



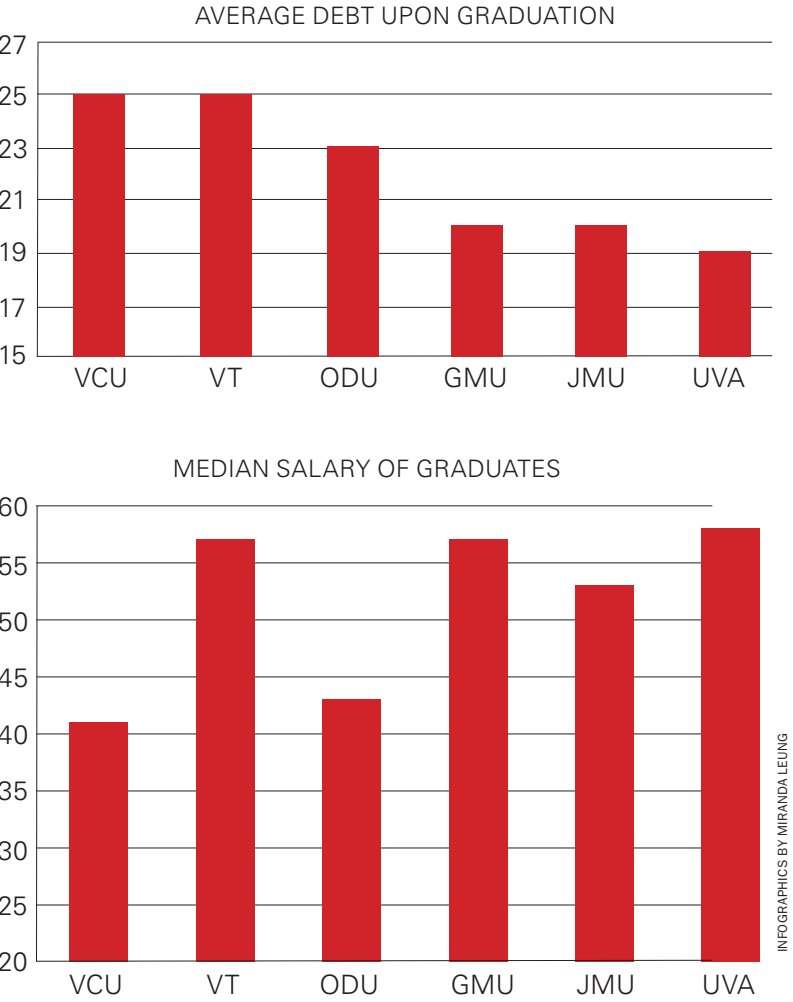
**NEWS**  
Nov. 3 elections  
guide • 2

**SPORTS**  
The Stu's sweet  
tooth • 5

**SPECTRUM**  
Cosplay gears up  
for Nekocon • 9

**OPINION**  
FDA testing  
procedures • 11

# Federal site ranks VCU grads among highest in debt and lowest in wages



**KATY STANLEY**  
Contributing Writer

VCU alumni have the lowest annual salary and the highest student loan debt upon graduation among large, public universities in Virginia, according to a new federal website. The College Scorecard website, compiled by the U.S. Department of Education, shows that VCU graduates earn a median salary of \$41,000, which ranks last among the six public universities with a student body of 10,000 or more in Virginia. Graduates of both VCU and Virginia Tech each face an average student loan debt of around \$25,000, the highest among large, state universities. University of Virginia graduates have the lowest student debt on average at \$19,000. U.Va. graduates also earn a median salary of \$58,000 — a difference of more than 40 percent from VCU grads. VCU also claims the second-lowest graduation rate among large, public universities at 56 percent. Only Old Dominion University, with a 50 percent graduation rate, fares at a lower rate. U.Va.'s graduation rate — 93 percent — ranks highest in the state. VCU is the fourth most costly state-school behind the College of William and Mary, Virginia Military Institute and U.Va.

In 2014, due to the political impasse in the Virginia General Assembly, public institutions had to pass their budgets without knowledge of how much funding the state would allocate for the first time since 2006. Despite this inconvenience, institutional ruling bodies began approving finalized budget plans and tuition increases for state schools in May 2014. “We didn’t count on any new funding,” said Pamela Currey, the associate vice president for finance and administration at VCU in a 2014 interview. “The Board assumed the state would give us what they gave us last year. That way when the budget crisis hit with the state we weren’t harmed by it because we hadn’t counted on it with our budget.” Following the state-wide tuition hikes, VCU saw the smallest increase in tuition and fees of the major research universities in Virginia at a 3.3 percent increase for in-state students. The increase at U.Va. was 4.3 percent, 4.8 percent at George Mason University and 4.9 percent at VT. “This budget puts the university’s academic mission first, including recruiting and retaining our internationally competitive faculty and increasing student financial assistance,” said VCU president Michael Rao

in a press release. Even with its low College Scorecard rankings, VCU is above the national average in both its graduation rate and average annual salary. Among large public institutions in the state, VCU is ranked second-best in the average annual cost for tuition among students who accept federal, state or university financial aid. The site pegs VCU’s average annual cost at around \$18,000. The website compares institutions based on each school’s affordability, graduation rate, typical student debt and the racial and statistical makeup of the student body. It also features tools to help prospective students calculate their potential financial aid and the average annual cost of attending each particular institution. According to President Obama, the College Scorecard was released in an effort to keep colleges accountable for their performance and to direct future students to a place they can easily compare colleges and universities. In a weekly radio address in September, Rao hailed the creation of the site. “Americans will now have access to reliable data on every institution of higher education,” Rao said.

# The oppressive white man’s worst nightmare

**MONICA HOUSTON**  
Opinion Editor

In early October, the NAACP chapter at Ole Miss organized a protest to have the Confederate battle emblem removed from the Mississippi state flag. Members of the Ku Klux Klan arrived at the rally, and a confrontation between the NAACP and KKK ensued. No violence occurred as the police authority escorted the KKK off campus. A few months ago, I signed a petition asking the Administration to recognize the KKK as a domestic terrorist organization and

make its eradication a Homeland Security priority. They responded “although simply believing in white supremacy or belonging to a white supremacist group is not a crime, the federal government has successfully charged white supremacists over the years using federal statutes ... (and) works closely with local law enforcement to identify, investigate and prosecute hate-fueled violence.” How has the federal government has not successfully managed to shut down the Klan when they state “we believe that all Americans have a role to play in combating hate and intolerance, in uplift-

ing our nation, and in making our union more perfect,” in response to the same petition? The hypocrisy and irony of the system is completely unbearable and intolerable. Movements motivated by equality and civil rights get trumped by movements encouraged and motivated by hate, separation, white supremacy and inequality. The Ku Klux Klan are among the most racist, white supremacist thinkers in the world. The formation of the Klan was founded in 1866 in Pulaski, Tennessee as a social club by former members of the Confederacy. They sought a campaign of violence against black and white Republicans to reserve policies of the Radical Reconstruction and restore white supremacy in the South. Could you imagine American history if the Native Americans and Africans chose to descend on Europe; allowing their cruel and torturous mindset of supreme power to dictate their actions to colonize, assimilate and enslave the masses? Imagine these immigrants barging into the Europeans homeland, killing, burning, lynching, raping, and whipping white men, women and children because they did not approve of their foreign and outrageously different skin tone. The reality is white people were the culprits of these despicable actions for more than 400 years. Naturally, it is appropriate to assume that throughout this time people would fight back and create movements to combat this racism, discrimination and inequality. White power was rooted deeply into all branches of reality including the industrial prison complex, poverty, homelessness, mental health, education, and starvation causing generations of minorities to feel outcast and unappreciated. America likes to bully others

and then pretend like they don’t understand why people are upset. Somehow they manage to become offended when minorities fight back as though we are unappreciative of the “favors” they so graciously forced on us. After Congress passed the Reconstruction Act over the president’s veto in 1867, which granted “equal protection” under the Constitution to former slaves, whites did not know how to cope with this new idea of equality. The Klu Klux Klan were prominent members of this confused identity. The name of the party derives from the Greek word “kyklos” meaning circle, suggesting a formation of brotherhood among the Klan. At its height in 1920, the Klan consisted of more than 4 million people. Of course there were attempts to shut down the Klan, but somehow they managed to slip under the thumb of the government and are still very alive today. Many minority groups weren’t able to maintain control of their voices to end violence and discrimination and groups like the Black Panther Party, the Chicano movement and Native American movement were shut down because they challenged the ideals of the white supremacist. In 1966, Huey Newton founded a Black Panther Party branch — dedicated to the empowerment and unification of blacks — in Oakland, California. A 10-item list of demands, derived from the Declaration of Independence titled “What we want, what we believe,” demanded basic rights to the black community and an explanation of why. Basic wants included: “WE WANT freedom. WE WANT full employment for our people. WE WANT an end to the robbery by the CAPITALIST of our Black Community. WE WANT decent

## The Stu is developing a sweet tooth for cupcakes

**BRYANT DRAYTON**  
Sports Editor

Cupcakes — healthy or not, it’s hard to resist the fluffy and scrumptious texture of the self-sufficient dessert. For team scheduling, the similar sentiment is evident: We all love them. Home games at the Stu provide students and alumni the perfect atmosphere for viewing a VCU basketball game. The condensed arena fits just over 7,000, making it a deafening place to play because of the

lack of volume in the arena. The Stu is intimidating, often times impossible for visiting team’s to come out of the game with a successful trip to Ram territory. This is our home court advantage, an advantage that should be tested to the highest level. Out-of-conference teams slated to play at the Stu this season are Prairie View A&M University, Radford University, American University, Old Dominion University, University of Cincinnati, University

—continued on page 5



## VCU performs “Rocky Horror”

**ANDREW SEYMOUR**  
Contributing Writer

TheatreVCU sold out their opening night of “The Rocky Horror Show” at the W.E. Singleton Center the night before Halloween. The show opened Friday, Oct. 30, and a midnight showing was held on Halloween. Then, on Friday the 13th, they will be having a costume party prior to the show with contests and cast member interaction. But for those who plan on coming to see “The Rocky Horror Show” and have no idea what to expect, Rebecca Frost Mayer, a third-year MFA candidate in

Performance Pedagogy and the director of VCU’s production of the show, encourages the audience to be open-minded and to expect involvement. “They can get ready for a live, interactive party atmosphere,” Mayer said. “Lots of fun costumes, actors interacting with them in the aisles, a chance to dance (and sing) along with the actors and just the chance to take it all in.” Originally written for the stage in 1973 by Richard O’Brien and later adapted into a film, “The Rocky Horror Picture Show” tells the story of a young engaged couple from Denton,

—continued on page 8

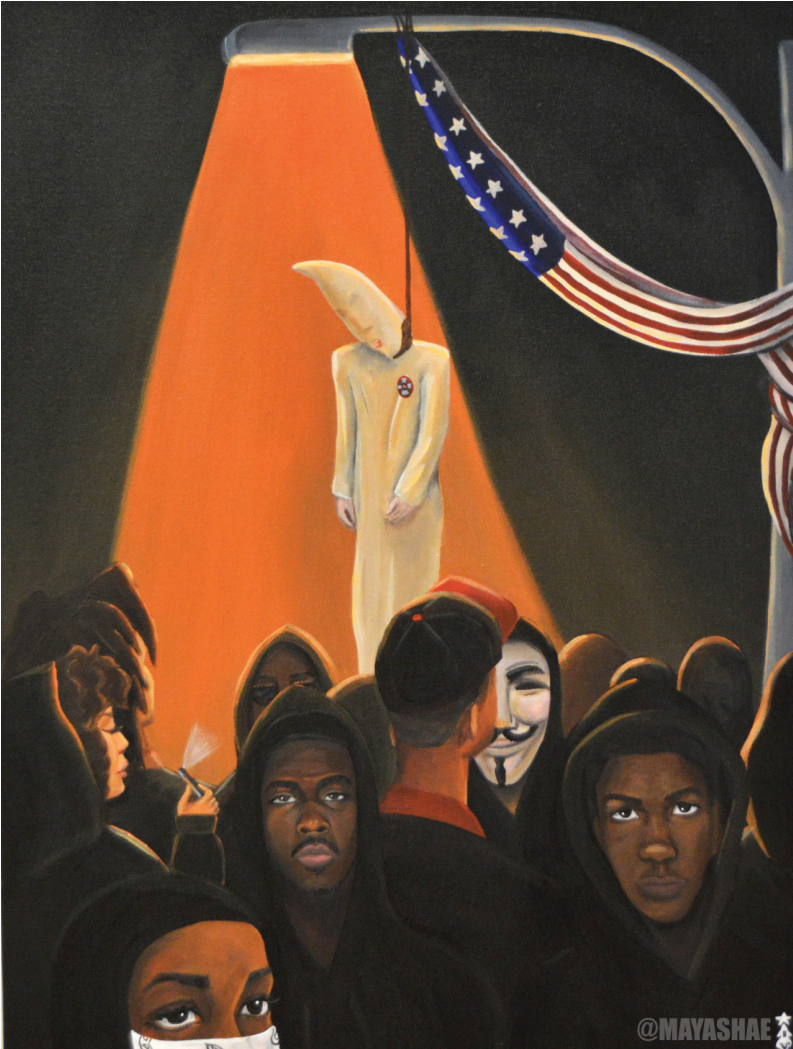


ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF MAYA SHAH

ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH BUTLER





In this section: Election guide.  
NIH research grant. Class fundraiser.  
Public indecency. Music therapy.

briefs

NATIONAL

**Man arrested in string of St. Louis church fires**

A 35-year-old black St. Louis man has been charged with starting fires at two predominantly African-American churches earlier this month.

David Lopez Jackson was charged Friday in St. Louis Circuit Court with two counts of second-degree arson in the Oct. 17 fires at Ebenezer Lutheran Church and New Life Missionary Baptist Church.

The blazes were among seven in the St. Louis area between Oct. 8 and Oct. 22. Five were in St. Louis and two were in nearby Jennings, all within a few miles of each other. Five are predominantly black, one is racially mixed and one is mostly white.

The fires spurred a hate-crime investigation based on either racial or religious motives. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives says there is no indication a hate crime occurred.

*Brief by the Associated Press*

**Clinton faces protests as she courts black voters**

Shouting over protesters, Hillary Rodham Clinton promised black Americans that if elected she would be their partner in the White House and follow in the footsteps of her predecessor, the country's first black president.

The Democratic presidential front-runner vowed to run "a love and kindness platform" as she courted African-American voters in Atlanta. Yet she struggled at times to convey her plan to address racial equality after aggressive protesters from the Black Lives Matter movement interrupted her remarks. Fewer than 10 people sang and chanted for several minutes in front of the podium as Clinton tried to stick to outlining her proposals.

Clinton called for eliminating sentencing disparities between crack cocaine crimes and those that involve powder cocaine. The changes would build on a 2010 act of Congress that narrowed the disparity between crack crimes — which are concentrated among minorities — and powder crimes, which are more likely to involve whites. Clinton's plan would make the change retroactive, according to her campaign.

*Brief by the Associated Press*

**GOP suspends partnership with NBC News for February debate**

Still annoyed by CNBC's handling of this week's presidential debate, the Republican National Committee said Friday that it was suspending its partnership with NBC News and its properties on a primary debate scheduled for February.

NBC News said it was disappointed in the development and will work to resolve the issue with the GOP.

It was unclear in the letter from RNC Chairman Reince Priebus to NBC News chief Andrew Lack whether the party would forbid NBC from televising the Feb. 26 debate and open up the broadcast rights to others. The debate was expected to be telecast on NBC and its Spanish-language partner, Telemundo.

Republicans were angered by what they characterized as petty, non-substantive questions by debate moderators Carl Quintanilla, Becky Quick and John Harwood designed to embarrass the candidates. Harwood asked Donald Trump whether he was running a "comic-book version of a presidential campaign."

Jeb Bush was asked to explain why his campaign was doing so poorly in the polls, Carly Fiorina was asked why Americans should hire her when she had been fired by Hewlett-Packard and Marco Rubio was asked if he should "slow down, get a few things done first" before running for president.

*Brief by the Associated Press*

**LOCAL**

**Hampton University student killed in shooting near ODU**

A Hampton University student was one of two people shot and killed early Saturday morning.

He is the second person to die from gunfire and fifth college student shot in the vicinity of Old Dominion University's campus since Oct. 16.

The student, 20-year-old Joseph Bose, was shot about 3:15 a.m. near the intersection of West 35th Street and Killam Avenue. He died at the scene, said Cpl. Melinda Wray, a police spokeswoman.

At a press conference Saturday, Chief Michael Goldsmith said his thoughts were with the families that lost their loved ones.

"In both instances, these cases started as arguments that ended in gunfire. When did it become OK to solve a fight with a gun?" Goldsmith said.

"As a parent, I cannot fathom this inherent disregard for human life. As a police chief, I refuse to allow this mentality to become commonplace in our city."

*Brief by the Virginian-Pilot*

# The Nov. 3 elections — for dummies

**FADEL ALLASSAN**  
Staff Writer

Election day is tomorrow, and maybe politics aren't really "your thing." Maybe you've been swamped with midterms and you haven't exactly kept up with local coverage, or maybe it's your first time voting in the River City and you have no idea where you're supposed to go. Here's everything you need to know.

### Virginia State Senate

On Tuesday, Nov. 3, there are eight seats up for election in the state senate where Republicans currently hold a 21-19 majority. Three of the senate seats will be maintained by Democratic incumbents and three by Republican incumbents. The senators in the remaining two seats — one Democrat and one Republican — have decided not to run for re-election. Hence, there are three seats up for election in Richmond.

- 9th district**  
Donald McEachin (D) (incumbent)
- 10th district**  
Daniel Gecker (D)  
Glen Sturtevant (R)  
Carl Loser (L)  
Marleen Durfee (I)
- 16th district**  
Rosalyn R. Dance (D) (incumbent)  
Joseph D. Morrissey (I)

### Virginia House of Delegates

Richmond is divided into five districts in the House of Delegates, where elections are held for each seat every two years. Republicans currently have a 67-23 majority in the House.

- 68th district**  
Bill K. Grogan (D)  
G.M. "Mandi" Loupassi (R) (incumbent)  
Michael R Dickinson (I)
- 69th district**  
Betsy B. Carr (D) (incumbent)
- 70th district**  
Dolores L. McQuinn (D) (incumbent)
- 71st district**  
Jennifer L. McClellan (D) (incumbent)  
Stephen J. Imholt (I)
- 74th district**  
Lamont Bagby (D) (incumbent)  
David M. Lambert (I)

### Polling locations near VCU

To find your polling place based on current residence, or to register for the next election, visit [virginia.gov/VoterInformation](http://virginia.gov/VoterInformation) and [richmondgov.com](http://richmondgov.com)'s Voter at the Polls site.

- Dominion Place Apartments**  
1037 W. Grace St.
- George Washington Carver Elementary School**  
1110 W. Leigh St.
- Calhoun Center**  
436 Calhoun St.
- Main Street Station**  
1500 E. Main St.
- Randolph Community Center**  
1415 Grayland Center
- Maymont Elementary School**  
1211 S. Allen Ave.
- Tabernacle Baptist Church**  
1925 Grove Ave.

# Public indecency reported by residents of Oregon Hill

**ANDREW CRIDER**  
Contributing Writer

On Oct. 28 at 9:30 p.m., junior advertising major Meredith Berger was walking to the library from her home in Oregon Hill when she said a girl warned her of a man publicly masturbating on the South Laurel St. Bridge.

"I was about to cross the bridge that is on Laurel going over the highway in Oregon Hill and was stopped by this girl," Berger said. "She told me I should cross the street because there was this guy publicly masturbating."

According to Berger, the young woman who stopped her seemed disturbed by the incident.

"She was really upset by this and she was really very adamant that I be on the other side of the street and not deal with him," Berger said. "She was really nice though and made a lot of effort to stop me."

Both Berger and her roommate, junior interior design major Noshin Faruque, described this man as African American, medium build and medium height in his late 30s to early 40s.

Faruque said she has come across this suspect five times.

"I've had to buy a bike because of

him. I used to walk," Faruque said. "I got hit by a car because I saw him during the day for the first time."

In one of the encounters with the man, Faruque said that he was exposing himself to the street while urinating in the daytime. Farque said that after her first encounter with the suspect, she called VCU Police Department right away.

“It definitely makes me realize how much I need to be concerned. I thought Oregon Hill was a little safer than what has been happening lately.”

— MEREDITH BERGER

Berger didn't want to file a report of the incident because of the additional work and distraction that the process took from her studies.

"I don't have the time to call the police and sit there with this dude who is going to leave and deal with the whole transaction when I'm trying to study for midterms," Berger said.

Faruque reported the incidents to the VCU PD and said she was dissatisfied with the results.

"I did report it and nothing was being done," Faruque said. "I went back to VCU PD and they told me to check with a different number so the process was even longer."

Discouraged by the difficulty of the process, Faruque stopped trying to report the incident until she encountered the man again.

"He was looking at me. He recognized me. And that's when I went in person to VCU PD myself," Faruque said. "I yelled at them because they did not take my report seriously."

Because this incident occurred off-campus, VCU PD had no jurisdiction in the matter. Faruque had to be referred to the Richmond Police Department before action could be taken.

"They referred me to Richmond PD," Faruque said. "They took care of it, they had detectives, they called me, they wanted to identify what he looked like, and I did notice they were patrolling weekly here and there."

Although this incident took place outside the jurisdiction of VCU PD, Faruque said they were unable to help her is a failure of the

police department to protect students effectively.

"I should not have to go through different process as a VCU student," Faruque said. "When I am actually seeking for help, I have rights for my safety and protection. They are not doing their actual job."

Faruque said she felt as though VCU PD was given the prerogative to act and failed to do its due diligence in taking care of her needs.

"To know that I'm asking for help for my protection and safety and I'm not getting what I want from the person who is supposed to do that, it has to stop," Faruque said.

According to Berger, this incident has made her more cautious when walking through her neighborhood.

"It definitely makes me realize how much I need to be concerned," Berger said. "I thought Oregon Hill was a little safer than what has been happening lately."

This year, six incidents of indecent exposure have been reported to VCU PD. Both VCU and Richmond police departments were unavailable to respond before press time.

# Advertising professor goes "over the edge"

**LOGAN BOGERT**  
Contributing Writer

Mass communications professor Hailey Spencer's public relations research class sent her over the edge.

In Spencer's MASC 425 course, students gain experience with real clients to apply the research methods they have learned.

The class' client this semester is the Special Olympics of Virginia, the largest sports organization for people with these disabilities. As part of a fundraising event for their client, Spencer rappelled 25 stories down from the roof of the SunTrust Center in downtown Richmond on Oct. 22.

Special Olympics of Virginia public relations director Holly Claytor sent an email to Spencer asking if any of her students would be interested in interning with them. Senior public relations major Rachael Zilic accepted the offer and was instrumental in sending her professor down 25 stories.

The night before the fundraiser, Zilic and Claytor emailed Spencer to ask her if she would be willing to go over the edge.

"It was a long shot, considering we emailed her at 4 p.m. the night before, but it was a great way to raise awareness to VCU students about Special Olympics and the fundraisers they offer," Zilic said. "She emailed back about two hours later and said yes. Our entire class, plus her husband and dogs, came to watch her rappel and we cheered her on the whole time."

“It was terrifying. Honestly I thought I was going to die, but I didn’t, thank goodness.”

— HAILEY SPENCER

Spencer, who admits she is afraid of heights, said the experience was terrifying.

"I called my husband when he was on his way home on Friday and told him and he was like 'Babe, are you serious?'" Spencer said. "He knows I hate heights. It was terrifying. Honestly I thought I was going to die, but I didn't, thank goodness."

Although Spencer had previous rock-climbing experience, rappelling was much more physically challenging and she had no practice.

"It was a lot more physically challenging than anyone told me," Spencer said. "I'm so small and I'm not strong so every time I tried to pull up the lever wouldn't work. That really made me anxious."

After rappelling down 400 feet to the bottom of the SunTrust Building, Spencer was greeted by her class who volunteered at the event.

"They were all down there cheering me on so that was really nice," Spencer said. "I just felt bad that it took me so long to get down. I got to the top, I looked at how tall it was and I just prayed that I was going to make it down to teach my students another day."

The "Over the Edge" event raised approximately \$100,000 for the Special Olympics of Virginia.



# NIH awards \$5 million brain development study grant

ANDREW CRIDER  
Contributing Writer

VCU won a \$5 million grant from the National Institute of Health to examine the brain structure and function of 10,000 children as they age.

The study will be the largest neuroimaging study of the human brain in university history and will involve 20 locations from Hawaii to Rhode Island over a 10-year period.

The project, called the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD), hopes to examine the effect of drugs, alcohol and other environmental factors on the brain as it develops.

According to Bethany Deeds, a health scientist at the National institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the study will answer several questions about brain development.

“Other investigators from around the planet will be able to apply to access to the data for a whole host of value added discoveries.”

— JAMES BJORK

“The ABCD Study will seek to address many questions related to substance use and development that will help inform prevention and treatment research priorities, public health strategies, and policy decisions,” Deeds said.

VCU won the research grant after months of competition between various other research groups. For the competition, VCU was partnered with the University of Minnesota, the University of Washington St. Louis and the University of Colorado.

Winning the grant means VCU researchers will become leaders in what medical professionals are calling one of the most important studies in the next decade.

“It is wonderful that our team at

VCU headed up by doctors Neale and Bjork is playing such a major role in what is sure to be one of the most important longitudinal imaging and genetic studies of drug use and abuse of the next decade,” said Kenneth Kendler, the director of the Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics.

### FAST FACTS

**\$5 million grant**  
to study the brain structure and function of 10,000 children

**20 locations involved**  
from Hawaii to Rhode Island over a 10-year period

VCU’s Collaborative Advanced Research Imaging Program consists of a new MRI capable of high detail imaging of brains

**Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry**  
VCU is home to one of the largest collections of twin registries in North America. VCU likely received the grant to participate in the study because of its unique ability to perform the study with twins.

One of the principal investigators, James Bjork, has been studying brain development in adolescents for the over 15 years.

According to Bjork, the study will provide new insight into the development of adolescent brains.

“What’s novel about the ABCD USA project is it will use leading edge neuroimaging technology to very precisely capture the structure and dynamic function of the brain,” Bjork said.

VCU will use its brand new Collaborative Advanced Research Imaging Program to conduct the research. The program consists of a new MRI capable of high detail imaging of brains.

“It’s only been in the last 18 months or so that a research dedi-

cated facility devoted to scanning and neurobehavior testing in human subjects has been constructed at VCU,” Bjork said.

Bjork said the study will be able to relate individual differences between children and their brain features. For example, the structure or functioning of the brain as detected with MRI and relate those to various kinds of exposures like environmental factors or if the child decides to use drugs or alcohol.

Data gathered at VCU and other testing locations will then be shared with doctors around the world so the data can be better analyzed.

“Other investigators from around the planet will be able to apply to access to the data for a whole host of value added discoveries,” Bjork said.

According to Bjork, this international collaboration is indicative of modern medical study.

“With the increasing legalization of cannabis and the concerns for what might that general availability mean for kids, it might add some more information on what brain features are linked to those kinds of exposures,” Bjork said.

VCU is the home of the Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry, one of the largest collections of twin registries in North America. Bjork said that VCU likely received the grant to participate in the study because of its unique ability to perform the study with twins.

“I think what really sealed the deal for us, with twins, we offer information with what other sites could not offer,” Bjork said.

According to Bjork, performing the Study with twins will allow doctors to compare genetically similar brains with different habits, showing a clear effect of the habit from normal development.

“If you have twins and especially if the twins differ in their behavior in what the twins are engaged in you have a way of approximating of what could have been if the teen had not used the drugs,” Bjork said.



Music therapist Melissa Owens uses a cart to carry her instruments and other items used in therapy sessions.

## Using music as medicine

LOGAN BOGERT  
Contributing Writer

In collaboration with VCU Health, the VCU Music Therapy Program works with patients in multiple settings such as hospitals, schools and homes to address their mental health or physical concerns.

On average, the program sees around 10 patients a day, but it depends on if both music therapists are seeing patients. In a year, the music therapists see more than 2,000 patients.

Music therapy uses sounds to accomplish positive changes in people’s behavior, thinking, communication, social skills or emotional and physical well-being.

These medical issues include but are not limited to brain injuries, women’s health and psychiatry.

“Music therapists have a degree in music therapy and follow strict code of ethics,” said music therapist Melissa Owens in an email.

Owens said therapists must maintain certain standards of practice and engage in ongoing training and education to fulfill the requirements for their board-certification. Owens said treatment plans for this program depend on the type of patient.

For example, individuals

who experience pain or anxiety would be treated through music assisted relaxation to reduce the perception of pain and teach coping skills while the brain injury groups focus on singing to increase communications.

Sessions may include singing, music improv, writing songs and analyzing song lyrics.

“The music therapists determine, with patient and staff input, the intervention that will best address the patient’s goals. Some patients engage in more than one type of activity, while others find that they enjoy one specific activity,” said music therapist Melissa Owens in an email.

Owens said personal preference in music is very important when working with patients, therefore the type and genre of music differs with each patient and session.

Owens previously worked as a music therapist in Richmond Public Schools for almost eight years before joining the team at VCU Health.

“I think it’s important to differentiate music therapy from entertainment or bedside musicians,” Owens said.

For more information on the music therapy program, call (804)-827-9962.

## vcu briefs

### VCU professor awarded for advocacy, work to improve birth outcomes

Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine professor Saba Masho, M.D., Dr.PH, was recently honored as a 2015 Birth Matters Advocate of the Year for her work in improving birth outcomes.

Masho, an associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Population Health, was principal investigator for a \$1 million Strong Start for Mothers and Infants grant, bringing Centering Pregnancy to five locations that support low-income, underprivileged, expectant mothers in Virginia. The CP prenatal care model is designed to address individual clinical, lifestyle and behavioral problems facing pregnant women.

Birth Matters Virginia is an organization that works to educate women and provide positive birth outcomes for women statewide.

Brief by Leba Byrd, VCU News

### VCU Health hosts Twitter chat on domestic violence

Virginia Commonwealth University Health officials hosted a Twitter chat on domestic violence from noon to 1 p.m. on Oct. 28 for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The participating officials represented the VCU Medical Center Level 1 trauma center’s Intervention and Violence Prevention Program and Project EMPOWER. According to The Centers for Disease Control and others, 20 people per minute are victims of physical violence by an intimate partner, and more than 50 percent of adult female homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner.

Brief by Leba Byrd, VCU News

### VCU alums, students in CVJO “Big band bass bone bash”

Last Wednesday, Oct. 28 VCU Jazz sax alumnus Myrick Crampton lead The Central Virginia Jazz Orchestra in its “Big Band Bass Bone Bash” concert from 8-9:30 p.m. at Godwin High School. Admission was free and open to the public. The ensemble, founded by fellow saxophonist Dan Borlowsky, featured bass trombonist Dave Adams in a variety of settings within and in front of the big band.

“VCU Jazz Night at Emilio’s” also debuted on Friday, Oct.30. The VCU Jazz Orchestra I will perform in Concert on Thursday, Nov. 5 at the Singleton Music Center.

Brief by Antonio Garcia, VCU Jazz

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# sports



## STAT OF THE WEEK

Men’s soccer hasn’t scored a goal since its Oct. 3 match against George Mason University.



Beth O’Boyle led the Rams to a 16-14 record in her first season as head coach last fall.

# Women’s basketball enters second season under O’Boyle

**SOPHIA BELLETTI**  
Staff Writer

Head coach Beth O’Boyle returns to her second season at the helm of the women’s basketball program. Last season, O’Boyle led the team to a 16-14 record, which placed them at eighth in the Atlantic 10.

The 2015-16 roster is stacked with upperclassmen and veteran players. Nine of the top-10 scorers for the 2014-15 season return to VCU, welcoming back 90 percent of its scoring production and 91 percent of rebounding.

“It’s really important when you can create that atmosphere in practice when everyone’s competing

— BETH O’BOYLE

One of the biggest distinctions between last year’s team and this year’s is the increased competition in practice. Katherine Strong, Sandria Skinner and Bria Gibson are all freshman who will add height to the rotation, standing 5-foot-11 and taller, respectively. “Sandra and Bria are tough and battle everyday and Katherine is an excellent outside shooter,”

O’Boyle said. “For us to play at the pace we want to play means we have to rebound. One of the most important things for us is getting some size in there.”

Redshirt junior guard Galaisha Goodhope and redshirt senior forward Jessica Ogunnarin are eligible transfer players who will increase the roster’s depth.

Goodhope left Old Dominion University for VCU at the end of the 2014 season. During her time with the Lady Monarchs, she averaged 8.1 points and a team-high 3.6 assists. In 2013 she was named to the CAA’s All-Rookie Team.

During her last season at Stony Brook University, O’Boyle recruited Ogunnarin. The 6-foot-1 forward averaged 9.0 points per game at SBU. Ogunnarin led her team and was third in the conference in rebounding with 7.8 rebounds per game. She was named to the America East All-Defensive and America East All-Academic team.

“She is very aggressive on the boards, both offensively and defensively,” O’Boyle said. “She can also be a really good shutdown defender and has a really smooth pull up jumper. She had some really big games for us when she was at Stony Brook and I think she helps us with our competition in practice. It’s really important when you can create that atmosphere in practice when everyone’s

competing.”

O’Boyle said this year’s increase in depth will allow the Lady Rams to compete at a faster tempo.

Junior guard Isis Thorpe, the leading scorer from last season, returns for the Lady Rams 60 three-pointers shy of becoming VCU’s career leader in that department. She has surpassed 60 three-pointers in her first two seasons, hitting 74 three-pointers her freshman year and 63 last year.

Thorpe ranked sixth in the A-10 in 3-point field goal percentage (.404) overall last season and ranked 15th in scoring during A-10 games, with 12.3 points per game.

Alaeze was named A-10 Preseason Third Team. The Baltimore native averaged career highs in points (10.22 ppg) and rebounds (6.9 rpg) last season and was named A-10 third team. She led VCU in rebounds and assists in 2014-2015 and ranked second on the team in scoring.

“She been an excellent leader for us and a role model for the younger players,” O’Boyle said. “She’s one of the most fit players and she sets the standards with our conditioning and I think our players look up to her.”

The Lady Rams begin their season at the Stu against Coppin State University on Nov. 13.

# Women’s soccer finishes fourth in the Atlantic 10

**FADEL ALLASSAN**  
Staff Writer

With eight minutes left in the regular season finale and the game tied at 2-2, University of Richmond’s Ashley Riefner bolted past VCU’s defense, took one touch and tucked in the game winner for the Spiders.

The loss, along with Thursday’s draw at home to Saint Louis University, means that the Rams conclude the season fourth in the Atlantic 10 with a 6-2-2 conference record and 8-3-3 overall record.

On the Lady Rams’ senior night against Saint Louis, the Rams found it difficult to adjust defensively early on as they were outshot by their opponents 9-1 in the first half. The story was reversed in the second half as the Rams defense held stout and the offense outshot the Billikens 10-1.

Senior midfielder Sharon Wojcik nearly found the net on multiple occasions, on one opportunity, the midfielder’s shot was deflected off of the post while the other was saved by Saint Louis’ goalkeeper Hanna Benben, who was able to get her hand on the ball. Despite both teams registering 21 shots, neither could find the target.

The clean slate for the Rams was in due part to the saves of VCU senior goalkeeper Emma Kruse. With five saves on the night and 260 all-time, Kruse broke the record for most career saves for any goalkeeper in the program. An appropriate way for the senior goalkeeper to end her collegiate career.

It was a different story in Sunday’s season finale against the Spiders which saw both teams score five goals collectively.

Freshman forward Kelly Graves got the Rams on the board 13 minutes in when her shot deflected into the goal for her second of the season. As the first half came to a close, the Spiders found their



Sophomore defender Amanda Hallesjo had six assists this season.

equalizer through Olivia Aha’s 40th minute shot. The spiders took the lead in the 59th minute before VCU’s freshman midfielder Maddi Santo equalized 12 minutes later.

With nine minutes remaining, U of R took the lead when Riefner’s run behind the Rams defense was spotted on a 10-yard pass to put her through for an easy finish past Kruse for the game winner.

“I think Richmond wanted it a little bit more than us and unfortunately I think our girls were looking ahead to the future a little bit with the tournament on Thursday,” head coach Lindsey Martin said. “The game meant a lot to us for sure but I think Rich-

mond just had a lot of energy and enthusiasm for the day.”

The Rams travel to Davidson, North Carolina for the first match of the A-10 Tournament on Thursday with their opponent yet to be determined. Martin believes that finding motivation in her players after the loss to their cross-town rival should not be a problem for the team.

“We’ll be fine motivating ourselves for the tournament, that’s when we know it really matters of course we wanna win every game we play but we just need to realize that we need to do a better job defending,” Martin said.



Freshman Julia Suarez was stifled by the Billiken defense Thursday night.

MEN’S SOCCER STATS			
W&M	vs.	VCU	
13 (4)	Shots on Goal	14 (5)	
5	Saves	2	
6	Fouls	4	
2	Cornerkicks	6	



Senior defender Jack Bates has a .462 SOG percentage this season.

# Men’s soccer falls 2-0 to Tribe in home closer

**PETER MASON**  
Contributing Writer

Wednesday night wasn’t the finish the Rams were hoping for in men’s soccer’s final home game of the season.

The College of William and Mary bested VCU 2-0, improving their record to 7-7-2, while VCU fell to 4-9-4.

In the first nine minutes of the match, VCU sophomore midfielder Luc Fatton fired a shot that would have given VCU a 1-0 lead, but the attempt missed wide. Two minutes after, the Tribe took advantage of an opportunity to give them the lead, W&M’s William Eskay received a pass from his teammate and older brother Jackson Eskay and proceeded to drive into the box and launch a shot that went left of the net, and the Tribe took a 1-0 in just the first 11 minutes of the game.

Just before the end of the first half, VCU’s junior forward Jorge Herranz fired a shot that would have tied the score, but W&M’s goalkeeper Mac Phillips punched it away.

The Tribe began the second half leading 1-0, 16 minutes before the final whistle VCU’s Herranz managed a corner kick that sailed straight into the box. The Rams had another chance to tie the score but Phillips got to it first.

W&M’s Geoffrey Young was able to get the ball into the box, passing to teammate Marcel Berry, who overcame a deflection in front of the goal. Berry preceded to pass the ball to Ryder Bell who would put the Tribe up 2-0 after launching the ball into the empty net.

The Rams spent the last 13 minutes trying to find the net, but W&M held out to the final whistle and came away with a road win. VCU out shot the

Tribe 14-13. Herranz led the team in shots with four total, two of which were on goal. Junior midfielder Dakota Barnathan managed three shots for the Rams with one of them being on goal. Fatton also contributed two with one being at the Tribe net. The Rams as a team held a 6-2 advantage in corner kicks, but were unable to put one in.

Eskay and Ryder, in addition to being the two scorers for the Tribe, also both managed four total shots for William and Mary. Phillips recorded four saves for the Tribe to help his team get the 2-0 victory.

The Rams will conclude the 2015 regular season with a road trip to face the Atlantic 10 conference leaders, University of Dayton, on Nov. 7. The Flyers hold a record of 10-4-2, and is unbeaten in the A-10 with a record of 5-0-1.



# The Stu is developing a sweet tooth for cupcakes



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VCU deserves a top-tier basketball program to visit the Siegel on gameday. VCU basketball's brand would benefit from obtaining a tough out-of-conference schedule when it's time to decipher NCAA Tournament projections. The Rams, normally a seven-seed in the tournament, could find themselves a top-five seed if a rare win against a superior program out-of-conference was on its resume.

Playing in the Atlantic 10 is a blessing and curse for the program. The A-10 is not a power-five conference in college basketball. The selection committee will always lean on that realization when deciding between VCU and a school like Oklahoma State. By playing and defeating a prominent program, not only would it bid well for the tournament, but it would enhance the Rams in their quest for attracting future recruits.

No school will just come to the Stu for free. It is a proven arena capable of posing a threat to any opponent that accepts the invitation to come here. VCU would have to make a strong case to entice top talent, but if it does happen in the foreseeable future, the Rams would finally be able to publically display the spectacle of the Siegel Center. Who knows, there may be a top program that doesn't deem the Stu a tough place to play, ultimately scheduling VCU as one of its cupcake games — what a rude awakening that would be.

—continued from page 1

Florida. None of these teams come into the 2015-16 season ranked in the preseason top-25. VCU will be favored against each of these opponents, making the out-of-conference schedule “cupcake.”

It's hard to get excited for a Saturday game, when lackluster talent is on the court. Everyone loves winning, but everyone also loves competition.

In the past five years, the University of Virginia has been the toughest opponent to enter Ram territory. The Hoos in last seasons

matchup were ranked as the No. 7 team in the land. Sure the outcome was not to our liking, but the build-up to that matchup was talked about weeks prior to the teams even hitting the court.

VCU will travel to play Duke University in the 2k Classic on Nov. 20. This will be the Rams

toughest matchup of the season, as the team will face the GOAT of college basketball in head coach Mike Krzyzewski. The most highly anticipated matchup of the season will not be a home game, but a game played in New York. Granted, Madison Square Garden will be an epic experi-

ence for our basketball team, but I can't help but be selfish when a week later I'll be watching Buffalo come to town — didn't know they even played basketball in Buffalo.

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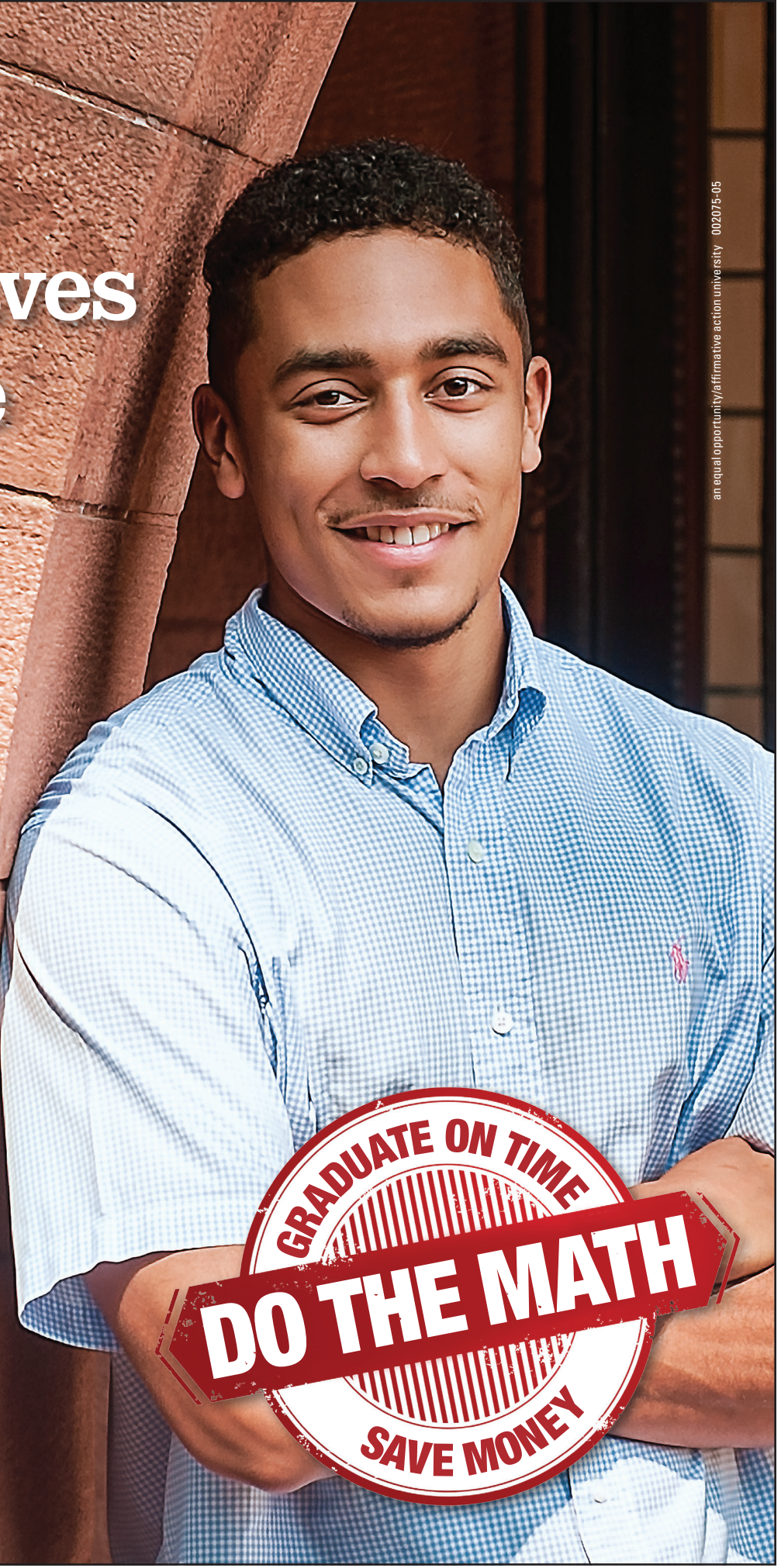


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# Field hockey falls to the Spiders



PHOTO BY JULIE TRIPP

**ZACH JOACHIM**  
Contributing Writer

Field hockey lost to cross-town rival the University of Richmond 3-1 last Wednesday, Oct. 28.

The Rams went into the match holding a 5-11 overall mark and 2-4 conference record. U of R on the other hand boasted a 9-8 line, 5-1 in conference, which tops the Atlantic 10.

On a miserable, rainy day, VCU students struggled to go to class as field hockey did to score on Richmond.

Kasey Gilbride put U of R up 1-0 in the 17th minute off a corner from the left side. Richmond dominated possession throughout the first half, but the Rams senior goalkeeper Kendall Clifton made key saves to keep the margin slim going into halftime.

Less than two minutes into the second half, however, U of R found some breathing room. Amy Cooke put home another corner from the left side to double the lead. The cushion would not last long.

Sophomore forward Jamee Albright scored her seventh goal of the season after the Rams defense forced a turnover to initiate a counter attack. Freshman sensation Emily McNamara

provided the assist, her team leading sixth on the year. McNamara also leads NCAA in goals with eight.

The Spiders took back the momentum and remained on the offensive the rest of the match. Katrina Balatgek scored Richmond's third goal from the left side in the 54th minute to seal the deal. Head coach Laura Baker's girls suffered their fifth conference loss, virtually putting an end to any playoff aspirations.

As field hockey's season comes to a close, focus shifts to their prospects going forward. The Rams will lose three seniors: goalie Kendall Clifton, midfielder Kendall Farino and midfielder Taleah Scott.

The Rams of the future will be led by James and Alexis Albright, and Emily McNamara. The freshman forward trio has accounted for 16 of the team's 26 scores this season and are primed for an outstanding VCU career together.

Sophomore Chessa Kownurko is ready to assume a starting role next year in goal. She tallied 14 saves in a spot start this season against The University of Saint Francis (PA), a thrilling 2-1 victory for the Rams.

Field hockey will conclude its 2015 season on Nov. 1 at Lock Haven University. Game time is set for noon.

## WOMEN'S FIELD HOCKEY STATS

Record	6-12
Conference	3-5
Home	4-6
Away	2-6
Streak	Won 1

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SPECTRUM	Mondays, 5 p.m.
OPINION	Mondays, 3 p.m.
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full certification course  
[nov. 21, 9am–3pm]

**AFAA primary group  
exercise certification v4**  
[nov. 7]

**AFAA primary fitness  
trainer certification v4**  
[nov. 20–22]

**Rectacular Spectacular  
on Cary Street Field**  
[sun, 11/8. 12–3pm]

**day cave**  
[sun, 11/1]

**day climb**  
[sat, 11/7]

**day MTB**  
[sun, 11/8]

**day hike**  
[sat, 11/14]

**bike tour**  
[sat & sun, 11/14–15]

**day cave**  
[sun, 11/21]



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in 1982, President Ronald Reagan declares Martin Luther King Jr. Day a national holiday.

## “Entertainment” quenching Richmond’s thirst for arthouse

**SAMUEL GOODRICH**  
Contributing Writer

Hot off the heels of showings at film festivals like Sundance, the dark arthouse film “Entertainment” will be screened at the Byrd Theater on Nov. 8. Similar to the work of David Lynch and Werner Herzog, this film is not traditional by any stretch of the imagination.

The director is Richmond’s own Rick Alverson, who will be at the screening along with lead actor Gregg Turkington. “Entertainment” will be presented by the Bijou Film Center five days before its official premiere in New York City.

The movie stars Turkington playing the character Neil Burger, who is simply referred to as “The Comedian” in the film. Burger is a failing performer whose material garners little to no reaction from the patrons at the dive bars and dirty clubs he performs in.

Traveling through the Mojave Desert to supposedly meet with his daughter, The Comedian simply observes life in between gigs. While he does have a semblance of a mission — trying to get to his estranged daughter — much of the film is dedicated to bizarre vignettes that force the audience to question what is real and what is simply going on inside the actor’s head.

The Guardian’s Jordan Hoffman describes the movie as “a comedy about emotional collapse and existential despair.”

This screening is presented by the Bijou Film Center in their continuing mission to bring arthouse cinema to the city. This is their fourth event, and the operators of the center hope it will be their most impactful.

“I think Richmond’s ready to support a little cinema,” said James Parrish, one of the co-founders of the Bijou. “(It’s) where we can bring

the films that are playing in New York and L.A. that are not coming to Richmond, and give them a nice showing here.”

Parrish and his partner-in-cinema Terry Rea are local film lovers who want to open their own small arthouse theater here in Richmond. An arthouse theater is usually reserved for smaller, independent films that are not traditional blockbusters. Both men want to provide a place where fellow film-lovers can see these films and are encouraged to discuss their meanings afterwards.

“I’ve had a lot of conversations in movie theater parking lots, and I’d much rather be sitting, having a beer in a café,” Parrish said.

Parrish and Rea are veterans of Richmond’s film culture. Parrish co-founded the James River Film Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to film as an artform, and Rea ran the Biograph Theater from 1972 to 1982.

Bijou has hosted three events to raise money to open their theater — all of which were designed to showcase of the type of films they’re looking to present.

They’ve shown mainstream classics like “A Hard Day’s Night” and “The Third Man,” but they also showed the 2014 documentary “Finding Vivian Maier,” a film about discovering an artist’s work that garnered some award buzz around the time it was shown, including an Oscar nomination for “Best Documentary.”

Parrish, commenting on this range of films, said “We’re a film center dedicated to the whole of cinema, not just what’s the Hollywood mainstream.”

Director Rick Alverson also supports the Bijou, offering them the chance to show his film five days before the official premiere in New York City. Alverson said he has seen films that would please any movie-lover in cities like Baltimore,

D.C. and New York, but they always seem to pass by Richmond.

“For 20 years, I’ve had to watch the majority of the films that educated me as a filmmaker either by getting them from a video store or watching them online,” Alverson said. “It’s incredibly vital, culturally, for a town like Richmond to step over and say ‘Hey, we’re a metropolis, we’re not some sort of starter city.’”

Parrish and Rea are also fans of Alverson and “Entertainment,” putting interesting spins into advertising the screening. They’ve put Banksy-esque graffiti on places around Richmond, like Edo’s Squid, showing the lead actor in a

monochromatic profile that includes his microphone, and the date of the screening.

Both men said they want people to see Alverson’s film, and appreciate his bold artistic ability.

“I have a good sense that he’s on his own path,” Parrish said. “He has his own vision, his own style, his own way of making films, and it’s not like anybody else.”

Rea also had good things to say about Alverson, commenting on his method of storytelling.

“Like good European films, he’s not taking you by the hand,” Rea said. “Instead, he’s taking you out there and at some point, you give in. You say ‘Alright, I’m along

for the ride.’ And that, to me, is a success.”

Rea compared the movie’s bizarre and unconventional storytelling, to the films of Robert Bresson and David Lynch, specifically “Eraserhead.”

While both men admit that this film is not for everyone, Parrish and Rea are confident that this event will represent what the Bijou is willing to do for local film lovers and filmmakers alike.

“Taking the risk with an edgy film like this says something about the Bijou, how it will be a place not afraid to show edgier films that will challenge people, because that’s what an arthouse is supposed to

do,” Parrish said.

Admission costs \$10 at the Byrd box office, while advance tickets can be purchased for \$7. There will be a happy hour beforehand at the Portrait House, which is across the street from the theater, from 5-6:30 p.m. After the screening, there will be a party at the New York Deli, where there will be a comedy showcase hosted by Herschel Stratego.

The Bijou invites anybody who wants to watch something different from what they’re used to, who are willing to take a risk with “Entertainment.” For those who can make it to the screening, Rea has one bit of advice: “Leave your expectations at the door.”



A stencil for the arthouse film “Entertainment” hangs on a wall outside of Hibachi Box restaurant on Laurel Street. The Bijou Film center has been advertising the movie’s pre-premiere before its presentation in New York City.

## “Rocky Horror” rides in for Halloween

—continued from page 1

film, “The Rocky Horror Picture Show” tells the story of a young engaged couple from Denton, Texas named Ralph Hapschatt and Janet Weiss.

On their way to visit their old science teacher, the couple’s car breaks down in a rainstorm. The two walk to a nearby house in hopes of using the phone to call for assistance, but instead are flung headfirst into the world of Frank-N-Furter, a transvestite scientist who has created the human phenomenon that is Rocky Horror.

What ensues is a tale filled with rock and roll, sexual freedom and nods to science fiction and old Hollywood B-horror flicks.

Mayer said VCU’s production of the show has been in the works for more than a year and she was offered the directing position last spring. Mayer said the cast members’ previous experience with “Rocky Horror”

varied widely as they began the production of the show.

“A few of our actors had never seen the film or attended it live,” she said. “Our (actor playing) Frank-N-Furter did a tour of “Rocky Horror” in Europe, and he’s done an American tour as well. So we have a large amount of experience down to zero experience.”

The department sometimes casts actors outside of the department when they feel their resident student body doesn’t have the required talents or appearances to fill a particular role.

Although the show was well received during its initial London debut, it took a while for the same enthusiasm to catch on in America. Even after the production made its transition to film in 1975 as “The Rocky Horror Picture Show,” Mayer said it still was not the cult classic it’s known as today.

“It didn’t do so well ... at first,” Mayer said. “But when they started showing it at mid-

night and people started taking it upon themselves to wear costumes and shout things at the screen, that’s how it became a classic.”

With the combination of its rock and roll music score and the heavy elements of science fiction and cheesy horror, one might find it puzzling how a musical such as “The Rocky Horror Show” works the way it does, but Mayer believes the show also pushes the boundaries of culture by addressing issues such as perceptions of human sexuality and crossdressing.

“It is a chance for people to be entertained by things that are societal taboos,” she said. “The Rocky Horror Show and “The Rocky Horror Picture Show” have often been associated with fringes of culture and people that may not feel like they have somewhere they fit in the world.”

This association allows for those who identify with the characters and situations in “The Rocky Horror Show” to feel a

sense of solidarity.

While challenges are inevitable in staging any theater production, Mayer said one of the biggest challenges has been trying to maintain a healthy balance between what people expect from the stage production and the film adaptation of “Rocky Horror.”

“The stage script is a little different from the movie script,” she said. “There’s different music, there’s different dialogue. The biggest challenge is how do we honor the movie and its traditions and honor the playwright’s original intent ... and weave all that together.”

In addition, Mayer said there will be a few additions that are exclusive to VCU’s production.

“We’ve made some choices that I believe have never happened in a production of ‘Rocky Horror’ before,” she said.

Tickets for the show can be purchased online at vcutheatre.showclix.com or by contacting the Theatre VCU Box Office at (804)-828-6026.

### Chance the Rapper returns to Richmond

**MUKTARU JALLOH**  
Online News Editor

Hip-hop artist Chance The Rapper’s “Family Matters” tour stopped in Richmond last Thursday night.

Towkio, D.R.A.M, Metro Boomin and Chance performed at The National for a sold out crowd of more than 2,000 fans. The tour is an effort to promote Chance’s 2015 album “Surf,” which he released in May. The album was downloaded 618,000 times on iTunes in its first week and received strong reviews from many music publications.

“Years ago, I came here during my first national tour. Last year I was VCU’s homecoming artist. It means something to be back here,” Chance told the crowd.

Hailing from the southside of Chicago, Illinois, Chance is 22 years old and has now released three highly acclaimed albums: 10 Day, Acid Rap and Surf. His work has also gained the respect of many music greats such as Kanye West, Madonna and Erykah Badu. Earlier this month, JAY-Z, Beyoncé and Usher attended his show in New York City.

In addition to his artistry, Chance is also a community activist, advocates against gun and gang violence in his hometown. For the past two years, he’s sponsored several non-violence campaigns and even a free music festival in Chicago, in which Grammy winning-recording artist Kendrick Lamar was the surprise guest.

Lines for his Richmond show began as early as 2 p.m. with about 10 fans sitting and waiting in front of the venue in an effort to gain front row access to the show.

The show began with fellow Chicago rapper, Towkio performing a 25-minute set. Soon after, rapper D.R.A.M performed a medley of his songs including his hit, “Cha Cha.” One of the biggest songs of the year, “Cha Cha,” peaked at number 40 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart this summer. In addition, it’s the original sample for Drake’s “Hotline Bling (Cha Cha Remix),” which is currently at number two on the Billboard charts.

“I love you mama! Richmond, it feels good to be home,” D.R.A.M

said while on stage.

A Hampton, Virginia native, D.R.A.M. was excited to perform in his hometown area. With his mother and many family members in attendance, D.R.A.M made sure to point out them out in the crowd.

The final opening act was hip-hop producer Metro Boomin. The 22-year-old produced a majority of rapper Future’s album “Dirty Sprite 2” and Future’s collaborative mixtape with rapper Drake, “What A Time To Be Alive.” The two efforts both debuted number one on the Billboard charts and have been commercially successful.

Spanning nearly 40 minutes, MetroBoomin performed an energy-filled DJ set which got the crowd amped for Chance The Rapper.

At around 10 p.m., Chance appeared to an excited and applause-filled audience. Chance opened the show with his song, “Everybody’s Something” and proceeded to perform album cuts from his first two projects. Backed by his band, The Social Experiment, Chance’s performance featured an elaborate stage set up.

During an intermission, Chance took an opportunity to thank the crowd for their unwavering support of he and his band. In addition to this, Chance talked about the significance the city of Richmond has to him because of his homecoming performance at VCU last year.

Chance’s set ran for an hour and thirty minutes. He performed his biggest songs, which included “Pusha Man,” “Good Ass In-tro,” “Nothing Came to Me” and “Sunday Candy.” He closed the show with his recently released song, “Angels.” The song, which he premiered on Stephen Colbert’s The Late Show, has been well received by his fans.

Jackson Henry, a VCU senior, was one of many VCU students who enjoyed the show. “The show was great. Chance had great energy and performed at optimum as always,” Henry said. “I’ve been a big fan of his since I heard Acid Rap. He’s the most unique artist I’ve ever heard. He’s truly one-of-a-kind.”

The tour makes a stop in Florida and ends Nov. 25 in Los Angeles.



ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH BUTLER



**ADRIEL VELAZQUEZ**  
Contributing writer

"I get more excited for panels by guests, like cosplay techniques by big-name cosplayers, than

Huddle said she believes conventions offer a break from

— HANNAH HUDDLE

"They just offer a really unique space where you can be someone totally different from normal, and take chances you usually wouldn't," Huddle said. "You can play with your gender presentation, show a daring amount of skin, or just wear a

A group of seven people are posing behind a large, blue and green display board for the 'COSPLAY CLUB'. The board features the text 'What is Cosplay?', 'Club Workshops', and 'BE YOURSELF'. The people are dressed in various costumes, including Princess Peach, Mario, Link, and others. They are standing in front of a brick building.

Members of VCU's Cosplay Club pose in the compass outside of Hibbs Hall to raise funds for their trip to Nekocon, a popular cosplay convention.

horse mask and banana suit and people aren't going to judge you because there are thousands of others doing the same."

For Dubois, conventions

are about meeting up with old friends and having fun.

“Going to other panels, video screenings, and even people watching ... I’m excited about

that. However, in general, I am ready to see friends that I haven't seen in a few months and hang out," Dubois said.

Participants can purchase

a full membership pass to the weekend-long event for \$55 at the door on Friday, Nov. 6. The convention center is roughly a two-hour drive from Richmond.

- ADVERTISEMENT

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SESSION FOUR

**2:00 - 2:50 p.m.**

why am i broke?

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# Throwback: 20 years ago...

We reached into the Commonwealth Times archive to bring back this jazzy event from October 1995.

12 ♦ Commonwealth TIMES

MONDAY, October 30, 1995

Ray Charles performace highlights celebration

David Henschel  
CT STAFF WRITER

Don't feel bad if you missed Frank Sinatra's ill-fated concert at the Mosque last year.  
The man Sinatra has called "the only genius in our business" played the building formerly known as the Mosque Saturday night to celebrate its reopening after a multimillion-dollar renovation. And, I must say, the building looks much better in its new incarnation as Richmond's Landmark Theater.  
Charles shared billing at the show with Ravel, one of the greatest classical composers of all time. Actually, Ravel is long dead, but the world of classical musicians considers Charles classical enough so that the Richmond Symphony Orchestra featured him right after they played Ravel's Bolero and the audience sat through an intermission during which some people from the cheap seats filled some of the empty high-priced seats close to the stage.  
To those of you who worry about traditional show-business terms of "sold out" and "SRO," fear not. Those seats opened up to audience members with limited funds but keen eyes because of the bureaucratic management of the theater. I know this because a slew of people — including myself — missed the opening symphony while ushers insisted on showing each customer to his or her seat one person at a time.  
It was appropriate that those who paid \$15 got a better view of Charles than those who paid \$75. His songs stick up for the working classes and celebrate the plight of the poor with the philosophy of the blues:

"I WAS BORN WITH MUSIC INSIDE ME."  
— RAY CHARLES  
RAY CHARLES ROBINSON WAS BORN SEPT. 23, 1930, THE FIRST SON OF ARETHA AND BAILEY ROBINSON. WHEN RAY WAS 4 YEARS OLD, THE LIGHTS BEGAN TO DIM. AT 7, RAY WAS BLIND. IN 1945, RAY WENT TO LOS ANGELES AND SIGNED WITH ATLANTIC RECORDS. BY THE EARLY 1960S, HE HAD ACCOMPLISHED ONE OF HIS LONGTIME DREAMS — TO PLAY IN CARNEGIE HALL.

shout and complain about your hard day at work and the loss of loved ones until you see the humor in them. As Charles sings, "If it weren't for bad luck, I'd have no luck at all."  
Charles stayed on stage for less than an hour, but in that short time he gave the audience the variety of songs that have earned him respect over the years.  
He sang the witty lyrics of Ira Gershwin in the song "They Can't Take That Away From Me." He then sang his classic "You're Cheatin' Heart," but skipped "Hit the Road Jack."  
Ravel's Bolero and the intermission together lasted longer than Charles' set, but in his short time on stage he proved his array of talents. He improvised his own classical material during the instrumental break of a modern song. He played grand piano, a Yamaha KX88 electronic keyboard (harking back to when he pioneered the use of electric piano in pop music 40 years ago) and an alto saxophone, then began singing mostly hoarse wails until he stunned the audience with a sustaining, clear, opera-like tone.

He did not talk during the first half of his set, then he explained that he must at least say something because that morning he had heard two local radio announcers wonder why he didn't talk during the previous night's concert.  
When Charles sang the lyric, "Help my baby through the hungry years," a woman from the audience shouted back, "You're doin' it!"  
Those who believe the singer has sold out and no longer faces the adversity that informs his songs might want to read about his recent conflict with American Airlines.  
He and his manager Joseph Adams filed a multimillion-dollar lawsuit after officials at Los Angeles Airport suspected them of carrying automatic weapons and explosives (the funny side of pain, indeed!).  
After Charles walked offstage slowly, all the while with his mouth as wide open as possible, Adams took the microphone to thank the audience in a graceful speaking voice.  
He joked that he had been a child exactly 10 years ago, when Charles last played the venue. He explained that he and the others in Charles' entourage always had the impression that Richmond is filled with good looking men and women.  
I couldn't figure out whether his next comment was a joke; he said he had discussed the possibility of handing a fresh

MUSIC MAN — Ray Charles performed with the Richmond Symphony Saturday night as part of the grand reopening celebration at Richmond's Landmark Theater.

rose to every lady in the audience. He said he then changed his mind because "a rose with any intelligence at all would wither in front of you."

Shaferbird Feature

Shafer Bird is part of the Mesh Media Network, a division of VCU Student Media. The Shafer Bird team works to bring the VCU community menu updates and original content, including reviews of on- and off-campus restaurants. [www.shaferbird.com](http://www.shaferbird.com)

Veggie Paradise at Fresca on Addison

Vegetarian / Vegan cafe

"It certainly isn't a far ride from the Monroe Park Campus, and I'd recommend to anyone, vegetarian or not, that's looking for a light, healthy meal. I would not recommend it, however, to somebody who wants a lot of food without spending a lot of cash."  
— AUSTIN WALKER



PHOTO BY AUSTIN WALKER

Vegetable curry, pickled cabbage and avovado soft tacos at Fresca, at the corner of Addison and Cary Street.

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Failures within the FDA have allowed a percentage of drugs on the market to be released though they should be considered highly experimental.”

— RACHAEL WOJCIECHOWSKI

# Issues with race, system highlighted in S.C.

Staff Editorial

Spring Valley’s Rosa Parks

Last week, at Spring Valley high school in Columbia, S.C., a school resource officer flipped a student’s desk, gripped her arm and leg and threw her to the front of the classroom after she refused to stand up.

The student, whose name is protected due to her status as a minor, refused to give her math teacher her cell phone, and was consequently arrested on the charge of “disrupting schools.”

Former deputy Ben Fields, the officer who arrested the student on video, has been fired from his position pending investigation of whether his actions violated the student’s civil rights.

The State newspaper in South Carolina reported U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan mentioned the civil-rights investigation Friday in Tennessee.

“(T)his week, we’ve been forced to again confront how far we still have left to go in the struggle for true equality,” Duncan said. “If we want to maintain the trust of parents and communities in our schools, we must start by treating our children with respect and human dignity.”

Fields’ actions weren’t justified, and at first glance at the footage, seem completely astounding.

How could someone who has held his position for seven years react so brutally? Fields claims the student attempted to strike him, but the video footage recorded by the girl’s classmates from different angles during her arrest fails to support his claim.

One of the classmates who captured the incident on video was Niya Kenny, who was also arrested after shouting at the deputy and school employees to stop, The State reported last week. Kenny was also charged with disturbing schools.

The fact is that people of color,

women especially, are disproportionately targeted by white police officers. The fact is that before race or gender variables even come into the equation though, this girl should have never been targeted for her “crime” in the first place.

“Initially, when they said an SRO was coming, we have two — so I didn’t know which one was coming,” Kenny said to The State. “It could have been the other one. When I saw deputy Fields, that’s when I started ... that’s when I told them to get the cameras out, because we know his reputation — well, I know his reputation.”

The actions of the Spring Valley student who was initially arrested, while clearly rebellious, didn’t warrant her violent arrest. Her actions didn’t warrant an arrest at all, let alone the use of force when she didn’t stand up from her non-threatening position at her seat.

The State reported that though Kenny said she didn’t personally know the girl Fields arrested, Kenny knew what was happening was not okay.

“It should have been an adult, that’s what I think,” she said. “One of the adults should have said, ‘Whoa, whoa, whoa — that’s not how you do this.’ But instead, it had to be a student in the classroom to stand up and say, ‘This is not right.’”

The girl Fields initially arrested didn’t have a weapon and wasn’t acting in any manner that indicated she did. Perhaps, the student was stunned she was being arrested for using her cell phone in class, or apprehensive to cater to an authority figure who has brutalized people of color in her state.

Who guards the guards?

Fields is a member of the Richland County Sheriff’s Office in Columbia, South Carolina and has faced two lawsuits in the last decade. In 2007, he was accused of exces-

sive force and battery, but the jury acquitted him, and in 2008 he was appointed as Spring Valley High School’s resource officer.

While there’s no doubt that the last year has seen a resurgence in discourse pertaining to race and authoritative displays of excessive force, there’s another variable here: the fundamental flaws in the education system toxically mixed with the reliance on “rent-a-cops” in public schools.

In the videos recorded during the encounter last week, the teacher is standing inactive at the front of the classroom.

Fields’ actions sent a clear message to the other students of the class who remained frozen in fear as he made his arrest: “I can do the same to you. I can do whatever I want.”

To fill the vacuum created by removing both teachers and students from having a legitimate stake in education, schools have increasingly relied on School Resource Officers to discipline students, but the popular use of SROs as the primary form of school security has faced critical review recently.

One article by U.S. News & World Report explains how SROs may contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline by needlessly instituting the justice system at an early age. The American Civil Liberties Union also has warned that the use of SROs puts the responsibility of disciplining children into the hands of the school’s presiding officer.

“Disturbing schools” is the third most frequent referral offense that lands children in the South Carolina’s juvenile justice system, according to state Department of Juvenile Justice statistics from 2013-14.

Nearly 1,200 disturbing schools cases were generated statewide during that period, including 98 cases from Richland County.

In the videos from Spring Valley, the teacher and other students

in the class watch as a uniformed, armed and agitated officer arrests a student for disrupting the teacher’s lecture because she wouldn’t put away her cell phone. The autonomous authority of these witnesses and bystanders has been reduced to nothing — reflective of the hierarchy and disregard for teacher-student or student-student dynamics.

What has allowed for officers, not teachers or actual school administration, to enforce the rules in public schools without any investigative branch to enforce accountability?

“We believe that Mr. Fields’ actions were justified and lawful throughout the circumstances of which he was confronted during this incident,” a portion of the statement released to media from Fields’ attorney reads. “To that extent, we believe that Mr. Fields’ actions were carried out professionally and that he was performing his job duties within the legal threshold.”

It is still about race

Severe racial inequality pervades the American education system across the board. Local property taxes largely comprise public school funding among different districts in the same state. In other words, low-income neighborhoods with crowded, smaller homes can’t contribute to obtaining better resources for their neighborhood schools.

Despite attempts by the Bush Administration’s “No Child Left Behind” act in 2001, the Obama administration granting billions to public education, and countless measures by state and local legislations, the U.S. Department of Education reports black students still consistently test lower than white students in math and reading tests in 2015.

In South Carolina — where there’s a prevalence of racial inequality embedded in the state’s social framework — the death of nine

black churchgoers in Charleston this summer surely still resonates with the community.

Charleston is only two hours from Columbia, and as recently as 1961, black Americans were being sentenced to chain gangs for violating Jim Crow laws. Not to mention, S.C. remains one of the only five states left in the U.S. without laws addressing hate crimes.

You read that correctly — South Carolina has no systems in place to employ federal investigation into instances of racially motivated hate crimes. People of color have faced disparities of wealth and violence for their children and these inequalities have played out on a national scale in places that should be safe: churches and schools.

Teachers don’t run the class

One distinct evolution in public high schools is the less-involved role of teachers as authority figures. The discrediting of teacher-authority, the inherent biases and power dynamics at play in any police encounter and students’ disillusionment with the institution of learning makes for a volatile mixture leading to incidents like this.

Teachers, at one point, helped mediate their students’ socialization into larger society. More recently, that paradigm has been mitigated by incidents of inappropriate sexual misconduct, conflicting views regarding standardized lesson plans and harsh enforcement of zero-tolerance policies.

Poor treatment and respectability of teachers can also be attributed to gender and race dynamics, as the National Center of Education Statistics reports that the last five years have seen the teaching workforce comprised of 77 percent females.

Wage gaps also persist between men and white women, and between white women and women of color —

and the National Center of Education Statistics indicates the average wages for teachers in South Carolina is below the national average of \$56,383 a year.

Furthermore, criticism of “helicopter parenting” interfering with education has existed for decades, with the first notable publication being Gene Lyons’ “Why Teachers Can’t Teach” in 1979. This idea has persisted, and consequently resulted in poor teaching practices as criticised in a 2014 Time Magazine cover story titled “Bad Apples: It’s nearly impossible to fire a bad teacher.”

Between the numerous incidents of in-school violence first reported in the early ’90s by the National School Safety Center, frozen funding pipelines for public schools and consistently increasing class sizes, “helicopter parenting” and low teaching wages, the means for providing quality education is crumbling.

Fields has been officially discharged following review of the incident by the sheriff’s office. At a press conference, Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott explained how the maneuver used by Fields was incongruent with standards for arrest and dealing with juveniles. Lott has previously defended Fields’ actions, but following national scrutiny, the Sheriff admitted Fields’ mistakes were indicative of the former officer’s inability to properly serve his duties.

The deputy was fired from the sheriff’s department after an internal investigation, and a federal investigation is underway by Columbia FBI Field Office, the Civil Rights Division, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of South Carolina.

If getting the police involved is likely to escalate an otherwise non-violent confrontation, why aren’t the faculty responsible for taking away a student’s cell phone also responsible for determining what constitutes unruly and disruptive behaviour?

# FDA drug testing procedures lack necessary scrutiny

RACHAEL WOJCIECHOWSKI  
Contributing Columnist

Recently there has been a surge of anti-vaccination advocates in the U.S. with many of them stating the reason for their concern is a mistrust for their doctors and the actual drugs themselves. While this may sound a bit paranoid, much of their logic is based on a mistrust of doctors or at least the medications they prescribe, which I wholeheartedly agree with, simply because the FDA is a cesspool of testing procedure failures.

The FDA is currently re-evaluating their procedure for accelerated drug testing, even though the current procedure is already faster than the European Union’s method and was just approved in 1992. The proposition being considered would allow drugs to be approved on the basis of “proof-of-concept,” meaning if the drug actually works, it will be placed on the market. These drugs would only begin late-stage testing after its release, legally making users clinical trial participants for the drug companies who dislike spending large amounts of money during the approval process.

According to the August 2014 edition of the Health Affairs Journal, there has already been a dramatic increase in the amount of recalls and black box warnings, such as Vioxx and Baycol, since 1992 with the rate of recall increasing by more than 5 percent. This is most likely due to the approval of an accelerated drug testing policy and the inability to use effective test subjects as stated by two cancer researchers, Marlene Cimens, Josh Getlin, and Thomas H. Maugh II.

These failures within the FDA have allowed a percentage of drugs on the market to be released though they should be considered as highly experimental. The patients receiving them unknowing become guinea pigs for informal drug trials. Personally, I have dealt with the side effects of Depo Provera, the birth control shot, all the while being told by my ill-informed doctors that they stood by the drug.

I experienced side effects of depression, weight gain of more than 40 pounds in two months,

cramps that merited 10 times the normal dosage of Naproxen, periods longer than two months, and constant sharp pains from my abdomen. After thoroughly researching the drug, I also discovered it could also make me infertile and give me cancer. All with the blessings of four doctors who trust almost any drug put out by the FDA.

Depo Provera is a birth control shot that is known for being effective for three months and suppressing menstrual cycles completely. However, it is also known for its six columns of side effects ranging from increased risk of STDs, loss of bone mineral density and causing tissue clots the size of golf balls. This drug has had a very long history of rejections but the main reason was its ability to cause endometrial cancer in Rhesus monkeys and increase the rate of breast cancer in beagles. This was the first time endometrial cancer had ever been recorded in Rhesus monkeys.

This drug was finally approved in 1992, the same year the drug approval procedures were changed, even with heavy opposition from women’s health organizations and the Advisory Committee on Obstetrics and Gynecology. It is considered so dangerous to a woman’s reproductive system that many surrogacy groups will not allow women to take the drug at all in their lifetime.

The most disheartening thing about this drug’s approval is the fact that it is heavily exported as a form of population control by the U.S. and Canada to the Southern Hemisphere and is one of the most used birth controls in lower income households in the U.S., Canada, and the UK. This is reflective of the drug’s initial clinical trials starting in 1967 where over 14,000 women were illegally tested without their knowledge or consent by the Grady Institute in Atlanta, Georgia.

Half of the women were poor, African American women who had no idea of the fact that they were being injected with something that would destroy their reproductive systems with cancer or



ILLUSTRATION BY DOUGLAS FUCHS

infertility. Several women actually died as a result of this and none of these deaths were ever reported to the FDA during the drug’s approval process. The clinical trials were so sloppy that over 13,000 women never showed up for their follow ups, but the FDA still saw

fit to pass this abomination and completely silence the voices of those innocent women who died as a result of testing.

The FDA is willing to keep this drug on the market with no black box warnings or recalls in sight and constantly approve

more drugs like it. The only chance of preventing this is to repeal the accelerated drug testing procedures and to implement the use of better test subjects to keep these experimental drugs out of pharmacies. For the meantime, thorough research

is required for any drugs prescribed to you to assure that you in turn do not become the participant of a clinical trial.



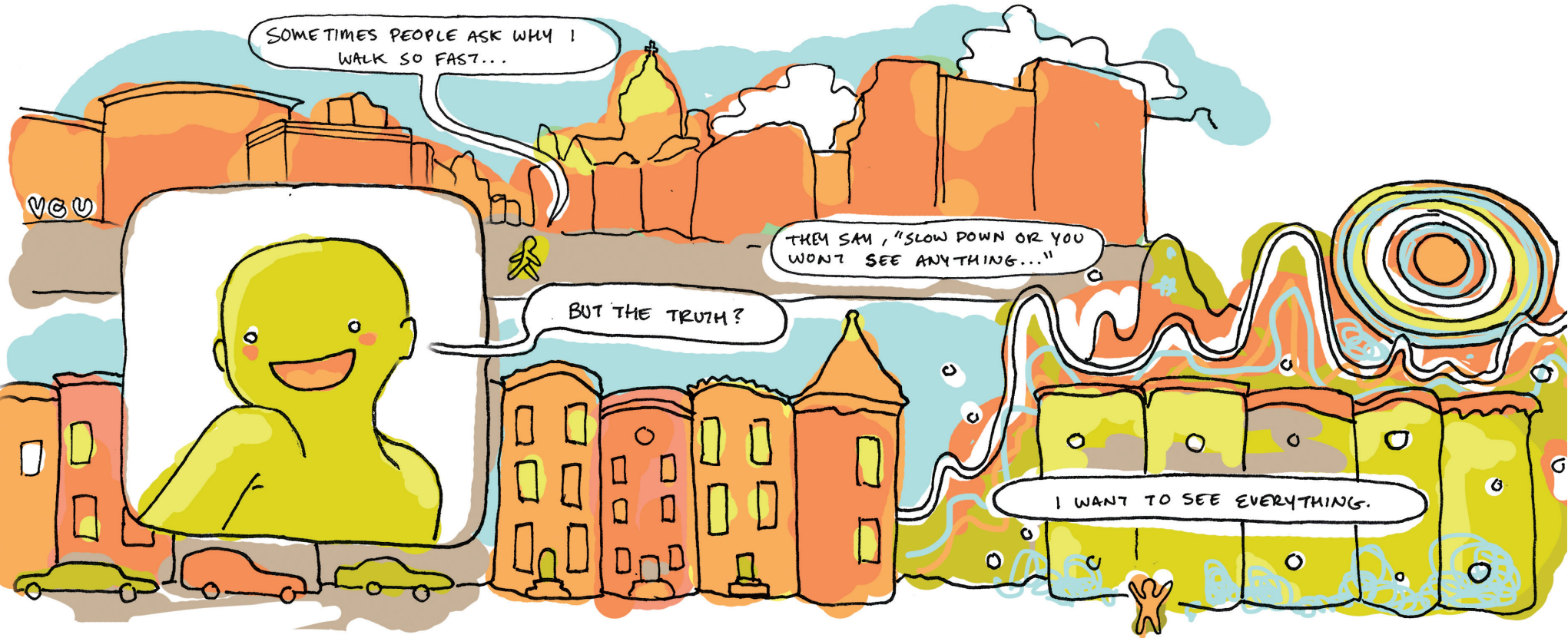




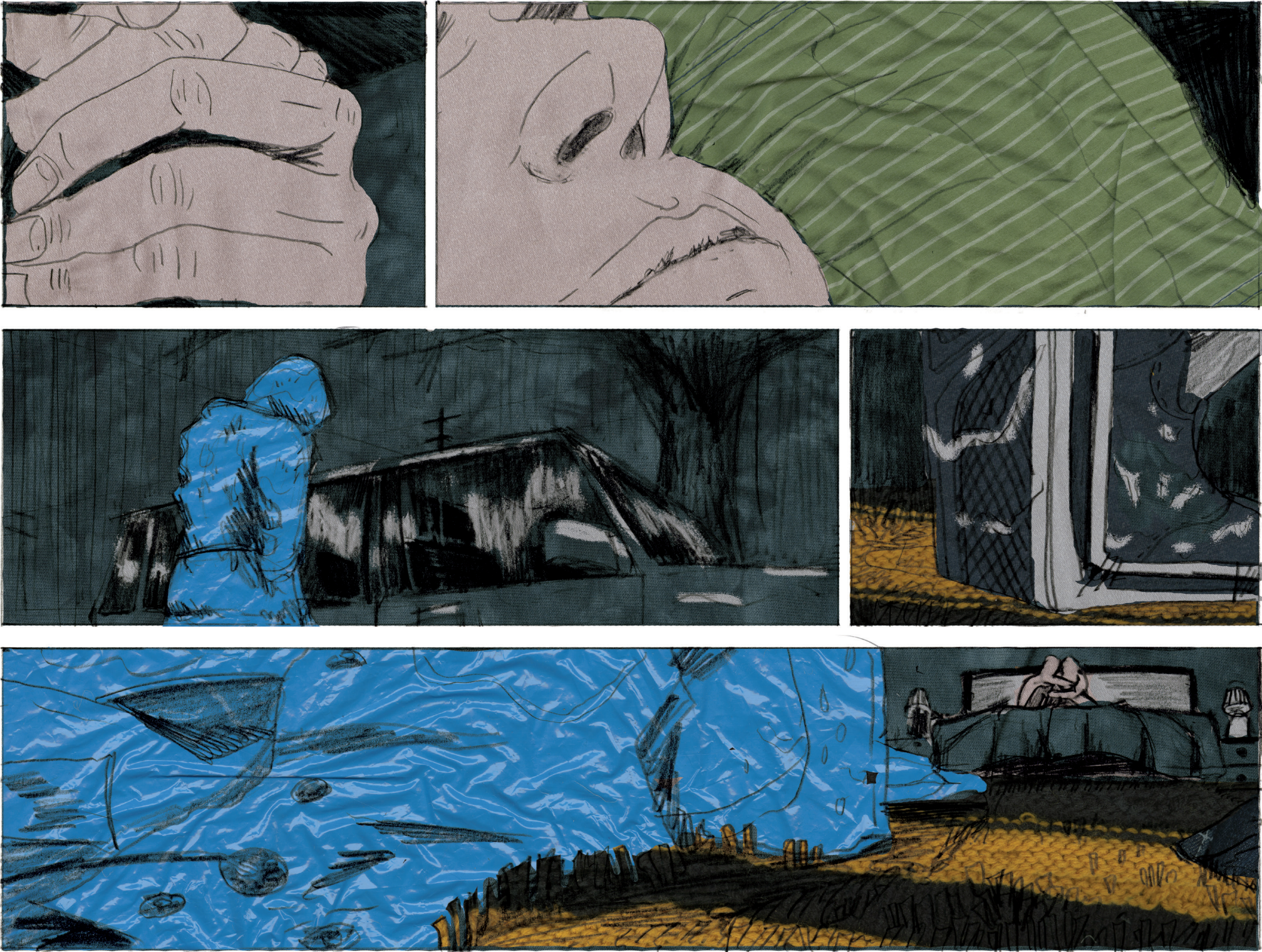


# comics

## Everything by Rachel Hume



## Sunday Night by Daniel Torraca



## Zombie Midterms Fall 2015 by Fahmida Azim

ZOMBIE MIDTERMS FALL 2015



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