arroyo.

“A good thing that they [the program] do is they allow early registration if you’re part of the team,” Arroyo said. “They’ll let you pick your schedule around the practice ... You’re not required to show up [to practice] so it’s not like you’re in trouble if you don’t.”

The Squad is open to all-male VCU students and it is a fun experience, according to Arroyo.

“I recommend it for a lot of people,” Arroyo said.

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VCU women’s basketball snaps its three-game losing streak against Loyola Chicago, 60-50

THAILON WILSON
Staff Writer

VCU came into the game against Loyola University Chicago on a three-game losing streak and after the final whistle, it came to an end, as the Rams prevailed 60-50.

The first quarter started with both teams stepping up defensively and limiting each other to only scoring one field goal for the first two minutes, giving the Loyola University Chicago Ramblers an early 3-2 lead.

The defensive matchup continued to heat up until VCU sophomore guard Grace Hutson went on a personal five-point run to give the Rams an 8-5 lead with five minutes remaining in the first quarter.

VCU women’s basketball head coach Beth O’Boyle said she was happy to see the ball movement leading to scoring opportunities.

“It was great to see us moving the ball the way that we did. Unselfish plays is a good piece of our team,” O’Boyle said.

This momentum helped them offensively, but it also helped the Rams defensively. The black and gold held the Ramblers zero points from the seven-minute mark until there was 48 seconds left in the quarter.

After another 6-2 run, the black and gold ended the first quarter with a 14-7 lead.

The second quarter started off with the Ramblers and the Rams going back and forth for the first four minutes of

play, but the Rams kept a 19-14 lead.

The back and forth scoring output continued for both teams, but VCU maintained its 21-16 lead with four minutes left in the half.

VCU freshman guard Timaya Lewis-Eutsey scored six points in the last three minutes to help

maintain a 31-25 lead for the black and gold to end the half.

At halftime, VCU brought out alumni from past teams to the middle of the court, where each player received a standing ovation for their contributions to the program.

O’Boyle said it was great to be able to represent in front of so many alumni who once played for the Rams.

“There’s such a great history of women’s basketball here at VCU,” O’Boyle said. “These former players laid the foundation for us and it was exciting to be able to earn the win in front of them.”

After the standing ovation and some rest time, the third quarter came underway with Loyola Chicago bringing the ball up the court.

The Ramblers scored the first seven points of the third quarter, which eliminated VCU’s lead and tied the game at 31-31 after a three pointer by Loyola Chicago senior guard Anna Brown with eight minutes left.

The black and gold went on to go on a 7-3 run to give the black and gold a four-point lead heading into the media timeout with four minutes left in the third quarter.

The Rams built their lead to 46-38 after some inside looks from VCU junior forward Chloe Bloom to end off the quarter.

Bloom’s inside presence led her to score her career high 19 points this game, according to VCU Athletics.

Bloom said the Rams designed plays to get her open inside to give her good looks in the paint.

“That was our game plan. I could keep attacking the paint and they kept passing it in,” Bloom said.

VCU started off the fourth quarter in similar fashion, where they went to Bloom, who scored the first bucket of the quarter with a layup to increase the Rams lead to 48-38.

The Rams went on a 6-0 run which increased their lead to 54-40 with six minutes remaining in the game.

The Ramblers attempted to etch away at the VCU lead, but the black and gold maintained a 56-44 lead going into the final media timeout of the game.

Loyola Chicago tried to cut the lead down with seconds left, but VCU outlasted the Ramblers and won, 60-50.

VCU will be hosting the La Salle University Explorers here at the Stuart C. Siegel Center for Education Day on Wednesday, Feb. 1. For ticket information visit vcuathletics.com. The game will be televised on ESPN+.

Stats:

VCU’s Grace Hutson went on a personal 5-0 run in the first quarter to get the Rams in the groove.

The black and gold went on a 6-0 run to extend the lead to its biggest for the Rams to 54-40 with six minutes left.

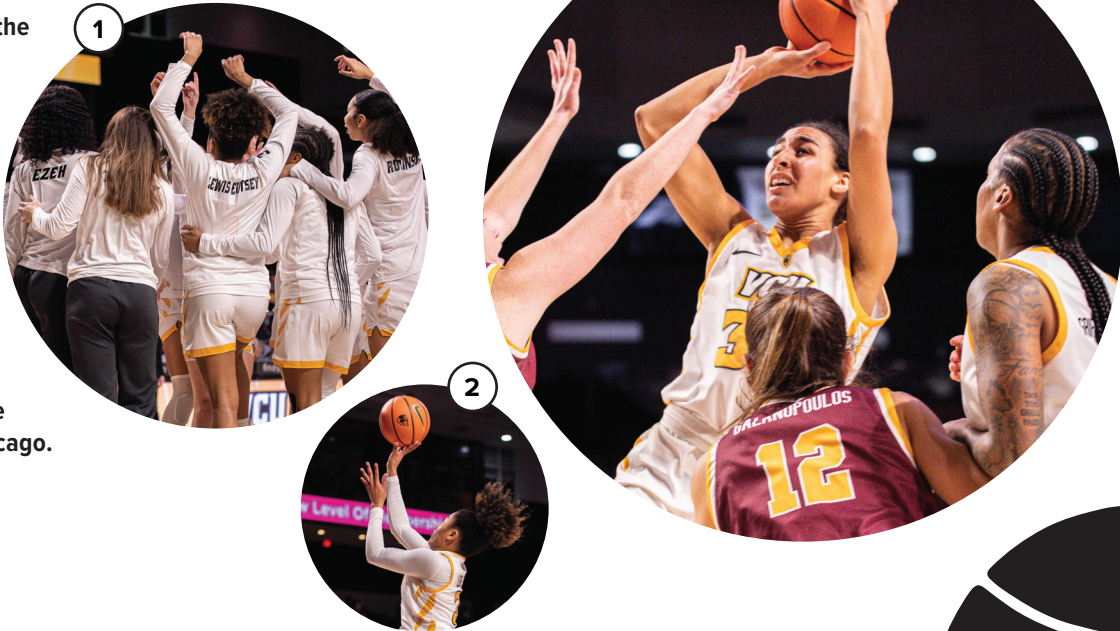
VCU shot 77.9% from the charity stripe.

Chloe Bloom scored a career high 19 points.

1. VCU players gather before the game against Loyola University Chicago.

2. VCU freshmen guard Timaya Lewis-Eutsey looks to make a layup during a game against Loyola University Chicago.

3. VCU senior forward Mykel Parham shoots the ball over defenders during a game against Loyola University Chicago. Photos by Kaitlyn Fulmore



GAME RESULTS

JANUARY 25

MEN’S BASKETBALL - VS. GEORGE MASON
WON 72-52

JANUARY 26

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL - AT UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
LOST 83-57

JANUARY 28

WOMEN’S TENNIS - AT NO. 6 DUKE
LOST 4-0
ITA Kicko Weekend
Durham, N.C.

MEN’S TENNIS - AT NORTH CAROLINA STATE
LOST 4-0
ITA Kickoff Weekend
Columbia, S.C.

MEN’S BASKETBALL - VS. ST. BONAVENTURE
LOST 61-58

JANUARY 29

WOMEN’S TENNIS - AT SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVSERITY
LOST 4-0
ITA Kickoff Weekend
Durham, N.C.

MEN’S TENNIS - UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
WON 4-3
ITA Kickoff Weekend
Columbia, S.C.

Sports’ pick of the week

MARCUS WILSON
Contributing Writer

For this week’s pick, we’re going to the NBA as the Dallas Mavericks square off against the Golden State Warriors at the Chase Center in San Francisco, California on Feb. 4.

The Mavericks currently have a winning record as they come off an on-the-road win against the Phoenix Suns, while the Warriors hold a neutral record at 27 wins and 25 losses.

With star player Luka Dončić out for the game with a sprained ankle, it almost called doom for Dallas, but as players such as

guard Spencer Dinwiddie step up, it gives hope for a spectacular season, according to the NBA.

The win against Phoenix on Jan. 27 was not only a convincing win, but also helped give the Mavericks hope knowing they can perform with Dončić.

With the help of a season-high 36 points from Dinwiddie, the Mavs battled to a tough 99-95 victory over the Suns. The Mavs are also missing forward Christian Wood, their second-leading scorer. Wood missed his fourth consecutive game due to a fractured left thumb, and it was a remarkable victory, to put it mildly.

Dončić made his return on Jan. 30 against the pistons to drop a whopping 53 points to lead the mavericks to a victory.

The Mavericks will continue their winning season by taking the win on the road in San Francisco. The mix of doubt from sources and the adversity that was overcome without key players gives the Mavericks the upper hand they’ll need to come out with this win.



PEGGY STANSBERRY
Staff Writer

"It started as a group of friends just riding bikes during the pandemic just trying to get out of the house, have some fun and not really worry about anything," said Zach Bazemore, a founder and social media co-ordinator for Broad Street Bullies. "Now it's one of the biggest rides."

Hundreds of bikers fill the streets every other Sunday for the Broad Street Bullies ride, oftentimes impeding traffic.

These rides occur weekly on Thursdays from March to November, according to Bazemore.

Bazemore said he and his friends had observed big bike cultures in other cities and wanted to help grow the culture in Richmond.

As wheelie enthusiasts, they noticed that while Richmond offered a variety of bike groups, it lacked a wheelie-based ride. Wanting to bring that aspect of bike culture to Richmond, they created the Broad Street Bullies, Bazemore said.

The Broad Street Bullies started in 2020 but "really took off" in 2022, according to Bazemore. Since then there have been around 300 people at every ride.

Bazemore said when they started the Broad Street Bullies, they were trying to make the streets safer for bikers and he has seen it affecting Richmond's bike culture. He said he knows people who started to ride bikes because of the group.

"It has definitely impacted biking in Richmond a lot," Bazemore said. "Seeing 300 people biking on the streets every week makes people pay attention to bikers more. I think people are a lot more comfortable riding the street now than before we started."

Bazemore said that after every ride, the Broad Street Bullies receive negative feedback on Reddit.

'A SOCIAL MOVEMENT': *Richmond Bike group claims the road*

Complainers on Reddit have described the Broad Street Bullies as "reckless," "dangerous," "inconvenient" and "lawless," according to a Richmond Reddit thread.

"We joke about it, but we don't really pay attention to it," Bazemore said. "Because we are riding by and we will be by you in four to five minutes, you can wait your turn."

Masha Timina, who rides with and organizes for Recess 4Ever, a bike group for and by queer people, said she has experienced this backlash.

"I have myself experienced the Richmond road rage," Timina said. "While there are bike-inclusive areas where the cyclist symbol is drawn on the asphalt, if the street has two lanes and the integrated bike lane is fully occupied by a group of cyclists, cars will merge without blinkers in frustration, therefore causing traffic buildup, further aggression and reckless driving."



Timina said this will often include "cyclist slander" where the driver complains they were late because of a cyclist in the street, seen in the Reddit comments directed towards the Broad Street Bullies.

"The Bullies do like to play around on urban infrastructure, but they are not what makes driving dangerous," Timina said.

The "overwhelming" car-centric design of the city forces the Broad Street Bullies to take "extreme measures," such as blocking intersections to stop oncoming traffic to ensure the group's safety, Timina said.

"The Bullies are an enormous group of riders that own up to their name, and physically take back streets from cars," Timina said. "They interrupt the hustle and bustle of daily mindless life with an enjoyable hobby that simultaneously highlights important issues about pedestrian dignity and car-centric city planning."

Groups like Recess 4Ever and the Broad Street Bullies help carve out spaces for cyclists to exist in the city, Timina said.

VCU professor of urban planning and public policy Niraj Verma considers the Broad Street Bullies an example of "the new resistance," which is a movement that uses the internet to organize but takes place on city streets.

"From what I have seen, they are like, 'I don't care about the rules, I can ride whatever way I want on the street,'" Verma said. "A way of asserting or reclaiming privilege on the street."

The Broad Street Bullies used to be the name of a hockey team who played "really rough" and "mean," and used any method possible to win, according to Verma.

"In that way this label is almost like, 'we are tough guys and this is what we do,'" Verma said.

Verma said he is curious to see if it evolves to be a social movement and if it could develop into something else if it becomes a traffic and law enforcement issue.

"When I say a social movement, that means it will change the culture," Verma said. "I think that's their hope, but is this the method to do this?"

When comparing the Broad Street Bullies to Richmond hosting the 2015 UCI Road World Championships, Verma said he thinks the Broad Street Bullies will have more "success" in bringing attention to biking because it's a "low-cost, self energized" movement.

"I have seen them riding, they are like 'this is what we do. Your rules were not made equitably and were made to privilege cars and we will not buy into that,'" Verma said. "That is why I think it is quite reasonable to not think of it just as a leisure activity but as a protest."

'AWKWARD SEX... AND THE CITY': *Sex-positive comedy show coming to Richmond*

EMILY RICHARDSON
Staff Writer

New York City-based comedy show "Awkward Sex... and the City" is coming to Richmond as part of its current tour, with comedians bringing their recollections of awkward and retrospectively hilarious romantic and sexual encounters to the Firehouse Theatre on Feb. 16.

"Awkward Sex..." throws the typically taboo subject into the spotlight, featuring a number of experienced storytellers looking to make those who have had their own sexual misadventures feel seen and heard, according to its website.

The show is part of Firehouse Theatre's "Firehouse Fringe" series, which highlights various unconventional or experimental performances, according to Joel Bassin, Firehouse's producing artistic director.

"We're a platform for artists to try stuff," Bassin said. "We're very open to whatever an artist comes up with because we want to be a platform for the art."

Firehouse is excited to be introducing the show to the Richmond audience because of how universal the theme is, Bassin said.

"Many of us have been in the position of having awkward sex or dealing with



Natalie Wall poses in a sex shop. Photo courtesy of Natalie Wall

those difficult moments that are both intimate and deeply personal, and we're learning how to navigate through them," Bassin said. "I think Natalie and her gang have tapped into something that there's an audience for."

Natalie Wall, creator and producer of "Awkward Sex..." hails from Stafford. Wall said she needed a creative outlet after graduating from James Madison University in 2010. "Awkward Sex..." began as a blog while she was working retail in Fredericksburg.

"It really resonated with people," Wall said. "Once I was able to get up to New York the next year, I finally got the courage after a year of living in the city to try it out as a live show. Once it was a live show, I never looked back."

The show is now performed monthly in New York City and tours nationwide — in the current tour, comedians are hitting Seattle, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. and more, according to its website — which Wall said she appreciates as New York is rich with performances and shows.

"When I lived in Virginia, I felt like there wasn't a show where people could experience these very vulnerable but very funny stories about something so universal to them, like sex and how weird and awkward it can be," Wall said.

Wall said she wants audiences to know they're not alone in their awkward sexual encounters, but at the end of the day, there's no such thing as awkward sex as long as it's safe and legal.

"As long as you're having a good time, even if you're queefing, even if your limbs are moving in ways you don't want them to, even if you fall off wherever you're doing it," Wall said. "As long as you're having a good time, that's all that matters."

Wall and three other storytellers are featured in the show, each with their own stories about awkward sexual encounters, dating experiences or relationships.

"No one's stories are similar, and no one's vibe on stage are similar. Most of us are pretty high-energy, but you're going to

go on a different journey with each of us and you're going to fall in love with all of us individually," Wall said.

Calvin Cato, one of the show performers, is a New York-based standup comedian and storyteller. Cato said he and Wall met approximately 10 years ago and he loved the idea of "Awkward Sex..."

"As someone who has definitely gone on a fair share of dates that have ended very awkwardly, I was very on board with the concept of it," Cato said.

Cato said something especially important about the show is that all of the stories are told by people who are sex-positive.

"It helps other people feel comfortable about their own awkward sexual encounters, and it's also very anti-slut-shaming," Cato said. "A lot of it is about being very sex-positive and understanding that sex is a natural thing that happens. Faux pas and foibles are going to occur from it, for sure."

Cato said one of his past stories involved going on a date with a guy who turned out to be a hoarder, and having to navigate through his apartment to get to his bed.

"I hope people can come to this show and take away the sense that they should never feel embarrassed about anything that they've ever done," Cato said. "Because trust us — we've done far worse."

Tickets to the show are \$10 in advance or \$15 the day of and can be purchased online.

NATALIE BARR
Staff Writer

THREE VCU BLACK STUDENT LEADERS are taking charge of Black History Month by celebrating Black identity. Sydney Wilson, Black Art Student Empowerment president; Eli Brown, Creative Production Collective head curator; and Taya Coates, Black in Fashion president, collaborated and created Black Fidelity — a project focused on empowering Black voices inspired by the themes of Afrorealism and Afrofuturism.

Black Fidelity is a month-long series of six events showcasing the Black experience using different forms of art, according to Black Fidelity’s Instagram post.

Wilson said Black History Month often focuses on the suffering Black people faced, but never focused on what the community accomplished or what the future could hold for the Black community — she wants to change the narrative, she said.

“We really wanted to bring together these events to give people the opportunity to express themselves as much as possible, whether that’s a panel discussion or an exhibition,” Wilson said. “Everyone has a different way they perceive things and that’s really exciting, so just giving people a platform and a safe space to share that voice and be celebrated.”

The series will consist of an opening gala at The Anderson Gallery on Feb. 1, a closing gala and fashion show on Feb. 25, and more events throughout the month, according to Black Fidelity’s Instagram.

Brown had a vision last spring of hosting an event at The Anderson and knew they wanted to collaborate with BASE, they said. Brown felt they could not do a fashion-related event centered around Black people without Black in Fashion and reached out to Coates to be a part of the vision, they said. The three came together in August and began planning this series, Brown said.

“It’s been many months since we’ve

been developing this,” Brown said. “We’re so happy that it’s coming to fruition, for sure.”

The three student leaders feel there is often not enough representation focused on Black students at the university, they said. Many of the events are focused between two organizations but not well promoted before the event takes place, Coates said.

“We wanted to collab and bring together all of our resources, all of our members, our friends and really make a statement and say, ‘hey, you know what, let’s work together and let’s do this right,’” Coates said.

Coates said she understands what it is like the first time an artist has their work seen and how treasured it is for artists. She wants to provide Black creatives on campus with a platform to showcase their work, she said.

“Giving that [platform] to people who may have not had that before, as well as just helping people be aware of Black art and

know it’s not just on Instagram,” Coates said. “You have Black artists around you can support everyday, so get to know them as well,” Coates said.

The opening night gala will feature about 30 VCU students from a variety of different majors and will showcase the Black experience through personal art, Brown said. They hope people will reflect on the pieces, feel inspired and feel accepted, they said. The three creators wanted the gala to be a formal event to celebrate being Black, Brown said.

“Black is beautiful. Being Black is beautiful and always coming back to that theme feels good and letting people appreciate that and be proud of their work,” Brown said.

Wilson hopes Black Fidelity and being inspired by Afrofuturism will give Black students a place to feel seen, represented and accepted as they are, she said.

“There’s nothing wrong with being Black. You should be proud of it. You should stay

affirmed in it,” Wilson said. “You should want to see yourself excelling.”

The three students hope the concept of Black Fidelity and events celebrating the Black community will not stop after this year but will continue on and expand, Wilson said.

“Hopefully, from this, it’ll get the ball rolling, spread more awareness, get more organizations involved,” Wilson said. “Opening it up to the Richmond community would definitely be something we would consider.”

Divine Porter, a sophomore VCUarts sculpture and extended media student, feels they have grown as an artist during their time at the university, they said. Porter feels their voice is often suppressed, as they are the minority in their classes and do not believe their white classmates could understand the perspective and message behind their Black-inspired artwork, they said.

“I know that most of my classmates wouldn’t be able to relate as much, or they

wouldn’t have a complete perspective to understand the work that I make, since most of my classes have maybe one or two other Black people in them,” Porter said.

Porter heard about this event as a member of BASE, and said they are excited to be a featured artist, as this is their first gallery appearance, they said. They appreciate the opportunity to be showcased at an event fully centered around Black artists to explore their own experience and identity as Black people, they said.

“Being in this exhibition and seeing the other artists fills me with a lot of joy and hope to see where we can go,” Porter said. “It’s definitely empowering to see the opportunities we can make for ourselves and the success we can make for ourselves.”

Experience the opening night reception for Black Fidelity on Feb. 1, at The Anderson Gallery, 907 ½ W. Franklin St., at 7 p.m.



The Anderson Gallery features art piece by VCUarts student Divine Porter.
Photo courtesy of Divine Porter

‘BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL’: *Series of events highlights Black students*

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VCU Transform

CT Opinions

Quote of the week

“To indoctrinate boys into the rules of patriarchy, we force them to feel pain and to deny their feelings.”
— bell hooks, “The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love”

ANDREW TATE IS NEGATIVELY INFLUENCING YOUNG BOYS

MIKA PEREZ
Contributing Writer

A “COMMON TATE W” IS POSSIBLY THE most commonly used phrase by every young boy.

Now, what is a “Common Tate W?”

This phrase branches from a man who was one of the most Googled names in 2022: Andrew Tate.

Tate is a British American influencer who is known for his interesting viewpoints — and when I say “interesting,” I mean violent and misogynistic.

He has labeled himself an entrepreneur and some people view him as some sort of self-help guru. You may be thinking, “how can anybody still have those views?” You’d be surprised, as a United Nations study reported 90% of men and women hold some sort of bias against women.

The sad truth is sexism and misogyny will never really go away but will be so hidden that nobody will ever notice it.

People like to believe problems, such as sexism, have gone away because they educated themselves, but if it only takes one guy on the internet to drive thousands of men to believe they are superior to women, that proves they’ve always thought that — they just needed someone to push them.

Tate’s whole facade may be laughable to some but there is a darker side to his influence.

Tate started getting views on social



Illustration by Dani Murphy

media like TikTok and Youtube for saying things such as, “if you put yourself in a position to be raped, you must bare some responsibility,” and “why would you be with a woman who’s not a virgin anyway? She is a used goods. Secondhand.”

Majority of his fans are younger boys who are still growing and understanding the world around them. To these boys, Tate is some macho man who fights, lives in a mansion, owns shiny fast cars and “gets women.” His tactic of being straightforward and preying on weaker vulnerable men and boys is how he gains a following.

His outrageous and sexist quotes have caused an uproar in elementary and middle schools. Teachers have been raging on social media about his negative influence on

their students. Schools across the country have been training teachers on how to talk to students about him and even holding assemblies to educate and encourage students to question the content he puts out.

Young boys are viewing Tate as a role model and saying women should only be housewives. Radicalisation of young boys and men is dangerous. Not only does Tate promote a toxic mindset, he also scams them into thinking they can become rich like him.

After Tate was banned on all social media platforms, he started to promote his online class called “Hustlers University.” This \$49.99 program “trains” about 100,000 students from around the world and teaches 18 different ways to make money between

business models and investment strategies.

This is nothing but a classic pyramid scheme.

These students, mainly boys and some who say they’re as young as 13, are being tricked to repost Tate’s videos on all social media platforms.

His recent arrest has garnered him more attention. Tate was arrested on Dec. 29 along with his brother, on charges of organized crimes, human trafficking and rape. Women who came forward about Tate’s crimes have publicly posted the disgusting vile things he has said to them.

You may think after his arrest young men will view him differently, but sadly, these boys are too far in. On Jan. 15, a swarm of Tate fans took to the streets of Athens, Greece shouting “Free Top G!” Tate’s brainwashing has convinced these boys that the crimes he committed aren’t a problem — or that he didn’t commit them at all.

We need to realize the true horrors of what’s going on. This issue isn’t just a problem for young men who get fed unrealistic and toxic ideas, but also for women, who are having to deal with cruel and vile comments.

These children are still growing and learning things and shouldn’t be told that they put themselves in the position to be raped and should bare responsibility.

It’s scary to see these negative influencers rise to fame, and it should make us question who we are promoting and why we are promoting them.

Schiaparelli takes us to the *nine circles of hell, in all its surrealist glory*

KOFI MFRAMA
Opinions Editor

Daniel Roseberry has done it again, subverting subversions until they can be subverted no more, all while beautifully adhering to the house codes of his foremother, Elsa Schiaparelli.

As Schiaparelli’s creative director, Roseberry embodied the surrealism that the French fashion house is known for in his most recent Spring/Summer 2023 Haute Couture collection.

The collection, titled “Inferno,” is inspired by the 14th-century epic poem “The Divine Comedy,” by Dante Alighieri. Most specifically, the author’s journey through the nine circles of hell. The collection is named after this section of the poem.

The collection notably included three hyper-realistic animal sculptures attached to excellently crafted garments.

“The leopard, the lion, and the she-wolf — representing lust, pride and avarice, respectively — find form here in spectacular faux-taxidermy creations, constructed entirely by hand, from foam, resin and other manmade materials,” Roseberry stated in the program notes.

It’s clear he was inspired by Schiaparelli’s incorporation of

animals in her garments like her famous lobster hat and other designs.

However, the intent behind Roseberry’s inclusion of these animal sculptures was missed by many. Dissenters of the faux-taxidermy animal heads say the heads glorify trophy hunting and the murder of endangered animals for the elite’s enjoyment. Some go as far as to say this collection could inspire people to go out and kill a real lion to imitate the look.

If anything, the inclusion of these sculptures shows that we don’t need to harm animals to create art inspired by nature. Besides, those who already enjoy poaching and trophy hunting see the act of killing as the trophy while the dead animal is just collateral.

The uproar this has caused makes it hard for me to see the ethical line when it comes to our relationship with animals. If fake animal heads on garments are unethical, wouldn’t stuffed animals be distasteful as well? Is it okay that we adorn imitation leopard print, cheetah print and animal leathers? If so, the heads should be no different.

They serve as an explicit reminder of the real animals whose skin we

wear on our shoulders — whose bodies we carnage to nourish our own. We can look into the resin eyes and imagine a live animal before us. Such a stark confrontation of our consumption was sure to spark discomfort and outrage.

Nevertheless, the show’s intent was never to critique any usage of animal parts in fashion. The intention was to show Roseberry’s connection with Dante’s “Inferno.”

Various garments on the runway were inspired by the slippery, house-of-mirrors quality of nine circles of hell, according to the program notes.

Dresses were given life as sequins made from leather-slicked slabs of tin danced in reflected light as models promenaded down the runway.

An extravagant plastron adorned with mother of pearls and gilded ornaments catches the eye.

Of course, it wouldn’t be a Schiaparelli show without nods to the past. Roseberry referenced Schiaparelli’s baroque period dresses and the exaggerated silhouette of the Tallyrand suit from 1945.

Although almost every look had the silhouette’s signatures —

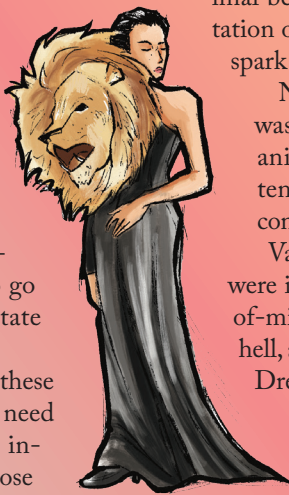
exaggerated hips and shoulders with a waist snatched into oblivion — two looks reimaged the Tallyrand suit in the contemporary: one in navy wool enhanced with ecru stripes and another in dark brown cotton with a plunging neckline.

Roseberry’s affinity for “The Divine Comedy” goes deeper than his connection to its aesthetics.

“What appealed to me in the Inferno wasn’t just the theatrics of Dante’s creation — it was how perfect a metaphor it provided for the torment that every artist or creative person experiences when we sit before the screen or the sketchpad or the dress form, when we have that moment in which we’re shaken by what we don’t know,” Roseberry wrote.

Roseberry said this collection is an “homage to doubt” — the doubt of things unknown. Is it a real lion head? Is it mimicry? And the doubt that fills our minds as we try to explain our aversion to one thing or another.

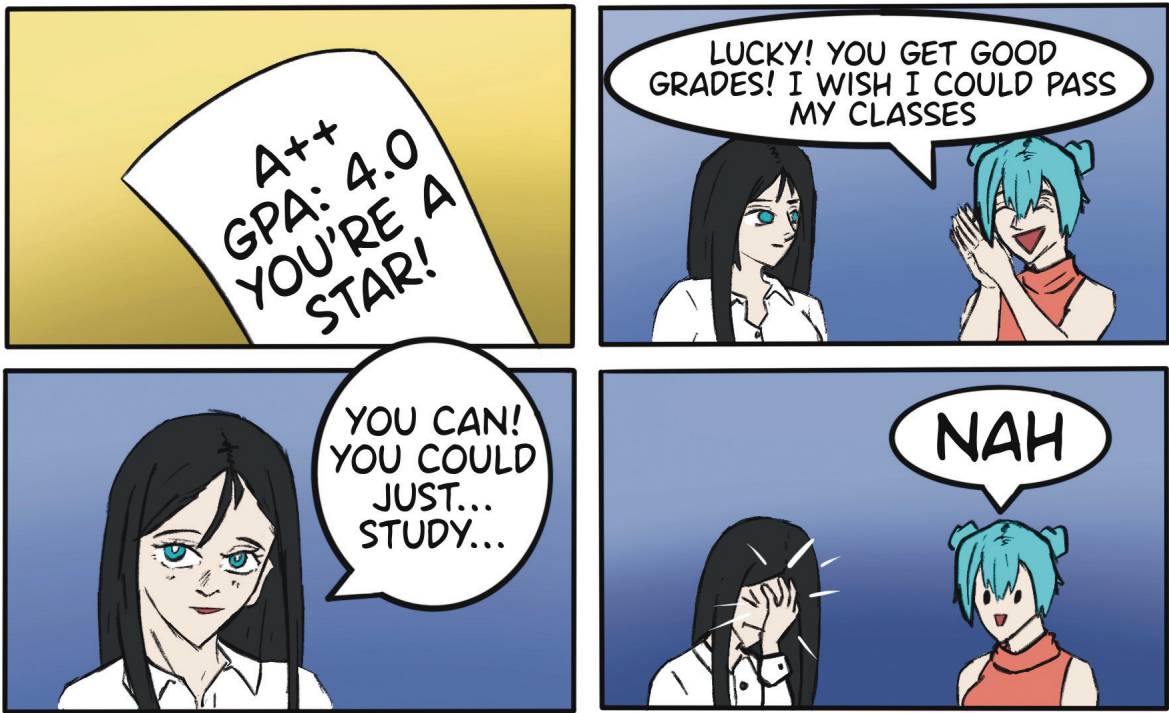
What is undoubted is the beauty of this collection and the talented house ateliers that brought these surrealist pieces to life.



Illustrations by Killian Goodale-Porter

CT Comics

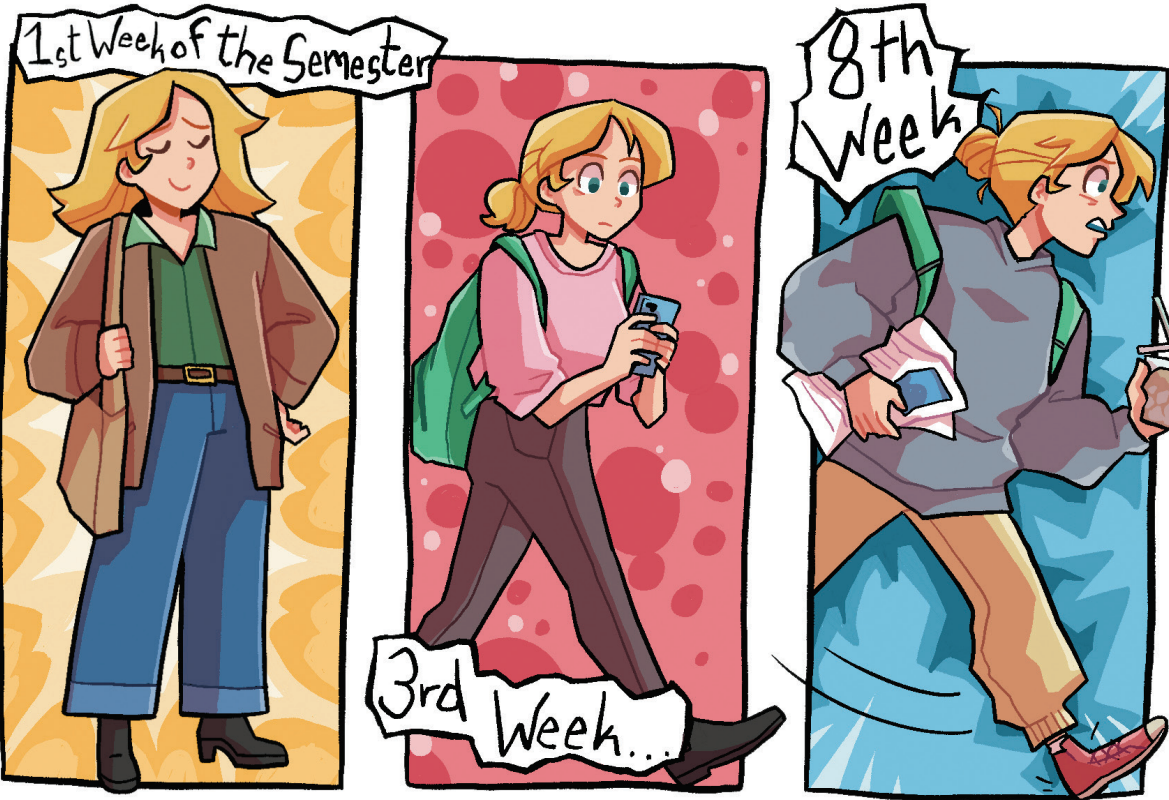
It's Not That Easy by Anthony Duong



Day 2 of class by Rena Bridge



The College Fashion Timeline by Killian Goodale-Porter



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FOR LINKS TO
ALL BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH
EVENTS



THE OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL STUDENT AFFAIRS AT VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY PRESENTS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2023

HISTORY

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history.

THE OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL STUDENT AFFAIRS AT VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY PRESENT OMSA'S SIGNATURE "BLACK HISTORY MONTH" IN COLLABORATION WITH PHI BETA SIGMA FRATERNITY INC. & FYE/SYE IN COLLABORATION WITH CULTURE, GLOBAL EDUCATION OFFICE & ADVOCACY IN COLLABORATION WITH VCU AFRICAN AMERICAN ALUMNI COUNCIL IN COLLABORATION WITH RECWELL, TEDXVCU, THE COMMONS, VCU HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTER, AND RESIDENTIAL LIFE & HOUSING FEATURING NAACP DESIGN TEAM EB
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