University of Richmond Magazine

A Cold New World
LESSONS FROM A SEMESTER IN SIBERIA
ON DANCING EUDAIMONIA, CHOREOGRAPHED BY LAUREN LAMBERT, ’19, DURING THE SPRING DANCE CONCERT

“Just before this point in the piece, there’s a switch in the intention and the mood,” said Ramsey Goodner, ’22, far left. “Before, we were dancing with each other but not interacting in an ‘I see you’ type of way. But there’s a point where we all start looking around and noticing things in our world. Then we get picked up by the people in the center who are moving in this new quality, and we all come to circle around each other. It’s like somebody sees something that’s influencing another person, who then sees something else beautiful about the world, who then moves and influences the energy and another person.”
ON CONDUCTING JEAN SIBELIUS’ SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN D MAJOR, OP. 43 IN CAMP CONCERT HALL

“This particular scene, at the end, there is a huge movement which communicates human hope,” said Alexander Kordzaia, artistic director of the UR Symphony Orchestra. “Everything’s going to be OK. Just have this hope. If humanity doesn’t have hope, then there is nothing left to do. When brass players play those chords, it just takes over you. Nobody can sit in the audience and not feel the energy. The conductor tries to communicate to the musicians this energy. It’s like one player. Seventy-five people play like one, and this energy goes straight to the audience.”
Five years ago, the magazine you hold in your hands underwent the latest major redesign of its nearly 85-year history. Those of us on the magazine team know that a good metaphor for a big redesign is the birth of a baby. In both cases, everything suddenly changes, yet what follows is not a period of calm stasis but immediate growth and development.

We’ve noodled around with the magazine in subtle ways over the last five years, making adjustments you probably haven’t noticed. Design elements have moved around to make them more useful. New departments have debuted. Fonts have changed.

This issue, we’ve made a few bigger changes, ones I suspect are more obvious. Call it a renovation, one that responds to consistent feedback and our own experience over the past five years. For instance, plenty of people told us the publication’s size was too big, and it felt pretty floppy to us, too. This new version is narrower by a bit and shorter by a bit more.

Likewise, I hope you will also be struck by what we’ve added. The publication’s new size frees up enough in printing costs to add 16 pages for now and the foreseeable future. We’ve dedicated half of these new pages to class notes to give them more room to breathe. The additional pages also free up space to add profiles of a broad cross section of alumni every issue. You'll see these profiles distributed throughout the class notes going forward (and we welcome your ideas about whom to feature). But truth be told, I’ve been, to use a newspaper expression, “burying the lede”: The text of the class notes is bigger this issue, too.

All of us who work on the magazine know that we are privileged to be stewards of a publication that belongs to you, dear reader. We hope to keep hearing from you as we share Richmond’s stories and news. Keep the class notes, story tips, and address updates coming our way.

Matthew Dewald, Editor
University of Richmond Magazine
Vol. 81, No. 3

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Moose, Riley, and some other good girls and boys pitched in to support National Spider Day March 14.
YOUR MAGAZINE, YOUR VOICE
Let us know what you think about what you read in this issue. Email your thoughts to magazine@richmond.edu or send us a letter (our postal address is on Page 5). Please include your class year, city, state, and maiden name, if applicable. All letters to the editor may be edited for clarity or brevity and should not exceed 200 words. We also welcome your story tips at magazine@richmond.edu.

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The stories that make us proud to be Spiders
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Alums around the world join together for Spider Day
As 19 alumni groups celebrate, we’re reminded of the strength of our Spider Family.

Thank you so much for ... the images and GIFs. Awesome pictures to use!!
—Lauren Harris, ’08

Alum launches scholarship foundation to support hometown
New York Giants’ Kerry Wynn, ’14, has started the Why Not Me Foundation to provide high school scholarships to Virginia students.

Go Spiders! I proudly have UR decals on my cars.
—Sue Carol Slater Salamone, W’80

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UR in Money Mag’s top 10 for business majors
Richmond is included in the publication’s recent list of the top 10 best colleges for business majors -- with a special shout-out to Q-camp.

We done good again.
—Temple Myers, R’68
A challenging call

Our sometimes uncomfortable past can lead to conversations that point to ways forward.

As I prepared to call Michael Kizzie, R’81, an African American alumnus who appears in a recently unearthed and grotesque yearbook photo, I felt apprehensive and conflicted. On the one hand, I was appalled by the photo of him that surfaced on social media — a smiling Michael with a noose around his neck, surrounded by unidentified classmates in KKK costumes. I had already publicly condemned the photo as an affront to our values of diversity, inclusivity, and equality in a message to the entire university community.

On the other hand, I felt empathy for the lone person thrust into this harsh spotlight. I tried to put myself in Michael’s shoes, but I had trouble imagining how he might have ended up participating in the disturbing scene captured in the photo. But I remembered what I teach my mentees: Listen generously to comprehend the seemingly incomprehensible.

So I called Michael, and I’m pleased that I did. He acknowledged his full responsibility as a participant in the photo and agreed that we must use this otherwise ugly moment as a learning opportunity about racism in America. He has graciously offered to come back to campus to continue our conversation and participate in a university program.

In the wake of the revelation that Virginia’s governor donned blackface in medical school, universities from every part of the country have been grappling with dark moments in their own histories, often documented in yearbook photos. Yet, unlike other countries that have made great strides addressing past transgressions, such as Germany, we as a nation have never emotionally dealt with the aftermath of slavery, segregation, and lynchings.

There are notable exceptions, such as author and activist Bryan Stevenson’s Legacy Museum in Alabama, which connects our history of racial inequality to contemporary racial disparities in the economy, criminal justice system, and elsewhere. But to borrow the words of writer W.G. Sebald, we have primarily shown an “extraordinary faculty for self-anesthesia.”

To achieve deeper racial understanding on our campuses and in our country, I believe we must probe the depths of our historical subconscious and give voice to the ominous silences of the past.

At the University of Richmond, our community has been showing a strong collective commitment to doing just that, even before the yearbook scandals broke.

Students, faculty, and staff had already excavated a number of racist yearbook images, including the one of Michael, as part of a student-led effort called Race and Racism at the University of Richmond, a project that aims to develop a shared understanding of UR’s racial history.

Through the Presidential Commission for University History and Identity that I convened in the fall, we are seeking to create a fuller, more inclusive story of who we have been and are, telling the previously untold stories of people such as Barry Greene, R’72, Madieth Malone, W’72, and Isabelle Thomas LeSane, W’72, the first African American alumni of Richmond’s undergraduate program.

And through the President’s Advisory Committee on Making Excellence Inclusive, we are working toward becoming a community where all our members thrive regardless of background and where no one feels like a guest in someone else’s home.

We know that we have more work to do, but I was pleased to tell Michael about the steps we are taking to become the exemplary intercultural community that we aspire to be. As an institution of higher education, our students — past, present, and future — deserve no less.
AN INSPIRING ENVIRONMENT

In addition to all of the construction work, facilities staff also tend the landscaping of the entire 378-acre campus — 170 acres of turf, 21 acres of parking lots, 2.5 acres of walkways, 16 formal flowerbeds, and Westhampton Lake.

Hammer time

Facilities across campus are getting upgrades, in planning for them, or beginning construction this summer, according to a March update from university facilities.

The multiyear housing redevelopment plan continues and will bring improvements to Lora Robins Court and Robins Hall, among them a new roof, classroom space, and flooring for LoRo and upgraded HVAC systems for both. Lakeview Hall will get a face-lift with new flooring and a fresh coat of paint.

Extensive planning is underway for a renovation of Ryland Hall, currently home to the history and English departments and other faculty. Facilities said it anticipates closing Ryland from spring 2020 through summer 2021 to install an elevator, complete extensive energy-saving improvements to HVAC systems, and address other needs in the oldest building on campus.

Richmond’s multiyear investment in arts facilities also continues. Skylights have been installed on the third floor of the Visual Arts Building, bringing much-welcomed natural light to the top floor, and other work to the building is on schedule for completion this summer.

Pre-construction activity for the Well-Being Center and the Queally Athletic Center was finished this spring. Construction, now underway, will continue into fall 2020. The latter project includes the conversion of historic Millhiser Memorial Gymnasium into a fully accessible academic center for student-athletes “while retaining the old gym floor and basketball goals as a reminder of this building’s history,” according to the March update.

Arts for all

The university’s cultural offerings became more inviting this spring through a new program that makes student performances more accessible to the community. Three programs — two plays and the 34th annual spring dance concert — were offered without charge through the UR Free Theatre & Dance initiative.

“We hope to use the power of theater and dance to build community through art, and this initiative removes those economic barriers that limit the community’s access to the arts,” said Sharon Feldman, interim chair of the theater and dance department.

Top Fulbright producer

Richmond was one of just 11 institutions in the nation — and the only one in Virginia — named to both of the Top Producer lists released by the Fulbright Program earlier this year. Two Richmond faculty were named Fulbright U.S. Scholars, and eight students and recent alumni were named Fulbright U.S. Students for 2018–19.

The eight student Fulbright awards set a new high-water mark for Richmond. The recipients of these awards spent the 2018–19 academic year teaching, studying, or conducting research in Colombia, Germany, Malaysia, Mexico, Panama, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Uruguay. To date, UR has had 56 student Fulbright grant recipients.
Auditors’ dilemma

Among the ways to lose a boxing match is the moment the referee intervenes, looks into the glassy eyes of a pummeled competitor, and stops the fight on a TKO, or technical knockout.

Auditors evaluating distressed companies can be a lot like that ref, but with one crucial difference. There’s no auditing tool like a TKO that halts an ongoing struggle. All an auditor can do when a company is on the ropes is look ringside and declare a GCO, or going concern opinion.

Declaring a GCO is a statement by the auditor that a company is at serious risk of going bankrupt in the next 12 months. It’s a declaration no company wants.

Marshall Geiger, CSX Chair of Management and Accounting in the Robins School of Business, has been looking at the factors that influence how auditors make this call. By comprehensively analyzing the results of 150 studies over the last six years, he’s reached one oft-overlooked conclusion: Auditors are people, too.

“I was surprised to find that auditors are sometimes influenced by others’ GCO decision-making,” said Geiger, whose research was funded by a grant from the Foundation for Audit Research. “If everyone around me is giving more, I’ll give more. If they’re giving fewer, I’ll give fewer.”

In addition to trend-following, auditors also have a human tendency to average a company’s strengths and weaknesses — “less negative information tempers really awful negative information,” as he puts it.

The goal of studying these human factors is more accurate audits to better signal when companies are likely to go down for the count.

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ONE LAST QUESTION

Many interviews for this magazine end with the same question: Is there anything else you want to tell me? Geiger had something.

“I wish you could tell all my former students hello,” he said. “I’ve had great students, and hearing from them always makes me happy.”

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IN THE NEWS

When media cover news and events, they come to Richmond for perspective and expertise. Here’s a sample of recent stories that put the university in the news:

**Physics professor JACK SINGAL** explained the utility of NASA’s newest Mars explorer to CNN. “We are currently discovering thousands of exoplanets around other stars, some of which may be quite similar to Earth or Mars,” he said.

“A lot of people [wrongly] think they are too old to change careers,” BECCA SHELTON, assistant director of career services, told U.S. News & World Report for an article about encore careers.

Neuroscientist and psychology professor KELLY LAMBERT explained the link between green spaces and mental health on NPR. “If we were talking about a new medicine [with] this kind of effect, the buzz would be huge, but these results suggest that being able to go for a walk in the park as a kid is just as impactful,” she said.

Classical studies associate professor WALTER STEVENSON gave digital outlet Ozy context for understanding Roman general and politician Crassus. “Many Roman nobles wanted to imitate Alexander the Great with campaigns to defeat Persia, so we don’t need to look too deep for [Crassus’] motivation,” he said.

**Richmond Times-Dispatch**

In an op-ed for the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Richmond College dean JOE BOEHMAN responded to a controversial Gillette advertisement. “I am trying — and failing — to see the problem with this ad,” he wrote. “The essential message to men is this: Do the right thing.”

For the latest stories, go to news.richmond.edu/placements.

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QUOTATION

“I assumed it was true.”

Sophomore DANIELLE SORSCHER, ‘21, reacting to Heilman Dining Hall myth-busting by The Collegian. Her comment came in a Feb. 27 article called “UR Curious: Is the dining hall dessert bar insured for a million dollars?” Read more of the UR Curious series at thecollegianur.com.
"Graffiti" being an Italian word, it’s no surprise that someone — we don’t know who — scrawled two words about a woman on the wall of an ancient Roman tavern just a bit south of Naples. What is surprising is that Erika Zimmermann Damer, associate professor of classics and women, gender, and sexuality studies, is reading them two millennia later.

"Crocale barbata" is one of several thousand examples of Roman handwriting preserved in Egypt, along Hadrian’s Wall in Britain, and in the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii. Its literal meaning is something like “bearded Crocale.” Crocale is a female name of the era, so this graffito is probably a joke or insult. For Damer, it’s also an entry point into a much wider study of women in Roman graffiti, the first research of its kind.

Romans wrote graffiti everywhere — in markets and temples, in taverns, and in their homes. Graffiti offers a broader window on Roman history than other Roman writing, which was almost exclusively written by elites, she said. “Studying graffiti allows the study of everyone — including the enslaved and free,” she said. “I want to see where women have a tangible physical impact.”

So far, she has analyzed more than 1,000 graffiti and found references to women in roughly 10 percent of them. Where she is finding these references has been a surprise. “So far, they’re showing up everywhere,” she said. “My work focuses on women’s agency. To see women’s names everywhere challenges the expectation we have” that women had little influence in many parts of Roman society.

The research, she said, “gives voice to the silences we have tended to put in our writing of Roman history.”

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**Writing on the wall**

**Excellence celebrated**

More than 250 guests came to the Jepson Alumni Center Feb. 23 for the first Black Excellence Gala, sponsored by the office of multicultural affairs and the Upsilon Gamma Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

The black-tie event’s goal was to “recognize the unwavering commitment students have had over the years in maintaining a thriving and inclusive community and celebrate the institutional work that has been accomplished,” said Chantelle Bernard, associate director of multicultural affairs and disability services.

Seven awards were given to students, faculty, and administrators for their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity. Organizers plan for the event to become annual.

“Even if you weren’t an award winner, it was still a celebration of you,” award recipient Alicia Jiggetts, ’19, told The Collegian. “It’s a great tradition that I’m glad the university has started.”

**Advanced placement**

The Princeton Review ranked Richmond fourth on its 2019 list of the top 25 schools in the nation for internships, based on students’ ratings of accessibility of internship placement at their school.

UR’s Richard S. Reynolds Graduate School of Business climbed the charts in the U.S. News & World Report rankings released in March. The MBA program ranked 35th, moving up seven positions from last year’s ranking.
HEALTH  Through her civic fellowship with Richmond’s Bonner Center for Civic Engagement, Afryea “Free” Henderson, ’19, interned at Crossroad Health Center, a nonprofit health care organization in Cincinnati, about an hour away from her hometown, Dayton, Ohio. Henderson worked as a care coordinator.

MY ROLE
I bridged the gap between the physician and the patient. I basically harassed the patients to make an appointment, and I dealt specifically with chronic-illness patients — patients who suffer from hypertension, heart disease, asthma, [ailments] like that.

When I first started the internship, that’s what I thought it would be — just me calling patients. However, I found it was a very intimate process of calling a patient and letting them know, “I know the problems you have health-wise, and I want to help you.”

MY PREPARATION
I had to do an academic component. We [Henderson and adviser Rick Mayes, assistant professor of public policy] came up with an academic plan of books I read, videos I watched, and assignments I did to help increase my understanding.

I knew it would give me informed knowledge of the health care system and health care disparities in certain communities. I [also] knew actually having the experience would give me anecdotal knowledge — seeing theoretical versus practice.

MY EXPECTATIONS
I thought, “I’m going to be in a hospital setting. I’m going to basically be a doctor.” It was kind of this fantasy I had going into it. The first couple of weeks, I still had that kind of romance about it. I thought, “I’m helping people. I’m making sure these patients make their appointments, and I am an instrument by which their condition is being controlled.”

MY REALITY
I was sitting at a desk, and I wasn’t even interacting with the patients all the time, besides on the phone. I started to lose focus of the bigger picture, so I had to kind of check myself.

The academic component helped me with that, which I did not anticipate. It helped me stay inspired and realize the importance of the work that I was doing. I was actually helping real people, and it intensified when people started to express their gratitude. I was calling it harassment, but they didn’t see it that way.

MY MOTIVATION
There’s a stigma around health care and hospitals. [Some] patients do not have trust for physicians or hospitals.

I was emotionally invested in the lives of the patients that I was dealing with because I understood. I have family members who suffer from chronic illness. Every patient that I dealt with was in an unfortunate circumstance where they lived in food deserts or had a mistrust of doctors. They didn’t have the means by which to make their lifestyles healthy to prevent those chronic illnesses, so I felt that on a much deeper level.

MY CONNECTION
There wasn’t a disconnect between the patients and myself. I’m not someone coming from privilege to this underprivileged community and trying to help out. I came from [a similar] community.

I would say, “I understand where you’re coming from. However, you have Type 2 diabetes, and you need your insulin whether or not you trust the doctor.”

“ I was calling it harassment, but they didn’t see it that way.”
As a birder, I had heard that if you paid careful attention to the head feathers on the downy woodpeckers that visited your bird feeders, you could begin to recognize individual birds. This intrigued me. I even went so far as to try sketching birds at my own feeders and had found this to be true, up to a point.

In the meantime, in my day job as a computer scientist, I knew that other researchers had used machine learning techniques to recognize individual faces in digital images with a high degree of accuracy. These projects got me thinking about ways to combine my hobby with my day job. Would it be possible to apply those techniques to identify individual birds?

So, I built a tool to collect data: a type of bird feeder favored by woodpeckers and a motion-activated camera. I set up my monitoring station in my suburban Virginia yard and waited for the birds to show up.

Identifying birds in images is an example of a “fine-grained classification” task, meaning that the algorithm tries to discriminate between objects that are only slightly different from each other. Many birds that show up at feeders are roughly the same shape, for example, so telling the difference between one species and another can be quite challenging, even for experienced human observers. …

The challenge only ramps up when you try to identify individuals. For most species, it simply isn’t possible. The woodpeckers that I was interested in have strongly patterned plumage but are still largely similar from individual to individual.

So, one of our biggest challenges was the human task of labeling the data to train our classifier. I found that the head feathers of downy woodpeckers weren’t a reliable way to distinguish between individuals because those feathers move around a lot. They’re used by the birds to express irritation or alarm. However, the patterns of spots on the folded wings are more consistent and seemed to work just fine to tell one from another. Those wing feathers were almost always visible in our images, while the head patterns could be obscured depending on the angle of the bird’s head.

In the end, we had 2,450 pictures of eight different woodpeckers. When it came to identifying individual woodpeckers, our experiments achieved 97 percent accuracy. However, that result needs further verification.

[Editor’s note: This piece is excerpted from an article in The Conversation and is reprinted with the author’s permission.]
Flooding made worse
As climate change increases the risk of flooding, a Richmond law professor is focusing attention on a related danger: chemical contamination of floodwaters.

“We identified more than 1,000 flood-exposed industrial facilities in the James River watershed, and contamination from these facilities would be an added burden to these communities, which already lack the infrastructure to rebound after a weather-related disaster,” said Noah Sachs, co-author of a new report, Toxic Floodwaters.

Sachs and co-author David Flores, an analyst with the Center for Progressive Reform, offer recommendations for Virginia policymakers and an action guide for citizens and advocacy organizations. The full report is available at http://bit.ly/VAToxicFloods.

On the up-and-up
Law professor Andy Spalding’s years of research and advocacy to curb corruption in international sports took a new step forward this spring with his appointment as chair of the Olympics Compliance Task Force.

The choice of Paris as 2024 host city, coupled with new International Olympic Committee regulations for host cities and recent French legislation aimed at combatting corruption and protecting human rights, is giving the task force a unique opportunity to design a framework of legal best practices, implement successful compliance policies, and set new precedents. The hope is that the Olympics can add good governance to the legacy it leaves in host cities.

The Olympics is just one of Spalding’s concerns. In June 2018, he wrote a blog post about similar issues in international soccer. He called it, “Will FIFA now follow the IOC’s lead?”

AROUND CAMPUS

‘A force for good’
Two spring gifts — an estate gift and a new endowment — will encourage students who are asking life’s biggest questions and bolster Boatwright.

The Weinstein family continued its long support with a $2 million gift to establish the Weinstein-Jecklin Family Endowment: Journeys of Faith and Ethics in a Global Society. It will fund chaplaincy-led travel and other chaplaincy initiatives that expose students to questions of what it means to be human and how to encourage humanity in others, with the goal of inspiring them to live lives of purpose.

“We hope this gift will have long-term impact by addressing the existential questions: Why are we here? What is our purpose? In what ways can we repair the world as individuals and as partners with diverse groups around the globe?” said Carol Weinstein. “Our hope is that by traveling outward to learn about other cultures and inwardly to understand ourselves better, this endowment can be a force for good among Richmond students.”

Fletcher Stiers, R’48, left the university $2.2 million for Boatwright Library through his will. Stiers, who died in April 2018, was a member of the Boatwright Society and Friends of Boatwright Memorial Library and a founding member of the UR Spider Club. His gift did not come with any conditions apart from its designation for the library.

“His unrestricted gift ensures that the University of Richmond Libraries may continue to acquire, preserve, and make accessible research collections for generations to come,” said Kevin Butterfield, university librarian.

PHILANTHROPY

A thread runs through two gifts received this spring: encouraging inquiry and providing the resources to pursue it.

QUOTATION

“The only point to studying the past is to understand today.”

EDWARD AYERS, president emeritus, speaking to students about the President’s Commission on University History and Identity. Ayers co-chairs the commission with Lauranett Lee, visiting lecturer in the Jepson School.

EVERY SPIDER, EVERY YEAR
A gift to UR is always impactful, no matter the size. Last year, more than 1,400不留 came from gifts of $100 or less.
Annual fund gifts can be used as soon as they are received and directly impact the experiences of students on campus today. Consistent annual giving by alumni raises Richmond’s participation rate, a measure that directly affects rankings and strengthens the university’s reputation.

For more information, go to giving.richmond.edu.
News reports that Boko Haram extremists took more than 200 schoolgirls hostage in northeastern Nigeria shocked the world’s conscience in April 2014. For reporters, it renewed questions — ethical and practical — about how to report responsibly on terrorism.

There are well-worn guidelines built from decades of experience for reporters covering war, but there’s very little guidance about how to cover terrorism, said journalism and mathematics major Victoria Davis, ’20.

Davis learned about this gap as part of her introduction to a journalism class project that culminated in Reporting Terror, a first-of-its-kind resource that combines student interviews of reporters who cover terrorism with analysis of the issues that the interviews raise. Interviewees include leading journalists, such as Rukmini Callimachi of The New York Times and Graeme Wood of The Atlantic.

Davis found herself interviewing Nigerian journalist Ahmad Salkida via Skype at 4 a.m. while he was self-exiled in Dubai and former Wall Street Journal West Africa reporter Drew Hinshaw.

The differences between Salkida and Hinshaw “really do lay in their backgrounds,” Davis said. Hinshaw focused on victims and over time had little news to report because attacks were numbingly similar. Salkida had multiple contacts within Boko Haram, so he always had fresh news.

“I didn’t really know what I was uncovering while I was doing [the assignment],” Davis said. “The story that we found was not the one that I had expected originally.”

Reporting Terror is available at blog.richmond.edu/reportingterror.
DIPLOMACY Curtis Blair, R’92, has learned a lot about dealing with difficult situations and people at his workplace — NBA basketball courts. Now in his 10th season as an NBA referee, the former point guard for the Spiders shares some of his coping mechanisms for handling difficult conversations.

1. LOSE THE EGO
When you get to the NBA level, you’re going to get it from all sides: the players, the coaches, the fans, everybody.

You’ve got to learn how to talk to the players. You’ve got to learn how to respond to them, when not to respond. But the one thing I’ve always learned is you’ve got to put your ego aside.

2. REMIND THEM THAT YOU’VE BEEN IN THEIR SHOES
The last three to five years, the NBA put out bios on us. The last three to five years, the NBA put out bios on us. Once the NBA did that, I had players come up to me and say, “Hey, Curtis, I didn’t know you played ball.” I’d say to them, “I tried to tell you: I know what I’m doing.”

3. TAKE LESSONS FROM BEING MARRIED
Listen, I’ve been married 22 years — you have to learn to listen. I think communication is the No. 1 thing in this profession. You have to learn how to defuse situations. You have to be patient.

Being a referee in the league for a long time and an ex-player, this is a game of emotions. As long as those emotions don’t cross a specific line, you have to be able to listen. And another thing: you can’t always want to be right.

4. PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED
In our veterans camp meeting that we have in September, we go through a little role-playing — if coaches or players come at you, you know what to say. Some you can joke with. Some you have to be 100 percent serious with.

5. DISCUSS THE GOOD TIMES YOU’VE HAD TOGETHER
Right before our veterans meeting, they have a coaching seminar up in Chicago. All the coaches and 10 to 12 referees are there. We talk about rules, the relationships between coaches and referees, players and referees. I happened to sit beside a former NBA coach.

He was the funniest guy, but you would never know that by watching him on the sidelines because he’s always intense. So, the times I had him after that, I used to say, “What happened to the guy I sat beside for two days?” and he’d start laughing.
Records fall
Spider runners set multiple new records at meets this spring. At the ECAC Championship in March, senior Ave Grosenheider set a new school record in the 3K as she took fifth overall. Junior Maria Acosta, sophomore Brooke Fazio, and freshmen Tamar Accius and Rachel Helbling set a school record in the 4x400 relay, which they then broke at the Duke Invitational in April.

At the Colonial Relays at William & Mary a month later, Acosta set a new stadium record in the 800 meters, and Fazio finished less than two seconds behind her. The pair were the fourth-fastest 800-meter duo in the NCAA behind USC, Florida, and BYU, as of early April.

Olympic-bound?
Junior swimmer Hannah Gouger qualified for the U.S. Olympic Trials in 2020 in the 100-meter backstroke.

Back-to-back champs
Women’s lacrosse earned its second consecutive A-10 championship this spring. As the magazine went to press, the Spiders were sitting at 17-3 overall — a new single-season wins record for the program — as they awaited seeding in the NCAA tournament. Also for the second year in a row, the A-10 named senior Julie Ball the Defensive Player of the Year.

Still on deck
As the magazine went to press, Spider baseball had a 20-16-1 record and more than a dozen regular-season games left, including the final series at Pitt Field May 16–18 versus Saint Louis.

For current schedules and results for all Spider sports, go to richmondspiders.com.

The call-up
Early in a scrimmage this spring, a William & Mary striker broke through the Spider back line chasing a through ball. Hot on her heels was center back Victoria Huxtable, ’22, who caught up and ran pace-for-pace with her, suffocating every option except a shot at the left side of the net, where keeper Jessica Stanfill waited. Job well done.

It’s plays like this that last fall earned Huxtable a start in every game and had her playing the most minutes on the team as a freshman. They also earned her a look from Jamaica’s national team as it finalized its roster for the FIFA Women’s World Cup in France in June and July.

Jamaica, the first Caribbean team ever to qualify for a spot in the tournament, invited Huxtable as one of 12 newcomers among 33 players to a training camp in January. The team will select 23 to take to France. Huxtable was still waiting to hear as the magazine went to press.

She called the possibility “surreal” but said that, either way, she took away important lessons from camp. “The soccer there was really good, fast-paced,” she said. “A lot of these girls play pro because they’re a little older. ... I think my confidence is going to rise from this, and my eagerness to play has risen.”

At age 19, she has time to keep developing her game and maybe compete for a roster spot again as the 2023 Cup approaches. “I’m just going to keep pushing hard and working hard until I can be my best,” she said.

Victoria Huxtable earned a tryout with Jamaica’s national team.

A NEW ERA
In April, athletics director John Hardt announced the appointment of Aaron Roussell as head coach of women’s basketball. Roussell comes to Richmond from Bucknell, where he led the Bison to the NCAA Tournament in 2019 and 2017. During his eight years at Bucknell, the Patriot League named him Coach of the Year twice.

A SOCCER

HER GAME
Huxtable anchors the defense as center back, which she said is her natural position. What makes her good? “My strengths I can always work on, but I would say I’m a pretty composed player,” she said. “I always play the simple ball.”
It's a familiar scene in sports after an underdog defeats an entrenched favorite. The jubilant victors come together in a sea of arms and legs, jumping and hugging, to celebrate beating the odds.

That's what played out at Robins Stadium on Feb. 23, when the men's lacrosse team hosted Notre Dame. After jumping out to a 3-0 lead, the Spiders held off the visitors, then No. 6 in the country, for a 9-8 win to set off the celebration. Upsetting a perennial powerhouse is no longer uncommon for the program, and the victory signaled that peers in NCAA Division I lacrosse shouldn't be surprised by Richmond's success.

“We just want to continue to build, year in and year out. So, if we can take one small step forward this year, then that’s a positive,” head coach Dan Chemotti said. “That will be the goal each and every year. We just want to be very relevant in the Division I landscape.”

This could have been a rebuilding season for the Spiders, who lost some of the program’s best players to graduation last year. But new faces — such as senior Teddy Hatfield, who was drafted by Major League Lacrosse’s Dallas Rattlers in March, and sophomore standout Ryan Lanchbury, who notched a hat trick against Notre Dame — have emerged to keep the momentum going.

With everything the program has already achieved — NCAA Tournament appearances, conference titles, poll rankings, upsets of annual national title contenders Duke and North Carolina — it’s easy to forget how recently men’s lacrosse came to Richmond. With the program now in its sixth season, Chemotti believes its progress has more to do with internal preparation than external expectations.

“We try to keep the same mentality game in and game out,” he said. “We have a specific brand of lacrosse that we like to play, and we just try to be very consistent with that. Whether we’re playing somebody who’s more highly ranked than us or not, we don’t take a different mindset.”

Chemotti, who played at Duke and was an assistant coach at Loyola University Maryland — two upper-crust college lacrosse programs — initially built the program on a vision of what might be. That pitch might have sounded like planning for a distant future to some recruits, but for those who first signed on, whom Chemotti calls “the pioneers of the program,” it was an unspoken challenge reflected in their coach’s quietly confident demeanor.

When asked if anything surprised him about the rapid development of his built-from-scratch program, Chemotti took a long pause before replying, “Nothing.

“We entered this whole process wanting to be good,” he said. “I give our guys a tremendous amount of credit for committing to the culture and wanting to be great.”

GREAT EXPECTATIONS A major upset is no longer a shocking surprise for Richmond’s young lacrosse program.

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A Cold New World
Story and photos by RYLIN MCGEE, ’19
It all started back in seventh grade when I made two decisions. The first came when, for some reason, I found out about New Zealand and Russia. I must’ve been Googling beautiful areas with lots of land. So I said, “You know what? In my life, I’m going to go to New Zealand, and I’m going to go to Russia.” ¶ The second decision came during our unit on astronomy in earth science class. I got 100 on the test, and I loved it. I was like, “You know what? I’m also going to be an astronaut.”

Editor’s note: At Richmond, McGee began taking courses in mathematics, chemistry, and Russian language studies to further her NASA ambitions. She also became an international studies major and used class projects to explore her interest in the Arctic.

During the fall of her junior year, she studied abroad in New Zealand and then traveled directly from there to Siberia for a non-UR spring semester program at Irkutsk State University in Irkutsk, Russia.

It’s Saturday, and classes don’t start until Monday. I remember that the woman at the airport had told me where the grocery store is. She said, “You need to buy bread, honey, salt, and sugar.” I am so tired, but before I go to sleep I buy my bread, honey, salt, and sugar. Then I go back to my room and sleep for 12 hours. I wake up the next day and eat some bread with honey and try to orient myself.

SATURDAY, FEB. 3
ARRIVAL DAY
IRKUTSK,
SIBERIAN RUSSIA

It’s negative 30 degrees Fahrenheit every day here. Yes, this is for real. All I was told is that someone at the airport will have a sign with your name. You just need to go up to them and say hello. I get in the terminal, and there are so many people with signs with people’s names. When I finally find the person with mine, she hands me a tiny little TracFone and then just stands there, so I say to her in Russian, “Hello. What are we doing? What’s next?”

The woman says, “Just wait.” I get my bags, and then she says, “All right. We’re going to go to your dorm now.”

I’m taken to a car, basically like an Uber. But Russian drivers ... it is crazy. It’s lawlessness. The driver is blasting the song “Rockstar” [by American rapper Post Malone]. Mainly all the music I will hear will be Russian, but this is the song that I listen to while he’s cutting corners going to the dorm.

There’s a nice section of the town, but for the most part, Irkutsk is very undeveloped, and a lot of people live in poverty. And my dorm is not in the nice section. It is a rundown Soviet building. We take my bags out of the car at the dorm, and I learn I’m on the 11th floor.

When we get up there, I go into my room, and there is dust and dirt all over the ground. The bed is one of those military metal bunks without a mattress, just a thin pad, and there aren’t any blankets, but I am so tired. I’m just going to sleep on this thing.

MONDAY, FEB. 5
FIRST DAY OF CLASSES

Public transport is really crowded here because not many people have a car. There are so many people in the morning that you have to wait an hour in line. You can imagine how this plays out when it’s –30 degrees. I finally get on a bus that takes an hour and a half for what should be 15-minute drive because there are so many stops and so much traffic.

The university is nothing like Richmond, as you would expect. It’s very small, almost like an elementary school building. You have your wooden desk, wooden chair, a chalkboard, and the teacher. Some of the rooms have a computer or other technology in them.

My environmental studies course is taught in English by a Russian woman who did a Fulbright to the U.S. She is amazing! I love her.

For my Russian classes, I am tested to figure out what level I should be placed in. For the test, I take my place in a room with probably 10 other people. Everyone has already somehow made friends. I sit here the odd man out, which is a weird feeling coming from Richmond.

The Russian classes — grammar, reading, speaking, etc. — will be only in Russian, which is cool. The classroom culture is an adjustment. I quickly learn I’m not supposed to interact with the professor or my classmates that much. From what I can tell, all the other students are from countries where the teaching style is like this. I’m supposed to just sit here and repeat the lessons.

OK, I can be a Russian, and I can do it this way. But I’m also still going to be Rylin. I’ll just figure out how to do it in Russian.
Scenes around Irkutsk, including the entrance to McGee’s dormitory (top left)
Every morning, I walk outside my dorm and take a right, but everyone else takes a left, and we are all going to the same school. I’m doing something wrong here.

One day I decide that I’m just going to follow everyone else. If I’m late to class, I’m late to class. So I take a left, I walk awhile, and all of a sudden I see this tremendous line. You’d think that it was a hot summer night and people are waiting for ice cream after a soccer game, that type of line, but people are bundled up and standing next to the road. OK, this looks like maybe public transportation, but I don’t see any huge buses. Instead I see these tiny white utility vans with the windows blocked out. I’m going to try this. Little do I know.

I am squished up against 40 different people and can’t see outside, so I don’t know where I’m going. Hopefully this is the right one because I saw some other students get on.

I get off when they get off, and eventually I get the hang of it. I learn to check my GPS to see where we are. When I want to get out, I yell “Na stanovlye, pozhaluzto!” which means “On the stop, please!” and jump out before it takes off again.

These are the marshrutkas. They go faster than the bus, but they’re not really legal. Basically, the drivers hang up scarves and curtains to block out the windows and put cardboard or some other barrier between the driver and the passengers, with a little hole to exchange money. It’s all supposed to be kind of secretive. They’re this way because the drivers are usually illegal immigrants. Russia has challenges with border control at the southern border in Siberia, and people come here to work as drivers.

The marshrutkas reduce my travel time by half or so, so this is a milestone. It’s all very sketchy, but it’s the fastest way to get to class.

The university has been taking us on local excursions. Today, we’re going to see Lake Baikal for the first time, so it’s basically an introductory, fun day.

The lake is frozen, so it’s fun to walk around on it to see everything. Lake Baikal is the deepest freshwater lake in the world, and it’s also the largest by volume. A lot of people also say it’s one of the cleanest lakes in the world because of the melted ice’s purity, plankton that eat floating debris, and a lack of mineral salts in the lake. When it’s frozen, you can see down almost to the bottom if you’re close to the floor, and the lake is very blue. Across the lake is a ridge of mountains. Everything is beautiful and makes incredible photos. The fresh air is one of the best things about being here.

To get into Dormitory No. 10, where I’m staying, I have to have a card. This is a problem because I don’t have one yet, and everything is really bureaucratic and takes forever. So, every single day, I have to argue with people in Russian to get in.
I have a paper pass that I am supposed to show to the guards at the dorm, but if they remember I am American they often give me trouble. They have a tiny, old ’70s box television they’re always watching. If Trump pops up and they see me walk by, they sometimes do mean things, like lock the kitchen or mess with the hot water, which is an issue when it’s this cold. I finally get my official card after about three weeks.

My environmental studies class is cool because it’s basically an environmental history of Russia. We start back in the 1300s and look at the Russian history after Western Russia was established and people start to trickle east into Siberia. We also look at how the foundation of subsistence life is then impacted by the industrialization of the Soviet state. That’s a dramatic binary.

Another interesting topic is radioactive waste. I want to research and write an article about it, but the article will go online and no one here really wants an American talking about Russian nuclear waste within their country. But I am able to learn about radioactive waste in class and the professor tells us about a place called City 40 in Chelyabinsk. The region is the most polluted, in terms of nuclear and radioactive waste, in the world — worse than Chernobyl, and no one knows about it. There’s so much censorship, so it’s really interesting to get an actual Russian perspective.

Some days I think, “What did I get myself into?” It’s weird because this is something that I have been wanting to do for years and worked toward. Now I’m here, and it’s like, “Oh. My. God.”

Because it’s winter in Siberia, it’s hard to find green vegetables. The water — you filter it and boil it, and it still isn’t drinkable. The air quality is poor because the buses and marshrutkas are from the ‘60s or ‘70s. When I go out for a run, I get layers of dirt on my skin and my phone. Over time, I get really sick from, I think, not getting the right nutrition, and the air is really hard for me.

The hardest thing is maintaining a sense of positivity in these surroundings. It’s so cold. If I’m out somewhere trying to take pictures, my hands are sometimes so cold that I can’t change the settings on the camera because I can’t take off my gloves. And people here, well — every day I have to check myself. I like to smile or say something to someone if I think of it, but here I think, “OK, don’t smile. Sit. Be really quiet. Don’t make eye contact.” I’m trying to fit into Russian culture.

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I just love being outdoors. There are some smaller mountains surrounding the lake, so I hike up to the top of one. I’m happy to be breathing in the fresh air. It’s quiet here. I think to myself, “I’m in the middle of Siberia. This is just incredible.”

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Above, McGee on frozen Lake Baikal. At right, a participant in the Victory Day celebrations. Opposite, a church in Irkutsk.

have formed along all of these little capes, so we go exploring. I can see the mountains, too. They’re really beautiful.

Throughout the trip, I take pictures of anything to do with development: electricity, roads, those kinds of things. Researchers 10 or so years ago looked at activities related to camping and the locals, so I want to look at other activities: transportation, housing, waste management, and other infrastructure. Do they have recycling? Is there a sewage system? As I go through my tourist activities, I write everything down so I can use my notes to do more research later.

Every month, I am exploring a different topic. One of the first was water quality because that is something that I am challenged by. Then I studied eco-tourism in Siberia and development challenges on Olkhon Island.

During the trip, we go in a banya. A banya is the Russian version of a sauna, but it’s very ritualized. You are supposed to enter it with birch tree branches so you can hit yourself with them because it’s supposed to open your pores. It’s the craziest thing.

We go in the sauna and then run out and jump and roll around in the snow. Then we go back in and do the birch thing. The warmth is good.

SATURDAY, MARCH 17— SUNDAY, MARCH 18 ELLIE AND ME

There’s another American in Irkutsk, Ellie. She’s from Utah. The minute I found out there was someone else from the U.S. in this city, I became determined to be friends with her.

We’re having some of the same challenges. We both just
want to be independent and explore, but we understand it's not the easiest thing. But together, we're like, “We're going to do it anyway.”

We set up a trip to go to a Buryat village called Arshan, which is hard to do as a foreigner. We had to wait a long time to get a special permission because the border zone around nearby Tunkinsky National Park is highly restricted.

Arshan is known for its Buddhist monasteries, and the water is supposed to have minerals that can heal any illness. Ellie and I stay in a wooden home and go on a daylong, snowy hike to a remote place called Peak Lubvi, which means Peak of Love. Along the way, a stray dog follows us up the ridge and becomes our friend.

When we’re ready to leave the next morning, we discover our planned transportation back to Irkutsk is sold out. This is a problem. As foreigners, we had to register to travel. If we don’t return on the day that we’re supposed to, we could be deported.

In the transportation office, we find a tiny flyer for some kind of private driver, and we’re like, “All right, this is our only option.” It’s expensive, which is expected, but it turns out to be a fun trip. He’s Russian, so I speak to him in Russian the whole time to practice, and we have the best conversation.

My academic work is piling up, so I spend much of April keeping up with projects and papers.

I have gotten into a rhythm in my daily life. I’m now getting fresh vegetables from a shop I found hidden in an underpass. I can get tomatoes, peppers, root vegetables, stuff like that. I have also found the central market, which is a really interesting mix of cultures. There’s a Chinese market, a central Asian market, and a Russian market all in one, and it’s really intense. People practically attack me: “Devushka! Nam nada pokupat eto ee pokupat eto!” which is “Girl! Come buy this, come buy that!”

I don’t eat at the university cafeteria much. A lot of that is because I am a vegetarian, and Russian meals are generally very meat-intensive, especially in Siberia. I usually pack my lunch, and then in the evening, I cook in the kitchen on my floor in the dorm.

There used to be a washing machine for clothes in the kitchen, but it worked for two weeks and then broke and flooded the whole room. Instead, I hand wash all of my laundry and hang it to dry inside my room because it would just freeze outside. I have strings running in different directions across it. Throughout my closet, above the shower — hanging my clothes anywhere. My dorm room is hilarious. Here I am, the Spider from Richmond living in a spiderweb. It’s definitely a shift in lifestyle for me.

Spending an entire semester here is a double-edged sword. On one hand, my Russian has improved so much that I am finally able to really communicate with the locals, move about my daily life without any troubles, and still have time to learn. At the same time, the excitement of being in a new place has worn off. It’s a mix of homesickness, the cold, being a little sick. A lot of things that I usually root myself in, such as being able to work out, eat healthy food, all these things that are my foundation, I’m not able to tap into. That’s what makes it hard for me.
A friend in Europe wants to visit, and we decide that St. Petersburg is a good place to meet. It means a long plane ride for me.

On our first night, we stay in an Airbnb, catch the metro into the city, and pop up in the middle of a jazz festival. Everyone is dancing, and there's music all around. People are smiling and talking. Strangers are coming up and being really joyful. I'd gotten used to Siberian Russia. It's completely different here. People's demeanor, their liveliness remind me of a European city. And St. Petersburg is really beautiful.

This trip is a good way for me to see my friend, have more familiarity with Russian culture, and enjoy myself. It's my rejuvenation so I can make May a strong month.

Spring is arriving, and classes are wrapping up. They've been good. When my Russian classes started back in February, I felt like everyone else was thinking, “Who is this weird American, and why is she asking so many questions?” But over time people started to like it because it makes class fun. We ended up having a lot of cool conversations as we practiced our Russian. I've come to feel like I have my little family of friends.

Russia’s Victory Day celebrating the end of World War II comes on May 9. Some of my Russian friends invite me to tag along with them for the whole day while they volunteer with the city government, so we have behind-the-scenes access to the events. Basically the whole city puts on a big parade, and everyone exchanges food and desserts. The whole city. It's like a big party.

Irkutsk has 146 different ethnicities: Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Mongolians, Chechens, Armenians, and many, many more. It’s just so diverse, and most people have a family member who fought in the war. Today, everyone has their country’s flag, but it’s a celebration of unity. It’s amazing.

Russia has definitely challenged my sense of my identity. I realize that the way that I think about who I am has been rooted in a lot of external things: the food I am eating, the environment that I go hiking in, buying fair trade, organic, this and that. The more I travel, the more I see that who I am is not about the material things that I engage with.

In Russia, I haven’t been able to do a lot things that are fairly easy to do elsewhere. I think it has made me stronger in ways that I haven’t thought about before and reinforced my sense of identify and independence. Now, I feel confident in my sense of sense of self no matter where I go because I have built my sense of identity through experience rather than what’s easy to do or what I have.

On my final day, I order my taxi to leave Irkutsk. And when I get in, what song is playing in the car on my ride back to the airport? “Rockstar.” The last song I listen to in Irkutsk is the first song I ever heard here. How serendipitous.
50-year legacy of the Gift
(You know the one.)
During the 1969 commencement exercises, graduates and their guests heard the announcement that 1931 alumnus E. Claiborne Robins had pledged to give Richmond $50 million — then the largest sum ever given to an American university by a living benefactor. The news brought cheers.

Crucially, much of the 1969 gift was undesignated, meaning Robins also gave generations of university leaders the ability to determine how these new resources could shape Richmond's future. His gift also amplified the effects of future donors, with gifts large and small, who followed in his footsteps — as he expressly wished — by investing in the university's potential. This five-decade flourishing of philanthropy is the foundation of today's excellence, and its impact is evident in every corner of campus.

To mark the announcement’s 50th anniversary, we asked five of the university’s presidents to reflect on how this gift impacted their tenures and look at how it remains integral to the university today.

E. BRUCE HEILMAN
PRESIDENT 1971–86; 1987–88
During his tenure, Heilman stewarded the influx of new funds and oversaw the construction of the Gottwald Center for the Sciences, Tyler Haynes Commons, the business school, and the Robins Center basketball arena, among other initiatives.

Claiborne gave his gift because he loved the place. He didn’t have any money, came here on scholarship, and felt he got a good education here. He told me, “I saw it as one of the best opportunities for a major investment to take root and to make a difference. Nobody knows Richmond is as good as it is. I want to make it one of the finest small universities in the nation.”

When I was considering the presidency here, I told him, “Claiborne, I don’t believe anybody really understands what that will take. You have said this is seed money. You’re right. It’s just a partial payment.” I told him I would need not just the $50 million, but his engagement and involvement. He said, “I’ll guarantee you my personal support and that you’ll never regret it.”

In a real sense, he employed me as president, and we also became good friends. Six to eight months after I became president, I announced we were going to match the $50 million gift by raising another $50 million. To put that in context, the largest campaign in this university’s history had been $2 million or so. I told the board, “If we can’t raise $50 million from everyone out there to match one family’s gift, then we’re fooling ourselves.”

I can honestly say he never once crossed my line of leadership. He would occasionally challenge my thinking, but he never forced me to change my mind on anything. The man trusted me as I trusted him.

One time I told him, “If you had given your money and said ‘I’ve done my part,’ it would not have been as impactful.” His ongoing involvement is the reason we’re where we are today. People come on the campus, and they’re amazed. It’s because a man took an action from his heart and remained true to his deep commitment.

RICHARD L. MORRILL
PRESIDENT 1988–98
During his tenure, Morrill guided the formal establishment of the School of Arts and Sciences and opened the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, the Jepson Alumni Center, and the Modlin Center for the Arts. He was the last president to work directly with Robins before his death in 1995.

Mr. Robins understood very well who we were. We were not a research university. We did not want to become an extremely large university. We simply wanted to be known as one of the best of our kind. That vision was steadfast.

In many ways, he was the university’s chief fundraiser during the years he was active. In countless cases, his giving multiplied its effects through his ability to solicit other donations. We have an exceptional tradition of major philanthropy. The Jepsons’ contributions were well over $30 million, for example. How many institutions function that way, where you’re given $50 million, and then 20 years later, you’re given another $30 million? That was part of the intent of Mr. Robins, to stimulate philanthropy in others.

For the past 50 years, the university has had the motif of possibility as part of its narrative. There is a sense here of being able to set high goals and reach them. That’s what possibility is, knowing that you can take some risks because there’s something behind you.

Claiborne Robins is the key to this sense of possibility, which is still playing itself out in everything we do. I see our ability today to enhance programming and facilities, to create a well-being center, to put up a practice facility for basketball — you can’t do that unless you have an enormous base of possibility.

All of this from a man whose humility was paramount, whose kindness was always in evidence. He never wanted to get into the specifics of decisions. When you were in his presence, you knew that here was a person of immense capability and talent, with really unfathomable generosity, but with realism about it.

WILLIAM E. COOPER
PRESIDENT 1998–07
During his tenure, Cooper raised the university’s national profile, led the Transforming Bright Minds campaign, oversaw the move to the Atlantic 10 athletic conference, and instituted the university’s financial aid policy of meeting the full demonstrated need of undergraduate students.

He was motivated to make the gift because he saw that the university had the right ingredients to be outstanding. The fundamentals were sound. It just needed more resources.

When I entered the picture, the endowment accounted for about 25
thing about all this is that the gift was not the Robins gift. A remarkable tion. It was hard to know what was every aspect of a Richmond educa-

tion budget and foundational to nearly of the gift had become integral to the

By the time I came along, the effects of the gift, but they’re wonderful effects. They keep on giving every year.

It’s important that the gift was not only so large, but that it was given when it was given. It allowed us to ride a wave of endowment growth over decades.

In the end, it’s never just about the money. It’s about how the money is used to foster achievement. I credit the Robins gift with everything our team was able to accomplish.

EDWARD L. AYERS
PRESIDENT 2007–15

During his tenure, Ayers directed the campaign that fully funded the Rich-

mond Guarantee, oversaw significant growth in undergraduate applications, launched initiatives that led to the establish-

ment of new first-year and sophomore curricular programs, and opened the Car-

dele Weinstein International Center and UR Downtown.

By the time I came along, the effects of the gift had become integral to the fundamental premises of the entire budget and foundational to nearly every aspect of a Richmond education. It was hard to know what was not the Robins gift. A remarkable thing about all this is that the gift was largely undesignated. Mrs. Robins did the same with her final gift from their estate when she passed away. The Robinses gave these gifts to sustain and enhance the entire university long into a future they could only imagine.

I came here in part because of the financial aid policies that were already in place — policies that were enabled by the financial foundation that the Robins gifts provided. I saw my job as extending that commitment so that Richmond’s students would look more like America. I could see that financial aid opened the doors in critical ways, but there was still more to do.

The Richmond Guarantee is an example of how great ideas built on one another and on the foundation the Robinses’ gifts provided. We knew there were students who couldn’t afford to take advantage of a summer research or internship experience, so they did not have the same opportu-
nities as the students who could. The Guarantee is an audacious move that bridges that gap.

But the Guarantee is impossible to implement unless you have the resources to make it happen. It was made possible by extraordinary generosity of many alumni who wanted to make the Guarantee possible for stu-

dents, as well as the final undesignated gift that Mrs. Robins left us. It’s rare that you can see a gift reverberating so powerfully across five presidencies.

RONALD A. CRUTCHER
PRESIDENT 2015–PRESENT

During his tenure, Crutcher has focused on strengthening UR’s national profile; launching initiatives to promote inclu-
sivity, thriving, and wellness; engaging alumni; and overseeing planning for the Well-Being Center and the Queally Athletic Center, both now under con-

struction.

When I came here, it was obvious to me that Richmond’s academic pro-

file had elevated to the point that we needed an office focused on assisting students with applying for national scholarships, fellowships, and awards.

We now have an office of scholars and fellowships and are already seeing great results. For example, last year, we were one of only 11 universities recog-

nized for being a top producer of Ful-

bright scholar fellowships and student fellowships. Mr. Robins had just this level of academic excellence in mind when he said he wanted us to be recog-

nized as one of the best small, private universities in the country.

In my tenure, we have built on decades of work by President Ayers and others who saw that we had a real opportunity to become more reflec-
tive of America. What I brought to the table was a commitment to use our increasing diversity to ensure that everyone here can thrive. Representational diversity is just the first step of a larger process if you want to be a truly inclusive, intercultural community. None of this change would be possible without the gift.

As president, I have to look ahead to the next 50 to 100 years. We’ve made very serious commitments — being need-blind and meeting demonstrated need, Richmond’s Promise to Virginia, and the Richmond Guar-

antee, for example. We must sustain these programs and develop others.

Robins, who came here on scholar-

ship, wanted his gift to encourage more alumni support. Our alumni are involved and dedicated in so many ways, but our yearly giving participa-
tion doesn’t match that level of ded-
ication. However, we’re making great progress with initiatives like our first-ever giving day in April, UR Here, which drew gifts from more than 2,300 donors.

The Robins family’s example and our experience over the last 50 years have demonstrated that continued giv-

ing by dedicated alumni remains critically important as we move forward. Marking this anniversary gives us an opportunity to bring home the notion that giving at every level is the founda-

tion on which we will continue build on this institution’s great promise.
Robins’ 1969 gift remains integral to the university today

E. Claiborne Robins repeatedly said that he wanted his 1969 gift to help the University of Richmond become “one of the finest small universities in the nation.” The history of the university over the last 50 years is, in many ways, the story of that pursuit. Here are six of the gift’s most lasting impacts:

1. IT CONTINUES TO RAISE OUR ASPIRATIONS.
   In an oral history interview with E. Bruce Heilman in 1983, Robins explained why he gave the 1969 gift. “As I was casting about to decide what, where we could make the greatest impact, I felt that University of Richmond had the greatest opportunity for outstanding success,” he said.
   With his gift, Robins gave the university the ability to begin asking how it could become among the nation’s very best. That question has guided Richmond’s strategic planning ever since.

2. IT ENCOURAGES INNOVATION AND STRATEGIC RISK-TAKING.
   The freedom to ask what’s possible inspires new thinking. It’s why Richmond launched the nation’s first school of leadership studies. It’s why this was the first university to guarantee every undergraduate funding for a summer research or internship experience. It’s why, when we learn that two-thirds of students study abroad, we ask what we can be doing for the other third — something we’re addressing now through a pilot program.
   Because of the gift and all that has followed, we’re able to examine everything we do — and envision what we could do — on our own terms.

3. IT NOURISHES A CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY AT ALL LEVELS.
   Robins hoped his gift would encourage more giving at all levels. He acknowledged the obvious, that only a small number of people can make gifts like his. But he was equally sure that the university is strongest with broad philanthropical support.
   One sign of this thinking is the name given to the new annual giving program that recognizes consistency: the Robins Society. Associating the Robins name with loyal giving regardless of amount reinforces the idea that everyone plays an important role in Richmond’s excellence.

4. IT ENCOURAGES FUTURE LEADERSHIP GIVING.
   “One of the most exciting things to me in the past 14 years has been how others have been caught up in this excitement,” Robins told Heilman. “They have seen the potential, and they have seen what is happening.”
   Although Robins didn’t say so, he probably had in mind the major donors who had recently made possible the Gottwald Center for the Sciences. Their example was followed by others whose names are inseparable from the university’s achievements today, such as Weinstein, Jepson, Queally, Walrath, and others.
   As Heilman put it in his conversation with Robins, “People think big if the example is large.”

5. IT SHOWS THE POWER OF INVESTING IN EACH STUDENT.
   “I have always believed that education is the greatest investment that any individual or corporation or foundation could possibly make,” Robins told Heilman. Robins might have been his own best example.
   We remember Robins and his family as donors of immense means, but that was not the case for the young Robins. He grew up poor and was a working commuter student who made ends meet at Richmond College with a scholarship and a job.
   Today’s policies on access and affordability make a Richmond education possible for thousands of students a lot like him. These policies are fundamental to the university’s character and promise today.

6. IT OPENS OUR DOORS MORE WIDELY TO THE COMMUNITY.
   Robins and his family have given more than $200 million to the university in support of a wide range of priorities, including some of the most visible ways we invite guests to take part in the life of the university.
   In just the 2018-19 academic year, 148,000 fans came to Robins Stadium and the Robins Center to see Spider student-athletes compete, as of late March. The Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature offers public exhibits and regularly hosts school groups on field trips.
   Theirs and others’ gifts to support UR’s public-facing facilities wouldn’t have followed the 1969 gift without ongoing confidence in the university’s potential. As Robins put it in 1983, “We have been able to see with our own eyes the tremendous accomplishments of the University of Richmond.” Subsequent gifts are evidence that others see it too.
Humanity’s eyes were fixed on Neil Armstrong’s moon landing July 20, 1969. The 50th anniversary makes clear just how much our world has changed.
As for Armstrong, he went on to teach aerospace engineering at the University of Cincinnati. Though he did some advertising campaigns for Chrysler and a few other firms, he mostly kept a low profile.

Those once mesmerized by NASA’s stillborn plans for lunar bases and manned flybys of Venus wanted more — so much more — out of Armstrong.

When he was chosen for Apollo 11, Armstrong was already one of the most talented test pilots in history. As Andrew Chaikin notes in his book A Man on the Moon, Armstrong “got his pilot’s license before he learned to drive,” then in the 1950s and ‘60s actually flew the X-15 rocket planes, supersonic fighter aircraft, and Gemini capsules that my NASA-obsessed peers glued together in 1:48 scale, following Sputnik in 1957.

After walking on the moon and right into the afterglow of fulfilling JFK’s promise, what more could America’s “first man” have done?

What if he had run for Senate? President? Could he have convinced an increasingly cynical and weary nation that Apollo was indeed a giant leap to something in space even greater?

Tom Wolfe, author of the epic account of the U.S. space program The Right Stuff, argued that “NASA had neglected to recruit a corps of philosophers.” Wolfe hoped that wordsmiths with the ability to excite and inspire might be the ones flying into space.

Wolfe liked the vision and ambition of Wernher von Braun, architect of the Saturn V moon rocket, who famously said, “I have learned to use the word ‘impossible’ with the greatest caution.” Unfortunately, the engineer had a bit of an image problem related to his Nazi past.

Armstrong, for his part, wasn’t the best with words. Even as he made his initial small step off the ladder, he seemed insanely focused national hero like Armstrong.

billionaires, I wonder if there’s a place for a humble yet

When Armstrong did speak, in the precise and succinct way one expects from a careful engineer, the crowd seemed to lean forward. It was him.

In our era of incessant self-promotion and celebrity billionaires, I wonder if there’s a place for a humble yet insanely focused national hero like Armstrong.

Ryan Gosling’s portrayal offers a glimpse of the Neil Armstrong we never really knew. Perhaps the film intended to inspire moviegoers with the sort of ambitious visions NASA had in the mid-1960s.

At the very least, it reminds us of a time when government functioned well enough to achieve something momentous. Could the same be done for reversing the effects of climate change? Or the more humble job of rebuilding our nation’s infrastructure?

For now, fixing potholes seems to be a job left for Domino’s Pizza.
Three-time Spider grad and criminal defense attorney Craig Cooley is back in court representing D.C. sniper Lee Boyd Malvo because of a recent Supreme Court decision on juvenile sentencing. Malvo’s crimes and notoriety will test ideas about children’s culpability and capacity for reform.
MANDATORY. A second decision, *Montgomery v. Louisiana* in 2016, clarified that the *Miller* ruling applies retroactively. As a result of these decisions, courts across the country have been engaged in proceedings to resentence inmates to whom the ruling applies. Some of the former juvenile defendants are now middle-aged and older, and some of their releases are inviting stories of redemption and second chances.

Bobby Hines was 15 when he received a mandatory sentence of life without the possibility of parole. He was an eighth-grader, “a small kid, just 5-foot-3,” according to the Associated Press, when he and two friends murdered 21-year-old James Warren in Detroit in 1989 in a drug dispute. His resentencing under *Miller* made him immediately eligible for parole, so in 2017, he walked out of prison older and, by all accounts, much wiser and deeply penitent at age 43.

Among his supporters were the father and the sister of his victim. At Hines’ parole hearing, Warren’s father spoke on Hines’ behalf, saying he had been punished enough. Warren’s sister met with Hines after his release for three hours. The AP published a photo of them hugging tearfully when it ended.

“To me,” she told the reporter, “forgiveness is up there with oxygen.”

Hines is perhaps the kind of offender that Supreme Court justice Elena Kagan had in mind when she wrote for the court’s majority in *Miller* that “children are constitutionally different from adults for purposes of sentencing and have diminished culpability and greater prospects...
Malvo’s arrest and trial coincided with his first meaningful separation from Muhammad in three years. The picture of him that emerged was of a highly impressionable and deeply obedient boy under the complete control of the profoundly disturbed and disgruntled Muhammad.

Muhammad had befriended Malvo and his mother on the Caribbean island of Antigua when Malvo was 14 years old. His mother then left him under Muhammad’s care when she emigrated to Florida. The pair moved from place to place together as Muhammad’s life disintegrated with a failed marriage, the loss of custody of his children, and other setbacks that embittered and emboldened him before culminating in the pair’s shooting spree.

“When we interviewed [Malvo], our belief was that he was under the spell of Muhammad and that would wear off as time went on,” Brad Garrett, an FBI agent who investigated the case, told The Washington Post in 2012.

This supposition, that Muhammad controlled Malvo, was part of the prosecution’s strategy when it tried Muhammad for one of the Virginia killings. Their problem was that much of the physical and eyewitness evidence linked Malvo, not Muhammad, to the crimes, according to an account of the trial by The New York Times. “The evidence against Mr. Malvo has made him virtually a shadow defendant in Mr. Muhammad’s trial,” the reporter wrote. “For the prosecution, it has meant trying to construct a story line for the jury that portrays Mr. Malvo as a puppet controlled by an often unseen master, Mr. Muhammad.”

Malvo made a similar impression of excessive deference on Cooley.

“He would never be a smart aleck,” Cooley said of their early conversations. “If you were saying things to him that he didn’t want to hear ... if you offered criticism of [Muhammad] or suggested that things that he had said to Lee were not accurate, Lee would never snap back at you. He would simply shut down.”

Cooley believes that the Virginia jury that chose life in prison without parole over the death penalty for Malvo might have offered an even lesser sentence had it been given the option. The Virginia jurors, Cooley told the Baltimore Sun for a story about the resentencing ruling, “opted to go as low as they could under the structure they were given on that date. ... They may have gone lower if they knew they could have.”

His client is now 34 but still small-statured. “He’s still a kid to me,” Cooley said. He estimates that, when they first met, Malvo was 5-foot-3-inches “and probably 115 pounds. ... He’s probably 5-foot-6 now, might be 150.”

Malvo is kept isolated at Red Onion State Prison, a Supermax site in southwestern Virginia, in part for his own protection. Cooley communicates with his client frequently, often by letter. During his visits to Red Onion, Malvo is heavily restrained.

“When they bring him, he’s in leg irons ... handcuffed with a belly chain around him, and on a leash,” Cooley said. “They sit right outside the door, and they run this leash, and they put him in the chair there. And I’m directly

for reform.” One reason for children’s diminished culpability, she noted, is their greater vulnerability “to negative influences and outside pressures,” including from their family and peers. For these and other reasons, Kagan and the justices who joined in her opinion concluded that sentencers may impose life sentences on juveniles but that the penalty may not be mandatory.

“Mandatory life without parole for a juvenile ... prevents taking into account the family and home environment that surrounds him — and from which he cannot usually extricate himself — no matter how brutal or dysfunctional,” Kagan wrote.

Cooley became Malvo’s defense attorney in 2003 after a phone call from Judge Jane Marum Roush, who was overseeing the case and wanted to appoint an experienced defense attorney. When she called, she suggested he talk it over with his family given the case’s public profile. The response from Cooley’s wife made it an easy decision.

“‘If you were saying things to him that he didn’t want to hear ... if you offered criticism of [Muhammad] or suggested that things that he had said to Lee were not accurate, Lee would never snap back at you. He would simply shut down.’”

The public announcement of Cooley’s appointment brought national reporters to his office and hordes of media trucks to the courthouse during his initial visit, but it did nothing to prepare him for his first meeting with his client waiting inside. His only awareness of the case was what he’d read in those media outlets.

“What I found was just a 17-year-old, in many ways considerably more respectful than most American 17-year-olds,” Cooley said. “In fact, that was something a lot of witnesses commented upon, that Lee was much more like a teenager from the 1950s in this country than he was a current teenager.”
“Our understanding is that he, given the chance, would not have chosen to take the same course again, but he can’t alter that.”

Cooley is not an opponent of the death penalty generally, but he advocated against its application to people who committed their crimes while juveniles up until the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional in 2005. Malvo’s 2003 trial, he believes, may have helped shape the court’s analysis of the nation’s evolving standards of decency in the ruling.

“If this case didn’t merit a death penalty, then perhaps no juvenile should be executed,” he said. “The jurors, in my mind, elevated us, elevated our humanity in our society with that verdict, and that affected me. It gave me even greater faith in our system.”

MALVO’S RESENTENCING HEARING WILL FURTHER TEST THE justice system’s — and the public’s — appetite for the arguments about juvenile vulnerability and diminished culpability.

“A lot of people say, ‘Well, clearly they don’t mean that someone like Malvo shouldn’t spend the rest of his life in prison,’” said Julie McConnell, director of Richmond Law’s Children’s Defense Clinic. “He’s one of the worst of the worst in many people’s minds.”

Through the clinic, she and her students offer pro bono representation to indigent youth throughout central Virginia. Based on her knowledge of Malvo’s case and Miller’s reasoning, she believes the courts have valid reason to reconsider Malvo’s fate.

She represented the first Virginia inmate resentenced under Miller, Azeem Majeed, who participated in a brutal murder in Norfolk in 1995 when he was 17. At his resentencing hearing, his two life sentences were reduced to approximately 29 years. With more than 20 years already served, he can now look forward to his release, is eligible to participate in re-entry programs, and has become “a voice for nonviolence, a voice for empathy for victims and restorative justice,” McConnell said, a point she underscored in local media interviews when he was resentenced.

“In his case, we have a very clear example of someone who committed very heinous crimes for which he feels incredible remorse, yet he has spent the entire time he has been in prison, for more than 20 years, without ever getting in trouble — not once,” she told reporters.

McConnell said that the analysis that led to Majeed’s resentencing applies equally in Malvo’s case, even given the horrifying nature of the sniper killings.

“[Majeed] and his co-defendants allegedly beat a man to death with a concrete block,” she said. “This is in no way a minor or insignificant crime. But what the Supreme Court has said is that even if the crime itself is horrific, you still need to look at the fact that they are young people whose brains are not fully developed, who have the potential to mature into someone that is better than that.”

Cooley argues that the mitigating circumstances of Malvo’s young life and subsequent remorse are too overwhelming to ignore.
“The bottom line was that Muhammad trained Lee as if he was a child soldier,” Cooley said. He even invited an expert on child soldiers to testify on Malvo’s behalf.

In such circumstances, “concepts of right and wrong are completely reversed,” Cooley said. “If the alpha male says, ‘We’re going to go into that village, and we’re going to kill every child in that village,’ that’s the right thing to do. It may seem to those of us looking from the outside to be a horrible thing to do, but for the child soldier, that’s exactly the right thing to do.”

Muhammad, he said, used his deep understanding of human nature to condition Malvo to follow orders and trust him completely. Witnesses at trial affirmed Muhammad’s charisma. His former wife called him “a pied piper,” and his oldest son testified that his father could persuade him “to do anything.” The son testified, “If my mother had not fought for me, it would have been me in that car instead of Lee Malvo.”

During Malvo’s years in prison, he has matured, Cooley said. “He got his high school diploma. He’s taken his college courses. He has done everything you would hope an inmate would do.”

Malvo expressed remorse in the last public interviews he gave, when media outlets ran stories coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the killings, in 2012. “I was a monster,” he told The Washington Post. “There is no rhyme or reason or sense.”

He said he has come to understand and regret the breadth of the devastation he caused. He was outwardly apologetic, the Post said, but also resigned to his inability to ever express sufficient remorse.

When a host of NBC’s Today show asked him about his victims, he said they should just try to forget about him.

“I was a monster. There is no rhyme or reason or sense.”

“Please do not allow my actions and the actions of Muhammad to hold you hostage and continue to victimize you for the rest of your life. … Do not give me or him that much power.”

Today also reached out to a family member of one of Malvo’s victims.

“We recognize that he was tremendously under the control of John Muhammad and he was, probably a good word would be brainwashed … and has had some years to recognize what he did,” said Bob Meyers, whose brother was killed at a gas station. “Our understanding is that he, given the chance, would not have chosen to take the same course again, but he can’t alter that.”

REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF MALVO’S RESENTENCING HEARINGS IN VIRGINIA, six other life sentences in Maryland will stand because in those cases, the judge had discretion; therefore, the sentences do not run afoul of Miller. Barring a new development there, Malvo’s lifetime incarceration is assured.

Nonetheless, Cooley will soon make arguments to a Virginia judge based on mitigation, remorse, and redemption. Similar arguments proved sufficiently persuasive in the lower-profile cases of Majeed and Hines. Can Malvo merit similar reconsideration?

Malvo’s case “is important for basically all other juveniles serving life without parole,” Cooley said. “How much of a benefit it will be to Lee is something else.”

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WHAT THEY DID

at camp

For the 10th year, 40 or so UR students will serve as counselors at Camp Kesem, a summer camp for children whose parents have cancer. The experience brings them closer to the kids, the community, and each other.
“MY CAMP NAME IS BAGEL,”
the girl who had reluctantly left her dad’s side whispered to a counselor she knew only as Franklin. Franklin, aka Lauren Costello, ’19, was hiding jitters of her own. Bagel was the first camper to arrive in their cabin, and it was Costello’s first year at Camp Kesem at Richmond, too.

Costello had recently chosen the name Franklin — everyone at this camp goes by a special camp pseudonym — in honor of her favorite childhood dog. Helping Bagel pick her camp name was one of Costello’s first acts during a weeklong respite for children who have a parent diagnosed with cancer.

Kesem literally means “magic” in Hebrew, and for its participants, CKUR is “Camp Magic.” It’s magic for the children who, at no cost to their families, spend a week in cabins in the woods with other kids just like them. It’s also magic for the approximately 40 UR students who devote a year’s worth of planning and fundraising to make it possible.

“I couldn’t help making comparisons [of] how her transformation during her first summer at camp mirrored my own,” Costello said of Bagel. “We were both put into a situation that pushed us out of our comfort zones [to] meet new people and grow as individuals.”

Camp Kesem began at Stanford University in 2000. Today, a community of Camp Kesems offers more than 116 camps for children across the country each summer. Ten years ago, this nationwide community sparked the interest of Christine Ghio Tauchen, ’09, who decided UR needed a chapter, too.

One of Tauchen’s closest friends from high school had been involved in Camp Kesem at Duke University. She began to look for Virginia chapters of Camp Kesem and discovered the University of Virginia’s camp. During her summer shadowing UVA’s camp, she got her camp name, Freckles. It didn’t make sense to her that there was no UR chapter.
“It was crazy to me because we have the Massey Cancer Center and all of these great hospitals and research centers around here, but they had never recruited east of Charlottesville,” Tauchen said. “I figured that there really had to be a need here.”

CKUR takes place for one week in August each year at the Westview on the James — 780 acres of rolling hills on a mile of riverfront. The kids who attend CKUR have worries most other kids don’t have to think about: fear and uncertainty about their parent’s disease, frequent disruptions to accommodate medical visits, and frequently more responsibilities at a young age.

For the first camp, in 2009, Tauchen, along with her co-director and team of coordinators, planned and conducted outreach into the community for 18 months, right up until the first day they arrived at camp, even bringing in therapy dogs for the kids to play with. When it finally opened, Tauchen stood in a large recreational room with a fireplace and finally relaxed as she saw the kids thrilled to see the dogs.

“I breathed a sigh of relief and thought, ‘Wow, we did this,’” she said. “It meant a lot to me just to see something that we’d worked on for 18 months unfold in front of me.”

That day in 2009, Tauchen took a photo with two campers and the therapy dogs. The two girls in the photo have grown with Camp Kesem and spoke at CKUR’s annual Make the Magic fundraiser in March. They will be at the 10-year anniversary camp this summer. The moment in the photo remains one of Tauchen’s fondest memories from CKUR, a reminder of the close-knit community she helped build.

Kesem’s close-knit community was one of the most attractive things of CKUR when Skylar Gray, ’15 — camp name Hippo — joined as a counselor his sophomore year. Gray had seen how his classmates enjoyed CKUR and wanted to experience the magic himself. Despite his excitement, Gray said his first day at camp was “nerve-wracking.”

“I remember thinking, ‘I hardly know anyone in this organization and can barely figure out what I’m doing next weekend, yet someone wants me to be responsible for children?’” he said. “Seems like a recipe for disaster.”
As a counselor in a cabin of 6- to 8-year-old boys, Gray held "cabin chats" each night to recap the day and focus on specific topics. For one night, the camp invites all campers and counselors to share personal experiences related to the reason they are at CKUR, a parent’s cancer. This night, called empowerment, gives each child an opportunity to share his or her own story. Gray believes this is where the close-knit community is solidified.

During Gray’s first camp, one of his campers shared something he said he will never forget. The child’s parents were using his week at CKUR as a vacation, and he was scared that they wouldn’t be able to reach him if something happened to one of them — and what if they didn’t come back from vacation?

“My heart broke,” Gray said. “Children shouldn’t have to face those fears, and especially not alone. And in that moment, seeing his peers rally around him and saying, ‘Hey, I’ve felt that too, but we’ll get through this together,’ made me understand how important it was that we all were there together. There is light. There is magic that can be found, and we can find it through each other. We can find it through ourselves.”

Brittany Woo, ’18, was a first-year counselor during Gray’s year as co-director. Later, she was part of the first team to hold a successful Make the Magic fundraiser at Richmond and was co-director for the 2018 camp.

“Until stories and experiences are shared, you really don’t know what someone’s going through,” Woo said. “Camp Kesem has opened up the hearts of so many people in a way that they are willing to share those experiences and stories with sometimes complete strangers.”

For 2019 co-director Sean Clair, ’19, empowerment was an experience unlike anything he has been through before. “I felt like camp had been reinvented for me,” he said, “and I was awestruck at the courage and resolve of all of the campers and counselors.”

After UR graduation, counselors have the opportunity to stay directly involved through an advisory committee, as Tauchen did for several years. Their experiences at CKUR often stay with them through their careers and lives. For Costello, CKUR solidified her career path.

“Camp Kesem has given me a sense of purpose,” she said. “I know that there is so much greater out there than myself. I am currently on the path to become a child psychologist, and that is something I became in tune with honestly due to the amazing work that our medical health professionals do during camp.”

For Woo, who now works in the development office at UR, the lessons she took from the kids affected her the most. When Woo began volunteering with CKUR, she thought of the time she spent with a non-profit golf organization, The First Tee, during her childhood and how it became a second home for her. She chose “Birdie” as her camp name.

“I still think about them and how strong and resilient they are, and that makes me want to be a better person,” Woo said. “These kids have just gone through so much more than I have, yet they’re impacting me, and they don’t even know it.”

Tauchen, who now recruits at an accounting firm in
Richmond, says that looking back, she never knew how much CKUR would end up influencing the counselors.

“I get so excited when I meet students who are involved with Camp Kesem — just the enthusiasm that you hear from those students, who don’t even know that I’m involved,” Tauchen said. “I never quite anticipated that piece of it. It says a lot about UR and the students who have brought it to this next level.”

“HEY, YOU KNOW THE STORY/CALL THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD/THIS IS KESEM TERRITORY,” Woo chants. She quickly acknowledges that Clair and Costello, the current co-directors, can yell the CKUR chant much better.

There is no typical CKUR student. The experience crosses boundaries of social groupings and stereotypes, pulling from across the entire UR community, Woo said.

“Camp Kesem isn’t just a sorority. It isn’t just a fraternity. It isn’t just a sports team,” she says. “At UR, sometimes we’ll stick with our groups, but at camp there are no groups. Everyone is one big group. There’s no boundaries, there’s no limits, there’s no hatred. It’s just all pure joy and happiness, all in one week.”

Woo remembers feeling nervous going to her first camp because of the many people she didn’t know. She was anxious about whether she could connect with the campers, and many of her fellow counselors were strangers to her. But by the end of the week, several of those strangers had already become close friends.

“Little did I know that these fellow counselors and campers would end up being some of the people I’m most connected to,” she said.

Although Giving Tuesday — the Tuesday following Thanksgiving — officially kicks off fundraising and raises $80,000 to $100,000 each year, CKUR never really ends. Kesem is a 365-day, job on top of typical schoolwork and extracurriculars, Gray jokes. Official training with the regional director begins in the fall, summer counselors are selected over winter break, and general meetings start early in the spring semester. On top of that, there is counselor training, the Make the Magic fundraiser, and several other initiatives throughout the year.

Part of the reason camp becomes so rewarding is that it marks the realization of so many months of hard work within the CKUR community. And while CKUR creates this comforting community on campus, it also pushes counselors out of their comfort zones in the “Richmond bubble” to become part of the wider community.

Costello says counselors have attended Kesem Friends and Family Days each semester, campers’ games and competitions, and sometimes even funerals. “We provide them that constant support.”

Though the bond within camp is vital to its success, the connection to the Richmond community is just as important. Tauchen, who now lives in the Richmond area, has experienced CKUR from both the inside and the outside. Without the bond between the counselors and the community, she says, CKUR would not work. Her first year, Tauchen spent hours reaching out to the local community to establish CKUR relationships with nurses and social workers, who helped spread the word about the camp.

Ten years later, the community aspect of CKUR is just as important — if not more — in establishing the funding and support for the camp to continue growing.

This past year, Costello and Clair have worked with their coordinator team to continue these relationships, whether distributing flyers at cancer centers or setting up meetings with oncologists and schools.

THIS SPRING, ALMOST THREE YEARS AFTER MEETING BAGEL, Costello busily planned the 2019 camp — CKUR’s 10th — with her co-director, Clair. After being chosen midway through her junior year so she could spend six months shadowing the directors ahead of her, she was finally in the last stretch of getting the 2019 camp finalized.

“Cupcake! Cookie Monster! Lance! Wolf!” Costello shouted out the names of campers during a general body meeting as Clair passed out cards and markers. The counselors wrote letters to each camper, sharing how excited they were about the 10th CKUR this summer. Though she had administrative tasks to finish as camp quickly approached, Costello was excited about being reunited with campers she has seen grow from year to year.

Bagel, she already knew, planned to be there.

Stacey Dec, ‘20, who began working as a writer in university communications her sophomore year, is a political science and journalism major from Northern Virginia.
Scene change

As a lifelong Richmond resident, Nadine Marsh-Carter, W'86 and L'95, has had a front-row seat to her home-town’s development. That includes her alma mater.

The daughter of civil rights attorney Henry Marsh, Richmond’s first African American mayor and former state senator, she didn’t consider attending the university until late in high school, when she became aware of the Cigna Scholarship program (now the Oliver Hill Scholars), which targeted prospective students of color.

“The campus, it just captivates everyone, whether you’re a little kid from [Richmond neighborhood] Church Hill or someone from up north,” she said. “I chose the school because it suited what was good for me — a smaller campus, smaller classes, professors who really cared, opportunity for exposure.”

That doesn’t mean she didn’t encounter the same jitters as many of her peers — and some different ones — when she transitioned from a predominantly African American high school to living in a Westhampton College residence hall with only one other black student.

“Richmond was the antithesis of my cultural experience,” said Marsh-Carter, now CEO of the Children’s Home Society, a state-chartered adoption agency. “And it was intimidating to me because I feared, ‘Will I fit in? Will I be different?’

“There were times in class when I felt like I had to be the voice of the people,” she continued. “It happens when you’re so different from everyone else. And yet, it gave me opportunities for leadership and growth.”

Marsh-Carter, who cited the Bonner Scholars program and the presence of UR Downtown as recent UR initiatives that have impressed her, has taken note of how the university has changed since her time on campus.

“It’s a very different place now, and that’s great,” she said. “Because the university has so much to offer the community.”
Lessons for life
This spring, the Robins School of Business Alumni Hall of Fame inducted its fourth honoree, Bobby Ukrop, B’69.

Ukrop is the chair and CEO of Ukrop’s Homestyle Foods, which produces prepared foods and baked goods for retailers in Virginia and adjacent states. In addition to his 40-year career at Ukrop’s, he has also served in a variety of leadership roles at UR, including service on the board of trustees and the alumni association board.

Surrounded by family and friends at the induction, Ukrop reflected on lessons learned and the faculty who taught them. “You have taught me the value of purpose,” he said, “and I am incredibly grateful.”

Spider in the House
There’s a new Spider in Congress. Ben Cline, L’07, was elected U.S. representative for Virginia’s 6th District.

Cline previously served eight terms in the Virginia House of Delegates. He replaces Bob Goodlatte, for whom he was chief of staff.

A career-long pursuit
For nearly a half-century, Wayne Talley, R’65, has carved out a niche as a leading expert in maritime business. His decades of diligence paid off when he was selected as a co-recipient of the 2018 Onassis Prize in Shipping.

The honor, which Talley described as “the highlight of my academic career as a maritime economist,” recognizes him for his academic research in shipping. Talley is a professor of maritime and supply chain management and executive director of the Maritime Institute at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

Old sport, new tech
Working for a company that uses technology to help golfers lower their scores has more meaning than you might expect for Tom Williams, ’99.

Williams is executive vice president of strategic partnerships at Stamford, Connecticut-based Arccos, which Fast Company named one of the most innovative companies in 2018.

“Golf is a game you can play until you’re very old,” Williams said. “People do that because they’re enjoying being outside and being with their friends and family and the pursuit of being better. We’re helping them have that enjoyment on the golf course through the power of data.”

Arccos produces tiny sensors that are either screwed into the top of a golf club’s grip or embedded into it. It uses artificial intelligence to gather data — including a golf course’s layout, weather and elevation, and the golfer’s prior shots — to provide strategy to the golfer.

As for the company’s name, the word “arccos” is the inverse of the cosine mathematical function.

Williams leads Arccos’ partnerships with companies such as Microsoft and golf club makers Cobra, Puma, and Ping. He attributes some of his professional success to Richmond. “[We] were coming out of the university having a very well-rounded concept of what it takes to work hard, work independently, and deliver a strong product at the end,” Williams said.

— Tom Kertscher

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

INNOVATION

QUOTATION

“You have to think about one arm then the other arm until you get to France.”

COURTNEY PAULK, L’00, on her thought process when swimming the English Channel. Paulk is the first female president of Richmond law firm Hirschler.

A day on the links or market research? Sometimes they’re one and the same for Tom Williams, ’99, right.
Beginning with a group effort with "The Trench," the nickname for he and his fellow flight controllers, von Ehrenfried has become a fairly prolific writer.

As a solo author, he's written two educational comic books and six books on aviation and space: one on high-altitude flight; another on nuclear terrorism (he also worked in nuclear safeguards); and three about his NASA experiences, including a pair about "Cave Man to Cave Martian," which was published in March.

A FEW SMALL STEPS FOR MANFRED

After a leap of faith as a young Richmond alumnus led to an audacious start to his NASA career, Manfred “Dutch” von Ehrenfried, R’60, was a witness to — and played important roles in — historic moments in American history.

In 1961, high school physics teacher Manfred “Dutch” von Ehrenfried, R’60, walked into NASA’s offices at Langley Research Center uninvited. He ended up working for Project Mercury, the first human space-flight program in American history.

“I just walked in the door and told them I was a recent graduate,” said von Ehrenfried, a physics major. “They were looking for science types and anybody with a science degree.”

Von Ehrenfried’s nerve — his initial reason for visiting Langley was to join the Air Force as a pilot — served him well throughout his NASA career. After learning space communications at Goddard Space Flight Center in Washington, D.C., his first mission was at the Mercury Control Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, for John Glenn’s historic 1962 orbit of the earth.

“We had signals that said that the heat shield might have come off and that he would burn up on reentry,” he said. “So my first mission was communicating with the remote tracking stations, trying to figure out where that signal came from and whether it was a false one.”

Between missions in his early days at NASA, von Ehrenfried worked in astronaut testing as an Apollo pressure suit test subject, taking on such tasks as wearing Neil Armstrong’s suit in a vacuum chamber and flying in zero-gravity aircraft.

“I was the sensor operator on the NASA high-altitude aircraft, so I ran all the infrared spectrometers, scanners, and cameras at high altitude,” he said. “Most of our missions were 65,000 feet or so. I got to 70,000 feet in one flight.”

As his career progressed, he became a branch chief, which involved writing operations manuals for astronauts to deploy lunar experiments on the moon’s surface, and worked in the early space station program — formally, the Space Station Projects Office — in the 1980s and ’90s. But his time in mission control resonates with him most viscerally.

“Now, at age 83 looking back, that’s got to be the epitome of my career,” he said. “These were all pretty emotional flights for people, especially those of us in flight operations.”

“I was there for the first space walk with [astronaut] Ed White. I was there for a lot of firsts,” added von Ehrenfried, who lives outside of Austin, Texas. “We look back on it now a little bit differently in that then, it was just trying to achieve [President] Kennedy’s goal and realizing that we’re actually having somebody leave the planet.”

He may never have been a part of it if he had not had the gumption to see whether NASA was hiring almost 60 years ago.

“Sometimes the good Lord tells you to turn left instead of right, and I just walked right in the door.”
COMMUNITY

Chemistry repeating itself

In 2016, when Griffin Myers, ’20, scanned her first-year fall course schedule with her father, one professor’s name jumped out: Abrash.

Abrash is Sam Abrash, an associate professor of chemistry and environmental studies who has been teaching at Richmond since 1990. That year, on the occasion of his first lecture for his first course as a professor at UR, one of his students was Griffin’s dad, Trevor Myers, R’91.

Trevor was happy for the symmetry, but Griffin, well … her feelings “were mixed,” she admitted. “I remember the first day I walked into Dr. Abrash’s office for help, he recounted that my dad got the highest score on his p-chem [physical chemistry] test that Dr. Abrash had seen to date,” she said. “I was worried I would disappoint both the professor and my father.”

Trevor, who became an anesthesiologist, saw things differently. “After all these years, he’s still here helping out my family, helping out my daughter,” he said.

Physical chemistry with Abrash was Trevor’s toughest course in his major, he said, but what he recalls most is the hours he spent in Abrash’s office. “I remember his infinite patience with me,” he said. “I asked a lot of questions. I knew he would go out of his way to help her the same way he helped me.”

The prediction proved true. “As I got to know Dr. Abrash, I quickly realized what an incredible resource I had,” Griffin, a biology and English major, said. “I still seek him out as an adviser.”

CREAM OF THE CROP At halftime of the men’s basketball team’s Feb. 9 home victory, two of the most well-known Spider student-athletes in Richmond’s history added another accolade to their crowded trophy cases. Leland Melvin, R’86, and Mary Sue Terry, W’69, received the first-ever Spider Athletics Alumni Achievement awards. Melvin, a football wide receiver at Richmond and NFL draft pick, went on to a career as a NASA astronaut. Terry, who played basketball and field hockey as a Spider, became the first woman to hold state-wide office in Virginia when she was elected attorney general in 1985.

HONORS

BOOKS

YOU CAN’T DRIVE YOUR CAR TO YOUR OWN FUNERAL
ANNE MARIE HANCOCK, W’68
A former television personality, Hancock tells the story of her mother’s cancer diagnosis and its aftermath. Her transparency prompted a Detroit Free Press reviewer to write, “You will be emotionally moved.”

REACH FOR MORE:
A JOURNEY FROM LOSS TO LOVE AND FULFILLMENT
DAVID SZUMOWSKI, R’67
After being blinded under fire in Vietnam, Szumowski went on to great success in the legal profession. His memoir has been billed as “a remarkable story of one man’s resilience, perseverance, faith, and courage.”

LOCAL SPEED
SUSAN PEPPER ROBBINS, W’64
Robbins, who teaches writing at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia, has won awards such as the Deep South Prize for her fiction. “Susan weaves tragedy, urgency, and true-to-life characters with ease,” one reviewer writes about her latest novel, featuring a 12-year-old narrator and protagonist.

THE FREE EXERCISE OF RELIGION IN AMERICA: ITS ORIGINAL CONSTITUTIONAL MEANING
ELLIS WEST, R’58
West, a UR professor emeritus, closely examines the First Amendment’s religion clause. “The long chapters are superbly researched and handle the state provisions on religious liberty much better than anything I know,” writes a reviewer.

STUDENT TEACHING

“My dad did something very significant for me,” Abrash told Griffin in one of their first meetings. As a first-year professor in 1990, Abrash didn’t know whether it was wise to take days off to observe Jewish holidays. “You should honor your religion,” Trevor told him. Abrash has taken the days off ever since.

Griffin (left) and Trevor Myers

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NOTES

We welcome your news. Send information to your class secretary or directly to the magazine at classnotes@richmond.edu. Or you may mail it to the magazine at Purnear Hall • 118 UR Drive • University of Richmond, VA 23173. Please include your class year and, if appropriate, maiden name. For your children, please include birth dates rather than ages. Photographs of alumni are welcome and encouraged. Please note that the magazine does not publish news of engagements or pregnancies. Information may take up to two issues to publish. Class notes do not appear on the magazine’s website.

The magazine uses undergraduate degree designations for graduates through 1992, and law, graduate, and honorary degree designations for all years.

A Robinson School of Business
B School of Professional and Continuing Studies
C Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
GB Richard S. Reynolds Graduate School of Business
GC Graduate School of Professional and Continuing Studies
H Honorary Degree
L School of Law
R Richmond College
W Westhampton College

Class notes are available only in the print edition. To submit your news and photos, contact your class secretary or email us at classnotes@richmond.edu.

IN MEMORIAM
Lorette Leong is dead. Let her memory forever rest. She was a great person and a true friend.

IN MEMORIAM
'45

IN MEMORIAM
'46 Dues after the 90s, they were never late. Let her memory forever rest.

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'47 Dues after the 90s, they were never late. Let her memory forever rest.

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'50 Lorette Leong is dead. Let her memory forever rest. She was a great person and a true friend.
For information about photos, see:
1. Mary DeVilbiss Barton, W’51
2. Robert “Bob” Slis, B’66
3. Laura Lee Hankins Chandler, W’74
4. Leo “Buddy” Whitlow, B’76
5. William “Charlie” Lindsey, R’86
6. Elizabeth Salley Vittone, B’91
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"Seventy years ago, we were young women getting to know each other and the university life."

—Lu Angell Soukup, W'52

"Seventy years ago, we were young women getting to know each other and the university life."

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Her Irish eyes still smiling

In early May, a few weeks before her 90th birthday, BettyAnn Dillon, W’49, boarded a plane bound for
Ireland to see one of her favorite trios, the Celtic Tenors. Her reason was simple: “I’m one of their
groupies.”

The distance she traveled to get there is far greater than the miles she flew over the Atlantic Ocean.
In November 2018, Dillon and her daughter Sandy Miller were on their way to a small Baptist
church in Mecklenburg County, Virginia, that Dillon’s grandparents helped establish. On the
way, an oncoming truck crossed into their lane and hit them head on. Dillon came to quickly, but her
daughter did not survive.

“In the months that followed, Dillon’s consider-
able volunteer work gave way to more immediate
concerns: her grief, a crushed wrist, broken ribs,
various leg injuries, and a concussion. But her inner
determination, guided by her religious faith, did not
waver. Within months, she was scheduling commit-
tee meetings around physical therapy appointments.
“I’ve always defined myself as willing hands,”
she said. “They’ve never been empty. I try to live in
such a way that somebody will say, ‘Gee, how does
she do that?’”

Aside from athletics, Dillon has held just about
every volunteer position the university has to offer,
including trustee. The best thing she learned at
Westhampton was really two things, she said.
“One was to roll with the punches, and the other
is there’s always something coming along. God will
look after you.”

“It makes no rational sense to take the 55-year-
old and leave the 89-year-old,” she said. “The
general answer is, ‘Well, there’s something else he
wants you to do,’ to which my response is, ‘Well, I
wish he’d hurry up and tell me what it is.’”

Until she knew, there was that trip to Ireland to
take.

— Matthew Dewald

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“Hard to believe it’s our 60th. Where did the time go?”

—Mary Mac Thomas Moran, W’59

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Holding court

Fanny Crenshaw probably didn’t envision games broadcast on television or athletic scholarships, among other developments, when she started coaching women’s basketball at Westhampton College in 1919.

Fanny Crenshaw probably didn’t envision games broadcast on television or athletic scholarships, among other developments, when she started coaching women’s basketball at Westhampton College in 1919.

Among Richmond’s many anniversaries being celebrated this academic year — the Spider nickname (125 years), the WILL* program (40 years), the enrollment of the first African American residential student, and the transformative gift from E. Claiborne Robins, R’31 (both 50 years) — is 100 years of women’s basketball.

The legacy Crenshaw started in women’s basketball at Richmond was demonstrated this season at a Feb. 24 home win over La Salle. To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the sport, former Spider women’s basketball players from across generations were honored.

“I really appreciate [the university] respecting women in the game,” said Lauren Tolson, ’16 and G’18. Tolson, who played for the Spiders between 2012 and 2017 (she redshirted for a season due to injury and played a fifth year as a graduate student while earning a master’s degree), now works for her alma mater as a user support specialist at Boatwright library.

“I’ve met alums who played in previous years, and their experiences are pretty cool to listen to compared to mine because it’s always evolving, always changing,” she said. “I just really appreciate the women before us who put those blueprints down and kept paving the way. I’m glad I was able to be a part of that as well.”

Aaron Roussell, hired as head women’s basketball coach in April, will look to build on the sport’s long tradition at Richmond. With facilities upgrades such as the Queally Athletics Center and the student-athlete development center at Millhiser Gymnasium in the works, the university’s commitment to women’s basketball is evident.

This magazine isn’t in the business of predicting sporting results, but given Roussell’s track record of success, odds are his teams will write a new chapter in the ongoing story of women’s basketball at Richmond.

YOUTH MOVEMENT

The future is bright for Spider women’s basketball. The 15-player 2018–19 roster featured nine freshmen and sophomores.

There will also be an infusion of new talent. Incoming recruits Angel Burgos, a guard, and forward Elaina Chapman — high school teammates at Trinity Episcopal School in Richmond — were rated two of the top high school players in Virginia.
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From the edge of the Camp Fire to Boatwright Drive, we Spiders always stay together.”

—Charles Geshekter, R’65

If it’s important to you, it’s important to us.

Spider class notes have been part of this magazine since 1936. Send us yours.

Random Spider encounters • Births and deaths • New degrees and jobs — retirements, too! • Fabulous vacations • Weekend getaways • Classmate reunions • Community service • Weddings and moves • Job losses, setbacks, and fresh starts of all kinds • Revelations, revelry, and reflections • Photos, photos, and more photos • Simple notes to say hello

EMAIL US AT: CLASSNOTES@RICHMOND.EDU
CHRISTOPHER BOLLENBACH, R’89

Duty to serve

As the co-founder and CEO of Bottega Louie — a popular Italian restaurant, gourmet market, and French patisserie in downtown Los Angeles — Christopher Bollenbach, R’89, is a successful entrepreneur and restaurateur.

Despite never spending a dollar on advertising or public relations, Bottega Louie is the most reviewed restaurant on Yelp — worldwide. It has become a favorite of locals and out-of-towners by providing guests with a high-end dining experience at a reasonable price — a concept Bollenbach calls “accessible luxury.”

“We’ve driven all of our resources into providing a consistent product that’s very high-quality, fine food,” Bollenbach said. “We take a very serious approach to our guests and the type of experiences they have.”

Bollenbach has applied a similar focus to philanthropy.

In September 2018, Face Forward, a nonprofit dedicated to providing reconstructive surgery and emotional support to those disfigured as a result of domestic violence or other criminal acts, recognized him for his ongoing commitment to improving the lives of survivors. Face Forward is just one of the many beneficiaries of Bollenbach’s generosity.

Chairman of the Bollenbach Family Scholarship Fund and a trustee at his high school alma mater, he also lends his support to causes such as the Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles, Autism Speaks, and the Academy of Business Leadership. Growing up in a “philanthropically oriented” family, Bollenbach understands the importance of giving back.

“Education is critical to the world around us; it helps promote growth in economies and communities,” Bollenbach said. “Private philanthropy creates a real basis for honest giving.

“I was provided with so many advantages growing up, and what I learned at that age in my life was invaluable,” he added. “I now have a duty to turn around and provide my time, effort, and money to help others who are less fortunate.”

— Cheryl Spain
Detail therapy

Imagine being unable to tell your mom you love her. You want to, of course, but you don’t have the communication skills to do so. For many children and adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), this is their reality.

Melinda Moore, ’99, works to help those with ASD conquer these challenges and so many others.

Early in her career, the Richmond-based Moore recognized the prevailing need for a treatment plan focused on intensive therapy. “Often, plans offer only a few hours per week of outpatient therapy, but so many cases require more — up to 20 hours per week of intensive intervention,” said Moore, who earned a doctorate in counseling psychology from VCU.

Nine years ago, Moore and her husband, Cedric Moore Jr., opened Spectrum Transformation Group, the first licensed applied behavior analysis provider in Virginia. This intensive treatment is highly customizable and helps those with ASD learn skills, improve communication, and understand the emotions of those around them.

The Moores’ business quickly grew to the point that Spectrum had a yearslong waitlist for treatment. In March, they celebrated an important milestone: that Spectrum had a yearslong waitlist for treatment.

In March, they celebrated an important milestone: that Spectrum had a yearslong waitlist for treatment. Unmet need is a big problem for the Moores and their colleagues.

“Our vision has come true,” she said. “I walk into our new sensory playroom, complete with ball pits and play iGloos for the kids, and I can’t help but think, ‘This is exactly what we envisioned.’”

Moore looks forward to helping more of her clients achieve life-changing breakthroughs — whether it’s a young adult establishing independence with her first solo apartment or a child finally verbalizing to his mother that he loves her.

“When we can help kids bond with their parents, and their parents can bond back in a way that both understand — that’s huge,” Moore said. “That’s the best feeling in the world.”

— Brian Ivasauskas

MELINDA MOORE, ’99

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“Amazing profs and classmates. I am still using the notes, 55 years later, of some of these professors.”

—Bill Greenwood, R’66
"At our age, it is so special to now be called Gramma and Papa. We are so blessed. Looking forward to seeing everyone for our 50th."

—Anne Larson Ferguson, W’69

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'74 SEE YOU AT REUNION WEEKEND MAY 31–JUNE 2, 2019

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Capturing ‘all walks of life’

During his senior year, Clay Tweel, ’03, came across a dilemma many undergraduates experience: What do I want to do with my degree?

A history major, Tweel had taken a few film studies courses, written his senior thesis on World War II movies, and interned at a film studio. A few months after graduation, he helped with the production of Cry Wolf, a thriller filmed at UR. These experiences were enough to convince Tweel to move to Los Angeles to start his career as a documentary filmmaker.

Today, Tweel has directed several films, including the award-winning Gleason, about a former NFL player with Lou Gehrig’s disease, and Out of Omaha, which followed the lives of twin brothers in Nebraska for eight years. Most recently he co-directed the popular Netflix docuseries The Innocent Man, based on novelist John Grisham’s nonfiction book about two men who sat on death row for crimes they did not commit.

“A lot of my work is through the lens of a particular character,” Tweel said. “And through their experiences, the audience is able to see and interpret topics of discussion.”

On any given project, Tweel combs through thousands of documents (more than 20,000 for The Innocent Man), watches hours of film (more than 12,000 hours of home videos for Gleason), and captures the stories of his subjects — all while trying to juggle several projects and maintain a work-life balance with his young son. During the making of Out of Omaha, for example, he finished three other films and a docuseries.

Sharing the untold stories of people from “all walks of life” is what motivates Tweel.

“Understanding that people are all similarly flawed and beautifully unique is a pathway for viewers to learn something about themselves while safely exploring someone else,” he said. “If I can get close to doing that, then I count that as a success.”

— Stacey Dec, ’20

2019 SPRING/SUMMER
TIM BEZBATCHENKO, ’04

Crew chief

At the start of 2018, Tim Bezbatchenko, ’04, was in Toronto, 300 miles away from his hometown team, as he followed news that it planned to depart for another city. At the start of 2019, he was the team’s president, helping it stay and succeed.

Bezbatchenko is president of the Columbus Crew, the first of Major League Soccer’s original 10 franchises, a distinction it earned in 1996 on the strength of 11,500 season ticket deposits and a plan to build the nation’s first soccer-specific stadium. As Crew’s new president, Bezbatchenko will help lead the construction of the team’s next stadium, one piece of a major investment by new owners who bought the team in part to prevent relocation.

“Growing up in central Ohio, I have followed Columbus Crew SC since Day One, and my parents have been longtime season ticket members,” he said. “To have the opportunity to return to Ohio and proudly serve as president of the charter member of Major League Soccer is an honor and an immense point of pride for myself and my family.”

MLS’s popularity has boomed in recent years. The league’s average attendance in 2017–18 outpaced the NBA and NHL, and MLS teams in Atlanta and Seattle outdrew their cities’ NFL teams over their respective seasons. After a century of fits and starts, soccer has become a major sport in America.

Bezbatchenko has helped create this success. After a terrific career at Richmond, he played professionally and then went to law school, but he quickly found a place in MLS league offices, rising to senior director of player relations and competition. From there, he moved to league member Toronto FC, where, as general manager he oversaw soccer operations before taking over at Columbus.

“The future is bright for this club, which has such storied history,” Bezbatchenko said. “In the near future, Crew SC will have state-of-the-art stadium and training facility projects underway that will help showcase the upward trajectory of this organization and the sport itself.” — Matthew Dewald

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“Wore [my] mud shoes and golf rain suit with five layers underneath and carried an umbrella for two days in Disney World the week before Christmas. Cannot disappoint the grands.”

—Beverly Tisdale Kee, W’75

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I’m sure they didn’t know what to expect. I told my dad I’d give it one year ... and 31 years later, I was still running the business.”

—Kathleen Kruder Turner, W’85

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The compassion dividend

As much as Oscar Holmes IV, G’05, wants his students to excel professionally, he’s equally zealous about them maintaining a strong moral compass.

“I hope that I help in creating compassionate business leaders — people who not only have the business acumen to lead and manage well, but who realize what they do is really important,” said Holmes, a native of Walkerton, a small town in King and Queen County, Virginia. "Decisions that they make can impact thousands, if not millions of people."

An assistant professor of management and director of access and outreach for business education on the Camden, New Jersey, campus of Rutgers University’s School of Business, Holmes uses innovative strategies to illustrate how there’s room for different approaches — and types of people — in the business world.

For example, in his organizational behavior course, Holmes developed a civic engagement component in which students partner with local and national nonprofits to help raise funds and awareness. And as the director of the Rutgers University Student Executive program, he recruits local high school students from backgrounds underrepresented in business majors, introduces them to business leaders, and has them pitch business ideas in a Shark Tank-style competition, all over the course of nine weeks in the summer.

"Many times, underrepresented students like to go into helping professions just based off of our cultural affinity to help our communities, which is a great passion, great endeavor," said Holmes, 36, a Poets & Quants "Best 40 Under 40 Professors" selection in 2018. "If they get trained in a school of business so that they can graduate and then really make an impact in many of these companies and organizations," he added, "then they can be in leadership roles and make even more dramatic impacts on their communities."
If it’s important to you, it’s important to us.

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2019 SPRING/SUMMER 69
Behind the diagnosis

“Each cell tells a story,” said Marissa White Daniels, ‘09, explaining the life-changing assessments she makes. A surgical pathologist at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Daniels examines and diagnoses patient tissues and, if they are malignant, provides oncologists and surgeons with the information they need to determine the best course of patient care.

“I have the unfortunate job of diagnosing a lot of patients with cancer,” she said. “Sometimes they’re not advanced; sometimes they are. As the pathologist who’s looking at glass slides, the challenge is to make sure you stay connected to the patient even though you may never actually interact.”

Interested in medicine as a Richmond biology major, Daniels focused on pathology at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta.

“With internal medicine, you’re often relying on laboratory values,” said Daniels, a member of the Spiders’ track and field team as an undergraduate. “As surgeons, you’re relying on appearance. The pathologist actually renders the diagnosis.”

After graduating from medical school, Daniels was a chief resident in anatomic and clinical pathology at Johns Hopkins and did a fellowship in surgical pathology, all while completing her proud- est accomplishment — the birth of her son.

Daniels has seen cases some doctors have only read about in books. She recalled, for example, a patient undergoing immunotherapy treatment for cancer. When Daniels was given the patient’s slides, she discovered only scar tissue.

“The patient had a complete pathologic response, meaning that the tumor literally melted away and was gone,” Daniels said. “It was a quite remarkable response … and a very rewarding moment that I’ll never forget.”

Now an assistant professor of pathology specializing in general surgical pathology and breast pathology, Daniels supports her trainees’ development as professors and mentors did for her. “Fourteen-year-old Marissa could have never imagined that as professors and mentors did for her. “Fourteen-

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For information about photos, see:
17. Mark White, ’08
18. Reilly Moore, ’11 and L’16
19. John Stewart, ’12
20. Kristen Bailey, ’14
21. Olivia Karahan, ’16
22. Lauren Tolson, ’16 and G’19
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**“Welcomed [our] first child, daughter Charlotte Blue, future class of ’41 Spider.”**

—Megan Myers Summers, ’05
When Yichi Zhang, '13, is wearing a T-shirt, it's impossible not to notice his left arm. He has a full sleeve of tattoos, which isn't an uncommon sight these days, especially in the millennial generation.

But fellow Richmond alumni will immediately recognize the designs inked on him, including the university's shield, a spider web, the school mascot, even the façade of the Robins School of Business. Originally set on a career on Wall Street, Zhang had a change of heart before graduating, realizing he wanted to pursue more creative endeavors.

"The moment I decided I didn't want to be in finance, I started designing my tattoo," said Zhang, a native of China who finished high school in northern Virginia. "I want to be great at what I do, and I want to be the type of person in the future where I can be an ambassador. I can represent and say, "Hey, I graduated from UR.""

Zhang frequently espouses that sentiment — aloud, not just by virtue of the ink on his body. Heavily involved in student activities as an undergraduate, he's transferred that same spirit to extolling the benefits of a Richmond education to prospective students and organizing alumni gatherings in Beijing, where he lives. That approach has also worked for him professionally, as evidenced by being named to Forbes' China "30 Under 30" list for his creative branding consulting agency, Flip the Script.

"A personal branding business requires a person to pay a lot of detailed attention to your clients' projects," said Zhang, who returned to campus in spring of 2019. "A personal branding business requires a person to pay a lot of detailed attention to your clients' projects," said Zhang, who returned to campus in spring of 2019. "The moment I decided I didn't want to be in finance, I started designing my tattoo," said Zhang, a native of China who finished high school in northern Virginia. "I want to be great at what I do, and I want to be the type of person in the future where I can be an ambassador. I can represent and say, "Hey, I graduated from UR.""

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Leahsells studies

“I don’t know how I could ever top this job,” Matt Palmisano, ’14, said.

Palmisano didn’t expect to wind up standing shoulder to shoulder with some of the world’s most powerful leaders. But in his position as director of advance and planning for the Office of the First Lady, that’s exactly what he’s doing.

A normal day’s work could include traveling ahead of the first lady, Melania Trump, to scout her planned visits; organizing a motorcade for her and the president, overseeing her meetings and logistics; speaking to the press; and coordinating logistics with the first lady’s Secret Service detail.

For Palmisano, this variety in responsibility is ideal — and it aligns with his former approach to education, too. From a young age, he knew he never wanted to limit his future to one or two concentrations. “I didn’t want to just be an English major or just a math major,” Palmisano said. “I loved the idea of mixing many things together.”

This appreciation for variety led him to both the Jepson School of Leadership Studies and the Philosophy, Politics, Economics, and Law program.

“My classes helped me consider the way people act and make decisions,” he said. “They challenged me to think in different ways.”

He finds that he puts these lessons into practice on a daily basis.

“I sometimes need to pinch myself when I’m standing at arm’s length from some of the most powerful world leaders,” Palmisano said. “And what I learned in Richmond’s classes helped me to be a better negotiator and a better representative for our first lady and country.”

Topping his current gig would be difficult, and he doesn’t plan on leaving the White House anytime soon anyway.

“It’s an awe-inspiring place to work,” he said. “To be able to serve the United States is something I’ll never take for granted.”

— Brian Ivasauskas

‘13

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If it’s important to you, it’s important to us.

Spider class notes have been part of this magazine since 1936. Send us yours.

Random Spider encounters • Births and deaths • New degrees and jobs — retirements, too! • Fabulous vacations • Weekend getaways • Classmate reunions • Community service • Weddings and moves • Job losses, setbacks, and fresh starts of all kinds • Revelations, revelry, and reflections • Photos, photos, and more photos • Simple notes to say hello

EMAIL US AT: CLASSNOTES@RICHMOND.EDU
Science lesson

Practically everyone learns about the periodic table of elements in school, but most of us don’t think about it on a daily basis. That’s not the case for faculty and staff whose expertise is rooted in one of the elements. Because 2019 is the 150th anniversary of the periodic table, here’s a chemistry lesson from some surprising and not-so-surprising sources on the vital role that six of the table’s elements play in our lives.

“Sodium, found in salt, is an element that the body needs to work properly, but eating too much salt draws extra fluid into your blood vessels, which raises your blood pressure and risks of heart disease and stroke.”

Karen Hensley, nutritionist in dining services

“My lab works with phosphorus on research to prevent, detect, understand, and combat human diseases, including cancer. We focus on MDM1, which is a phosphate-binding protein found in high levels in aggressive breast cancers.”

Chemistry professor Julie Patlock

“My lab works with phosphorus on research to prevent, detect, understand, and combat human diseases, including cancer. We focus on MDM1, which is a phosphate-binding protein found in high levels in aggressive breast cancers.”

Chemistry professor Julie Patlock

“Oxygen is the most essential natural resource used by our cells. I incorporate sleep education, breathing exercises, and meditation into training.”

Matt Barany, head coach of the swimming and diving team

“When more calcium is removed than added, our bodies develop osteoporosis.”

Biology professor Isaac Skromne, who researches bone disease

“The quest to turn lead into gold motivated the alchemists who were the forebears of today’s chemists.”

English professor Elisabeth Gruner on alchemy in literature

“The halogens, which include fluorine, chlorine, bromine, and iodine, are chemically interesting and versatile. Halogens affect the way the molecules that contain them behave, especially a phenomenon called halogen bonding.”

Chemistry professor Kelling Donald

Read more about these and other elements being highlighted by faculty and staff experts this year at NEWS.RICHMOND.EDU/PERIODIC-TABLE.
Discovery begins within us.

RICHMOND SPIDERS GO BY MANY NAMES. Doers. Researchers. Go-getters. Whatever the moniker, we stay focused on driving industries forward. We take pride in shining new light on areas unexplored and finding new solutions to complex topics. As a community of creators and achievers, we celebrate research and discovery because we know: What happens here has an incredible impact everywhere.

See what's within us and the impact we make at within.richmond.edu.
Once a Spider, always a Spider

From London to Philly to Music City, Spiders everywhere came together March 14 to celebrate National Spider Day, proving that wherever there are Richmond alumni, there is Spider Pride. Mark your calendar for next year.