



January 2016

Chapter Team

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Don't Forget

You are REQUIRED to have a Virginia Tech PID (vt.edu email address) to access the Chapter Forms database.

The Chapter Newsletter is a communications tool between the Virginia Tech Alumni Association and its chapters.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to your chapter liaison. If you have problems viewing the newsletter, please contact [Ginny Ritenour](#), Chapter Program Coordinator.

Dear Chapter Volunteers,

Happy Hokie New Year! As we embark on 2016, our staff is looking forward to working with you on another year full of exciting and inspiring chapter programs. Many of you have already scheduled spring events and are busy planning April community service projects. If you're still looking for a speaker, be sure to contact your chapter liaison for assistance. Also, be sure to take advantage of our upcoming "Virtual Speaker Event" on Wednesday, February 10 at 7 PM (EST) with Jason Soileau, Assistant Vice President of the Office of University Planning (all the details are available on our [Chapter Resources](#) website).

The ACC 2016 football schedule was just announced and our office is busy planning around both home and away games for college homecomings, class reunions, and away game tailgates. Our 2016 Chapter Officers Forum will be held during the first home game weekend (September 1-3) when the Hokies take on the Liberty University Flames. This will be Coach Fuente's first home game at Virginia Tech and we will welcome him in style!

This April, we will continue our Hokie Nation Serves initiative. As we have for the past several years, we encourage all chapters to initiate or participate in community service projects in your local area. As a reminder, you may request your official "Hokie Nation Serves" t-shirts for your event by completing the form on our [Chapter Resources](#) website. The only requirements are that you wear your shirts proudly and submit a photo to our office of your chapter volunteers in action. We will also be partnering with the student-run "Big Event" again this year on Saturday, April 9 (more information on page 6). If you're looking for new ideas for service projects, contact your chapter liaison.

Over the past year, you've heard us talk about our excitement around the university's new "Advancement model." Our senior leadership team is finalizing our missions and goals for our organization as a whole, as well as individual units and we will share updates with you in the coming months about how these changes will help to grow and energize our chapter program.

We look forward to working with you in the upcoming year!

Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations

Chapter Event Highlight: Denver Chapter Young Alumni Stranahan's Distillery Tour

Last May, in an effort to broaden the diversity of their chapter event participants, the Denver Hokies took a look at their Young Alumni programs and decided to try something different.

In the last several years, Denver has become a hot spot for not only local breweries but also fine craft alcohol. Stranahan's Colorado Whiskey lays claim to being the first Colorado-born whiskey using handcrafted distilling techniques and local ingredients.

Chapter leaders identified this trend as having the potential to attract some new participants and organized a tour and social specifically targeted to area young alumni.

Chapter volunteer Kelly Dillon '10 reserved the time and tour spots and publicized the event as an exclusive for "Denver Hokies Young Alumni."

The limited availability was sold out, with 25 young alumni attending. They enjoyed an hour-long tour, sampled products, and socialized afterward in the tasting room. The group then moved on to enjoy dinner in the restaurant together.

Of the 25 total participants, 10 of them had never attended a Denver Chapter event. This resulted in a great mix of familiar faces and new friends. Many of the new attendees were excited to learn more about the chapter and have continued to attend events.

The Virginia Tech Alumni Association was pleased to present the Denver Chapter with the Broadening Alumni Engagement Award at the 2015 Chapter Officers Forum. This event epitomizes the intent of "broadening engagement," as the chapter worked to develop an intentional strategy for including more alumni from their area.

We encourage you take advantage of local attractions and new trends in your area to help you think "outside the box" when planning your chapter events. Take a look at who is attending your events and who may not be showing up, possibly due to location or interest. If your chapter is interested in learning new ways to attract alumni to your local events, contact your chapter liaison for ideas and information.



Denver Chapter Young Alumni pose for a photo op during their tour of Stranahan's Colorado Whiskey



Missy Tasky '86, Denver Chapter officer, is presented with the 2015 Broadening Alumni Engagement Award by Tom Tillar, Vice President for Alumni Relations, Carole Pratt, President, National Board of Directors and Charlie Phlegar, Vice President for Advancement

Chapter Volunteer Highlight: Harry Brown '95, Tidewater Chapter

by Chris Jennings '96 and Jina Gaines '02

Alumni volunteer Harry Brown '95 has been an invaluable asset to the Tidewater Chapter.

Shortly after Harry and his family moved to Norfolk, VA from Memphis, TN, Harry approached chapter president Chris Jennings '96, who was not only a friend but also a fraternity brother, about what he could do to help local Hokies. After hearing about the chapter's vision for the previously organized Tidewater Hokie Business Network, Harry got to work right away and pumped life back into the program this year.

Harry took creative ownership of the [Tidewater Hokie Business Network](#)'s LinkedIn page and organized a Tidewater Hokie Business Network Re-Launch event that was held in October 2014 at O'Connor's Brewing Company in Norfolk, VA. This event featured Penny O'Connor, a Virginia Tech business graduate, as the guest speaker who talked about her career and her experience transitioning from a corporate 500 company to co-owning O'Connor's with her husband.



The Tidewater Hokie Business Network's recent "Orb of Awesomeness" event

The Re-Launch event brought in 50–60 alumni and friends. Since then, Harry has hosted multiple Tidewater Hokie Business Network lunches where he has brought in various guest speakers to provide information on numerous business-related topics to local Hokies and an opportunity for Hokies to network with other Hokies.

In addition, Harry has organized other Business Network speaker events including one featuring Tidewater Hokie and Real Estate Developer Bobby Wright '86 who spoke about property development and a second that was coordinated with Virginia Tech focusing on real estate.

Harry continues to plan for the future of this up and coming piece of the Tidewater Chapter that provides a way to reach an entirely different set of Tidewater Hokies than anything else that the chapter organizes.

In addition, while spending countless hours planning Tidewater Hokie Business Network events, Harry found time to volunteer to review scholarship applications and participate in the chapter's scholarship interviews. This just shows how Harry is willing to go above and beyond to help out the chapter in any way that he can.

We appreciate the energy that Harry brings to our chapter and look forward to continuing our efforts to support local alumni through the THBN and other projects.



Harry Brown '86 (second from left) is joined by fellow chapter leaders, Virginia Tech speaker Ben Knapp (center), Director of the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, and other guests at the THBN event

Staff Highlight: Matt Winston '90, Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations

Matthew M. Winston Jr. '90 was named senior associate vice president for alumni relations at Virginia Tech early last fall and joined our organization at the Holtzman Alumni Center on November 1, 2015. Matt succeeds Tom Tillar, who stepped down from his position after 40 years of serving Virginia Tech alumni.

Many of you have had the opportunity to meet Matt over the years, through his involvement with our Athens, GA Chapter, the Alumni Association National Board of Directors, and his service with Pamplin College of Business. His passion and commitment to Virginia Tech have kept him highly engaged as an alum and we are thrilled to welcome him back to Blacksburg.

"Virginia Tech alumni are passionate about our university and I know from first-hand experience that our chapter volunteers are dedicated to providing our alumni with exciting opportunities for engagement with each other and their alma mater," Matt said. "As the Advancement division and the Alumni Association organization continue to refine their roles in President Sands' initiatives for Virginia Tech, our volunteers will play a key part in helping us define and carry out those goals. I look forward to creating new programs and partnerships that provide our volunteers with access to the information and materials they need to deliver our message of engagement."

Matt comes to us from the University of Georgia, where he served early on as the news bureau manager then as assistant to the president at Georgia since 2000.



A member since 2007, Matt served as the president of the Virginia Tech Alumni Association board of directors from 2013 to 2015. He also served as the chair of the Alumni Services and Communications Committee, the Nominations and Awards Committee, and as vice president.

Matt was a member of the Virginia Tech Real Estate Foundation Board of Directors, the Pamplin College of Business Advisory Council, and the Virginia Tech Foundation Board of Directors. He was also a member of the Virginia Tech Black Cultural Center advisory board from 2003 to 2006. He is an active member of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), which recently awarded him with the 2015 Distinguished Service Award.

Matt is a second-generation alumnus of Virginia Tech. His father, Matthew Winston Sr., received his bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering in 1959 and is one of the university's early black graduates.

Please join our university community and our staff in particular as we welcome Matt into this new role. You can look forward to hearing more from him in the coming months as our new position within the Advancement division takes shape.

Community Service Highlight: 2015 Independence Bowl

On Saturday, December 26, Virginia Tech alumni and friends from across the country traveled to Shreveport, Louisiana to watch the Hokies take on the Tulsa Golden Hurricane at the 2015 Independence Bowl.

The Virginia Tech Alumni Association has a long-standing tradition of hosting a community service project prior to the game. This year, a banner was signed by Hokies attending the pre-game event to be sent to the troops on the USS Truman. This provided the perfect opportunity for football fans to remember our university motto, *Ut Prosim*, and to connect with each other prior to the big game.



Defensive Coordinator Bud Foster



University President Timothy Sands and Dr. Laura Sands



San Antonio Chapter officers Bay and Chris Bryan

Alumni Invited to Participate in 2016 Relay for Life

RELAY FOR LIFE is a student-organized, fun filled, overnight fundraising walk made up of teams of people in support of the American Cancer Society. Virginia Tech has had the largest college Relay for Life in the world for the past 7 years. The 2016 Virginia Tech RELAY FOR LIFE will be held on April 22nd from 5 PM to 5 AM on the Drillfield. The event is followed by the spring football game in Lane Stadium on Saturday April 23.

This year, an alumni team has been set up for those who would like to participate. For more information, please visit the main [Relay for Life sign-up website](#).

Additionally, individual chapters can create their own teams at vtrelay.org. The organizers are planning to announce the alumni chapter that provided the most support at the event.

Registration Open for The Big Event 2016!



Dear Chapter Officers,

The Big Event is Virginia Tech's largest community service event and all alumni chapters are invited to participate! On Saturday, April 9th 10,000 students, alumni, and volunteers will complete nearly 1,200 projects across the New River Valley and the country! With this year marking the 15th anniversary of The Big Event at Virginia Tech, it is sure to have our largest turnout yet!

Again this year, we are encouraging all alumni chapters to participate in an "extended campus" version of the Big Event on **Saturday, April 9th**. All chapters that participate will receive official Big Event t-shirts!

There are three easy steps to making this happen:

1. Identify a service project in your community for your chapter to participate in on April 9th
2. Publicize the event to your local chapter alumni through web, email, Facebook, etc. **Also, please send the project information to Katie Marquis at kmarquis@vt.edu.**
3. [Complete the survey](#) by March 15th to request Big Event t-shirts for your chapter. Email David Bohn at alumni@vtbigevent.org if you have any questions.

That's it! Once your project is registered with David, your chapter will be sent t-shirts to wear during your service project.

Stay up-to-date with The Big Event here: vtbigevent.org/alumni

We look forward to making the Hokie Nation stronger than ever as we come together in one great day of service!

For more information, please contact Nathan Lavinka at 704-579-1117 or nathanlavinka@gmail.com

Go Hokies!

Steven Vanderloo '16 and Rahul Kulkarni '16
Co-Directors of The Big Event at Virginia Tech

Ellie Helton '16
Assistant Director of The Big Event at Virginia Tech

One Big Day, One Big Thanks vtbigevent.org

Dates to Remember:

- February 4 - Hokie Day 2016 in Richmond
- February 10 - [Virtual Speaker Event](#): Campus Master Plan update with Jason Soileau, Assistant Vice President for University Planning
- March 18-20 - Drillfield Series: [Civil War Weekend](#)
- April 8-10 - Drillfield Series: [Behind the Scenes at Virginia Tech](#)
- April 9 - [The Big Event 2016](#)
- April 22 - Virginia Tech [Relay for Life](#)
- May 13 - [Spring Commencement](#)
- June 10-12 - Drillfield Series: [Human and Animal Health: We're All in This Together!](#)
- June 13: [4th Annual Hokie Classic Golf Tournament](#)
- June 25 – [3rd Annual Summer Beer Festival at Virginia Tech](#)
- September 1-3 - Chapter Officers Forum

University Relations Chapter Logos Update

by [Katie Marquis](#), Assistant Director for Alumni Relations

The chapter logo update project is underway and University Relations is busy reviewing current logos for compliance and assisting with the development of new logos from the suite of options.

Our goal is to have everything complete by the end of the spring semester. Thank you to all Chapters who sent in your logos or selected a new one from the suite. Thus far, 40 chapters have responded to our request.

If you've been unable to send in your logo or make a selection, there is still time. If you would like a new logo that is already compliant, University Relations has created a suite of logo designs (right) for you to select as your official chapter logo. These are examples of what your logo would look like with your chapter name in the top area. Please look at the options and let us know which one you would like to be customized for your chapter.

If you would like to keep your current logo, University Relations needs to review it to ensure it's compliant. If not, they have kindly offered to bring it into compliance for you. Therefore, if you would like to keep your current logo, please send it to me at Kmarquis@vt.edu as soon as possible.

If we don't hear from your Chapter, University Relations will create a new logo for you from the suite by default

Thank you for your assistance in this important project.



Communications Corner: January 2016

From [Denise Crawford](#), [Matt Dowdy](#), [John Vile](#), and [Sherrie Whaley](#)

We are approaching our busiest time of the spring semester. Due to the high volume of print jobs we handle this time of the year, we can only accept print requests submitted at least six weeks prior to your RSVP or event date (if no RSVP date is needed). Please plan accordingly. If you have any questions, contact your chapter liaison.

For email requests, please be mindful of our five business day turnaround, and remember email requests should be submitted early enough to allow people time to respond and plan to attend your event.

To submit your email or print request, log-in to the [Chapter Database](#), scroll down to the Email and Print Requests section, and click "Begin your request" button.

HOKIES on FACEBOOK



Palmetto Chapter alumna Blair Demianovich '07 and her husband were featured in the [Greenville Journal](#)



The Seattle Hokies kicked off 2016 with a networking social for local alumni



Columbia, SC Hokies gathered for a Hokies After Holiday Party earlier this month



Atlanta Hokies enjoyed brunch and attended the Virginia Tech vs. Georgia Tech basketball game



The First State Chapter gathered in January to prepare meals and bake treats for families at the Ronald McDonald House



The San Antonio Chapter joined together with the local Clemson alumni chapter for a game watching party