



March 2015

Chapter Team

[Debbie Day](#)

[Greg Fansler](#)

[Kelly Griffin](#)

[Gwen Harrington](#)

[Jack Hutcheson](#)

[Katie Marquis](#)

[Jordan McCauley](#)

[Ginny Ritenour](#)

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,

Spring is here and the Alumni Association is gearing up for a busy season of community service and speaker events, as well as planning many exciting reunion and homecoming events for this fall.

This April, many chapters will participate with The Big Event in their local communities, in conjunction with students, faculty and staff here in Blacksburg. Chapters have scheduled blood drives, community clean-ups, food drives, and have partnered with other local organizations to continue the Virginia Tech tradition of *Ut Prosim*. This is also a big month for projects promoting our community service initiative of Hokie Nation Serves. Many chapters will host April 16 Remembrance activities across the nation, including 3.2 for 32 walks/runs, remembrance gatherings, and service projects. For a full listing of activities, visit the 2015 [We Remember website](#).

We have a unique speaker opportunity coming up next month via a webinar with Senior Instructor of Geography, John Boyer (a.k.a. The Plaid Avenger). John is a popular chapter speaker and we are thrilled to host him as our inaugural "virtual speaker." This event is exclusively for Virginia Tech alumni and friends; more information can be found on page 6. Chapters are encouraged to join the interactive webinar as a group or alumni may participate individually online from any location.

As we enter the final quarter of the 2014-15 fiscal year, make sure you have checked in with your chapter liaison to ensure that your chapter is on track for meeting this year's requirements for the Outstanding Chapter Award.

As you're making travel plans for this summer, I encourage you to check out the offerings in our [2015 Drillfield Series](#) to be held in Blacksburg, as well as the many exciting [alumni travel tours](#) for the upcoming year.

Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations



Photo by Jim Stroup

Chapter Event Highlight: Chapter Networking Events – We Asked, You Delivered!

Networking events have proven to be popular with our alumni and chapters across the country, with many different types of events being hosted. Ranging from happy hours to breakfasts to profession-specific events, there is something for everyone and alumni have jumped at the chance to combine their passion for Virginia Tech with professional networking in their local area.

Several chapters are hosting their networking events in a casual, happy hour format that provides participants an opportunity to meet and greet in a relaxed atmosphere. The Palmetto, Charleston, Minnesota, and Greater Seattle Chapters have all hosted “Hokie Networking Happy Hours” recently that have brought diverse alumni together.

Some chapters have opted to add a networking component to their signature annual events, providing an opportunity to take advantage of the large turnout of local Hokies. The San Antonio Chapter hosted its 2nd annual “Behind the Scenes” event and included time to network with one another prior to tours of a local brewery.

Other chapters have focused on specific topics or industries for their events. The Roanoke Valley Chapter recently hosted a session entitled, “Crafting Resumes & Cover Letters for Today’s Job Search” that included a local speaker on the topic. The National Capital Region Chapter held an event specifically for business owners and entrepreneurs in the area.

Professional networking events are geared toward all alumni and the goal is to make connections with others who have expertise in a wide range of areas. Some examples are hosting a short panel, speed networking, an after-work cocktail reception or breakfast round tables before work.

We encourage your chapter to consider these opportunities to interact with alumni who may not be interested in traditional chapter events. Providing a platform to connect with local Hokies for professional contacts can bring a more diverse group of alumni to your chapter.



The Minnesota Chapter hosted its first networking event in a happy hour format at a local restaurant



The San Antonio Chapter hosted an event at a local brewery that included a networking component



The “Business Owners & Entrepreneurs” networking reception hosted by the National Capital Region Chapter drew a diverse crowd of local professionals

Volunteer Highlight: Rick Curry '72, Richmond Chapter

by [Greg Fansler](#)

The Richmond Chapter serves the second largest population of alumni in the country, with over 15,000 alumni living within its footprint. Rick Curry '72 has been actively serving the Chapter since the mid-2000s.

Rick's first official role as an officer was President-Elect in the 2006-2007 year. At that point in time, our country was experiencing an economic downturn: banks were failing, the housing market was crumbling and jobs were being down-sized. Rick created an initiative to help alumni find jobs within the Richmond area and it grew into the popular program, "Hokies Helping Hokies." He reached out to Hokie-owned businesses in the greater Richmond area. If they had job openings, he invited them to monthly breakfasts to meet and network with alumni who were in need of a job.

Almost a decade later, Hokies Helping Hokies is still going strong and is THE model for a comprehensive networking event executed by a chapter.

Rick also facilitates presentations through Hokies Helping Hokies like "Practicing Your Elevator Speech" and "Polishing Your Resume." Dr. Elizabeth Lee Robertson remembers how this event impacted the community, "When I think of Rick, I am thrilled he has championed this program in Richmond which is a true service to alumni in the community."

Under Rick's service as President in the 2008-2009 year the Richmond Wine Festival began to grow "legs." Today, with Rick's continued support, it is one of the largest attended events any alumni chapter hosts annually. Rick currently serves the Richmond Chapter as the Legislative Activities Chair and is a member of the Ut Prosim Society, the university's highest level of philanthropic contributions.



Rick Curry '72 and Debbie Day '84, Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations, catch up at 2015 Hokie Day where the chapter hosted a dinner for students and alumni

New Chapter Resource: Chapter Best Practices

In our ongoing effort to provide helpful tools for our chapter leaders, we have started to put together a new resource: [Chapter Best Practices](#). These are one-to-two page documents that are easy to access, print, and share as needed with your team to help with your event planning. Take a look at what we have shared so far and be sure to send us your feedback.

We are looking for additional ideas and we need your help! Please contact [Ginny Ritenour](#) with suggestions for Best Practices topics and let us know if you would be interested in providing your tips on a specific event. We would be happy to share your dos and don'ts, marketing material samples, and success stories.

Staff Highlight: Aldyn Abell, Chapter Programs Intern

Aldyn Abell joined the Virginia Tech Alumni Association team in September of 2013 as the Chapter Programs Intern. In her role, she is responsible for tracking chapter event data, analyzing alumni programming data for chapter team staff, and producing reports for specifically assigned alumni relations projects.

Aldyn is currently a junior at Virginia Tech majoring in Agribusiness and Agricultural Sciences with minors in Political Science, Leadership and Social Change, and Animal Science. She is heavily involved around campus, holding membership in several organizations including: Pi Beta Phi Sorority, Block and Bridle, Agriculture Economics Club, National Agri-Marketing Association student competition team, and Collegiate 4-H. After graduation, she plans to remain in Virginia to work in governmental relations, specifically with agriculture policy.

A native of the Northern Neck, Aldyn calls her small family farm in King George, VA home. Her passion for agriculture was sparked at the age of six from involvement in the local 4-H program, where she grew up raising lambs and chickens. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time outdoors (especially hiking in areas around Blacksburg), hunting and fishing, baking, and watching Hokie football!



Aldyn Abell, Chapter Programs Intern, relaxes during a hike to Dragon's Tooth (a Hokie favorite!).

Communications Corner: Important Reminder!

From [Dave Hunt](#), [Denise Crawford](#), [Matt Dowdy](#), and [John Vile](#)

Please remember that chapter email and print requests pull information from the chapter database, as well as information you enter at the time of the request. Please make sure we have your correct chapter information in the database.

If you find information is missing or needs to be updated, or if you have any technical problems submitting a communications request, email Technical Services Manager John Vile at jvile@vt.edu with your changes or questions.

March Chapter Chat

Join us at noon (Eastern) on Friday, April 10th for our monthly Chapter Chat. Our topic will be "Revisiting the Status Quo: Thinking Outside the Box." Watch your email inbox for registration information coming soon!

Scholarship Program Update

If you have not already submitted your updated scholarship application for 2015, please send it to [Ginny Ritenour](#) as soon as possible. We will receive the lists of all accepted students in early April and will send them out to chapters then.

Community Service Highlight: Charleston Chapter, Adopt-a-Highway Program

The Charleston, SC Chapter recently received word that their hard-working group of alumni volunteers was selected as the Charleston County Adopt-a-Highway Group of the Year!

The chapter has been dedicated to keeping their Sullivan's Island street clean for several years now and have consistently had a group of local Virginia Tech alumni show up to clean on their scheduled trash pick-up days. The Virginia Tech Alumni Association congratulates the chapter on receiving such a prestigious honor! Their sign was also replaced and a "County Winner" notice attached to the bottom.

Carrying on the *Ut Prosim* tradition through this popular Hokie Nation Serves project, the chapter considers their pick-up days to be an opportunity for bonding and camaraderie as well as service. They followed their most recent clean-up with an afternoon at a local restaurant to celebrate.



Charleston Chapter volunteers pose proudly in front of the "County Winner" Adopt-a-Highway sign

Dates to Remember:

- April 10: Chapter Chat – Revisiting the Status Quo: Thinking Outside the Box
- April 11: [The Big Event 2015](#)
- April 16: [2015 Day of Remembrance](#)
- April 18: [3.2 for 32 Run in Remembrance](#)
- April 25: Spring Game
- May 16: [Spring Commencement](#)
- June 1: Deadline for scholarship recipient information and scholarship funds to be submitted to [Ginny Ritenour](#)
- June 5-6: Drillfield Series: [The Rich Heritage of SW Virginia](#)
- June 10: Chapter Chat – Everything You Need to Know about Year-End Reporting
- June 15: [3rd Annual Hokie Classic Golf Tournament at the Pete Dye River Course](#)
- June 27: [2nd Annual Summer Beer Festival at Virginia Tech](#)
- July 10-11: Drillfield Series: [Alumni and Legacy Weekend – a Day in the Life of College Admissions](#)
- July 17-19: Drillfield Series; [Women's Weekend at Virginia Tech](#)



The Charleston Hokies take a well-deserved break after their Adopt-a-Highway clean-up event earlier this spring

Chapter Virtual Speaker Event Opportunity with John Boyer, “The Plaid Avenger”



In an effort to bring more opportunities for alumni to engage with Virginia Tech and the Virginia Tech Alumni Association, we are hosting our inaugural virtual chapter speaker event with John Boyer, The Plaid Avenger.

Join us on **Wednesday, May 6, at 7:30 PM** (Eastern) for this unique event. While the webinar will be open to all Virginia Tech alumni and friends, we encourage your chapter to consider hosting a virtual speaker event that may be counted towards your Outstanding Chapter requirements. In order to qualify as a “speaker event,” we are asking that you secure a local venue with internet access and the capability to display the live presentation (television screen, monitor, etc.) and send an email invitation from Blacksburg to all alumni in your area. You could combine the talk with a reception or social.

[Click here](#) to access the live presentation. On the evening of the event, you’ll just visit this site to see John Boyer live in Blacksburg. You can ask questions by setting up an account via Livestream (see instructions on site).

John Boyer, Senior Instructor of Geography, is one of the most popular teachers on campus and one of our most requested chapter speakers. We hope you’ll take this opportunity to virtually bring him to your local alumni for an entertaining and engaging event. Please contact your chapter liaison for more information.

HOKIES on FACEBOOK



John Boyer, Senior Instructor of Geography, enjoys an evening with the Greater Seattle Chapter



Charlotte Hokies participate in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade in downtown Charlotte, NC



The Triangle Chapter gets together for their annual brewery tour at [Nickelpoint Brewing Co.](#) in Raleigh, NC

HOKIES on FACEBOOK



Hokies beat the 'Hoos: The Richmond Chapter's Hokies vs. Hoos food drive was a terrific success again this year



The Minnesota Chapter volunteered at their local food pantry and packed over 11,000 pounds of food



The First State Chapter gathers together for a community service project with their local Ronald McDonald House



Columbia Hokies gathered together for a tailgate and to watch the Virginia Tech vs. UVA baseball game



The Central Florida Chapter hosted a booth at their local Birdies, BBQ & U event in March



The National Capital Region Chapter hosted "Cocktails and Conversation: Celebrating Virginia Tech's Black History"