



Fall 2024 Issue

Greater Happens Here

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This newsletter is dedicated to celebrating the Partnership for Petersburg and collaboration with Virginia State University.

GREAT!

"The City of Petersburg is a neighbor and a friend to Virginia State University. When Petersburg thrives, so does the University, and vice versa. At VSU, we are excited about the opportunities 2025 holds for both the City and the University."

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah

"The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University is proud to spearhead these initiatives, empowering our students to interact with local companies and drive significant change. This collaboration demonstrates our dedication to the long-term success of the City of Petersburg while also enhancing the educational experiences of our students. We are excited to expand our reach and strengthen this collaboration with the help of all participating VSU colleges."

Dr. Tia A. Minnis, Provost

"The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business looks forward to continuing to partner with our neighbors."

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The Fall Semester in Pictures — 2, 3, 4, 5

A Different Look — 5

Women Owned — 6

FARE — 6

Coming Soon — 7

MBA Update — 7

More Pictures — 7, 8

It's a Wrap — 9

Friendsgiving — 9

Condolences — 9

BDO — 9

Faculty Research — 9

Kick It — 9

Impact — 10

Yet More Pictures — 11, 12, 13, 14

Back to the Future — 15

Green Thumb — 16

Giving Back — 16

Message from the Dean — 16

2024: THE FALL SEMESTER IN PICTURES



Katheryn Moore and Alysia Vincent travel out of state for training.



Tony Tucker and Osman Kamara are accounting superstars.



Thomas Pointer and Amari Brooks embrace at a Richmond Kickers game.



Devin Styles attended an Activation Capital event. (above)



Brooke McClinton and Jazmine Esson join Tonya Battle for a picture in Petersburg. (left)







Bryan and Jazmine join industry for a pic outside of Singleton.



Andrina Spriggs attends an accounting conference. Above.

Brooke McClinton and Lauren Parham deliberate.

Tania Judkins and Lucas Nunez pose for the camera.

Devin Styles networks. Below.



Leilani poses, Jada hosts, Deshaun listens attentively, Osman gets off campus with industry and Kiersten celebrates a gift of a State Fair ticket. Below.



A Different Look

Everyone is talking about a different look at Singleton Hall because of the new dynamic exterior to the building including a mural facing Foster Hall, a quote from the College's namesake above the main entrance and a distinctive sign above the four western doors for The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business. The mural is but the first of three to be affixed to Singleton. President Makola M. Abdullah championed what was conceived and painted by S. Ross Browne assisted by among others Skye Whiting who is a member of the College's American Marketing Association. It is important to note that the sign was inspired by Mrs. Loida Lewis.



Women Owned

The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business at Virginia State University this semester partnered with the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) relevant to an opportunity for fifteen students to benefit from training in entrepreneurship. In collaboration with sponsor Altria, each of the female students are either aspiring business owners or already own and operate a business. The semester-long training culminated in a pitch competition won by Shelby Moore (Accounting major). A non-traditional student and a mom, Shelby introduced a plan to open a hair locks salon in Petersburg. Her advocacy and enthusiasm for her business included championing women and an unscripted authentic answer to the pitch competition's panel question pertinent to the origin of the name of her business. Her reply nearly brought some of the judges to tears. [continued below]



The winnings included a check for \$5,000 along with a full expenses-paid trip to New Orleans in June that will afford Shelby to again compete. Of the experience, Shelby said, *"I am grateful to WBENC for this opportunity and I am proud to represent the College of Business."* Other participants included the runner-up Kiersten Williams (Marketing major) who won the Audience Choice Award for \$2,000. Kiersten's business, i.e. Healing with KW has become a well-known quantity on the campus of Virginia State University particularly following her return from studying entrepreneurship abroad in London and Paris.

The initiative is but the most recent example of the College's experiential education initiatives along with its support of competition.

FARE

Students in the College again attended the Financial Alliance for Racial Equity conference in D.C. and participated in workshops and networking with industry along with undergrads from other institutions.

Coming Soon

Among the newest experiential education initiatives in the College is a financial literacy train the trainer experience. Born out of a partnership with a prominent foundation, fifty-five students in a personal finance course will benefit from an Ivy League curriculum adopted at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. The objective is to increase financial literacy and wealth management specifically. The idea is undergrads to learn by teaching. The end goal regards the community and the College's students offering training sessions. Already this semester Kathryn Moore (Marketing major) and Alysia Vincent (Management major) visited New York to participate in training. The ladies are campus ambassadors.

MBA Update

Students in the first cohort in the College's Master of Business Administration program have only good things to say about the experience. Though the majority of students participate online, the approximately fifteen that attend the evening classes in person are for example mentoring undergrads. Elton Wright has taught groups of freshman and sophomores and introduced them to the idea of staying at VSU to earn their MBA. Wright said, *"I am thoroughly enjoying my graduate classes and I also like to meet the undergrads and share my experiences."*

More Pictures





It's a Wrap

Jamilla Henderson (Management major) like so many at VSU took unexpected turns including when she was discharged from the U.S Army because of an injury and could no longer continue basic training. Despite the unexpected turn of events and disappointment, Jamilla would instead rethink her future and enroll at VSU. Her tenure at Virginia State University included substitute teaching and earning an apprenticeship as a Pharmacy Technician. However, her future truly began to manifest when she gave birth to her son. Now in her final week before graduation Jamilla has been accepted into a Masters program in Healthcare administration and will start classes in 2025.



Friendsgiving

The College's American Marketing Association (AMA) chapter again hosted a Friendsgiving meal in Singleton for students to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Condolences

On behalf of all of the student-athletes in the College, we extend our condolences along with thoughts and prayers to the family of Peggy Davis, past Athletic Director, for their loss.

BDO

The College every semester facilitates opportunities for students to visit industry off-campus in the office place. Among the hosts this fall was BDO in Richmond. Accounting students spent part of the day getting to know the company and learn about the profession. Oh, and they joined the BDO staff for pizza. Pizza and accounting, who can argue with that!



Faculty Research

The College again this semester hosted presentations for faculty to present research. Among the topics included Dr.(s) Venkat Mummalaneni and Chandra Challa examining India's Tele-Law scheme and Dr.(s) Yun Lee and Jun Lim studying how values affirmation are leveraged in marketing strategy.

Kick It

The College's relationship with Rob Ukrop and the Richmond Kickers manifested this semester in an internship for Thomas Pointer (Marketing major) who facilitated an opportunity for his colleagues including Amari Brooks (Information Systems major), Tara Spencer (Management major) and Nylan Taylor (Marketing major) to attend a match in Richmond. Thank you Rob Ukrop and Thomas Pointer! Go Kickers!



Impact

It would be a very very long read if all of the many hundreds of stories that materialize in a semester in The Reginald F. Lewis College of Business were to be told so instead the following page will but include a news-brief to encourage readers to contact the College to learn more.

Jefferson Hotel: Accounting majors again this semester won big scholarships including from the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) and celebrated together at The Jefferson Hotel in Richmond.

Top Performers: Dozens of students this semester earned Top Performer status relevant to Small Group Role-Play with Industry; topics includes sales, cold calls, conflict resolution, memos and reports, etc.

Discovery Program: Mekhi Simmons (Marketing major) earned admission to the Wells Fargo six-week Sophomore Discovery Fellowship Program.

Accelerator: Hope Woodies (Marketing major) earned a paid internship for the summer at the Wall Street Diversity Accelerator.

Moms: The College celebrated moms by nominating Jamilla Henderson (Management major) for a top award at graduation.

Certification: Jasmine Pierce (Marketing major) earned a SEO certification from HubSpot Academy. Jasmine is President of the College's American Marketing Association (AMA) Chapter.

Debut: Katheryn Moore (Marketing major) and Tara Spencer (Management major) attended a panel conversation and film debut at the Altria Theater.

Henrico: The College again hosted Henrico County for an opportunity to interface with more than a dozen county departments.

Leadership: Leilani Liggins (Marketing major) earned admission to the Gloucester Institute Emerging Leaders Program.

UR: Bryan Hobbs (Management major) and Mariyah Walters (Marketing major) participated in the C-Suite Series at the University of Richmond.

Energy: Lauren Parham (Management/HR major) participated in the Dominion Energy Diversity Student Conference in Richmond.

DC: Students again participated in the Thurgood Marshall College Fund conference in D.C.

Carfax: Students participated in an experiential learning opportunity relevant to Carfax.

Real Estate: Students all semester visited real estate networking events to learn more about the profession and to build their business.

Entrepreneurship: Students continued to launch and grow their businesses.

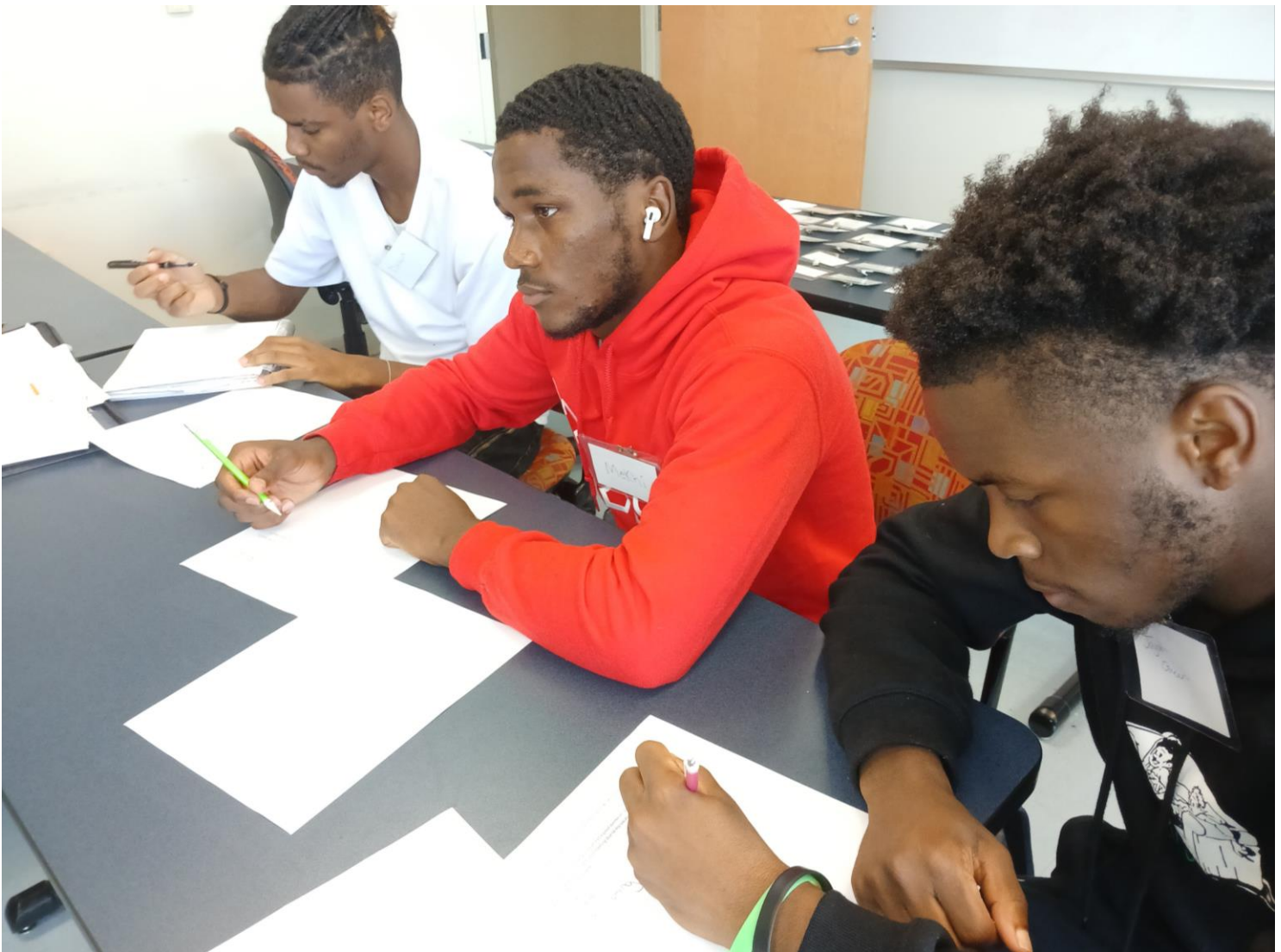
Yet More Pictures



Devin Styles talks shop with Chesterfield County Administrator and friend of VSU Joe Casey. Above.

Nakiyah Jones is a student-athlete and aspiring to study-abroad. Below.







Back to the Future

An important initiative for the Reginald F. Lewis College of Business regards Governor Glenn Youngkin's Partnership for Petersburg. Since its inception, students have regularly visited with the Governor and even hosted His Excellency prior to his election in Singleton Hall to guest teach. This fall included an opportunity for a dozen students in Professional Enhancement to meet with Youngkin at a ribbon cutting for the new Hotel Petersburg. The occasion constituted a bit of a back to the future for the 64-room hotel in downtown Petersburg that had sat vacant for decades but perhaps the highlight of the event included Fabyan Dandridge Mayes (Accounting major) standing next to the Governor to cut the ribbon and Shelby Moore (Accounting major) sharing her business card with the Commonwealth's CEO and inviting his support of her efforts to bring a new business to Petersburg. The Governor was so impressed with Shelby that he remarked on camera, *"that is the way to do it!"* It should be noted that the College is so excited for the new economic development in Petersburg that students participated in not one but actually two soft openings for Hotel Petersburg. Only a hop, skip and a jump from campus; Petersburg matters and the College is a committed stakeholder.



Green Thumb

Students in the College are getting known for their green thumb. They have now planted scores of trees and bushes and dozens of flowers on campus including this semester when students in Professional Enhancement took advantage of the cool fall temperatures and rain to get their hands dirty to plant eight new flower beds.



Giving Back

Every semester the College hosts VSU alumni in the classroom to guest teach because of all the persons undergrads enjoy meeting the most are alumni. This semester, of the more than two hundred fifty industry representatives hosted a total of forty-seven were alums.



Message from the Dean

I frequently use this space to convey my gratitude to all of our stakeholders including principally students, faculty & staff, the University's administration, alumni, industry, etc. but I want to in this message simply say thank you to Mrs. Loida Lewis for all of her support and for believing in who we are and what we do.

Sincerely,

Dr. Emmanuel Omojokun, Dean



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