**Forum Magazine**

Volume 2016 *Summer 2016* Article 13

2016

# Forum Magazine, Summer 2016

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarship.richmond.edu/forum

 Part of the Civic and Community Engagement Commons, Community-Based Learning Commons, Journalism Studies Commons, Nonfiction Commons, Other Arts and Humanities Commons, Other Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons, Photography Commons, and the Publishing Commons

Recommended Citation

(2016) "Forum Magazine, Summer 2016," *Forum Magazine*: Vol. 2016 , Article 13.
Available at: http://scholarship.richmond.edu/forum/vol2016/iss3/13

This Complete Issue is brought to you for free and open access by UR Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Forum Magazine by an authorized editor of UR Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact scholarshiprepository@richmond.edu.

# Forum Magazine

A UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND STUDENT PUBLICATION

SUMMER 2016

## *Untold Stories*

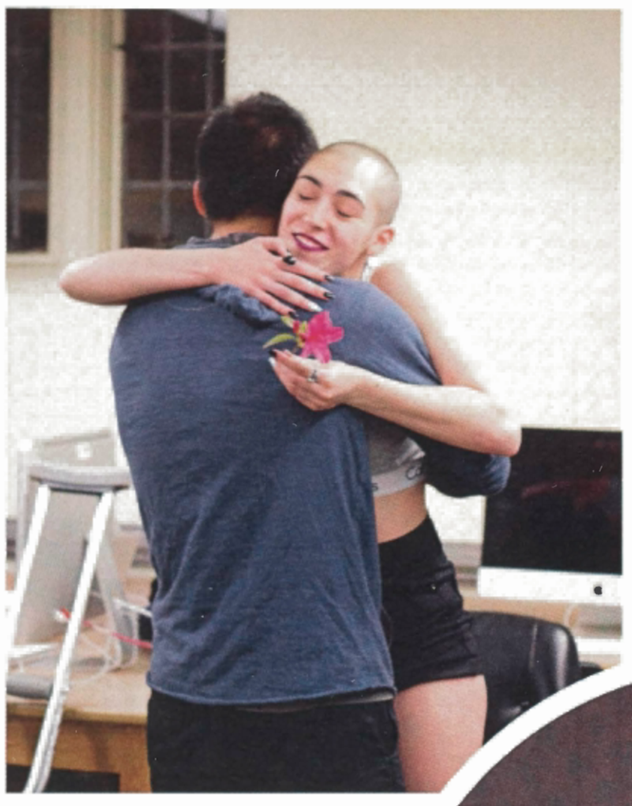
PAGE 30

## MY CONFESSION TO YOU

PAGE 28

## BORDERS AND HAND SIGNS

PAGE 22



# DEAR READERS:

There's always another side to the story. It's a cliché phrase coined by some lucky fellow who said it first. But I think it's fair to say that every Forum Magazine writer believes this is true. Check out Cassandra's and Chelsey's perspectives about the campus' history and decide for yourself. Are you going to hold on to a narrative that sparks the image of freshly mowed grass, blood red tulips, and fairytale-like Boatwright tower? Or are you going to part through the haze and see the other side of the story: a plantation and a lake dammed by slaves? Our writer Soleil balances two visions of healthcare in the United States. Andrew juxtaposes seniors in college with senior citizens at a volunteer-hosted prom. Jabari helps us see that coming out isn't the final challenge and act of bravery faced by the LGBTQ community—it is only the beginning.

This spring may mark the end of an undergraduate career for many of us, or maybe you're a freshman just waiting to get exams over and done with before facing a couple of more years in d-hall and dormitories. Wherever you fall in the academic line-up, this really is just the beginning. Your story may not even turn out like you expect it to, but I do hope that it turns out better than you imagined. I'm the baldy in the photos above, and I was supposed to be finishing up as Lead Writer this semester and saying goodbye to my Forum lovers. Instead, my life went on a very different path, and I've had to learn how to walk that path in new ways. If you know the other side to my story, this is my shout out to you. Thanks to everyone for all of your love and support.

Let us know if there's a story that needs telling, because this is your forum.

**SINCERELY,**

*Tracy Akers*

**TRACY AKERS, LEAD WRITER**

#FORUM FOR TRACY

Thank you to the 2015-2016 magazine staff led by McKenna Jensen and Joe Han for their tireless support of our lead writer, Tracy Akers, during her fight and recovery. Congratulations on a great year!

FM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

# Forum Magazine

Our mission at *Forum Magazine* is to create an impactful, revealing and balanced magazine designed and reported with students in mind. In awarding time and space to the most impressive people and projects, we hope to make something that strengthens the community by inspiring pride in every student, faculty, and staff member at the University of Richmond. Through sections focused heavily on career advice, national issues, superlatives, and culture, *Forum* will be a place for conversation—both serious and light hearted—that leaves students with a deeper understanding of both the college world and beyond.


***Editor in Chief***
MCKENNA JENSEN

***Publisher***
JOE HAN

***Executive Managing Editor***
CHELSEY DAVIDSON

***Director of Operations***
DYLAN MCAULEY

***Director of Public Relations***
KARISSA LIM

***Lead Writers***
JABARI LUCAS, BROOKE WARNER

***Creative Director***
SOFIA NICOLET

***Business Manager***
ALEXANDER BEMAN

***Design Assistants***
DYLAN FOX, KARISSA LIM, UYEN NGUYEN, SOFIA NICOLET, BROOKE WARNER

***Staff Artists***
FRANCESCA BURKHARDT, ELIZABETH MONTAGUE

***Staff Reporters***
RACHEL BRINGEWATT, SABRINA ESCOBAR, CARNEY JUDGE, KARISSA LIM, KATHRYN OLON, SARAH QUAGLIARIELLO, LIANA SALEH, BROOKE WARNER, ASHLEY WILDA, ANDREW WILSON

***Staff Photographers***
KELLY BONAVENTURA, ELLEN BROOKS, CORINNA CHO, ROSIE COMPTON, GARRETT FUNDAKOWSKI, DEVIKA JHUNJHUNWALA, SOFIA NICOLET, ELLEN OH, MONIKA PAYERHIN, DANA RAFFERTY, MARIANA WEBER

***Copy Editors***
CHELSEY DAVIDSON, KARISSA LIM, LYDIA DUBOIS


**Visit us online**

www.urforummagazine.com

# CONTENTS


**11** **LIGHTS AND SIRENS**

Student EMTs respond to calls on campus to provide live-saving care. Some also act as off-campus first-responders, witnessing final breaths and debilitating injuries. *By Christopher Clark*

**22** **BORDERS AND HANDSIGNS**

Members of a sorority consistently show their pride and connection through handsigns. In El Salvador, hanadsigns are used to convey more sinister messages. *By Sabrina Escobar*

**24** **THE SONGS WE TAKE FOR GRANTED**

In the U.S., we are accustomed to the music of our choice appearing at the touch of a buttom. In Baltic nations during Soviet rule, music was censored, and singing became a form of revolution. *By Lydia Dubois*

**28** **MY CONFESSION TO YOU**

To an outsider, coming out is seemingly the end of a queer person's struggle to find acceptance and self-realization, but coming out is sometimes only the beginning. *By Jabari Lucas*

**30** **UNTOLD STORIES**

An amusement park once occupied much of our campus. But another story entwines our campus to an essential and provocative past. *By Chelsey Davidson & Cassandra Ceballos*

*...and more!*

**ON THE COVER**

PHOTO BY SOFIA NICOLET

Narratives are found in all shapes and forms, from discarded news reels to complete novels to stories exchanged around a campfire. Some hide in archives, others beg for attention in commercialized soundbites. Others surround us without our notice. These are those *Untold Stories*.

# WDCE 90.1 FM

## UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND RADIO

### What is WDCE?

We are proud to be one of the University of Richmond's oldest student-run organizations. We have been on the air since the 1960s, and have been one of the most important voices in indepdendent radio in the Richmond area, providing an outlet for upcoming, fringe, and underrepresented artists.

Today we boast more than 50 DJs from the community and university alike, and are constantly looking for new on-air talent. Together our DJs host more than 40 different shows throughout the week, providing the campus and Richmond community with a wide variety of programming. We typically broadcast from 9am to 3am, although we do have shows that start earlier and end later. Turn your dials to 90.1 near the UofR campus or head to our website to stream the shows and, chances are, you'll hear something you have never heard before!

### What do you broadcast?

We broadcast a wide variety of things. We primarily focus on music, but we also have sports talk shows and variety/mixed shows that combine talk, music, interviews, and live perfomances. The genres of music we play include:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rock/Indie | Punk/Metal | Reggae | Americana |
| Classical | Electronica | Hip Hop/R&B | Jazz |

And whatever else our DJs want to play!

If there's a particular genre you enjoy, but you feel no one else does - you're not alone. Chances are we either already play it, or are looking to include it in our repetoire.

Follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/wdceradio for event information and news and check out our website at wdce.org for our updated schedule!

### Interested in volunteering?

We are now accepting applications for student and community DJs, as well as general volunteers and managers. If you have questions or would like to request an application or more information, send an email to wdce.volunteer@gmail.com.

### Contact Us:

Phone (Request/DJ Live) - 804.289.UR90
Phone (Office) - 804.289.8689
E-Mail: wdce.volunteer@gmail.com
Snail Mail: Box 85
28 Westhampton Way
University of Richmond, VA 23173

# ( ON CAMPUS )

# A BRIGHTER FUTURE

BY CHELSEY DAVIDSON

University of Richmond's next strategic plan – a document that lays out the goals and mission of the university for a 7-year period – is still in development, but for the first time, it will include stewardship and sustainability among the wording of this essential document, Rob Andrejewski, campus director of sustainability, said. In line with Richmond's continued efforts toward carbon neutrality, the university began a plan two years ago to install solar panels on campus.

Seven-hundred forty-nine new solar panels have been installed on the roof of the Weinstein Center for Recreation and Wellness. These panels, which cover 22,000 square feet of rooftop, are expected to generate 237,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, potentially offsetting the emission of 364,000 pounds of carbon dioxide. Approximately 1 percent of campus electricity will now be derived from this source.

Our campus climate action plan aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, Andrejewski said. Such a goal is quite ambitious, but he said he would like us to come up with new solutions to get to that goal even sooner. The solar array is one step towards achieving that goal, but it does so while keeping academic research in mind.

Of the 749 panels on the roof, 529 are Bisun bifacial panels, and 220 are monofacial panels. Andrew Harrison, a photovoltaic technician for Shockoe Solar who installed the panels, said that the monofacial panels are typical panels that capture sunlight from the top-face of the panel. Bifacial panels are different, in that they are partially transparent, and can capture sunlight that reflects onto the back of the panel. These bifacial panels are more efficient at capturing ambient light, he said, but not much is known about their practical efficiency when installed. Testing has shown that they may be as much as 25 percent more efficient than traditional monofacial panels, but the data collected by our university will be used to validate or refute this theory.

The bifacial and monofacial panels were installed on both a gravel and a white roof to test the relative efficiency of each. Also being tested are string inverters and microinverters. Microinverters collect the energy individually from each panel, while string inverters do so for a whole line of panels. Microinverters are thought to be more efficient, because the shading of one panel does not affect the production of its neighbor, Harrison said. However, this style of inverter is also more expensive – better data is needed to see if the improved efficiency can justify the increased cost. The solar panel array thus gives students the chance to do ample statistical and environmental sciences research on-campus.

Both technological and policy improvements made this type of project viable for the university, Mary Finley-Brook, a professor of geography and environment, said. The solar panel market has taken off in the last couple of years, and we as a country are now researching ways to improve solar efficiency, she said. These gains are coming later than some would like, but what is exciting about the bifacial panels is that it marks a step forward, Finley-Brook said.

Similarly, the power-purchase pilot program, legislated in 2013, makes this type of project financially and legally viable. Because Virginia is an energy-regulated state, it was previously impossible for solar companies to sell solar energy because of the monopoly of utility companies. Thus, the solar market was limited to the purchase of panels. To put this into perspective, Andrejewski gave this analogy: If your phone bill cost $100 per month, but you had to pay for your 2-year contract up front, it would cost you $2,400 to get the phone. Few people would be able to pay these upfront costs. Similarly, solar panels typically pay for themselves after 15 to 20 years, but last for 30 to 50 years. It's a good investment in the long run, but few could afford to pay a 20-year electricity bill up front. This power-purchase agreement allows for the electricity itself to be purchased, without the up-front costs.

Andrejewski predicted that the solar array would start saving the university money in just a few years, as fossil-fuel electricity becomes more expensive. Richmond is locked into a fixed rate for the solar electricity, so the project is a smart investment for both ecological and economic reasons, Andrejewski said.

Harrison said that approximately half of the customers of Shockoe Solar were politically conservative, and purchased panels simply because of the economic bottom line. Though people will find reasons to argue against the normative support for renewable energy, Harrison said, it's hard to argue numbers, and solar is becoming increasingly more affordable.

The project has generated excitement, and has also been accompanied by complementary campus events, such as the Power Dialogue held on April 8. The Power Dialogue allowed students from across the state to ask questions of the Department of Environmental Quality representatives and other environmental actors. The student panel,

organized by Mia Hagerty, president of Westhampton College Government Association, empowered students to exchange ideas to promote real action, changing the perspective of those involved, Hagerty said. "State officials learned that college students were capable and willing to engage in these discussions, and college students learned that there is space for their opinions in these discussions," Hagerty said.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the array, held on April 19, similarly brought influential figures to campus, most notably Gov. Terry McAuliffe.

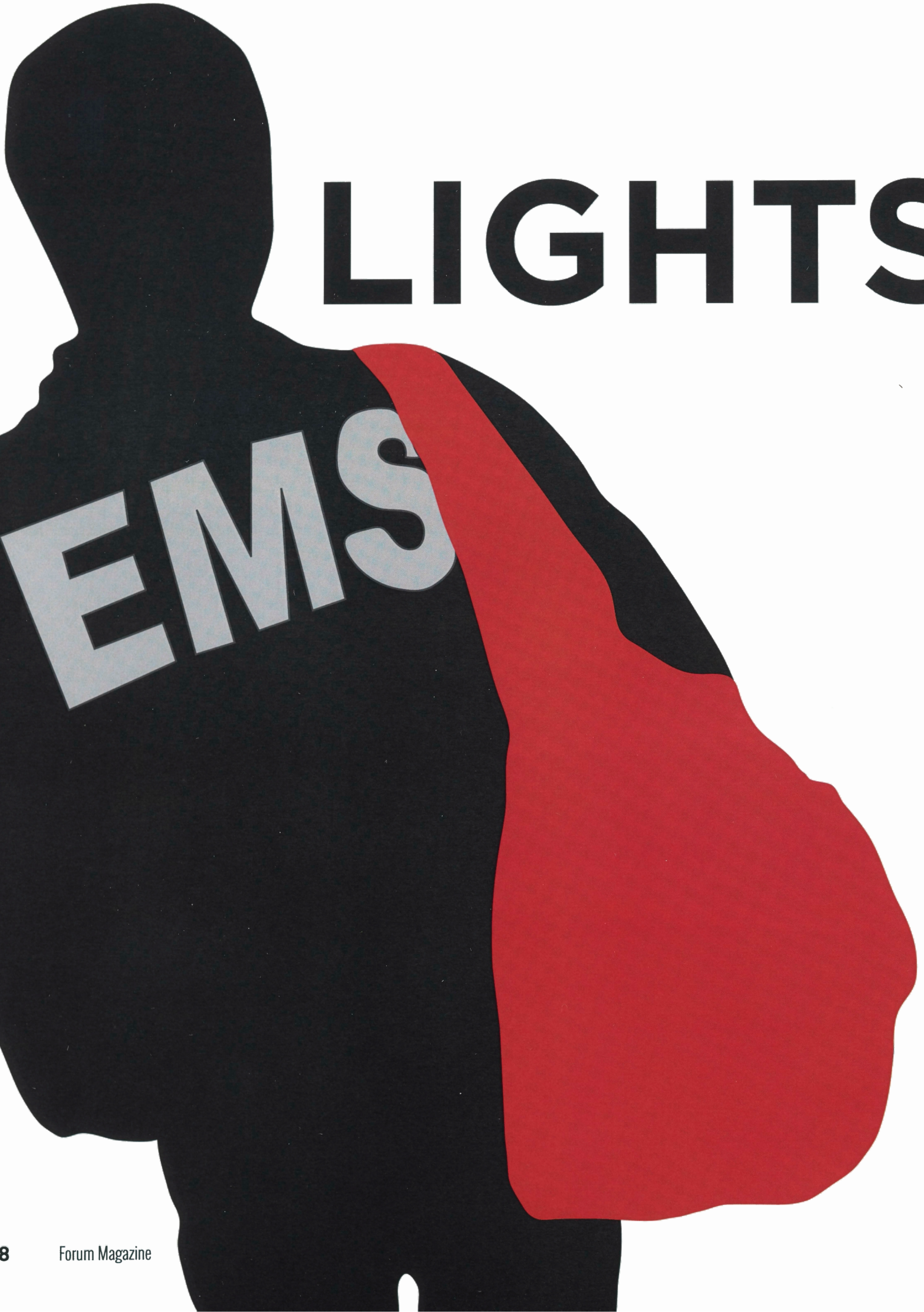
The solar array marks the beginning of continued sustainability projects on campus, but we must also keep in mind that attaining 1 percent of our electricity through these means is not significant enough to generate complacency, Finley-Brooke said. "The solar project is an important step symbolically, and for student education," Finley-Brook said, "But it should always make you look at energy use more broadly." If the university were able to reduce its total load and consumption, that same array would suddenly produce proportionally more of our electricity, Finley-Brook said. She suggested several areas for reduction in energy consumption, including reducing light-pollution from 24-hour stadium lights, as well as day-to-day changes in student and faculty behavior. Students often feel that because of their large tuition bill, it is fully acceptable to do a load of laundry with a single article of clothing inside, or to leave the lights on when leaving their dorm rooms, Finley-Brook said. However, these small actions add up to both increased energy consumption and increased tuition bills, something most students do not consider, she said.

However, the impact of the solar array should not be minimized simply because the proportion of electricity produced is currently low. "I think it's huge," Andrejewski said. "For us to be able to do this in a state where this was illegal to do just a couple of years ago is an amazing thing. I wouldn't minimize it. 1 percent of our electricity is still 237,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity. It's a really big deal, and it's just the beginning. The first doesn't usually mean the last. I would like to blanket every flat roof on campus with solar."

Shockoe Solar echoed this sentiment. "People say, 'Well you're only 1 percent solar right now,'" Harrison said, "Good, then we only have 99 percent more to go! Now I know how much more I've got to do. It's cool to be doing something that's new that you can share with people."

The energy generated by this project has been felt by much of the student body. "I think it's an amazing project and I really think that it's going to trigger our campus to continue new developments to becoming more sustainable," junior Walid Alatas said. "Solar energy is one of the ways to take action and can help us decrease our carbon emissions."

Andrejewski said that the visibility of the project was in part responsible for the level of attention it has received. "There's so much energy and interest right now – people want to know more. This solar array isn't the main thing we're doing towards achieving our sustainability goals, but everything else is behind the scenes. Changing lightbulbs doesn't create a news story, nor does efficient heating and energy. But this array is super cool – it's like magic, to convert the sun's energy into electricity that can then power our lives. It's a very visible symbol of our commitment, which then allows us to tell other stories about our sustainability goals."


LIGHTS
EMS

# AND SIRENS

## a UREMS first responder's experiences in emergency medicine

BY CHRISTOPHER CLARK

My pager startles me awake. It's three in the morning, but that doesn't matter – I'm used to it by now. I rise out of bed, trying to shake off exhaustion as I fumble around for my shoes. I grab my radio, throw on a uniform and head out the door, mumbling profanities en route to the EMS vehicle. Someone needs help, and I need to hurry.

As I rush down the steps to the EMS Quick Response Vehicle – lovingly known as 'Stella' – I flip open my pager to determine the location of the call. URPD has alerted me to head over to the University Forest Apartments for an unresponsive patient. That's on the other side of campus, and there's no telling what could be wrong. I'll need to hurry.

I turn on the radio and begin communicating with Richmond Ambulance Authority (RAA) in the city, telling them what few details I have from the dispatch. After acknowledging the call, they relay the extent of their knowledge: A patient was found unresponsive in their room and hasn't regained consciousness. They aren't sure what the cause of this illness is. I really need to hurry.

With lights and sirens blaring, I speed across campus to reach this person as quickly as I can, collecting a few "force points" for an "unsafe" right turn. Pulling up to the scene, URPD is waiting to usher me inside as I go over possibilities in my head. Hypoglycemic shock? Doubtful. Overdose? Most likely.

I work through an assessment, doing everything I can for the patient and getting him to the ambulance as quickly as possible. The RAA providers rush him to the hospital, leaving me in the parking lot to fill out paperwork with URPD while the adrenaline rush slowly fades. The call is over, and I want to get a few hours of sleep before my 9 a.m. class. I fall asleep in a hurry.

This is an everyday reality for first responders at University of Richmond Emergency Medical Services (UREMS), who are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week – voluntarily. It is a considerable commitment, and only a select few students have the dedication and skill necessary to carry out this duty.

However, my EMS career started long before the 3 a.m. calls at Richmond. In my junior year of high school, desperate to make my college applications as attractive as possible, I began volunteering with Shawnee Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department. I had figured it would at least be a great chance to get some service hours and gain a unique experience. What I did not predict, however, was that it would be the decision that would define my college experience and career aspirations.

The first day I went in for a ride along, I helped with some of the station chores and got to know the crew. I was already enjoying it, and after a few hours, we were dispatched to our first call: a heroin overdose.

I remember racing down the road, arriving at the scene in about 3 minutes. The house was surrounded by emergency vehicles, and as I hopped out of the back of the ambulance, I was amazed by the frenzy of ordered chaos in front of me. We made our way to the patient and began treatment, ultimately loading her into the ambulance and heading to the hospital for definitive care. It was not only my first call, but my first experience being part of a team that actually saved a life.

I was unashamedly addicted to EMS, riding as much as possible despite a busy schedule for junior year. I enrolled in an EMS class and eventually received my certification after passing the state and national exams.

As I began the college application process, a handful of unsuccessful tours led me to do what most high schoolers do when making important life decisions: I put my faith in Google. With a little bit of luck, and a lot of encouragement from my mom, I stumbled across this place called University of Richmond. A bit of research landed on a small student organization called UREMS. What more could I ask for? One tour

was enough to settle it, and I applied early decision to join the Class of 2018.

I immediately reached out to the Chief of Operations of UREMS at the time, Jared Ingersoll. Not realizing that the Chief of Operations could be a student, I consistently addressed him as "Mr. Ingersoll" – an error he teases me for to this day. We kept in contact, so when I arrived in the fall, I was able to complete the necessary requirements straightaway to be cleared as a first responder on campus.

Along with campus EMS, I have the opportunity to ride with an RAA unit in the city, which exposes me to an incredible diversity of patients and emergencies, ranging from water rescues to gunshot wounds. On a 12-hour shift in the city, most units work about eight calls – others have responded to as many as 21 in that time frame.

When I worked in the city, I made an effort to ride with Harry Lambert – a UREMS responder who now works at RAA – and our favorite partner, Brian Eads. Mostly working Saturday night shifts to avoid worrying about classes, these were some of the most interesting and challenging shifts I have ever been on and were invaluable to my career as an EMT.

However, EMS isn't always fun, and we don't always save our patients. I have seen some of the most terrible and vile things that the human mind can imagine. I have watched a pair of best friends sit on a sidewalk and dearly hold onto their companion who was shot in the head. Every few moments he would regain consciousness, violently thrusting himself forward as he gasped for breath, desperately clinging to life. I have sat by helplessly as doctors informed a mother that her child wouldn't be coming out of the resuscitation room, and I looked on as she collapsed, realizing she would be planning a funeral, not a first birthday party. These calls remain in the minds of EMS personnel forever, and I can remember many of them as vividly today as if I were living them over again.

One such call has, and likely will, remain with me forever above the others. It was probably the first truly serious call I ever ran and, as such, had a powerful impact on myself as an EMT and a human being.

As we slowly drove up to the scene, I noticed bits of glass and metal strewn about the roadway. The concentration of the destruction grew thicker as we got closer, and we eventually passed the mangled first vehicle. The engine was sitting in the driver's seat, and I thought to myself, "This guy is dead." Thankfully, I was wrong, but I was going to have to work hard to keep it that way.

I stepped out of the ambulance, and my ears were instantly flooded with the screams of the woman still trapped in the second car. The fire department was viciously working to pry the car from around her so they could get her onto an ambulance. The man from the first vehicle had already been extricated, and the fire department quickly loaded him onto the stretcher, and we rushed him into the ambulance. The doors slammed behind us, and I was left alone with the medic and my other EMT.

It was eerily quiet for a moment, maybe a few seconds, as we prepared for the chaos that was certain to ensue. I began a rapid trauma assessment, running my hands along

the man's body to feel for any broken bones or to locate bleeding. His abdomen was swollen, likely from his organs being lacerated from the impact, and his left leg was a purple, swollen mass. There was blood coming from his ears and his nose, and he was barely responsive. I called over to the medic as calmly as I could, "Hey, I think his leg's broken." "Check for stability," was the quick reply that had an all too familiar meaning. I swallowed and placed my hands above either side of the bruise and applied a small amount of pressure to see if the leg was stable. It moved like Jell-O under my fingers, and the previously unresponsive man roared to life in a wretched scream. It was broken. I splinted the leg, and the medic started two IV's as the other EMT hopped in the front of the unit to race us to the hospital.

When we arrived, we rushed the man into the resuscitation room where a trauma team was waiting to take him. They threw him onto the stretcher and cut off all the splints and dressings we had put on -- an odd and slightly defeating, yet necessary, move. They performed a CT scan of his abdomen and found that his liver had been lacerated, and that he was bleeding heavily inside his stomach. If they didn't stop the bleeding soon, he would die. The doctors acknowledged this, and within moments, he was rushed to the operating room.

My medic, my EMT and I looked at each other, and then we made our way out of the resuscitation room to clean the unit and prepare for our next call. As we walked past the last gurney in the room, I noticed the other driver who had been hit in the collision. She was lying on the bed screaming in agony. Her arm was visibly broken in three places, and her femur was sticking straight out of her thigh. She cried out and begged the doctor to give her something to take the pain away. I shut my eyes and turned away to keep walking. I had a unit to clean and more calls to run.

Even though these calls may be difficult to handle and certainly have an impact on the way I approach life, I refuse to let them completely define me as an EMT, a leader or a person. There is much more to EMS than the challenges, both mental and physical, that these calls present to us, and I try to focus on the benefits rather than the costs as much as I can.

The camaraderie and relationships I have formed with others in this field are unmatched. These men and women are there for me through everything and would put their lives on the line to ensure each other's safety and that of their crew. In an unspoken agreement, we do this for each other with the knowledge that the person standing beside us would do the same.

After two years in UREMS, I have served two terms as Chief of Operations, taking over for "Mr. Ingersoll," happily working with new providers and taking the heat for yet another unsatisfactory duty schedule. There have been plenty of challenges – balancing a heavy workload and a full-time EMS service comes with its fair share of stress and sleepless nights – but these two years have undoubtedly been the most rewarding ones of my life.

Every day I get to make a positive difference in the lives of students, faculty, staff and university visitors. I have the privilege of working closely with an amazing family of student first-responders, the officers of URPD and the providers of RAA.

There are even days when I quite literally get to save lives, and that is a feeling that cannot be matched. Even if it is at 3 a.m.

I believe that patience is an action.

-Joe Rochm

# What do you believe?

**chaplaincy.richmond.edu/believe**

This I Believe | This I believe | This I believe | This I Believe | This I Believe

$1000 Stipend for the 2016-17 Academic Year

RICHMOND CENTER FOR CHRISTIAN STUDY

## Student Internship

Explore a Biblical worldview and its relevance to your life, your studies and the world we live in.

Apply by April 30 at
**Richmondstudycenter.org/student-internship**

# SENIOR PROM: Members of APO host annual prom event for senior citizens

BY ANDREW WILSON

For most seniors on campus, the spring is time to celebrate graduation and receive diplomas. A completely different group of seniors, however, had their own unique celebration on campus in the spring. But instead of taking photos with their diplomas, they took pictures with an Elvis cutout as part of the APO's Senior Citizen Prom.

Alpha Phi Omega (APO) has become one of the school's staple philanthropic organizations, and the senior citizen prom is their signature tradition. The annual event was held on April 12 in the Alice Haynes Room. Each spring, APO invites senior citizens from local assisted living communities to relive their youth by throwing a prom in their honor. Past themes have included old Hollywood and a luau. This year's theme was rock n' roll, and part of the Alice Haynes Room was decorated as an old-fashioned diner. The prom has become an extremely popular event for APO, with nearly the entire organization and over 75 seniors attending.

"It's my favorite event that APO does every year," junior Shayna Webb, the chair of the prom committee, said. "We get to sit, chat and dance with them for a couple of hours. The seniors always say it one of their favorite parts of the year because they get to dress up and have fun".

Hira Siddiqui, a senior who also cited the prom as one of her favorite memories with APO, said, "Not only do they get to see people their own age but they get to interact and have fun with students."

The most memorable parts of the prom for the brothers was fostering connections with the senior citizens and getting to know them, Webb said. "With the elderly in assisted living homes, you don't know how much time they get to see other people. It's really special that we get to have this connection with them," she said.

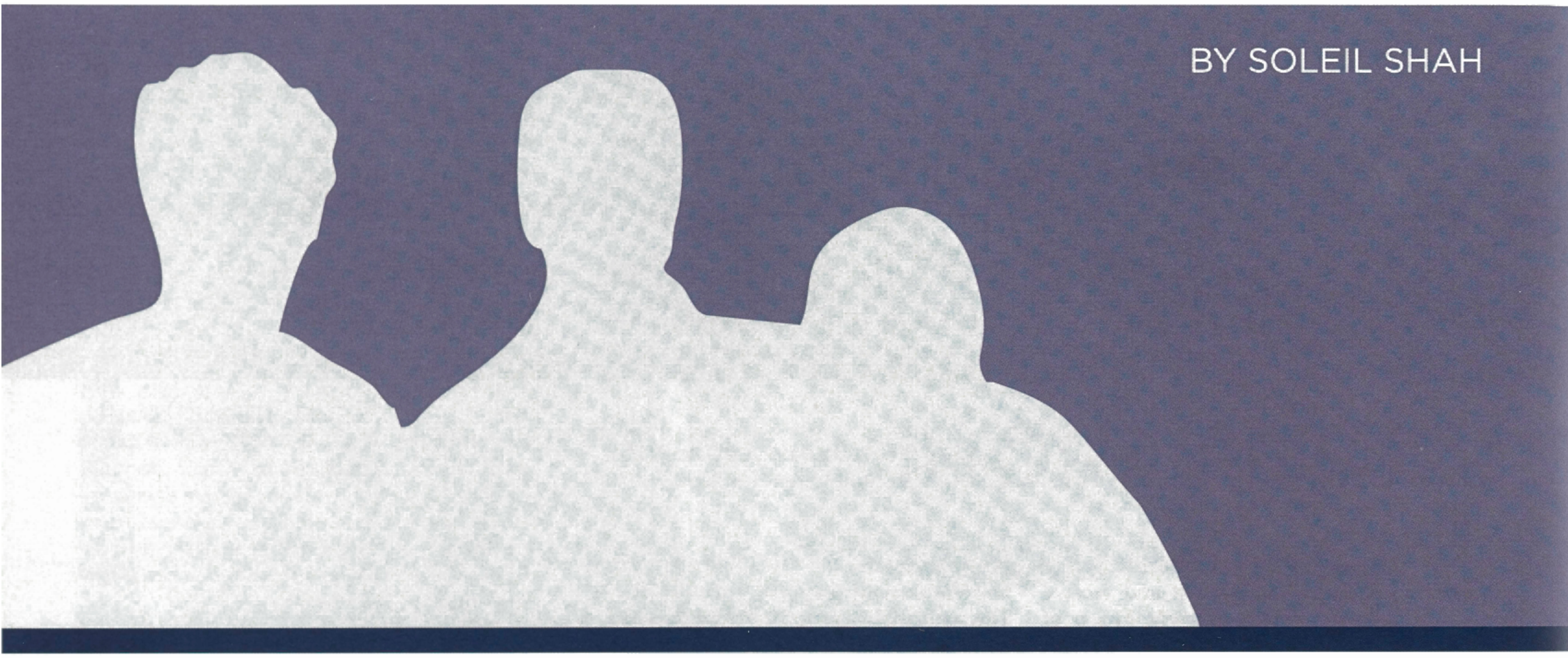
While the senior citizen prom is a highlight of APO's year, APO members stay active with service events every week. "We're different because of the variety of the service opportunities we have," Kelly Power, APO president, said. "On any weekend we can have up to four service projects. It's easy and pretty simple to get involved and volunteer." Members can work with dogs at BARK or play games with senior citizens during their dominos event at Lakewood Manor. Other events include cleaning tombstones at East End Manor and helping kids learn about science at the Science After Dark event at the Science Museum of Richmond.

"The cool part is that you can pick and choose to go to events that you're interested in," Siddiqui said.

What truly makes APO unique is their mission of service combined with the elements of friendship and brotherhood normally associated with Greek Life. Senior Amy Shick said that APO was not just about service, but focused particularly on relationships fostered among brothers. "Each experience is unique because of the people you get to work alongside," Shick said. "One of the best parts about our service projects is the ability to develop meaningful relationships with your fellow brothers. It is a great atmosphere to be doing service because all of the students are passionate about giving back to the community."

While APO certainly value its social aspects, its main priority has been and always will be service, as demonstrated by the success of the senior citizen prom. "The real value comes from hearing about the difference we make in their individual lives," Siddiqui said.

# *The Real Costs of* AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE



BY SOLEIL SHAH

Around the time she graduated from college, United States citizen Monique A. "Nikki" White was diagnosed with systemic lupus erythematosus, a serious but treatable disease. Although she had too much money to qualify for healthcare under Medicaid, she had too little money to pay for the treatment she needed to stay alive. On May 28, 2006, Nikki was pronounced dead at Duke University Medical Center. In an interview, Nikki's doctor, Amylyn Crawford, mournfully stated: "Nikki didn't die from lupus. It was a lack of access to health care that killed Nikki White."

During my sophomore year of college, as part of my SSIR global health capstone project, I trained to become a certified health insurance counselor through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This process, which took several weeks to complete, taught me how to help uninsured citizens sign up for health insurance online through the federal Marketplace. The Marketplace is the federal government's website for purchasing insurance under the Affordable Care Act. My training would give me the opportunity to help people like Nikki access healthcare in times of urgent medical need. After spending much time staring into a computer screen to complete my certification over winter break, I was ready to help the uninsured in Richmond enroll for healthcare plans.

Or at least – I thought I was ready. After being invited to my first enrollment event at St. Augustine Church, hosted by the Legal Aid Justice Center of Virginia, I assumed I would be eased into the process of insurance counseling. Instead, I arrived to a frenzy of clients demanding assistance on healthcare.gov or complaining about glitches with the website, with few counselors to help. Not only was the event understaffed, but there were barely enough computers available.

I abruptly found myself alone in a room with my first client, Anthony. He told me that he needed to sign up for health insurance so he could pay for his son's coming surgery. Both of us were evidently worried. Here I was, a young college student, about to use my iPhone to help a middle-aged man I had just met carry out health insurance decisions for his child. My choices were no longer a mat-

ter of answering questions correctly to earn a health insurance counselor certification. This was about his son's health, or even life. "Alright, let's do this," I said with a nervous smile.

Anthony's appointment took nearly two and a half hours. While waiting on hold for a Marketplace representative, Anthony told me that he was excited to have a new, better-paying job as a custodian, but he no longer qualified for Medicaid as a result. He wanted to buy health insurance but had trouble signing up online and needed someone to assist him. By the end of the meeting, despite a glitch in the verification system, I was able to set up his account, create his Marketplace application, and submit his financial information to the IRS. We made progress.

That day, and throughout my time volunteering as a health insurance counselor, I worked with several people like Anthony to help them get closer to accessing healthcare. The work was exhausting, frustrating, and frankly sad. I met people who realized they were caught in the "Medicaid gap" because Virginia did not expand its Medicaid eligibility level. In other words, these people made too much money to qualify for Medicaid in Virginia but not enough money to afford insurance or qualify for subsidies through the exchanges. The Medicaid gap encompasses people who in most states earn between 48 percent and 100 percent of the federal poverty level, a result of an oversight in a section of the Affordable Care Act that was struck down by the Supreme Court. Approximately 3 million people are caught in this coverage gap. I met a woman in her late 20s who did not qualify for Medicaid simply because she did not have children. My time spent meeting these individuals reiterated that in the U.S., so much of our access to healthcare is not determined by our healthcare needs.

As a certified insurance counselor, I worked directly with patients motivated by an urgent need for medical treatment. I empathized with patients frustrated by the system, at times wishing I had the ability to offer them the medical treatment myself. But I did what I could and felt gratified seeing the relief on their faces as they signed up for insurance plans.

Many Americans believe access to healthcare is, unquestionably, a human right. In many developed nations, this issue is addressed through the implementation of universal healthcare. Some governments provide healthcare directly through government-owned hospitals and government-employed doctors. Others pay for privately provided care or subsidize private health insurance. In the United States, it can be much harder to receive such aid because healthcare is not guaranteed for all citizens. American critics of universal healthcare argue that it promotes rationing, lessens the quality of care, and/or sacrifices consumer freedom for government control. But for those like Nikki, with common diseases like lupus, or even Anthony's son, guaranteed care could also mean staying alive.

**"My choices were no longer a matter of answering questions correctly to earn a health insurance counselor certification. This was about his son's health, or even life."**

BetterMed
urgent care

You Deserve Better

Now treating Willow Lawn

www.bettermedcare.com

1700 DOCK ST.
RICHMOND, VA 23223

BOTTOMSUPPIZZA.COM
(804)644-4400

BOTTOMS UP

U of R SPECIAL!

FREE APPETIZER

WITH PURCHASE OF ANY LARGE, MEDIUM OR THIN CRUST SIGNATURE PIZZA!

No substitutions. One free appetizer with purchase of any whole signature large, medium, or thin crust pizza. Dine in only. Not valid for delivery or carry-out. May not be combined with any other discount coupon or special offer. Limit one free appetizer per table/party. Expires 12/31/15.

Seniors!

Time to say...

...goodbye

# Graduation Fair

Tuesday, April 19, 1 -4 pm in Alice Haynes Room

Ticket distribution ★ Commencement Info ★ Life as a Spider

# IN OUR WORLD

# S.E.E.D.S.

THE SEEDS PROJECT IS A STUDENT LED ORGANIZATION THAT LEADS SERVICE TRIPS OVER FALL BREAK IN RICHMOND, AND OVER SPRING BREAK IN LOUISIANA, WEST VIRGINIA, AND STARTING NEXT YEAR: DETROIT.

It seems like every time I open Facebook there is another article that villainizes "voluntourism" and short-term community service trips. Opponents argue that these trips are not beneficial in the long-term to a community. What can a person really do in one week that will change a community permanently? Would not a single construction worker have repaired a roof more quickly than a team of inexperienced college students? These critical questions are not unfounded, but are ultimately short-sighted. The purpose of The SEEDS Project is not found in a single trip, but rather in its continued discussion about the service-learning experience around which it is centered. The organization's acronym, "Students Engaging in and Enacting a Dialogue on Service" is reflective of its broader focus. SEEDS does not hope to change a community during a single trip. Instead, the organization encourages its participants to consider the value of being allowed to enter into these communities and to engage in a discussion of the purpose behind their actions. When we travel to disadvantaged communities, we engage in physical service, but as university students, we also examine the systemic problems that have shaped the community. By the end of the week, participants can see how they are connected to places like West Virginia and New Orleans, and the ways in which their actions impact the communities where we are working.

For the past two years, I have gone on the SEEDS trip to McDowell County, West Virginia, most recently as a part of the leadership team. While working on various service projects, mostly construction and building repair, in rural West Virginia, we interact with community members who are living in an area with few economic opportunities. During the past century, West Virginia has been dominated by the coal industry. For the better part of the century, coal companies practiced wage slavery, forced their workers to live in company-owned houses, and paid workers in company tickets, redeemable only in a company-owned store, rather than in U.S. dollars. Mining was not just the primary way of life for people in this region; it was the only way of life. The families of those who were killed in mining accidents were evicted within 24 hours with no actual money and little hope of making a life in the community.

Though this practice has been outlawed, its legacy continues to exist more insidiously today. Because the region has been dependent on coal for so long, there are few other opportunities. There is little hope of a future for young people who are products of a substandard education system and yet who do not wish to work in the mines or join the military. The education system in conjunction with other factors causes many of them to turn to drugs. Consumption of painkillers, heroin, methamphetamine, and countless other drugs has turned the already poor community into a landscape of disrepair, in the face of which citizens who are free of addiction continue to reside. Despite being responsible for the dire economic situation and the waterfall of other issues the economy, or lack thereof, has caused, the coal industry has done little to give back to the area or to promote the economic diversification that could greatly benefit the region.

While on the SEEDS trip we not only talked with residents of the McDowell County community but also attended lectures at West Virginia University pertaining to the history of the coal industry and drug addiction. Upon our return to Richmond, we learned

in both academic and service settings about the factors that contributed to the present state of the West Virginia community, in addition to making a positive physical impact on the area. The particular value of SEEDS comes from the fact that it occurs at a time when its participants are still developing skills as students and choosing the path their life will take. By engaging with overlooked communities in both an academic and tactile way while in college, SEEDS participants will enter their future careers with an awareness of systemic problems that they may one day be in a place to change, and with a deep compassion for invisible people groups in any community. Though the roof we repaired might not last forever, the experience of meeting the community member who owns it will forever live in the mind of a participant, even as they enter the boardroom of a Wall Street skyscraper. Thus, a vital part of SEEDS is reflection. Reflection allows participants to process their experiences in a manner that encourages deep-rooted growth. At the end of every spring break, The SEEDS Project publishes a professional journal filled with participants' reflections from the week. My reflective entry from this year reads as follows:

With the sunlight streaming through the trees as I swayed on the back of large white horse down a dusty dirt road on the side of an Appalachian Mountain, the coal industry was not on my mind. Terry held the reins, and guided the horse to the end of the road before turning around and speeding him up for the ride back. For Terry, the patriarch of a livestock-raising family in McDowell, West Virginia, riding is second nature. Terry's son taught himself to ride at the age of four by jumping on a goat's back and throwing food in front of it so it would run forward. The house we were working on was a new acquisition for the family. It needed a lot of work, but they all had places to stay while the extreme renovations took place. While young nieces and nephews were running around the front yard playing with chickens, baby pigs, and all the other parts of the land that were now owned by Terry and his wife Brandy, Terry sat us down and told us, "I don't care if you go home and tell everyone that you met the dumbest rednecks in West Virginia, as long as you tell them we are happy."

What we saw at Terry's house was idyllic. We saw a family living off of the livestock business and the gorgeous, mountainous landscape of West Virginia. I wasn't thinking about the coal industry when Terry guided the horse up the dirt path, because I was finally catching a glimpse of what life in West Virginia could be like. What it could be like if mountains weren't being blown up to drag along an undiversified economy, or if residents who felt that coal mining was their only option weren't turning to drugs like heroin or methamphetamine. At Terry's house we saw the part of West Virginia's economy that doesn't lead to black lung and didn't practice wage-slavery well into the mid-twentieth century. We had a glimpse of what West Virginia could be like without the coal industry. But when the horse turned around, you could once again see the house that had fallen into disrepair after the previous owner had ceased to perform routine maintenance. We were reminded that the contentment of Terry's family is somewhat of an anomaly. Our admiration for them should not be ruined by our disgust for the coal industry, which was only narrowly defeated in its attempt to destroy the park and nature reserve behind his house. What we saw at Terry's house gives us hope that West Virginia is not lost forever. Though we met many residents who said that the only way their community would improve was if the mines reopened, Terry showed us that their Stockholm Syndrome is unfounded. Terry and his family are happy in the absence of the coal industry, and it is their example that shows the potential of West Virginia and can lead the state into the future.

To read more stories from SEEDS participants, pick up a copy of The SEEDS Project journal.

# Election Update: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

BY: DYLAN MCAULEY

# The Democrats

## Will the Democrats have a contested convention?

Sanders needs only to win 36 percent of remaining pledged delegates to bring the Democrats to contested convention in July. Clinton would need to win a stunning 64 percent of remaining pledged delegates to prevent the contested convention, according to statistics found on Bloomberg's 2016 Delegate Count Tracker. At this convention, Sanders and Clinton will likely battle it out for the support of 719 superdelegates.

## I don't like any of the options. Will there be a strong third party candidate this year?

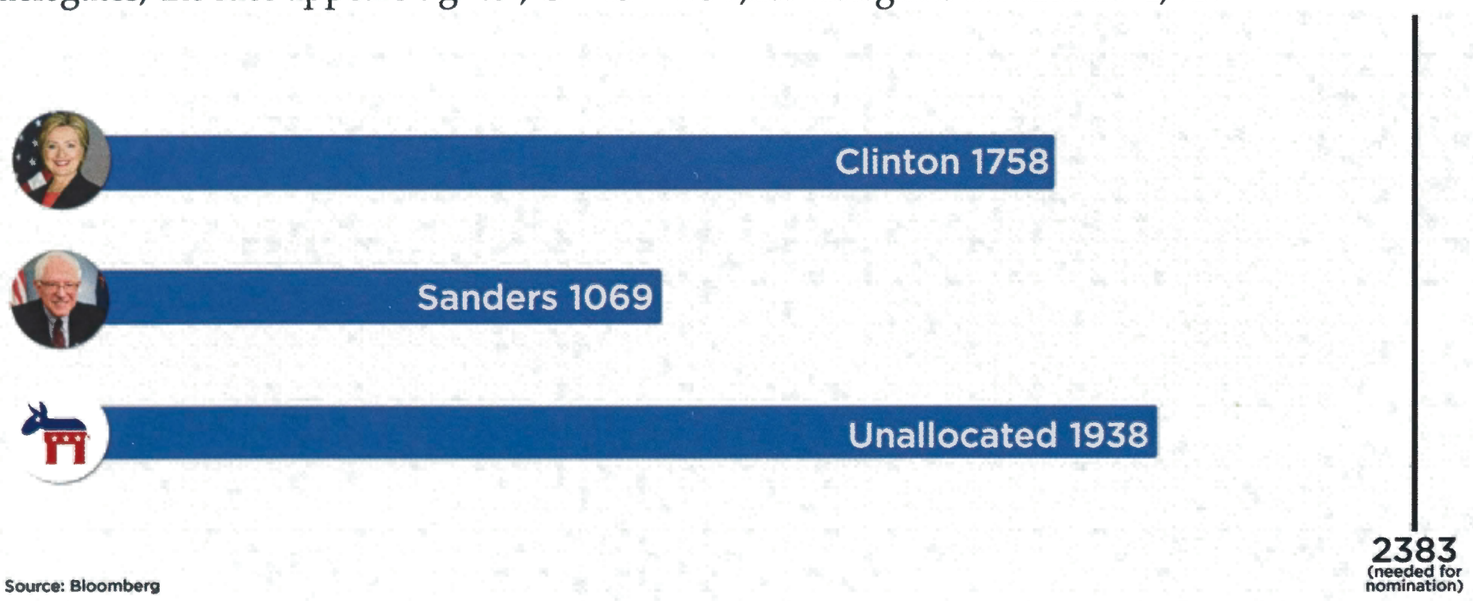
Although millions of Americans seem dissatisfied with the candidates on both sides, there does not appear to be any serious third-party candidate on the horizon. Michael Bloomberg was the most likely choice, but he turned down the opportunity in March. The most likely chance of a third-party candidate emerging would occur if Donald Trump wins the nomination outright. In response, Republican leaders and donors would probably try to launch a new candidate who they feel represents them. This would cause a rift in the party and would probably give the Democrats the White House, but these Republicans may feel that Donald Trump winning would be an even worse outcome for them.

## What is a delegate? What is a superdelegate?

Delegates are simply people who are chosen at the state level through direct vote or conventions to go to the party's national convention to select the nominee. They tend to almost always be party leaders and local activists who are rewarded for their efforts in supporting the party. At the convention, delegates actually vote state-by-state for the nominee. If a candidate does not receive a majority of the delegate votes on the first ballot, then they continue voting until someone wins a majority. Superdelegates are different and exist only in the Democratic convention. Superdelegates are party leaders and elected officials who automatically receive an unbound vote at the convention, which means they can vote for whichever candidate they prefer regardless of state primary results. It is usually clear whom they will support based on their public endorsements or relationships to the candidate -- this is most clear with the most

## Who is winning the race for the Democratic Nomination?

Although Bernie Sanders has won seven out of the last eight Democratic contests, Hillary Clinton is still in the lead. Bernie Sanders has shocked the political world by winning 17 contests in the Democratic primary, but Clinton's delegate lead still appears insurmountable. In order to the win the nomination, a Democrat needs 2,383 delegates. Hillary Clinton currently has 1,758 delegates, which includes 469 unpledged superdelegates, while Bernie Sanders has 1,076, which includes 31 unpledged superdelegates. If Bernie Sanders were to win, he would need to win 67 percent of the remaining delegates, or he would need to convince the superdelegates supporting Hillary Clinton to change their support to him. It is possible, but not yet likely, that Hillary Clinton will win the nomination based solely on superdelegate support. When one looks purely at pledged, committed delegates, the race appears tighter; Clinton has 1,289 delegates to Sanders' 1,045.




## Can Bernie Sanders win the nomination?

Of course Bernie Sanders can still win the nomination, but he will have to pick up major victories in states that are less friendly to his campaign. Sanders tends to do extremely well in small states that hold caucuses with high white voter turnout, but most of these states have already voted. However, according to the most recent polling in each state, Clinton's best remaining state is Maryland, where she is currently capturing 55 percent of the vote, according to the Washington Post, far less than the 64 percent needed to avoid a contested convention. To win the overall nomination, Sanders will need to take a large majority of delegates throughout the northeast, including New York and Pennsylvania, and all throughout the west, especially California. If he fails to win these states, it becomes more difficult to picture a path to victory. He will also need to amass significant superdelegate support.

# The Republicans

## What is a contested convention?

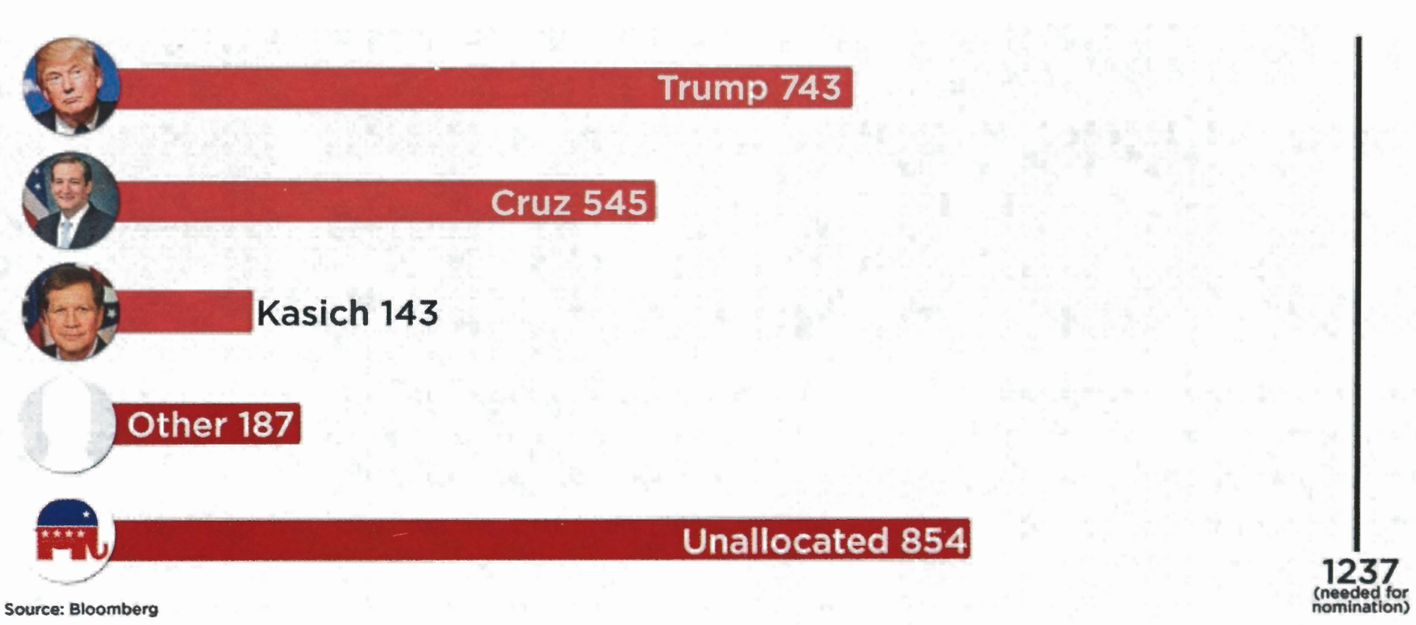
In order for a candidate to win his or her party's nomination, they need to win a majority, or 50-percent-plus-1, of the available delegates. In order for a candidate to win the Republican nomination for president he or she needs 1,237 delegates, and a Democrat needs 2,383. A contested convention occurs when no candidate has won a majority of the delegates so there is not a clear winner at the convention. At the convention, the delegates vote by ballot. During the first round of voting, nearly all delegates are required to vote for the candidate to whom they were assigned during the primary season. If no candidate wins a majority of delegates on the first ballot, then a second round of voting begins, but almost all of the delegates are allowed to vote for any candidate they individually choose. At this point, anyone can win. The candidates then begin making deals in order to accumulate enough support from the delegates to capture the nomination. A second-ballot vote has not occurred in either party since the Democratic convention in 1952 ,and the last convention where a candidate was not determined before the first-ballot vote was the Republican convention in 1976.

## What would happen at a contested convention?

A contested convention could be a Republican civil war from which the party may never recover. Trump will almost certainly go into the convention in July with the most delegates, but not enough to win. If Trump loses the first ballot, then things get hectic. Donald Trump's campaign made a major organizational mistake at the state level by allowing Cruz and Kasich supporters to be elected as Trump delegates. Regardless of the candidate they personally support, these delegates have to vote for Trump on the first ballot, but after that, nearly all of them are free to vote for whichever candidate they want. Because most delegates assigned to Cruz and Kasich are Cruz and Kasich supporters, they will continue to vote for the same candidate. However, many Trump delegates are not Trump supporters and will abandon him the first chance they get. In order to prevent this, Donald Trump may attempt to make a deal with Cruz or Kasich, probably offering one the vice-presidency on his ticket, in order to win his delegates. However, the hatred between the candidates and their supporters makes this unlikely.

## Who is winning the race for the Republican Nomination?

As you probably already know, Donald Trump has been winning the race for months, but he is no longer a lock for the nomination. Trump has 743 delegates, Sen. Ted Cruz has 545, Gov. John Kasich has 143, and 854 are still unallocated. There are also 187 delegates assigned to candidates who have dropped out of the race; Marco Rubio, Ben Carson, Jeb Bush, Carly Fiorina, Mike Huckabee and Rand Paul all have a share of these delegates. In order for Trump to win the nomination, he would need to win 494 additional delegates, which is 58 percent those remaining. A 58-percent margin is far higher than his performance in any state so far. Ted Cruz faces an even more daunting task, needing 692 delegates, which equates to 81 percent of those remaining. This figure is essentially unattainable. John Kasich is still running, but cannot mathematically win the nomination before the convention and is therefore hoping to win at a contested convention. Right now, Donald Trump is the only candidate who can realistically win the nomination for President outright, but as Ted Cruz continues to win contests, it is becoming increasingly unlikely that this will happen.

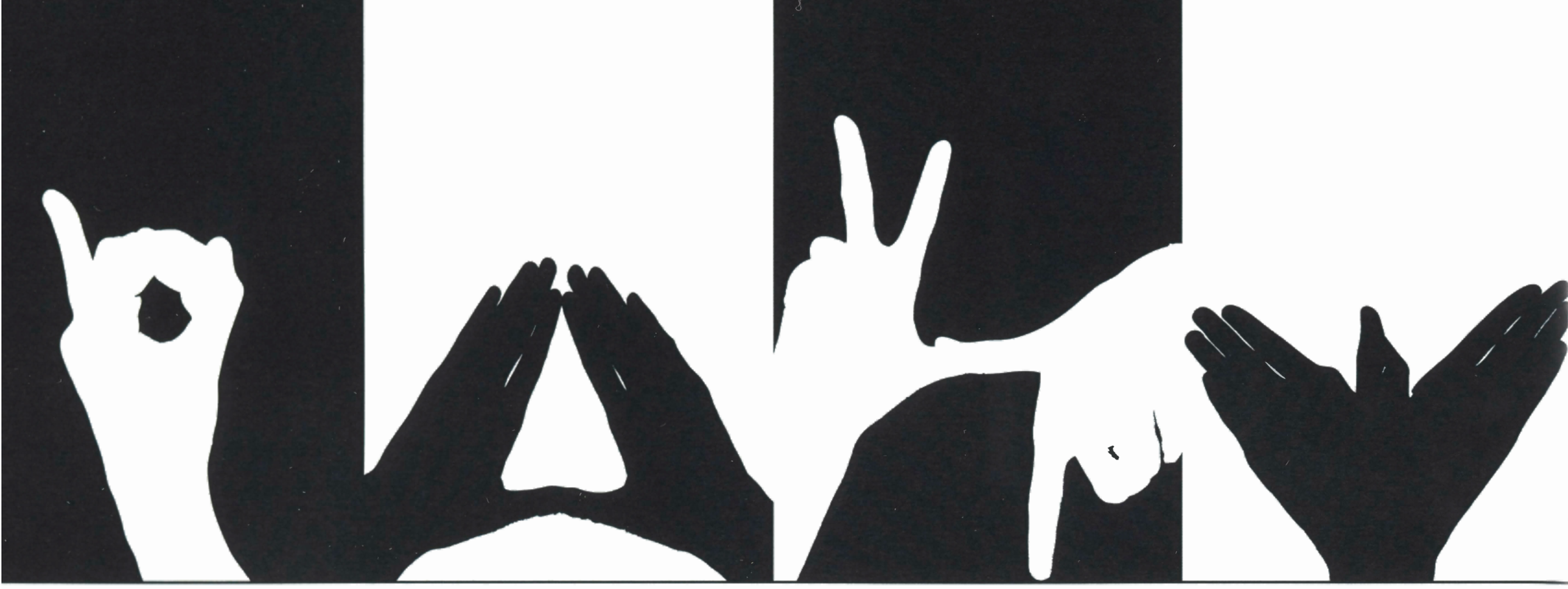



## Can Donald Trump win the Presidency?

Seven months before the election, it is impossible to say what will happen in November so of course Donald Trump can win the Presidency, but Hillary Clinton currently holds the advantage. For the past few election cycles, Republican leaders have argued that the party needs to increase its minority outreach and widen the party's appeal, but Donald Trump is taking a different approach. Instead, he is under the belief that if the Republican Party raises white voter turnout substantially, which Trump has done, and then wins 70% of white male votes, the party will capture the White House. This math is correct -- a candidate could carry the White House if he or she wins 70% of the white male vote, but this is a far higher percentage than Republicans tend to receive in this demographic. However, Trump appears to be in range to do this. If Trump gets close to 70% of the white male vote and brings in minimal support from other demographics, he could be the next to occupy the White House.

## Who else could win?

Ted Cruz might be successful earning reallocated votes on the second or third ballot, but this plan could falter if establishment leaders rally behind one candidate. John Kasich would be the obvious choice for this role and could win by being the second choice for both Trump and Cruz supporters, which is clearly his current strategy. Kasich currently faces a roadblock in the Republican convention rules, which state that to be the nominee, a candidate must win a majority of delegates in eight contests, but Kasich has only won one. This rule, however, will likely be changed before the convention to allow anyone to run on the second ballot, which brings us to the last possibility: that a candidate not currently running wins the nomination. The most discussed candidates who are not running are House Speaker Paul Ryan, who has stated that he is definitely not running, and former Gov. Mitt Romney, who is clearly interested. In addition to these potential candidates, anyone who ran in the primary and dropped out, like Jeb Bush, Scott Walker, or Carly Fiorina, could also run. There could also be a dark horse candidate like South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley or former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, but a scenario like this is highly unlikely.



# BORDERS AND HAND SIGNS

BY SABRINA ESCOBAR

You have grown accustomed to the typical routine of a Richmond student — waking up, going to class, eating lunch, working long hours in the library and talking to your friends. It's a beautiful day outside, so you take a stroll around campus and see a group of people in the distance. From what you can tell, they are all clustered closely together, and their shirts are covered in letters. You remember the countless stories you've heard about this group, stories about the cumbersome tasks members have to endure in order to join, and stories of the highly organized dynamic that holds them together. All of these thoughts flash through your head as you decide whether or not to change your route. Suddenly, every member of the group makes a hand gesture, and you walk towards them, relieved that you found a group of your sorority sisters.

You are now walking along the streets of El Salvador, Central America. You're accustomed to the routine of student life — waking up at the crack of dawn, trekking several miles along a beaten-up dirt road to go to a crumbling school, eating a meager lunch and working long hours in the fields to support your family. As you're coming back from a long day of work, you see a group of people in the distance. From what you can tell, their bodies are covered in ink, and with a terrifying jolt, you remember all the stories you've heard about these people, stories about the horrifying tasks they've had to perform in order to join the group, and stories of the highly organized dynamic that holds them together. Suddenly, every member of the group makes a hand gesture, and you bolt. Avoiding the street gangs is not a choice -- it is a survival instinct.

Being in a sorority and growing up in El Salvador, I am familiar with both of these situations. Granted, I have never personally had the second situation happen to me. I was fortunate enough to grow up in one of the "safe" areas of El Salvador's capital, San Salvador. These were areas where situations like these didn't occur, areas where gang signs were an excuse to flaunt your street knowledge and the impressive flexibility of your hand. Ironically, the first time I ever took a hand gesture seriously was on Bid Day, where I took several pictures "throwing what I know." Unfortunately, not all Salvadorans can say the same thing.

El Salvador is plagued by two main gangs: the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and the Mara 18 (18th Street Gang or M18), both of which were started by Latin American immigrants, primarily Salvadorans, living in Los Angeles in the 1980s. Once El Salvador's civil war finished in 1992, the majority of the gang leaders were deported from the U.S. to various countries throughout Central America, and these gangs have been growing on the fringes of Salvadoran society since then. The gangs are responsible for El Salvador's recent surge in violence. More than 2,000 people have been murdered in the span of the last three months and thousands more within the last couple of years. For reasons unbeknownst to me, as well as to the rest of the Salvadoran population, the violence has escalated dramatically in the last year. Several newspapers have attributed the surge in violence to a retribution for the new government's anti-gang stance, where gang members are beaten up, imprisoned in harsh conditions or instantly killed. Now each gang thinks it is fighting a war on two fronts: the rival gang and the government. As part of the war effort, the MS-13 and M18 have been targeting family members, friends, neighbors and acquaintances of their enemies, leading to thousands of innocent lives being lost. Consequently, the majority of the Salvadoran population has learned to adapt to living in a situation where nothing they own actually belongs to them. Houses, land and businesses aren't insured to a company. Through extortion, everything belongs to the gangs. The price of a late quota is their lives.

In contrast, the first thing I did when I arrived at San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua, for spring break was beg my friend to take a picture of me throwing a Delta against the skyline. She rolled her eyes at me and scoffed, but nevertheless took the picture. After posting it on my Facebook, I promptly forgot about it. As I was going through the pictures of my trip afterwards, I realized how similar the San Juan beach looked to my favorite beach in El Salvador. A sickening thought crept into my mind: "If I had done this at home, would I have been in danger?" My sorority sign looks very different to the hand gestures used by MS13 and M18 members, but the idea of the similarity became unshakeable. Rival gang members have been shot for less—throwing up their gang's sign in rival territory is a major felony.

**A sickening thought crept into my mind: "If I had done this at home, would I have been in danger?"**

Far beyond killing for the fun of it, the gangs rival the Mafia in terms of organized crime. In El Salvador there are approximately 30,000 to 70,000 members affiliated with a gang, which constitutes 0.95 percent of the 6.34 million population. How, then, does such a small portion of the population inflict such terror upon the remaining 99 percent? Financially, the extortion of El Salvador's businesses -- including universities, private schools, major production plants and public transportation systems -- provides the gangs with an excess of funds needed to buy weapons and maintain a grip on their marked territory. Once territory is obtained, it serves as a base from which to engage in illegal activities, including human and drug trafficking, which is their ultimate goal. Each sector of the gang's territory is assigned to 10-60 members that respond to the national and regional leaders, who more often than not, communicate their orders from their headquarters in the Salvadoran prisons. The most vulnerable areas targeted by the gangs are the poor, rural areas around the country, but as gangs consolidate more power, they start to migrate to the urban. By this time, every sector of society has now become hyper-vigilant, even those in areas deemed as "safe."

Most parents, upon dropping their children off at college for the first time, are worried. They worry about their kids' social lives, their ability to adapt to college, to uphold the workload, and to pay tuition. They worry about the safety of the campus and the surrounding area: Is this a campus that will protect my child from harm? My parents had most of the same concerns when they dropped me off at college. As we toured the campus, my father said to me: "I like this place. You'll be safer here than back home." My father is not the first Central American to think this, and he will certainly not be the last.

Central American migration to the U.S. has become one of the most debated topics in the coming presidential elections. Every aspiring candidate seems to have a stance towards migrants, but unlike many voters and even the candidates themselves, I have direct experience with both sides of the argument. As of 2015, more than 900 Salvadorans leave the country per day, hoping to immigrate to the U.S., Mexico or surrounding Central American countries, where they hope to find a refuge from the constant danger by which they are threatened. Safety comes at the price of the place they call home, but for many, leaving the threatening handsigns in the past is worth the trade.

# The Songs We Take for Granted

BY LYDIA DUBOIS

I remember a conversation I had with a friend a mine before my choir tour in the Baltic states. I would be traveling with the University's Women's Chorale and Schola Cantorum, and we would be singing in a variety of beautiful church venues. My friend asked me were we'd be visiting, and I listed off the countries – Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – struggling somewhat to recall them all. As I talked her forehead creased at the center, and she asked, "What do they have there?"

It was a perfectly valid question that, at the time, I couldn't formulate a response for. What did these countries have? They weren't like France and Italy, countries that immediately trigger mental images of iconic landmarks like the Eiffel Tower or the Leaning Tower of Pisa (or Pizza, as little Lydia mistakenly referred to it as). What did these Baltic states have? Where did they fit into history? What languages did the people speak? How did you even spell Lithuania without spellcheck? I honestly didn't know Lithuania was a country. Essentially, I had no clue where I would be going, and all I knew to expect were frigid temperatures and long travel times. Many of my fellow choir members undoubtedly would've said the same.

About two weeks before March 9 – the day we would leave by Coach to the Dulles airport before flying to Germany where we'd board a connecting flight to Helsinki – Mr. Pedersen, the director of Chorale, decided to tell us about the history of these countries, explaining how most everyone in the Baltic states had lost someone during World War ll because of the Soviet Union occupation. He discussed a documentary called "The Singing Revolution," which is about how Estonia literally sang its way to freedom from the Soviets, despite the pernicious forces and terrors they were constantly up against. By the end of WWll more than a quarter of the Estonian population had been deported to Siberia, been executed or had fled. While under the Soviet rule, Estonians were very restricted by what they could and couldn't do, say or believe. Estonian folk songs were illegal, yet Estonians kept singing and preserving their culture. Singing was such an essential part of their struggle to gain back their independence, the plight became known as the singing revolution. Between 1987 and 1991 the Estonians gathered by the hundreds and thousands to sing forbidden patriotic songs and give speeches in protest of the Soviet occupation. Even as friends, family and neighbors disappeared throughout the near 50 years of occupation, Estonians kept singing and defying the Soviets. The Tallinn Song Festival Grounds, which was designed to fit 15,000 performs and thousands of attendees, is where such monumental events occurred and is now the site of the Estonian Song Festival that occurs every 5 years.

The power of the Baltic resistance wasn't solely evident by the singing revolution. The Baltic Way was a human chain of 2 million people that formed on August 23, 1989, and spanned more than 419 miles across Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It was another explicit call for freedom that united more than one country. Our tour guide, Dace Fridrihsone, who was born in Latvia, told us about how she had participated in the human chain as a child. Dace shared many unbelievable stories like that, some of which were testaments to the absolute terrors of the Soviets, while other tails exemplified the strength of the Scandinavians. On our way into Lithuania, Dace decided to give us a surprise stop at another place that spoke even more volumes about their strength. The Coach pulled off unto a dirt road in the far outskirts of the nearest city, Siauliai, and everyone got off to walk a short distance to one of the most amazing sights I've ever witnessed. Dace had taken us to see the Hill of Crosses. It was a place that was surrounded with legends of healing. During the soviet occupation of Lithuania, the soviets did everything they could to destroy the hundreds of crosses brought to this hill, but Lithuanians kept bringing more under the cover of night. They refused to give up the site and its significance, even after the soviets bulldozed the area repeatedly. Yet almost every day more crosses showed up. To this day the Hill of Crosses has thousands upon thousands of crosses from all over the world.

Now snapshot to when we sang in St. John's Church in Tallinn, Estonia. Chorale performs a well-known Estonian song called Lauliku Lapsepõli, featuring a flawless solo performed by Brennan Rankin. As the chilling chords progress, an immediate change occurs among the audience and the atmosphere feels charged. Smiles break out, eyes glisten and claps explode following the end of the song. As Mr. Pedersen had predicted, the audience had been touched by how we took the time to learn a song in their language that could've been obliterated during the rule of the Soviet Union. We didn't know everyone's stories and couldn't relate to the pain and sorrow many experienced during their messy history. But at the same time, we could connect through music.

# (UN)HEALTHY LIVING

## WHEN EXERCISE BECOMES AN ADDICTION

BY RACHEL BRINGEWATT

Body image and exercise are often closely related. An article published by Eating Disorders Hope cited in a recent study that "48% of survey participants identified weight and shape (versus health improvement) as the primary motivator for exercise."

Drug and alcohol addiction are recognized concerns on college campuses, but according to a research article published in the Journal of Contemporary Athletics, exercise addiction isn't always given the same level of priority. The article, "Exercise Addiction: Unnoticed and Peer Supported on College Campuses," concluded that a discrepancy existed between exercise addiction and other addictive behaviors.

"Our results indicate that, as expected, college students would be very concerned if a friend was exhibiting excessive Facebook use, shopping, video game playing, and/or time dedicated to a dating relationship," according to the article. "Addictive exercise behavior was not rated as 'very concerning' by any participant." The article speculated that this could be attributable to the general unfamiliarity with exercise addiction, as well as the commonly held belief that exercise is always beneficial to health.

Exercise does have many physical and psychological benefits. However, it is beneficial to maintain a healthy balance, which entails framing exercise goals.

"The gym really does try to focus less on getting to a certain weight or body image and focuses more about students feeling strong and confident in their own skin," Helaine Ridilla, a sophomore and certified group exercise instructor at the Weinstein Center for Recreation and Wellness, said. "Workout goals should be things like running a faster mile or lifting more weight, but the lines between body image goals and exercise goals get mixed."

Ridilla, who also works as a fitness specialist at the gym, said she thought the confluence of these goals was attributable to the close relationship between body image and exercise.

**"No one is more or less valuable as an athlete or as a person because of their appearance."**
**-Jane Schmidt**

Marshea Robinson, a student-athlete who is on the track and field team, agreed that she closely associated body image and exercise.

"As an athlete I do feel pressure to look a certain way," Robinson said. "Often times, there is an idealized image of what a track athlete should look like. Sprinters have strong, large thighs and distance athletes are thin and tall. Growing up, runners hope to look exactly like the track athletes in the Olympic Games who usually all look the same. It's odd when the athlete does not fit the specific image."

Lindsey Stevens, junior, played on the field hockey team and said she had always loved exercise. While she doesn't necessarily consider it a bad thing to have body goals, these need to be positive ones that focus on respecting your body, Stevens said.

"I think it's important to say that the way you feel about yourself has nothing to do with what you see in the mirror and everything to do with what you tell yourself while looking," Stevens said. "But I do think exercising to lose weight or to look a certain way is completely fine, normal and even healthy."

Stevens said that for her, the gym was a safe space, and exercise helped her handle stress. Exercise should be personal and not about comparing yourself to others or hating your body, Stevens said, but rather should be about loving yourself and doing workouts that make you feel great.

Tabby Bruck, a student personal trainer and group exercise instructor, felt similarly.

"Fitness is about growth, mentally and physically," Bruck said. "Personally I am motivated to work out because I used to be one of the girls who focused on the scale and became very sick. Exercise should be about bettering yourself and reaching goals that you once thought were impossible. The best part about finding that motivation is that it will motivate everyone around you to want to become the best version of themselves."

Jane Schmidt, a swimmer and dancer, faced similar struggles with reconciling body image and exercise. Schmidt became focused on the scale because she wanted to look a certain way in her leotard or swimsuit, she said, and body image began to dictate her self-esteem. After realizing the negative relationship she had developed with exercise, Schmidt chose to take a 365 day break from exercise as a way to reset and heal, she said.

"I had easily fallen into the trap of exercising to lose or maintain my weight and look a certain way, but I knew something was wrong," Jane Schmidt said. "I would weigh myself multiple times throughout the day before and after practice and let that get into my head. If I was on or below a certain weight my self-confidence would soar, but if I was not, I would be devastated."

"When I realized that thoughts about eating and exercise were consuming every moment of my day, I knew something needed to change," Schmidt said. "After lots of prayer and difficult soul-searching and conversations with supportive friends, I was able to let go of the control I had been holding on to with my body image struggles and experienced healing in this area of my life through the grace of Jesus Christ," Schmidt said. "As part of giving up control and ending the unhealthy habits that had dominated my life, I made the decision to take an intentional 365-day break from exercise to celebrate the new freedom and healing that I have. After this year is over, of course, I will exercise again, but hopefully it will be with greater joy and for healthier reasons than before. "

Schmidt said that she felt as though exercise-related struggles are too often ignored, and she wants other students to know they are not alone in dealing with these things.

"No one is more or less valuable as an athlete or as a person because of their appearance," she said.

# MY CONFESSION

BY JABARI LUCAS

# TO YOU

I pen this with insuperable apprehension, stemming primarily from two causes. Firstly, I have tremendous respect for this forum, and while this is merely a student-run, local publication, I treat it as a prestigious academic journal. I take every piece I author seriously, with intent to approach and embrace difficult philosophical or political frameworks, pose provocative contentions, and raise novel questions. This piece, because of its highly personal nature, its focus on myself, and its somewhat selfish motive, I fear, will do neither of those things. Secondly, the topic, or– in the case of a surprisingly large contingency of you– the revelation I intend to offer to you is highly sensitive. I am gay, and self-deceptively out.

Gayness, by now, is widely advertised thanks to the bravery of so many individuals who have announced being so. However, this concept that I introduce to you now, "self-deceptively out," instinctively seems as incoherent and weak as it is foreign. I coin this disjointed term to indicate the predicament into which I have been entrenched since June 2015. During that month, I announced via Facebook that I am gay. The response was refreshingly positive. My mother did, and always will, accept me, and I felt a torrent of relief that I have now realized was merely momentary. Once I got back to campus in the fall, I began to realize that not everyone got the message.

Of course, there is the possibility that persons who I think do not know actually do, and the imperceptible or non-existent changes in our interactions gave me the wrong impression. However, I have experienced a lot of people inquiring into whether I was dating a female or goading me to go to a social outing because "there will be plenty of cute girls there." Therefore, I think my extrapolation, with that being considered, is not that off-kilter.

In complete candor, this was partly my doing. When told that available women would be at a certain venue, I would feign interest, but politely decline. I would allow all the new people I have met to believe that I was straight. Whenever conversation arose with other students about romantic encounters or plans with females, I would nod my head aimlessly. I would nod, pretending I had or have had similar aspirations I have never truly known in my whole life. All the while I had a sort of cognitive fissure wearing me down.

I could take the easiest path, continuing to reap the benefits inherent to the privilege of passing as straight, while convincing myself that I was not actually being deceptive. "It is not my fault others may have been too busy to have read my status or too obtuse to take my occasional hints," I would often think. However, I think I always knew that I was only fooling myself (hence the "self-deceptive" part of my terminology). The deeper problem was always within me.

For some reason, as of late, this has been continuously reverberating in my head. On April 5, I came to a metaphorical fork in the road. I recall vividly transiting the flower-petal-littered path that lay between Jeter and Dennis, and saying to myself, "I could very well go back into the closet." That is, I could very well pretend that the fateful June 8 post never happened. I could very well go on and let this "gay phase" dissipate into the wind and be buried in the heap of yesterday. To be honest, I kind of wanted to. I thought being closeted, in my particular case, was not bad, because at least I tried to be honest. But now I see my thinking was only self-deceptive. I was deferring the blame and ignoring the true problem: my fears and my own self-image.

I wanted to get rid of the gay label, because I am afraid of the baggage it entails. Fear presents the obvious challenge of coming out. There is a part of me that was, and still is, afraid of physical retaliation or social resentment for my announcement. I am afraid that the friends I have come to know will think of me differently and treat me accordingly. I am scared that I will lose respect. Most painfully, I still dread the day when I have to finally inform my extended family of my sexuality. Their religiosity, albeit decently motivated, has most of my family convinced of the immorality of homosexuality. I fear that, upon their learning of my sexuality, I will lose their love, and that is a pain I am not quite ready to fathom or face.

Even with all of this, the largest impediment has been myself. I am still not completely comfortable with who I am. To those who know me the best, I am sure that this discomfort materialized itself in the form of a sour disposition, an undercurrent of discontentment, irascibility, and just plain being a dick. That is the saddest part of all of this.

I am still afraid that being gay makes me less of a man. I am so wary of being perceived as an effeminate "queen," in any way, shape, or form that I have become willing to hide my identity. I am afraid that being gay makes me a sexual deviant, thanks to years of exposure to conjecture and homophobic rhetoric in the public sphere. I fear that I do not have a place in the LGBT community. What is so warped about this particular fear is that I cannot muster the courage to get involved because of the stigma, be it real or imaginary, that comes with corresponding, University-sanctioned programs.

As I pen this–and as you read this in its published form–my decision is obvious. As I have lain forth all of these personal tempests of emotion and introspection, I realized that this year, I was being self-deceptive. I was fooling myself into thinking that being perceived as straight was solely the fault of others, when the blame was mostly mine. I am not necessarily saying that I should have made my sexuality a point in every conversation or essay. I am posing that my willingness to go along with and even facilitate falsity belied my own form of self-loathing.

That is the nastiest form of oppression homophobia has ever exacted. Like racism, homophobia's potency is contained in its ability to make the gay person hate and devalue himself or herself. As political history shows, it seems to be increasingly evident that the best way to repress someone is to convince him or her to repress his or herself.

So, I come out to you today, not to grab attention. I do it, even though some of you may already know, because the source of my disease was more so internal. I do it because it is how I make peace with myself. It is my way of dismissing the aforementioned fears and stereotypes that have impinged my psyche.

I do so on a continuing quest toward acceptance of my sexuality. It makes me no less of a man, no less of an intellect, nor any less of a person.

"Yes, I am gay."

I do so knowing full well that there may be negative consequences to my announcement, and yet go forward anyway. For, it is better to be rejected whilst being yourself than to be accepted whilst living a lie (or in my case, a half-truth). I do so because I understand that the worst kind of lie one could tell is the one that lies to oneself.

Perhaps, you can relate to my story. If so, I hope you find solace in hearing that you are not alone. My advice is to come out only when you are ready. Coming out compulsively, as if you have to, is just as bad as remaining closeted. There is no use in telling others and asking for acceptance, when you cannot accept yourself. Perhaps, you cannot relate and yet found the resolve to bear with me. Either way, I hope you forgive my moment of self-indulgence.

# UNTOLD STORIES

# EXCAVATING OUR PAST

BY: CHELSEY DAVIDSON

Those with an interest in our campus' history have likely heard the tale of this campus' past as an abandoned amusement park. A perusal of the campus' architecture website will show you that before Boatwright Beach served as the entrance to our library, it housed an old playhouse, where Richmonders would go for amusement to escape the city. It also was home to a merry-go-round, a Venetian gondola, and what was the only electric shooting range in the country at the time. According to this same website, President Boatwright and the Board of Trustees purchased the land that formerly housed Westhampton Park in 1910, with campus construction beginning in 1911. In 1914, the coordinate colleges replaced the amusement park, and the university opened its Westhampton and Richmond doors to its carefully selected students.

Fast-forward 102 years, and the tale of the origins of campus is often framed in terms of an underdog story. To open a campus so far west was brave and daring at the time, placed at the last stop on the streetcar line and marking the virtual end of civilization. The contrasting images brought to one's mind of a swampy amusement park and a serious academic institution is quite remarkable, our campus's jovial background casting a romanticized light on the place we call our second home.

The story of a post-bellum amusement park – a fun oasis and a harmless pastime – is typically the only narrative included in day-to-day campus dialogue about our past. But there is another tale known to several at this university and yet held in obscurity.

The story you are about to read was not excessively difficult to trace. The Virginia Baptist Historical Society, which provided much of the documentation and facts, is easily accessible next to Boatwright Library, and upon entrance, Michael Whitt, special projects assistant for the VBHS, greeted me with facts about our campus. This is the narrative I was able to piece together using their resources and knowledge, as well as other sources noted where appropriate.

## Before Westham Park: Physical History of our Campus

In the antebellum period, the area that now envelops campus was no amusement park. Mr. Ben Green's plantation encompassed several hundred acres, extending from Three Chopt Road to the north, to the Higgenbottom Plantation bordering the river to the south and west. His plantation included the entirety of what is now our campus, from the business school to the sorority cottages, New Fraternity Row to the Gateway Apartments. As we all know from treks up Mt. Modlin, our campus is anything but flat, and as such, Mr. Green's land was not suitable for an agricultural plantation. Because Mr. Green could not grow profitable tobacco, his business was lumber.

Fortunately for Mr. Green, his plantation housed abundant natural resources. There was no shortage of trees on his holdings, and the small but sufficient Westham Creek ran through his plantation. If dammed, this creek could power a sawmill to efficiently produce his lumber. Around 1840, Mr. Green ordered his slaves to do exactly that – his able-bodied slaves dammed the creek and built his sawmill along the resulting lake's southeastern edge. For the duration of the operation of his plantation, these slaves would also haul felled trees from all corners of his plantation, up and down the hills of campus, and eventually deliver them to the southeastern edge of the lake they themselves formed.

Yes, our beloved Westhampton Lake was indeed created by slaves, established as the millpond of a slave owner.

This is an unsurprising revelation for a campus in the South, but what is notable is that so few people seem to know that Mr. Green's slaves worked and sweat on the topsoil of our campus. This was where they lived their lives, and likewise, it was where many of them died.

The sawmill and dam were situated in the approximate location of present-day Tyler Haynes Commons. According to a 1935 book titled "Zion Town – A Study in Human Ecology" published in 1935, "some few years ago" a group of laborers dug a hollow just behind the dam. In doing so, they unearthed piles of the bones and human skulls of Mr. Green's slaves. This site is considered to be the burial ground of the slaves who worked Mr. Green's plantation, a site that students pass by and walk over every day.

In the 1940s, the same thing happened a second time – workers digging a hollow unearthed the bones of several bodies near the same area behind the Commons. These bones also belonged to Mr. Green's slaves, and were found along with a small marker engraved with the lettering "D.F." According to an article published in The Collegian dated Nov. 7, 1947, it was thought at the time that this inscription was meant to denote "Died of Flu." This same article also reported the speculation that the bones may have belonged to William and Mary football players, but this assertion has since proved to be unfounded. Both historical facts about the university timeline, as well as analysis of the bones themselves have shown that these belonged to people of hard slave labor, Whitt said.

The records of Mr. Green's plantation are unfortunately incomplete, and we do not know exactly how many slaves worked the land of our campus. However, with the quantity of land Mr. Green owned, he would have owned a substantial number.

The history of campus in the post-bellum era is detailed in a self-published piece by Stuart Wheeler, entitled "Absolute Beauty: Frederic William Boatwright, Ralph Adams Cram, and the Arts and Crafts Neogothic Architechture of the University of Richmond." According to this source, in 1897, William Washington Browne

purchased the land to the south of Green's millpond – 634 acres of land known as Westham Farm, which included the southern parts of campus. Browne, born in 1849, lived the beginnings of his life as a slave on a Georgian plantation, joining the Union army at the age of 14. After pursuing an education in Wisconsin and teaching school in Georgia and Alabama, he settled in Richmond and became the head of a group called the Grand Fountain of the United Order of True Reformers. The True Reformers was a secret order that developed in the reconstruction era, and at its height had 15,000 members, employed 250 people, and ran the 150-guest Hotel Reformer in Richmond. The group also formed the first African American bank in America, created in 1888.

In 1893, Browne proposed to create a retirement home for poor African Americans, and this quickly became his chief ambition. He purchased with his own funds Westham Farm, including the southern portion of campus, for exactly this purpose. Browne selected the land because of its location, a mere 6 miles from Richmond, and its proximity to Westham River Road, presently River Road. Unfortunately, he died in December of 1897 of skin cancer, leaving the management of the land to the True Reformers.

The grandson of the new president of the True Reformers, Thomas W. Taylor, took charge of the land on which the retirement home stood. Though he supported the home for many years, by 1910 the True Reformers was facing financial ruin, which Wheeler attributed to poor leadership. The land was sold to John Landstreet of the Westham Land Corporation, who offered 100 acres of his holdings to Richmond College, with an option to purchase additional land. At an evening meeting at the Jefferson Hotel, the Richmond College Board of Trustees accepted the gift, voting to purchase more acreage for just under $18,000. Thus, a site that for 13 years had played an important role in the positive reconstruction of African American communities became part of an all-white institution.

## Spiders over Time: Developing Campus Culture

Richmond College was founded in 1830, long before the move to Westham was conceived. Robert Rhyland founded this college as a Baptist institution, and while he himself was inextricably entrenched in a slave society, Richmond College was revolutionary in one respect: Rhyland would not allow his students to bring their slaves to college with them. Other Virginia institutions, such as William and Mary, allowed students to be accompanied by their slaves provided they pay an additional small fee. Though this seems but a small accomplishment in hindsight, that no slaves were brought to campus was quite an anomaly for a Southern institution.

However, the power of the institution of slavery far exceeded the actual exploitation of labor. Slavery in some form or another has been a feature of human civilization seemingly from the inception of society itself, and many societies have featured slaves and slave labor in varying forms. But there is a clear difference between a society with slaves, and a slave society, as explained by Julian Hayter, professor of leadership studies:

"In a slave society, everything revolves around institutional slavery. A slave society's institutional, political, and social culture is dictated by slavery. It is the driving force behind everything that particular society produces. These schools are a product of that slave society. No slavery, no Virginia. No slavery, no University of Richmond. No slavery, no UVA. And it's not just the labor, it's everything it engenders. People were able to assume an exorbitant amount of the political and cultural power in this place. They had the leisure time because slaves were giving them the time to invest. People treat slavery and race as an addendum to American history. These institutions treat slavery and race as if it's a footnote to their development. It's not. It's central."

The University spent its youth seeped in the culture of a slave society, and for that reason, it is impossible to divorce campus's institutional history from the institution of slavery itself. After the war, the Southern culture adopted what Whitt described as the "lost cause mentality." This idea romanticized the Southern fight during the war, and attempted to write the history of Civil War battles in terms of Southern pride. This narrative structure transformed Southern veterans from planters into knights who fought for the cause. Whitt said he believed that the development of this mentality was little more than a cover, and that today, there is little separation between Confederate pride and deliberate racism. "There existed a desire among some to 'Make the South great again,' and it still exists in part today," Whitt said.

Racism in the post-bellum era was a mechanism of entitlement and privilege, designed to ensure that the lowest white person was always a step above the most advanced black person, Whitt said. Virginia institutions were very much entwined in building such mechanisms.

Virginia institutions like UVA, William and Mary, and University of Richmond began to develop the ideological frameworks to justify the perpetuation of racism and Jim Crow, Hayter said. These institutions lead the way in racial science. Pseudoscientific thought, like scientific racism, social Dawinism and eugenics came out of institutions like ours. The anti-miscegenation statutes that forbade interracial marriage developed in part from these institutions as well, Whitt said. Donors who have been memorialized on campus buildings, including Rhyland, Thomas, and E. Claiborne Robins, all had connections to slavery or segregation. Our university has recently hired an archivist whose job is to investigate the ties between our institution and the development of these racial barriers – the specific narrative is still emerging.

On our campus, the Southern mentality was evident through much of the 20th century, and even our spider mascot was entrenched in the system. Colonel Spidey, our mascot through much of the first half of the century, appeared at sporting events and in yearbooks clad in a gray Confederate uniform. His presence is especially prevalent in the 1949 edition of "The Web," the title of the former campus yearbook. In this edition, Colonel Spidey graces the cover of the book, as well as appears in every section divider. This predecessor of WebstUR was a manifesta-

tion of Southern pride and racial elitism, and an isolated movement to re-introduce him to campus culture occurred only 10 years ago, Whitt said.

Today, the remnants of racism are still felt by many students of color, though they may seem invisible or trivial to the majority of students. Macda Gossa, a black sophomore from Ethiopia, said she had never experienced racism in any form before coming to our campus for college.

"Coming here, race wasn't something I considered at all," Gossa said. "But when I got here, the way the school promoted diversity on its website and what I saw on campus did not match. The school really sells diversity, but it isn't really diverse as far who they reach out to for student selection."

The minimalistic diversity on this campus creates a particular type of atmosphere for these students. "I've been the only black person in most of my classes, and that puts a certain pressure on you," Gossa said. "You feel like you're representing a whole race. And there's always the risk of furthering the misconception that black people are not as academically gifted as white students if you slip up one day." Richmond delivers in terms of academics, Gossa said, but the institution lacks the open-mindedness that she craved to find in college.

Gossa acknowledged that many people who deny the existence of modern racism on college campuses would likely dismiss her concerns as hypersensitive. "When people use the word hypersensitivity, it's a lack of empathy," she said. "They don't face these problems, and they don't understand them. But it affects my life and my everyday experience here."

## Moving Forward

Ignoring narratives of campus, whether this obfuscation is purposeful or negligent, provides little to no reconciliation or unity on campus, and further progress cannot occur without widespread knowledge of our school's institutional memory. The careful consideration of our campus's legacy is in the best interest of our school, Hayter said, because until we do this, our status as an elite and intellectual institution cannot be taken seriously.

"We are creating a core contingent of future disgruntled alumni – people who are upset with the way this institution is not dealing with the diversity that it brought about over the last 10 years," Hayter said. "It is immoral to change an admissions process to bring about diversity and not create institutional apparatuses to allow that diverse community to thrive. And I think there are scores of students on this campus who feel that something is wrong."

Progress, of course, occurs incrementally, and our school has made significant strides towards inclusivity over the course of its existence.

"You would be a fool to deny the progress this school has made," Hayter said. "But the only way you continue to make progress is to be critical in a positive way of the way this school has grown. Growth is not going to happen axiomatically. The types of progress this school has made towards inclusivity didn't happen organically – people forced it. And a lot of people weren't ready for it when it happened. But you've got to be out in front of the trend in that way. It's critical that this school ask, 'How do we get in front of the next trend?'"

# MODERN MOVEMENTS

## AN OPINION BY CASSANDRA CEBALLOS

What makes a story powerful? The content is one source of power, but the storyteller ultimately shapes the content. Thus, crafters of stories are wells of power into which readers may cast their buckets. The storyteller is powerful because each carefully chosen perspective, adjective, and metaphor comes together like the colors in a painting to present a final image. So what happens when a story is left incomplete or unfinished, when storytellers leave out or gloss over important details, both the respectable and the unseemly? I may exist in a personal utopia of idealism, but I believe historians, journalists, parents and politicians as the world's storytellers have an obligation to pay each story justice. I believe in telling stories honestly, fairly, and wholly. That is not the world we live in however, and it never has been.

A dominant narrative overwhelms our history books, our television shows and commercials, and even our campus tours. For many centuries now there has existed an erasing of any history that challenged the dominant narrative. Stories have been lost, destroyed, and forgotten that can never be recovered. But there exists hope, as young people around the world set their sights on reviving the forgotten and the glossed over. I believe in the power of just storytelling and believe it is imperative that University of Richmond students know the history and legacy of our name and this campus we call home, as well as how our campus fits into larger movements.

On March 15, Alicia Garza of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement came to speak on campus. In addition to detailing the organization's movement, she left the audience with several unanticipated takeaways that were more holistic in nature than the targeted movement would suggest. First, as Garza succinctly put it, "Hashtags don't start movements. People do." BLM exists as a movement today because of the overwhelming need to share another narrative. The privilege to tell a story is often reserved to the same repeating few, who find themselves with the power and victorious position to frame things as they choose. BLM became a forum in which black people, whose experiences are ignored and invalidated everyday, could share their own stories. BLM occupies a space on social media where black people can share their pain, discrimination and the daily struggle of being black in America.

Secondly, Garza coined the term Black Lives Matter not with the intention of starting a movement, but simply as a reminder to historically devalued bodies that their bodies did, in fact, matter. She waved aside the idea that she initiated the black liberation movement of BLM. Garza, and many that came before her and will come after her, believe movements in fact have no points of origin or ending points, but rather evolve over time through incremental changes that happen all too slowly. The fight for equity is not new, and it is far from over.

The more I learned of this campus's history, the more skeletons I found concealed in the University's closet, both literally and figuratively. As many Spiders of color know, life at the University can be difficult for those perceived as 'different,' or who do not conform to the overwhelming Richmond way. Spiders of color here are aware that their struggle is by no means new, and are part of a long fight for inclusion and acceptance on this 350 acre campus, tucked away in the elite West End of Richmond. Beyond the physical particulate lying just below the surface of our campus, there exist dusty yellowed archives revealing the nature of past Spiders.

**THERE CAN BE NO RECONCILIATION WITHOUT RECOGNITION**

**-Julian Hayter, Professor of Leadership Studies**

The history of our campus and its culture makes its current divided state seem less surprising or controversial. One of the last schools to desegregate in the Commonwealth of Virginia, our university not only worked within the system of white supremacy, but actively helped to uphold the system. One particularly ugly moment in the school's history occurred in the 1960s, when it accepted a young woman from the Mary Walker School, only to rescind that acceptance when the admissions office realized she was black. While many years separate that reality from our campus atmosphere today, its integral we explore that history to understand modern interactions.

Tinina Cade, Head of the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) became a staff member almost three decades ago, and campus has experienced many changes in that time. In the past, not many international students, students with disabilities, low income students or students of color attended the university. The reputation in Richmond and the surrounding area was one of a very homogenous campus. Yet efforts specifically concentrated on increasing the diversity at the University, diversity in every aspect, proved obviously successful. Today a number of students of varying religious, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds exist at virtually every level and in every circle on campus. However, as we should all acknowledge a little more often, there is still work to be done.

When asked about why she thought barriers may exist for people of diverse backgrounds, Cade said, "When students arrive here they are coming with 18 years of a past value system. When faculty and staff arrive they are coming with a lifetime of experiences that have shaped how they see the world." Sometimes, these past value systems and experiences fall short of wholly preparing individuals to understand people differing from themselves. Hayter echoed this sentiment. "Just bringing students to a school does not change a campus culture," he said. Even though we learn from our former experiences, focusing solely on individual's or society's past would be a mistake. By focusing on the past, we leave no room for critically thinking about the present and ensuring that we create the best possible future. "We cannot control people that come in with their own personal history," Cade resolved, "We can just focus on ensuring the values and experiences Richmond exposes them to help them become better people."

Stories are powerful, much more so than we give them credit for. Stories adopt a myriad of forms and characters, reaching us through songs, narratives, books, plays, and shared gossip over a meal. Stories structure our view of the world, and we subsequently structure the views of others through our own stories. If you read the preceding article and have made it this far in mine, but do not identify with everything said, please do not read this and take it as a personal indictment. Do not throw up walls of defense and think, "I don't do that," or, "That's not true." Because this is bigger than you, and it's bigger than us. This is about the flawed society we

exist in and the repercussions of that flawed society. We live in a country that looked for a reason to excuse the murder of 12-year-old Tamir Rice because he was black. The story of Black Lives Matter is about, and for, the people who do not get to share their stories because of the institutional dominance of a single narrative. People of color look at the television screens, read magazines, and look at missing children headlines, and rarely is it ever a similar face staring back at them. It's time we share the stories that highlight all of our differences. Everyday we have the power to give life to the untold stories.

Not an expert on storytelling, I consulted Karolina Castro, a senior American studies major who I knew possessed her own extensive thoughts on the power of storytelling. Eloquently, she described the lens through which we approach a story or narrative, and the uneven distribution of power when it comes to memorializing events or places. "When you visit a slave plantation, you enter from the Great House," she said. "You receive the tour from the plantation owner or overseer's perspective. Why not from the slave's perspective?" People marry, and host functions or events on plantations. Meanwhile, the history of the land remains unacknowledged. How would it change the way we think of these spaces if we made a conscious effort to remember and memorialize the site of tragedy for so many? "That's the power of storytelling," Karolina said. "Sharing stories makes people realize they are not alone. Storytelling helps build community and it helps people heal together."

The idea of healing together is exactly how Black Lives Matter got its start. Four years ago, the murder of unarmed Trayvon Martin, a young black boy, days after his seventeenth birthday on February 26th, 2012, incepted national outcry and marked a shifting discourse within the country. A grand jury acquitted George Zimmerman of Martin's murder a year later, a resolution that rocked the African American community. Alicia Garza coined the term Black Lives Matter shortly after the decision. Designed as a space to share visceral stories, experiences and voices, BLM immediately took off and today is an international activist movement.

Hearing the rumblings of change, leading figures and decision makers at the University worked tirelessly to expose faculty, staff and students to the dialogues happening at home and abroad. This year's One Book, One Richmond selection, "Just Mercy" by Bryan Stevenson, exemplifies the University's renewed commitment to having these sometimes uncomfortable but always necessary conversations. Heralded as America's Nelson Mandela, Stevenson is a civil rights lawyer dedicated to defending condemned prisoners on Alabama's death row. His memoir explores the complicated history of Jim Crow and institutional racism, and the resulting impact on the lives of people of color. This engagement in truthful storytelling is an important step forward. When asked about her feelings on the workshops and talks this year, Karolina's response was positive. "The discussion seems to be more about accountability and not so much placing the burden on the students of color to bring up the difficult topic," she said.

Accountability, truth telling and reconciliation are three necessary components to building a better future. Talking about white supremacy is uncomfortable and difficult. But what's even more uncomfortable and difficult is living under the suffocating blanket of it. We live in a society that for centuries has privileged blue eyes, fair skin, and straight hair while it punishes the Afrocentric, such as the wider nose, curly or kinky hair and fuller lips. These features are looked down upon, unless the likes of Miley Cyrus and Kylie Jenner make it a trend, at which point it becomes sexy.

Students of color do not get to choose when something a classmate, professor, or staff member says or does makes them uncomfortable. Students of color do not get to choose when a careless comment about their hair, way of speaking, manner of dress, or viewpoint makes their heart skip a beat and their blood run cold. I hope certain readers of this piece recognize that their life experiences, their day-to-day joys and struggles, can and do look very different than those of students of color at this University. We do not live in a post-racial society and we will never live in a post-racial society. We will always see color and we will always look different from each other, and that is okay. That is not something to be embarrassed about, or to sweep under the rug. Our differences are something to celebrate. Our differences make us powerful and ensure a brighter future for our country and for our world. All I'm saying is that in order to know and understand the differences, we have to validate the whole story, not just one part or voice. As Hayter said, "There can