

Spring 2013 Issue



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Year in Pictures — 2, 3

Milestone Achievement, 21<sup>st</sup> Year of Hosting Black Executive Exchange Program (BEEP) — 3

It's Tax Season; Accounting Students Prepare Tax Returns — 3

Did someone say Ni hao? Students depart for China — 3

Project Shadow on NBC — 4

Three Faculty Earn Ph.D.s — 4

Student organizes Toy Drive for Haiti — 5

Industry Council(s) hear from President — 5

Students participate in City of Hopewell's rebirth — 5

Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM) leans on business students for support — 5

Accounting graduate first to finish program at V.C.U. — 5

Students produce commercial for RVA — 6

Interview(s) with a student, alum, industry stakeholder, and faculty — 6, 7, 8

Dean of Business School Awarded Humanitarian Award — 8

### CONGRATULATORY NOTE

"Congratulations to the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business on securing reaffirmation of your AACSB accreditation. Accreditation is the bread and butter of academia."

*W. Weldon Hill, Ph.D., Provost*

"On behalf of faculty, staff, and students, we are grateful to Dr. Miller, Dr. Hill, our Industry Boards and all others who supported the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business in its AACSB Maintenance of Accreditation quest. Congratulations on a job well-done! Everyone worked extremely hard to attain this important milestone. Thank you!"

*Mirta M. Martin, Ph.D., Dean*

2012: THE YEAR IN PICTURES





## Milestone Achievement, 21<sup>st</sup> Year of Hosting Black Executive Exchange Program (BEEP)

Sponsored by the Urban League Inc, the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business for the 21<sup>st</sup> year hosted the Black Executive Exchange Program (BEEP). Consisting of 30 leading African Americans from industry, the two day event in February included group exercises, mock interviews, small group conversations, networking, and more. Said Dr. Adeyemi A. Adekoya, Professor of Management Information Systems and BEEP Campus Liaison, "our students learned from the BEEPers' experiences and wisdom on what it takes to succeed first in college, and thereafter in the ever-changing and highly competitive marketplace."

## It's Tax Season; Accounting Students Prepare Tax Returns

In collaboration with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Accounting students are again this tax season participating in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program by way of preparing tax returns for individuals with income below \$51,000. Led by Dr. Lester Reynolds, Assistant Professor of Accounting and former 32 year IRS agent, the students provide free tax return assistance to the Tri-Cities community in a program now over 15 years strong at the School of Business.

## Did someone say Ni hao? Students depart for China

Three students have been given the chance to study in China by the Caterpillar Foundation again this spring. On Valentine's Day, Alana Dawson, Junior Marketing Major; Shakira Taylor, Junior Management Major; and DeLydia Lawrence, Junior Accounting Major along with three students from the School of Engineering, Science and Technology left Richmond International Airport to spend the spring 2013 semester in Beijing, China at Beijing Normal University learning Mandarin Chinese along with other international business courses to fulfill their International Business Minor requirements. In addition to academic course work at Beijing Normal University and other immersion activities throughout Beijing, students will spend 9 to 11 days on cultural excursions throughout various areas of China, including visits to Xi'an, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.



## Project Shadow Profiled on NBC

Few universities are as committed to providing students regular access to industry as the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business at Virginia State University. So when Emmy Award winning producer Jesse Vaughan was approached with the idea to showcase the school's Project Shadow program, he immediately started to think about how to tell the story! No less than ten days of filming later, three corporate partners were captured on film working intimately with business students. Ron Garstka at Dominion, Bernard Robinson at Networking Technologies + Support (NTS), and Adrienne Whitaker at SunTrust all agreed to be filmed hosting DeLydia Lawrence (Accounting major), John Miles (Management Information Systems major), and Breyana Baggett (Marketing major), respectively.

*Aimed at increasing students' exposure to industry, Project Shadow regards a student spending a day at a company shadowing professionals. With an expectation to observe and to listen, students sit in on meetings, attend luncheons, meet with company executives and listen in on phone conversations. The objective is to assist a young person in determining if a particular profession is the right fit. The goal is to increase the participant's marketability by refining "soft skills", augmenting career awareness, and developing "real world" skill-sets not often learned in a classroom. Arguably most importantly, Project Shadow affords undergrads opportunities to network with leading professionals. One way to characterize the program is a "mini-mini-internship."*

For the three students, the opportunity to shadow leading professionals complimented their classroom instruction. Said Breyana Baggett, "I am so grateful to have been given the opportunity to network with professionals at SunTrust Bank." John Miles added, "*I didn't know how important it is the first five seconds that you meet someone, that it is the first impression that you can get from someone and that it is very important; you got to nail it, it's either a hit or a miss.*"



To Watch, CLICK HERE:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AllAI67HGIw&list=UUdIGDR6Ctraka1dFaCXJgJw&index=7>

For the industry hosts, the experience was rewarding. Ron Garstka remarked, "*I get to share opportunities and based on sharing those opportunities I get to learn and that kind of makes it exciting from my standpoint.*" Adrienne Whitaker added, "*That's the reason that you get involved, because you are part of a student's development and nothing beats that.*" Said Bernard Robinson, "*It's the difference between truly understanding what's best for your students as opposed to putting on a program that gets students through a curriculum.*" Jonathan Young, the program's administrator added "*that Project Shadow is an opportunity for students to develop a skill-set, a learning, that you candidly can't do or at least it's very difficult to do in a classroom.*"

## Three Faculty Earn Ph.D.s

What does an investigation of internal control related frauds, information privacy, and leadership ratings have in common? They regard dissertation topics for the three newest Ph.D.s at the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business.

Dr. Ifeomah Udeh, Dr. David Coss, and Dr. Kim Gower, respectively defended their theses within the last 10 months having already joined a diverse and talented cadre of faculty at the School of Business. Udeh and Coss, assistant professors of accounting, and Gower, assistant professor of management, "*are critical assets to the family at the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business and each exemplify teaching and scholarly pursuit*" said Dr. Mirta M. Martin, Dean. Martin continued, "*We are truthfully fortunate to have them.*"

## Student organizes Toy Drive for Haiti

Marnelle JnBaptiste Fanfan understands firsthand the plight of children in the Western Hemisphere's poorest country. A native of Haiti, Fanfan knows all too well that many of the Caribbean island's children each year go without basic sustenance much less are given toys. So when the junior business management major was approached by a friend in Haiti with a plea for help, Marnelle considered the request a call for action.

Initiating a Christmas toy campaign, Fanfan secured donations of over 100 toys from faculty, staff and students. From Barbie dolls to coloring books to puzzles to jumping ropes, the gifts moved Marnelle to remark, *"I am so moved by the selfless generosity of so many people here many of whom gave anonymously."*



## Industry Council(s) hear from President

On February 1<sup>st</sup>, thirty-nine members of the Executive Council, Accounting & Finance Advisory Council, IT Advisory Council, and Management & Marketing Advisory Council convened on campus for deliberations regarding new industry/academia collaborative initiatives. At the breakfast meeting, the group heard from President Keith T. Miller who provided an update on the status of the University.

## Students participate in City of Hopewell's rebirth

Thanks to a budding new relationship between the City of Hopewell and the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business, students are being afforded opportunities to develop business plans for the rehabilitation of Hopewell's downtown area. In a Hopewell News & Patriot article on November 8, Jahmica Ragsdale (Management major), and Valarie Simpson and Shalia Watts (Marketing majors) were quoted conveying how critical student participation will be in making the plans a reality. Ragsdale is providing support to a team of students being led by Dr. Jim Damico (Assistant Professor of Management).

## Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM) leans on business students for support

DeLydia Lawrence (Accounting Major) and Shalia Watts (Marketing major) this semester are interning for CCAM conducting business development research. Lawrence and Watts are excited to be a part of what constitutes the only collaboration of its kind in North America. An applied research center that bridges the gap between fundamental research typically performed at universities and product development routinely performed by companies, CCAM accelerates the transition of research innovation from the laboratory to commercial use.

## Accounting graduate first to finish program at VCU

In December Mary B. Scott graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) with a Master's degree in Accountancy; Scott became the first Reginald F. Lewis School of Business alum to finish a new



collaborative program between the schools. The Reginald F. Lewis School of Business and VCU have entered in to an agreement that affords undergraduates the opportunity to complete the Reginald F. Lewis curriculum and go on to VCU and participate in an accelerated master's in Accountancy program. Scott completed the required 30 credits at VCU in one year and is now employed as an auditor with the Commonwealth of Virginia's Auditor of Public Accounts. *"Academically and professionally VSU prepared me"* said Scott. Mary aims to be teaching Accounting students, in 5 years, because she wants to get back in front of students.

## Students produce commercial for RVA

Invited by Venture Richmond and NBC to encourage suburbanites to reconsider downtown Richmond for the purpose of recreation, retail, restaurant, and residency; a team of Reginald F. Lewis School of Business students produced a



30 second commercial that played on WWBT NBC12's website. Consisting of over five days of filming, the team learned on the spot all of the complexities of creating a television commercial. Led by Andre Garvin (Management major) as Executive Producer, the team included Breyana Baggett, Shary Fleurimond, Aaron Kinney, and Ryan Villogram (Marketing majors); Preston Bullock (Mass Communications Major); and Fernando Pantoja (Management Information Systems major).

To Watch, CLICK HERE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceof7xEHQy4>

## An Interview with a Student



Equasha J. Smith is a junior Business Management major from Petersburg

Age: 20 years old      Career Goal: Supply Chain Management

**What is your most memorable experience in the School of Business?** COBU 903, I will never forget that class. I definitely learned the importance of teamwork, dedication, and persistence. Most importantly I developed a new interest in marketing.

**Identify your favorite quote.** *"Don't let anybody diminish your accomplishments."* Jay-z

## An Interview with Faculty



Alex Weimer, J.D. is a new Assistant Professor of Management

Place of origin: New Mexico      Education: Duke (undergrad), UVA (law)

**What are your expectations and objectives here?** Work on communications skills with students and teach law. I think it is very important that students learn their constitutional rights and responsibilities.

**Identify your favorite quote.** *"Make the class interesting first."*

## An Interview with an Alum

Page 7



Amina Mogaji is a December, 2011 graduate

Employment: Financial Advisor at Morgan Stanley Wealth Management

**What is the most challenging part of your job?** Everything! (no I'm kidding) Honestly, the hardest part about my career is sometimes the easiest, if you ask me on the right day. I am required and expected to bring in new assets and clients and that within itself can be a challenge. Being the first African-American female advisor that the Richmond office had ever seen (in 2012 mind you) was a bit challenging for me but I have learned to use it to my advantage.

**Most rewarding?** I love that I get to help people not only plan their finances and investments but really put together the roadmap for their lives.

## An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Bernard Robinson is the Founder and President of  
Networking Technologies and Support (NTS)

Family: His wife Barbara, daughters Nikki & Krista, & son Bernard, Jr.

**What is your most rewarding experience with the School of Business?** To see the School of Business actually act on the curriculum recommendations; to act on the realization that their graduates' employment was the most tactical and strategic reason for why people come to school. It isn't to fulfill a curriculum but is rather to better their lives. Having those certifications make the graduate marketable immediately upon graduation. The department head listened and actually agreed. To see that happen felt very good.

**Identify your favorite quote.** "Delegation without follow up is not management."

## An Interview with an Industry Stakeholder



Renee Chapline is the Executive Director of Virginia's Gateway Region

Accolade: member of the "Top Development Group" as recognized by Site Selection magazine

**Why do you work with students in the School of Business?** I am so pleased to work with the students at VSU and feel that the continued engagement of community leaders along with business and industry leaders will develop a workforce pipeline that the US must have to remain globally competitive. We must be willing to share the wealth of experience that we have been fortunate enough to acquire

through a lifetime career. The Reginald F Lewis School of Business offers the right mix of academic and real world exposure to inspire their students.

**Identify your favorite quote.** "Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself." *Leo Tostoy*

## Dean of Business School Awarded Humanitarian Award

It's not an everyday occurrence to earn a Humanitarian Award but when Dr. Mirta M. Martin, Dean of the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business at Virginia State University, did just that, she simply said thank you and acknowledged that it was a team effort. Honored by the Metropolitan Business League (MBL) at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual MBL Awards Ceremony, Martin was bestowed the **Humanitarian Recognition for Educational Excellence Award**.

In an introduction of Martin, the awards presenter Ms. Adrienne Whitaker noted that the Reginald F. Lewis School of Business had been recognized by at least one publication as the top business school at any of the nation's over 100 Historically Black Colleges and Universities. That distinction explains the educational excellence but what for the humanitarian component? Students, industry, and faculty/staff agreed to share a few examples as follow.

*"Dean Martin, I think, recognized early on that a lot of business students didn't have the resources to purchase a wardrobe of business suits. So, she committed the School to creating a student-run clothing consignment store for us to purchase slightly used clothing at an inexpensive cost"* said Amadou Berete, Personal Banker at Bank of Virginia and May, 2012 graduate. Ulysses Knight, Senior Management Major, said of the Dean, *"I had for so long wanted to study abroad in China and when the opportunity arose I came up a little short in being able to participate but Dr. Martin launched a fundraising campaign and I was able to join my peers in China!"* Said Ed Baine, Vice President – Fossil & Hydro Merchant Operations at Dominion, *"I think a great example of Mirta Martin's work in the humanitarian arena is her commitment to lowering costs and increasing retention rates by providing digital textbooks and course content to her students. That is why we invested in her vision to increase academic excellence."* Oliver Singleton, President and CEO of the Metropolitan Business League remarked the evening of the Awards Ceremony at the Hippodrome in Richmond that, *"Mirta brought eight of her students with her tonight, I just think that is tremendous."*

Many other people shared many other stories of why Dr. Martin is deserving of the award but perhaps its most appropriate to use her own words;



Dr. Mirta Martin at MBL Awards Ceremony

***"It takes all of us to help educate the next generation of leaders"... "this award is for all of us."***



*"This school provides so many opportunities to achieve success. There is really no excuse to do anything but succeed."*

*Chennel Church, Junior Business Management Major*