The men tottered across Kaufman Mall wearing high heels, boots and clogs ranging from electric red to glossy black. The sight amused some members of the opposite sex, but it was all for a serious cause: raising awareness of sexual assault.

Old Dominion University’s ninth annual Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event attracted a record 400 participants, including male athletes, administrators and campus police officers who dared to don women’s shoes.

President John R. Broderick, who led the walk, told the crowd that the campus community must work together to eradicate sexual violence.

PHOTOS: BILL TIERNAN, THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT
FEATURES

6  Good guys finish first
Jay Harris '87 has risen at ESPN with humility and hard work.

18  Enriching African-American history
Thanks to Wendy Porter '03 (M.F.A. '05), now millions can see a Bible owned by Nat Turner.

20  The NFL's a snap for him
Rick Lovato '15, the first Monarch to play in the NFL, is long snapper for the Philadelphia Eagles.

22  Rebuilding from tragedy
After her husband's death, Jennifer Mullen Collins (M.P.A. '04) is giving back – to help other military families and advance scientific research.

28  In honor of the Honors College
Students say the benefits go beyond the classroom.

36  He built up Old Dominion
David Harnage, ODU's master planner extraordinaire, will retire in June.

46  Triple play
Two brothers – make that three – shine on the baseball diamond, and at home.

DEPARTMENTS

5  Comments and letters
6  Alumni
34  Campus news
38  Faculty
41  Students
44  Athletics
51  Books
52  Class notes
57  Obituaries
64  Last look

ON THE COVER
Meet Monarchs thriving in the world of entertainment – from opera to comedy to filmmaking – on Pages 10-17. The cover image was created by faculty members Ivanete Blanco and David Shields using historic wood type from the Art Department's collection.
Welcome to the spring 2017 Monarch magazine. In this issue, you’ll meet some talented people who’ve served in leadership roles at Old Dominion University, such as Jay Harris ’87. You know him best as an anchor for ESPN, but he has also been an active and enthusiastic member of Old Dominion’s Board of Visitors since 2014.

We bid farewell to David Harnage, who will retire in June. Old Dominion was fortunate when Dave agreed in 2011 to return to serve as chief operating officer. He’s had a huge impact on this campus – from planning more than 15 buildings to overseeing budget, public safety and information technology – and he’s been a true friend to Kate and me.

And we reconnect with Jennifer Mullen Collins (M.P.A. ’04), a former assistant vice president here. She left in 2014 after a family tragedy. How she has moved forward since then will inspire you.

This issue also illustrates some of Old Dominion’s most impressive characteristics:

- Practical problem solving: Victoria Time, a professor of sociology and criminal justice, doesn’t just research women’s issues in her native Africa. She seeks to create change. The goal of her new book, she says, is “to wake them up, not to feel sorry for them.”

- Collaboration: Petros Katsioloudis’ and Victoria Hill’s recent research expedition to the frigid Arctic represented another example of our faculty’s openness to cutting across academic boundaries. He teaches in the Darden College of Education; she’s from the College of Sciences.

- Adaptation: John Sokolowski recently retired as executive director of our Virginia Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center. The center has embraced new opportunities since it opened in 1997, branching from military applications to such areas as health care and cybersecurity.

John R. Broderick, President
Old Dominion University
The spring 2017 Monarch magazine showcases several impressive Monarchs – from a half-dozen alums flourishing in the entertainment industry to ESPN anchor Jay Harris to science writer Marcia Bartusiak.

I also want to showcase the people behind the scenes who helped make this a vibrant issue. After the last issue, I made an executive decision: I’d do a little less writing and seek more freelance contributors. It was a painful choice since I love to write. But I thought readers would benefit from diversifying our pool of writers – and the styles they embrace.

This issue features the work of 19 writers, including my predecessor, Jim Raper, who profiled Bartusiak, and public relations specialist Brendan O’Hallarn (Ph.D. ’16), whose enthusiasm for breakthroughs and personalities at Old Dominion is contagious. We also include an essay by Andrew Bennett, an assistant professor of management, summarizing his research on how to de-stress from work. I hope to include essays from other faculty members about their topical work in future issues.

It takes more than writers to make a publication sparkle. The university’s photographers, Chuck Thomas and David Hollingsworth, have enlivened these pages with their images. We also include the fine photography of Roberto Westbrook, the director of ODU’s Tri-Cities Center in Portsmouth; Shara Weber, a designer in Old Dominion’s design and publications department; The Virginian-Pilot’s Kristen Zeis, and Gretchen Ertl, who previously worked for The Associated Press and the Providence Journal.

And we feature three visual artists – the University’s new videographer, Kathleen Byrne, as well as Ivanete Blanco, associate professor of art, and David Shields, assistant professor of art, who contributed the striking cover image representing our alumni in the performing arts.

Finally, a strong thank-you to my two partners-in-publication whose talent has raised the quality of every page of this magazine – art director Karen Smallets (M.A. ’14) and copy editor Janet Molinaro (M.A. ’14).

Philip Walzer
Monarch Magazine and University Editor
WELCOME, FUTURE MONARCHS

When I started to lose hope and everything looked like it was falling apart ... God's blessing finally came thank you @ODUnow TavisThompson @Varsity_24 (See his letter on right.)

Extra Special

Great job on the March Monarch Extra. I like the range of content and the measured use of dynamic elements in the publication, enough to be an enhancement ... but not so much as to be gimmicky or overused.

This seems like a nice combination of web presentation and print structure. Keep up the great work.

Steve Wynn ’86
Ashburn, Virginia

Loved the Gray's article. Enjoyed hot turkey sandwiches with mashed potatoes there!

Cassandra Lacey ’65
Powhatan, Virginia

Kudos for a wonderful Monarch Extra e-magazine. The featured stories about members of our ODU family (alumni and faculty) and treasured memories associated with Gray's Pharmacy and Ramblin' Conrads were very special to me.

If not for the piece about young Joe Porfert, few of us would ever know about how much he did for those he cared for and what he left behind in his writing. Thank you for capturing so well these little-known stories.

Donna S. Morris ’77
Norfolk, Virginia

Finding Love at ODU

Zach Hill ’14 and Lizzie Applewhite ’14 won the #ODULoveStory Valentine’s Day contest for best Monarch romance. Here’s their story, from Applewhite:

“We had mutual friends throughout high school but didn’t know each other very well. When I was transferring to ODU, I reached out to him as one of the only people I’d known on campus. He promised to take me under his wing, and we spent the next three years attached at the hip!

“We loved our time together at ODU attending football and basketball games, supporting each other’s Greek organizations, and spending hours in Club Perry. We got engaged last summer on July 4th in Pensacola, Florida, and are busy planning our wedding for May 2018! ODU will always hold a special place in our hearts, as it was the foundation to the rest of our lives together.”

Find the second edition of MONARCH EXTRA, our new e-magazine, in the fall and our next print issue later in the year.

Maaly.maal It’s official! I will be attending Old Dominion University in Fall 2017 for Electrical Engineering #ODU21 #gomonarchs #oduengineering

Essentiallyyours Followed my heart and it led me to ODU, now this monarch is taking the throne.
A GOOD GUY’S RISE IN SPORTS BROADCASTING
When Jay Harris’ alarm clock rings every weekday, his first instinct is to stay in bed. After all, it’s 3 a.m. But he likes to get to work at 4 o’clock, three hours before millions of TV viewers first see him in the morning.

Harris ’87 co-hosts ESPN’s “SportsCenter: AM” show, which recently celebrated its first anniversary. A February article in Sporting News describes Harris as “one of ESPN’s secret weapons.”

He offered perhaps the best clue to his success not during his morning show, but in a 2014 speech at a convention in Washington for high school students considering journalism.

The best journalists, he told them, “have the ability to walk like people, talk like people, write like people, and act like people when they do their jobs. … They act like they would act if you saw them at 1 o’clock in the morning at Waffle House. … They keep it real. They act like you.” Harris’ ability to “keep it real” has endeared him to fans and colleagues during his 14-year run at the sports network.

“Forget about Jay Harris the anchor. Jay Harris is one of the best people I know,” says Jemele Hill, co-host of ESPN’s “SportsCenter” at 6 p.m. She describes him as “one of the most humble people in our building. He always has a kind or encouraging word, not to mention an infectious laugh.”

For his part, Harris attributes his easy-going personality and on-air style to his circuitous route to get to ESPN.

“I came from local TV news,” he says. But not directly.

Technically, Harris, 52, came from the now-defunct Norfolk Community Hospital on Feb. 22, 1965.

His family lived in Portsmouth, but after his parents divorced he moved with his mother to her hometown, Chapel Hill, N.C.

So how does a boy who grew up in Tar Heel country – where the clear sky is believed to be a shade of blue from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill – land at ODU?

His father still lived in Norfolk, “so I had dual hometown citizenship,” Harris says. “I found during my visits that ODU had a similar vibe to my high school – friendly, open, accepting. It just felt right.”

Harris knew when he enrolled at ODU what he wanted to major in – speech communication.

“I did yearbook in high school. In 11th grade I took one of those aptitude tests, and I scored high on interpersonal skills. I liked writing, telling stories – that whole process. I wanted Brent Musburger’s job at CBS Sports.”

While he was at Old Dominion, Harris was a member of the Student Senate and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. Dana Burnett, who was dean of students at the time, says Harris was balanced then and balanced now.

“As Jay has moved from ODU into the world of media … I have observed that he has maintained his ability to stay proud and humble,” he says. “Jay has earned the right to be a little cocky, but that isn’t consistent with his core values.”

Burnett, who recently retired as a professor of education, also recalls Harris trying to teach him how to step, a complex group dance popularized predominantly by African-American fraternities. “We had a lot of laughs, but not much success,” Burnett says.

In a perfect world, Harris and his natural talents would have gone straight from graduation to a news outlet. But he detoured to Washington, where he landed a job as a telemarketer, earning $16,000 a year.
In 1989, two years after Harris graduated, he called Don Roberts, a radio news director, friend and mentor, about the possibility of a job at WRAP, an AM station in Norfolk where Roberts was working.

The only problem: It would pay nothing.

Harris wasn’t deterred.

“I took my one suit and two ties and moved to Norfolk and stayed with my dad,” Harris says. “It was three months before they found a little money for me.”

Roberts, now an anchor at WAVY-TV, recalls Harris’ energy: “He hustled! Jay didn’t care if 10 people were listening; he was learning. I saw the same hunger in him that I had to make it.”

After a few other gigs in Hampton Roads, Harris and his wife, Stephanie, moved in 1991 – the day after their wedding – to Pittsburgh. They stayed there for the next 12 years while Harris worked as an anchor at several outlets, including WAMO-FM, American Urban Radio Networks and WPGH-TV.

Even as he reported hard news, Harris stoked his lifelong love of sports. He had played basketball at Chapel Hill High School. “I still think I can take down anyone with my jump shot,” he insists.

So in 2003, when ESPN invited Harris to audition for a job after an old buddy from Pittsburgh shared a tape of him with ESPN execs, it seemed like a dream coming true.

They liked Harris’ style, he liked them … and he turned down the offer.

“I actually said no several times,” Harris says, chuckling. “We had been in Pittsburgh for 12 years. We were settled.”

Stephanie finally persuaded Harris to say yes to a job with a network she reminded him he watched all the time, anyway.

“She asked my buddy, ‘Is this a good opportunity for Jay?’ He said yes, so I said we’ll go. But then I balked again. And she made me follow through. Thirteen years later I always say it’s the best decision she ever made.”

The Sporting News article called Harris “ESPN’s utility player.” His resume proves it. Over the years, he’s worked on or contributed to such ESPN shows as “Baseball Tonight,” “Cold Pizza,” “ESPN Sports Saturday” on ABC, “First Take,” “Friday Night Fights” and “Outside the Lines” and reported on the NBA finals.

In February 2016 he joined three other
anchors to launch “SportsCenter: AM,” a new three-hour morning incarnation of the legendary show.

“There was great chemistry from the start because we like each other, and we all have worked together on various shows and projects,” Harris said.

“As the first live show on the air, we get to set the table on the day, and at the same time add a new twist or context to the previous night’s games. … It’s fast-paced for a morning audience that dips in and out as they get ready to start their day.”

Harris lives in Bristol, Conn., where ESPN is based, with Stephanie and their two children, Bryce, 18, and Tyra, 11.

He credits Old Dominion for his broadcasting ascent.

“I think to be a good broadcaster and a good journalist you need a certain amount of confidence,” he says. “You put yourself out there to be criticized, for your work to be criticized. My ODU experience gave me that confidence because I was able to really get involved in campus student leadership organizations. ODU allowed me to grow up.”

Since 2014, he’s been back at Old Dominion in a new role – member of the Board of Visitors.

He describes the responsibility as “initially surreal,” given his past at ODU as a student, and “eye-opening.”

“I guess if anything jumped out at me early in my tenure on the board,” he says, “it was that relationships like the one I had with Dana – student and teacher, mentor and mentee, friend – were not unique to me. … Those relationships have been driven by this overarching attitude at ODU of ‘What can we do to send these young people out to the world and be prepared?’”

His goal is to spread the word about Old Dominion.

“If there was one thing that I would like to see different – this is just me surfing in four times a year (to board meetings) – it’s making sure that ODU is seen as a leading institution, not only in the state, but in the country. We were always like the little engine that could. Instead, people should think of ODU as the world-class university that it is and not be afraid or ashamed of that.”

In other words, keeping it real for Old Dominion, too. ☝️

James Burnett is a strategic communications consultant and former journalist who worked for newspapers including The Boston Globe, Miami Herald, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and Financial Times. He is co-founder of Cards in Color, dedicated to the positive portrayal of multiracial families in greeting cards.

Photos by Gretchen Ertl
Derrick Borte ’91 endured seven years chasing his dream of making a movie, so it’s not surprising that he doesn’t remember which was the first scene he shot for “The Joneses,” his 2009 writing and directorial debut starring Demi Moore and David Duchovny.

He does remember his stomach churning that day, as it does every day on location. But he always gets through that first shot and then the second. He’s rolling by then. Soon the crew is calling a break for lunch.

He likens it to a veteran quarterback sensing the game has slowed down around him. “I am able to focus. It’s a great feeling,” he says. “I love being in production; it’s where I feel most comfortable.”

Since “The Joneses,” Borte has been comfortable a lot, directing three more movies – including one he co-wrote – as well as Super Bowl commercials and television shows.

His most recent film, “London Town,” grew out of a desire to capture what he felt when he first heard The Clash punk rock band in 1980. He directed a cast including Jonathan Rhys Meyers and Dougray Scott. The film, made in London, debuted last fall at The Naro Cinema in Norfolk and was released in 17 cities.

Borte, 49, has more in the works, but he doesn’t know which will get the green light first.

He wants to make a Western and has optioned the rights to a three-book series. He’s written a couple of scripts set in Norfolk. He has a deal with the CW network to write a
script for a pilot. Borte directed an episode of “The Haunting” last year and would like to do more television.

“In my daily life,” he says, “I’m a plate spinner. Everything is frenetic and high energy.”

He finds refuge in creating art in his Virginia Beach studio. “Working in film is such a collaborative media,” he says. “It’s nice to go hide out in my studio and work on something where I can do whatever I want.”

Surfing trips also give him a chance to stop spinning those plates. His favorite spots are Indonesia, Barbados and the Basque coastline along Spain and France.

Borte (rhymes with fort) graduated in 1985 from First Colonial High School in Virginia Beach, where one of his ‘mates was future actor Mark Ruffalo, a year behind him. He and Ruffalo were surfing buddies and have remained friends.

While he was at ODU, Borte became a regular at The Naro in Ghent. But in class, he focused on art, starting in painting and switching to mixed media using materials such as magazine clippings.

Ken Daley, a longtime art professor who retired last year, recalls Borte as “something of a rogue” with no art background. “But he had, to me, what seemed to be an innate sense of putting colors together, shapes together, coming up with very strong graphic statements.”

After Borte received his bachelor’s degree in fine arts in 1991, he moved to Los Angeles to sell his art. “But within a year, the art market tanked.”

His path changed when he visited friends in New York in the master’s program at the Parsons School of Design, part of The New School. Soon, he enrolled in The New School’s master’s program.

“As much as I loved movies, I guess I kind of never put two and two together as far as being something I could go do,” he says.

He studied media and film. He worked on the “MTV Unplugged” shows at Sony Music Studios. “It was pretty much two years of eat, sleep and breathe production,” he says.

After graduating from The New School in the mid-’90s, he returned home to work as a feature reporter at WAVY-TV, learning flash nonfiction. Two years later, he switched to producing commercials and corporate videos.

He wrote the script for his first film, “The Joneses,” over six months, then spent years journeying to Los Angeles, sleeping on friends’ couches and knocking on doors – and seeing them close in his face – before selling the script.

The movie received strong reviews. The New York Daily News described “The Joneses” as “a sharp sendup of suburban conformity and American materialism.”

Borte says the distributor had a deal to do a bigger release. That didn’t happen. But it has found an audience over the years with a couple of million views on Netflix. “Had they released it the way the distributor wanted to, I think I would be sitting in a much different position right now,” he says.

He seems happy with his position, though. Of course, he’d love to direct a $100 million feature. Or a micro budget flick with a small crew.

“It just depends on the story,” he says.

Either way, he’ll be at home behind the camera, where he belongs.

Jim Morrison is a Norfolk writer whose stories have appeared in publications including Smithsonian, The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. Like Borte, he is a fan of Wes Anderson, particularly “Moonrise Kingdom.”
Jacob Marshall ’02 sat on the bank of the James River in Newport News, meditating and praying and listening for guidance. He had spent 10 years training with the USA gymnastics program, but a missed landing ended his dream. It was the summer of 1998, and out of the sunset, a cloud of color rolled toward him. He didn’t know if it was a waking dream, a vision or a hallucination, but suddenly he could not only see it but hear it, taste it and feel it on his skin. “It was as if every one of my sensory languages was experiencing perfect beauty at the same time,” Marshall says.

To understand it better, he enrolled at Old Dominion University and designed his own degree program in aesthetic studies, researching people who could see colors corresponding to notes.

Marshall wanted to put that research to use, so in 2001, a year before he graduated, he and his friend Dave Elkins, a guitarist, started a band, MAE, for MultiSensory Aesthetic Experience. Zach Gehrig ’13, M.A.’16, joined in 2003.


MAE has sold more than half a million records and performed more than 1,600 concerts on four continents, its music a blend of ballads, hard rock and techno. In March, the band played at the NorVa in downtown Norfolk.

A review on AllMusic.com of MAE’s 2007 album “Singularity” called it “guitar pop perfection that is (yes) singular.”

True to his passion, Marshall seeks to engulf MAE’s audiences in as many sensory experiences as possible.

One album had a scratch-and-sniff smell of the ocean. Another had watercolor paintings to correspond with each song.

In 2009, MAE released one song every month, donating the money raised to help build a house through Habitat for Humanity.

But its pinnacle came last year, when it performed on the last night of the Forbes-sponsored peace-building summit 30 Under 30 at the historic Tower of David site in Jerusalem.

The 700 or so audience members tucked their cell phones into Google Cardboard devices – modern Viewfinders that fit around their faces, blocking...
In the documentary “Searching for Shaniqua,” African-American women opened up about the stigma of bearing unusual names that are hard to pronounce—and make it harder to get hired.

“I feel like I have to prove to everyone that women with names like mine are…I hate to say ‘worthy’—but we are worthy of the same respect that everyone else is given,” a legislative director from Washington said in the film.

The subject struck a nerve at a screening at Old Dominion University last fall. Afterward, hands shot up and producer Eleanor Earl was on stage to answer.

One woman asked: “What can we do to stop the shaming of names?”

Earl, 46, responded: “Will it ever change? … I’d like to suggest, ‘Yes, one day it will.’ But it’s going to take a lot of discussions just like this.”

Mostly, Earl diverted attention to the director, Phill Branch. She and Branch served as producers of the film.

Her modesty contrasts with a certain boldness in her bio.

The Portsmouth native has performed a one-woman show at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. She watched actors read her play in London at Her Majesty’s Theatre. She read her poetry alongside Nikki Giovanni in Los Angeles.

Earl discovered her love of producing as an undergrad at the University of Virginia. She built her writing and acting skills at ODU, where she received a master’s in humanities in 1994, followed by an M.F.A. in musical theater writing at New York University.

Earl founded a production company, E.L. Earl Entertainment, in 2000, ultimately to tell “really dynamic, interesting stories that have a positive message.”

She is equally passionate about helping her students: “I want to inspire them to live a purpose-driven life.”

Earl is assistant professor of English and film studies at Hampton University, where she has taught since 2003 and is now focused on building a film program. Last year she inaugurated a campus film festival, which brought in major industry figures.

In 2009, Earl won Hampton’s E.L. Hamm Sr. Distinguished Teaching Award.

She and Branch are touring “Shaniqua.” DVDs will be sold soon on www.searchingforshaniqua.com. The film can now be downloaded for a fee.

Last summer it won the HBO Best Documentary award at the Martha’s Vineyard African American Film Festival. Earl hopes the movie will bring national attention to a rarely aired issue. Working on it, “I became aware of just how much pain this has caused. I had no idea that it was that bad.”

Teresa Annas is a longtime culture writer in Hampton Roads. She thinks she’s had the best seat in the house to watch the arts blossom in this area.
Van Gay: From the shower to LA Opera

By Andrew Faught

Ron Van Gay II’s singing career got off to a clean start … in the shower. “You have the best acoustics there,” Van Gay ’06 explains.

But the shy kid from Los Angeles didn’t know he had an audience as he belted out tunes by the R&B groups All-4-One and Boyz II Men.

“I was mortified that my family had, in fact, heard what I thought I was doing in private,” says Van Gay, who was 13 at the time. “I’m looking down the banister from the bathroom, and there were my mom and dad. They were in the living room listening to me as though they were attending a concert.”

Bigger audiences were to come.

Today, Van Gay, 37, is an up-and-coming tenor who has performed for the Los Angeles Opera – the fourth-largest opera company in the United States – and on stages across the world. Opera, like a diva temptress, grabbed him and hasn’t let go.

“It’s raw and organic,” he says of the genre he learned to love at Old Dominion University. “When I get up there on the stage, I’m laying it all out and I’m at my most vulnerable. I allow everything that I worked for up to that point to just shine.”

His LA Opera credits include “¡Figaro! (90210)” (an adaptation of Mozart’s “The Marriage of Figaro”) and “The Prospector” (a tale of the California Gold Rush, based on Puccini’s “The Girl of the Golden West”). In “¡Figaro! (90210),” Van Gay “unleashes a seductively smooth pop voice” and “transforms an ode … from a sexist rap into a soulful love song,” LA Weekly wrote in a review.

Van Gay’s parents, both of whom have backgrounds in music and ministry, moved to Norfolk when he was 18. Van Gay enrolled at Old Dominion as a communication and theater major, but he changed his degree to music after he won a spot with the Virginia Opera. That he couldn’t read a note of music didn’t matter. He was determined to master the art form.

Van Gay did that under the tutelage of Agnes Fuller Mobley-Wynne, a senior lecturer in voice at Old Dominion, and Kerry Lee Jennings, a former coordinator of Old Dominion’s voice program.

Van Gay doesn’t limit himself to opera. An R&B album is due out by year’s end. An autobiographical single, “Surrender,” released last year, “explores the love story between a guy meeting the girl of his dreams.”

But opera, which Van Gay’s mother listened to when he was young, remains his first love.

“I told my mom at a young age, ‘You know, one day I’m going to sing that,’” he says. “Now those dreams are being realized.”

Andrew Faught is a freelance writer in California. He wrote this story to the strains of “Un bel di vedremo” from Puccini’s “Madama Butterfly.”

Learn how Stellarhead, Laurel Harris’ edgy marketing agency, has showcased the stories of clients like Home Depot and Lucky Jeans at www.odu.edu/monarchmag
WALLACE FINDS FULFILLMENT IN DOCUMENTARIES

By Mike Gruss

From the West Virginia coal mines to the experimental theater scene in New York, Deborah Wallace follows a simple philosophy: Be a better human. She’s doing it one movie at a time.

Wallace, 43, is a Manhattan-based documentary filmmaker who has collaborated on 20 stage and screen productions. Perhaps her best-known work is the movie “Gasland Part II,” which explained the dangers of fracking and followed the 2011 Academy Award-nominated documentary “Gasland.”

This year, “Blood on the Mountain,” about West Virginia’s coal country and the human costs associated with mining, was released on DVD and Blu-Ray. The movie, which she co-wrote and co-produced, won attention following the presidential election and a renewed interest on Appalachian workers.

Documentaries “diagnose problems and hold industries to account,” Wallace said. “This medium fulfills everything for me.”

The picture was a lot fuzzier 20 years ago. In the 1990s, she changed majors three times at Old Dominion University, from anthropology — “I wanted to be Indiana Jones” — to biology to creative writing.

While Wallace describes herself as largely anonymous in the classroom, she found inspiration from poet Tim Seibles and novelist Sheri Reynolds, whom she describes as equal parts encouraging and exacting. “Everything I know about writing I would attribute to those teachers more than anyone else,” she said.

Outside class, she played the title role in “Medea” and Captain Ahab in “Moby Dick” in university productions. “She was the one we all wanted to be,” said her friend Brad McMurran ’02.

In 2000, following a summer working in avant garde theater in upstate New York, she moved to New York City to become an actor rather than return to Norfolk for her final class before graduation.

She’s been in the arts ever since, traveling internationally, appearing in experimental theater productions and writing plays. Her re-telling of the Greek myth of Niobe was presented in Norfolk last fall by the CORE Theater Ensemble and ODU’s Theatre Department.

In more recent years, acting alone hasn’t satisfied her desire to serve a broader audience and be a better person. Instead, Wallace has spent more time debunking what she sees as myths and falsehoods about the environment.

“She’s the most socially conscious person I know,” said McMurran.

As journalism evolves, she said, documentaries help fill the investigative vacuum that has been created.

“The climate issue is a life-or-death question for the species,” she said. Her work these days can mean hundreds of hours of reviewing interview footage and court documents as part of a new form of “artistic inquiry.”

Wallace is already deep into her next project, a film about developing fusion as an energy source for the United States. It’s a topic she didn’t know much about when she started, but she’s sure the curiosity and resourcefulness that she honed at ODU will help her find the right audience.

Mike Gruss is a writer and editor based in Northern Virginia. He took one class at Old Dominion, Web Programming.
They’re pushing improv comedy in Norfolk

By Philip Walzer

A shot rang out at Push Comedy Theater in downtown Norfolk. When the lights came back, Teddy Roosevelt was slumped against a wall of the stage.

Who killed him? Another former president, a past first lady or a member of the audience?

Trying to solve the murder in the midst of the mayhem: two Hardy Boys detectives, played by Brad McMurran ’02 and Ed Carden ’07. They and Alba Woolard ’10 form three-quarters of Push’s management team.

All 99 seats were occupied, which was nothing new. The monthly production, “Who Dunnit? The Improvised Murder Mystery,” has sold out for at least the last year and a half.

Push’s success – like the art of improvisation – relies on far more than clever spontaneous reactions. The craft requires extensive training, a perceptive ear and an emphasis on teamwork.

“You have to be focused on listening and taking things in,” Woolard said. “If you’re trying to be funny, you’re not being real.”

McMurran, Carden and Woolard said they got a solid grounding at Old Dominion University. “Everything I learned there set me up to do what I’m doing now,” Woolard said.

For McMurran, “it was the best eight years of my life. That’s actually accurate.”

Chris Hanna, an associate professor of theatre arts, said: “I’m so impressed and proud of them. But it’s not that surprising. They were all really loony clowns when they were here, but very serious-minded people and very determined.”

They started in 2005 as the Pushers comedy troupe. The name was changed to avoid the drug connotations, and the theater opened in 2014.

Push is “very 757-oriented,” McMurran said, but it’s come close to Broadway. McMurran and the group’s other director, Sean Devereux, wrote “Cuff Me: The Unauthorized Fifty Shades of Grey Musical Parody,” which played Off-Broadway in 2011 and 2012.

Push has three “acts”: performances, classes and workshops for businesses.

The performances recently branched into musical improv. There are a lot of them. Woolard estimates she performs more than 150 times a year, sometimes four times in a weekend. At home, McMurran said, “I don’t watch comedies anymore; I see it all night long.”

The classes, which include improv, sketch comedy writing and standup, attract a wide cast of students, from yoga instructors to Realtors. The “camaraderie is incredible,” McMurran said, because the philosophy is so upbeat.

“We’re one of the few art forms that steer clear of conflict,” he said. “The first rule is to make your partners look good.”

And that’s why the workshops for businesses have grown in popularity, he said. They reinforce the values of teamwork, clear communication and customer service.

“It’s not about being fast and funny,” Woolard said. “You may have to sacrifice three or four little laughs to get a huge payoff that makes everything tie in and make sense.”

For more information on shows and classes, go to pushcomedytheater.com.
Remember “Flashdance,” the 1983 movie in which Jennifer Beals played a welder who dreams of being a professional dancer? Helen Gault ’07 is living that life in reverse.

Gault was a ballet dancer who won a highly competitive apprenticeship at Newport News Shipbuilding in 2013. She became a full-fledged welding inspector this April.

Her job is to follow welders and check the integrity of their work on the aircraft carriers and submarines that her employer builds. With cranes moving large ship parts, it’s a busy shipyard — “a little city,” Gault says. So the 34-year-old rides her bike through the work area, just as Beals’ character did.

How did she get from dancing to shipyard work?

Gault worked for dance companies, including the Virginia Ballet Theatre/Todd Rosenlieb Dance, during her time as a student and for a few years after she graduated. “I had my toe in a lot of things during that time,” she jokes.

In 2010, when Gault’s dance company merged with another, leaving her fewer opportunities, she decided it was time for a change. She kept dancing and hunted for jobs unsuccessfully until she landed the apprenticeship in 2013.

She’s found surprising similarities between her dance and shipyard work: In addition to relying on physical strength, “both involve being shown a skill or activity and repeating it, and they’re both very hands-on.” One difference: “To inspect welds I’ve had to crawl into some very tight spaces.”

Gault credits her time at Old Dominion with preparing her for the mental rigors of the apprenticeship. “My ODU classes gave me the time management skills and self-discipline I needed,” she says. “I had to attend lectures several times a week and then be tested on the material. It was up to me to study on my own, and research whatever I didn’t understand.”

At Old Dominion, she majored not in dance, but in biology. She attributes much of her drive to Deborah Waller, her professor in entomology and ecology. “She had high standards and tore apart my first lab report,” Gault says. “I took all her suggestions to heart and by the end of the term, I got an A,” Gault says.

Gault still performs occasionally, but she’s focused on her new line of work.

“I’ve had a lot of leadership classes and opportunities here, and I have my eyes on a supervisory role. I want to work my way up either at the shipyard or at our parent company, Huntington Ingalls Industries. The sky’s the limit – I don’t want to let anything stop me.”

Pat Olsen is a frequent contributor to The New York Times, for which she first wrote about Helen Gault. Olsen took only a few ballet classes, but she’s an avid bike rider and is sure she could weave among the shipyard cranes with the best of them.
She's given Nat Turner’s Bible a second life

By Mary Architzel Westbrook (M.F.A. '10)

Growing up in Virginia Beach, Wendy Creekmore Porter knew about Nat Turner’s slave rebellion in Southampton County. Every kid at Porter’s elementary school learned the story. But not every kid had one of Turner’s Bibles at home.

In fourth grade, Porter brought the Bible to school for show-and-tell. Most of the time, however, the Bible — which is about 4 inches long, 3 inches wide and nearly 2 inches thick — was stored in a closet. The family wanted to protect it.

“We were looking for somebody to preserve it, somebody who could give it more prominence,” said Porter, an Old Dominion University alumna and adjunct professor of women’s studies. But for years, no one — including experts the family consulted — knew what to do with the Bible.

That changed seven years ago, when Porter, acting on the suggestion of an ODU colleague, reached out to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Today, the museum prominently displays the Bible in its permanent “Slavery and Freedom” exhibition. More than 1 million visitors have had the chance to see it since the museum opened in September 2016.

“It’s a hard history to talk about,” Porter said. “Slavery was horrific and dehumanizing. Nat Turner killed people. The Bible is a small offering from our family. We hope it helps people heal.”

Wrapped in a dishtowel

National Geographic, CBS News and The New Yorker, among others, have told and retold Porter’s story. No wonder: It’s filled with human drama.

In 1831, Nat Turner led a
revolt that killed dozens of white people in Southampton County. Lavinia Francis, a pregnant white woman who was hidden by slaves, survived the raid. After Turner was captured, authorities confiscated his Bible.

In 1912, the county cleared out old evidence and released the Bible to Walter Person, a grandson of Francis. It made its way to Person’s son, Maurice, who later became Porter’s stepfather. (Maurice also attended ODU in the ’40s, when it was a two-year division of the College of William & Mary.)

By then, the Bible, which experts believe was printed in the late 1700s, was in a fragile state. Worried about its condition, Porter’s mother, Barbara Jean Person, wrapped it in a cotton dishtowel and put it in a closet.

For years, that’s where it stayed — pulled out only occasionally. Otherwise, half-forgotten.

‘His eyes lit up’

Porter earned her undergraduate degree in human services counseling from ODU in 2003 and then, two years later, her master’s in humanities with a certificate in women’s studies.

Her studies deepened her understanding of Virginia history and the Bible’s significance. Porter began to talk about the Bible with her students and ODU colleagues and to look more actively for a new home.

In 2009, she took the Bible to the experts at “Antiques Roadshow,” the PBS program. They passed on it. The verdict: The story was too complicated to tell in a short segment.

Porter vented her frustration to Vaughan Frederick, a colleague in women’s studies. Frederick suggested Porter contact officials planning the African-American history museum, a division of the Smithsonian.

It was then in the early stages of assembling its collection. Even getting a representative to return Porter’s messages proved challenging.

Finally, at the end of 2010, Rex Ellis, the museum's associate director for curatorial affairs and a native of Williamsburg, stopped by over Christmas break.

“He walked into our kitchen and took off his coat, and his eyes lit up,” Porter said.

Everything about the Bible intrigued him. “I haven’t been this excited since the birth of my children,” Ellis told her.

The Bible is now one of the museum’s most popular exhibitions.

Nate Parker, the director of “The Birth of a Nation,” the 2016 film about Nat Turner, sought it out while filming the movie.

Staff members mention it when talking to potential donors about their efforts to collect national treasures that illustrate the African-American experience.

‘A beautiful moment’

Porter traveled to Washington to see the Bible during a donor reception a week before the museum opened.

“We were hugging people we didn’t even know,” she said. “It was a beautiful moment.”

She visited the museum again in February, this time with about 55 ODU students.

In the classroom, Porter uses her family’s story to open up discussion about race and gender. Those conversations could be fraught, but instead felt open, said former student Montae Lamar Taylor, president of the ODU chapter of the NAACP.

“It wasn’t about me looking at her as a white woman and her looking at me as a black man,” explained Taylor, who also attended the trip to the museum. “It was the whole class, talking about life. Seeing the Bible and the museum in its entirety was powerful. We were all moved.”

That’s exactly the experience Porter hopes to keep sharing, now that the Bible is out of her hands.

“The Bible needed a life,” she said. “It finally has one.”

“We hope it helps people heal”
Rick Lovato’s world has been turned upside down more than once in a whirlwind 18 months.

However, when you are a long snapper, being upside down is standard operating procedure. If a little terrifying.

“You’re bent over, looking between your legs, and blood rushes to your head,” said Lovato ’15, who has served as long snapper for three National Football League teams in the past year and a half. “And behind the punter or the field goal holder, you can see what looks like the entire stadium, wondering if you’ll make a mistake.

“You just have to block all that out and focus on your job.”

The short box score on Lovato:
Four games with the Green Bay Packers at the end of the 2015-16 season, including two in the playoffs. Then cut at the end of training camp.

Called up by the Washington Redskins as an injury replacement in November last year. Played two games, released, picked up by the Philadelphia Eagles for the final three games of the season. Lovato was paid the NFL’s minimum salary of about $25,000 for every game in which he was listed on a team’s active roster.

No matter where the next snap goes, Lovato will have a permanent entry in Old Dominion University’s history books as the first Monarch to have played in an NFL game.

He looks on the bright side of his young multi-team career:
“As much as I wanted to play my whole career with one team, it’s really opened my eyes to see how different teams operate,” he said. “It’s been a really unique experience.”

But the long snapper knows the challenges that await him in the next quarter of his life.
“It’s not easy to earn one of 32 jobs at your position in the entire world,” he said.
Each NFL team carries only one such specialist on its roster, responsible for
snapping the football for longer distances to the punter or placekicker. If he is hurt
or performs poorly, the team finds a replacement.
So last fall, after Lovato was cut by the Packers, he went back to working at the
family’s sandwich shop, Joyce’s Subs and Pizza, owned by his father and uncle in
Lincroft, N.J. But he stayed ready.
After he was called up by the Washington Redskins, the first team he
played against was the one he first suited up for – the Packers.
“I really couldn’t have scripted it any better. I played against my former
teammates, and it was fun to see them. Then four days later, I played for
the Redskins against the Dallas Cowboys on Thanksgiving,” he said.
Lovato was waived after the long snapper he had replaced recovered
from his injury. But a Redskins coach recommended him to the
Philadelphia Eagles after their long snapper, Jon Dorenbos, suffered a
season-ending wrist injury.
Lovato, who reported back to the Eagles for spring practice on April
17, voiced optimism about his – and Philadelphia’s – future.
“As soon as I stepped in the locker room, I could tell the Eagles are
building something good. We are going to be phenomenal.”
Lovato’s football journey has included a few other unexpected twists.
He picked up long snapping as a junior high school defensive end in
New Jersey, in an effort to get on the field more. He soon realized he
could do the job well.
“I wish I had played other positions,” Lovato said. “But being a long
snapper was something I could work on myself to get better.”
Lovato threw himself into the craft, attending college
tryout camps in New Jersey. That’s how he landed on the
radar of Old Dominion, a school he was barely familiar
with.
“I should have known about ODU,” he acknowledged.
“Both uncles on my dad’s side went there. I loved
absolutely everything about being there and playing for the
Monarchs.”
After graduating in 2015 with a degree in business
management, Lovato attended training camp for the
Chicago Bears, but didn’t make the final 53-player roster.
So he moved home to New Jersey and kept in shape,
waiting for his chance.
Green Bay was the first team to give it to him. Along the
way, he played in its wild playoff game against the Arizona
Cardinals, when quarterback Aaron Rodgers led the
Packers on a comeback before losing in overtime.
In a year and a half, Lovato has played in the playoffs,
played on Thanksgiving, played on Sunday night football and played for three of
the most recognized franchises in the NFL.
“For having played in only nine games, I feel fortunate for the opportunities,” he
said.
He is working diligently to make sure they continue.

Brendan O’Hallarn is a public relations specialist at Old Dominion University.
Jennifer Mullen Collins knew hours after her husband, Dave, had killed himself that she would donate his brain to research. She didn’t know how quickly that decision would make an impact.

Turning a family tragedy into a research breakthrough

By Philip Walzer

Jennifer Mullen Collins (M.P.A. ’04) had just received the worst news of her life. Her husband, Dave, an ex-SEAL suffering depression, insomnia and the inability to perform simple functions like start a car, had killed himself.

On that raw, overcast March evening in 2014, Jennifer sat in her living room in Virginia Beach, surrounded by five police detectives and ex-SEALs. Most of her husband’s friends, the toughest of the tough, had dissolved into tears. For Jennifer, the crying would come later. That night, she remained clear-eyed and focused, snapping into crisis-response mode – a familiar role for her as assistant vice president for marketing and communications at Old Dominion University.

She asked the police about next steps. She mentally formed a list of people to call (dozens, given Dave’s penchant of befriending the world) and assigned tasks to the others. And she decided that night to donate Dave’s brain for research.

To help find out what really killed him. To keep other members of the service and their families from going through this hell.

Three months later, the results came in: Dave had suffered from a degenerative brain disease better-known for plaguing former football players. His was among the case studies cited in an article last year in a leading science journal that offered a breakthrough in assessing injuries suffered by victims of severe blasts.

Jennifer has stayed up-to-date on the research and sometimes gives speeches about it. “I’ve learned more about the brain than anybody with my background should know,” she said.

She left ODU in 2014 and joined the SEAL Legacy Foundation as grant administrator the next year. It allows her to spend more time with her two children and to “give back” the help she received after Dave’s death.

She’s also changed her personality – less rushed, more easy-going. “There are days I swear I’m becoming him,” Jennifer, 47, said of her late husband.

Jennifer Mullen met Dave Collins through mutual friends on New Year’s Eve at the end of 1992 in Philadelphia, her hometown. He struck her “as very quiet, kind of cute.”

They got together a few more times with friends. He told her he didn’t want a girlfriend. “Eventually, I guess I just wore him down,” she said. They began dating in 1993, moved to Virginia Beach in 1996, when he joined the SEALs, and married in 2001.

“Dave liked to do very kooky things to make people laugh,” says Jennifer. “He was never embarrassed or self-conscious. He found a redeeming quality in everybody he met.”
hey proved the “opposites attract” theory.

He was gregarious, fun-loving and spontaneous.

“You never knew what Dave would do next,” said Jennifer’s friend Karen Meier, Old Dominion’s assistant vice president for community engagement. “It was always important to him to make you laugh and feel good. He lived life to the fullest, and he wanted to make sure you did, too.”

In contrast, Jennifer said, “I’m a big city girl. I’m a little more guarded and suspicious. People would have said about me, ‘She needs to loosen up a little bit.’”

Mullen joined Old Dominion in 1998 as a public relations specialist and rose to assistant vice president, overseeing such departments as public relations, marketing and publications. Meanwhile, Dave was deployed around the world, including Afghanistan, Iraq and South America.

Jennifer knew a few things – one tour involved drug interdiction in South America – but didn’t ask for details. “I don’t recall being nervous,” she said. “I had faith in him and all of his teammates. They’re the best of the best.”

Dave retired from the SEALs in 2012.

Jennifer chalked it up to a desire to focus on his family.

After he left the Navy, “he got farther and farther away from us.” His temper flared. He couldn’t sleep. He’d forget to pick up their daughter from school. He set a rigid schedule of household tasks – laundry one day, the kids’ nails another.

Jennifer now sees those schedules as a way to preserve control: “He was very good at maintaining. He was the biggest impediment to his own care.”

That veneer of normalcy was shattered in an early-morning phone call from Utah, where Dave was on a business trip in January 2014. He hadn’t slept for five days, he told her. “The whole conversation was that he couldn’t do anything anymore. I never heard him like that. He prided himself on doing anything he put his mind to.”

When she picked him up at the airport, he was shaking, and he shook most of that night. The next month, Dave went to a nationally renowned brain center in Dallas, where he was diagnosed with traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. He agreed to undergo therapy in Virginia Beach.

Four days after his return, he killed himself. In his final text to Jennifer, Dave told her he couldn’t pick up their son from school. “So sorry baby,” he wrote. “I love you all.”

Jennifer had no doubts about donating Dave’s brain. “I worked at universities my whole career,” she said. “I knew the value of research.”

But she didn’t know how quickly the donation would make an impact. First came a report from Dr. Daniel Perl, professor of pathology at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland, three months after Dave’s death.

An examination of his brain found that Dave suffered from CTE, or chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a condition mostly noted in former NFL players. “Here was positive proof that nobody could refute that he died in combat or in training for his country,” Jennifer said.

Then in June 2016, the journal Lancet published an article, co-written by Perl, based on further research on the brains of 21 people, including Dave, who was referred to as “Case 1.” It found a “distinct and previously undescribed pattern”
of scarring in certain parts of the brain in victims of blasts.

To Jennifer, the research revises the perception of shell shock that first developed in World War I, proving that combat veterans suffer “physical damage that also has psychological consequences.”

The article concludes with the hope that researchers “will find ways to make these injuries not only visible, but also treatable for service members, veterans and civilians.”

“That’s why I donated his brain in the first place,” Jennifer said, “to help unlock a piece of the puzzle. The better we understand what’s happening to them, the better we can serve them and later generations.”

She credits a wide support system for keeping her and their two children afloat and functioning. It includes the local military community, particularly Naval Special Warfare families; her neighbors, whom she calls her “second husbands,” and her Old Dominion network.

“The people at ODU were amazing,” Jennifer said – taking charge of the flowers for Dave’s funeral and the catering afterward, paying her visits round the clock. But she knew she couldn’t go back.

“My priorities instantly shifted to the kids and to ensuring they were going to be OK,” she said. “I couldn’t do that in the job I was in; it required so much of my attention.”

In January 2015, Jennifer became grant administrator for the SEAL Legacy Foundation. It’s based in Austin, Texas, but she can work from home.

The foundation helps current and former SEALs and their families in a variety of ways, including survivor support and college scholarships. Jennifer received assistance from the foundation for Dave’s funeral expenses.

She reviews applications, pays vendors, follows through with families, and assists with fundraising and communications. A recent case involved making a bathroom handicapped-accessible for the wife of a SEAL.

“Sometimes I share my story with them to let them know they’re in good hands with somebody who knows what they’re facing,” Jennifer said.

Year by year, it’s gotten tougher, not easier.

“The first year, I was on autopilot,” she said. “I had all this energy to expend and this mission to tell people what happened and to make a difference.” The second year, “things slowed down,” and “2016 was awful.”

“When everything is quiet, you have time to stop and think: ‘OK, this is forever. It’s a very difficult thing to know that you’ll never have that again,’” Jennifer said, breaking into soft tears.

“Jen’s been able to take what’s happened to her family and show people how to live,” Meier said. “She’s strong, even when she feels like crying, positive and peaceful when most would be lost.”

As with all things, she has been deliberate and purposeful dealing with her children about Dave and his death. “Daddy’s brain was injured from his work as a SEAL,” she initially told them.

“I’m very open, but I let them lead the way. I refuse to avoid it and I refuse to put any shame into the conversation.”

She displays pictures of Dave at home, but “not too many” to avoid the appearance of a shrine.

“We talk about him all the time. I tell them all the great things about him. He really was unlike anybody I ever met. But I sometimes tell them about the times he got on my nerves, to make him real.”

Every day, she spots more of him in her children.

Grace, who is 12, “has her father’s spirit. She loves a good party.” Sam, 9, has his mannerisms: “The way he holds his fork, the way he stands, the way he uses his hands. He moves them exactly like Dave.”

And that comforts Jennifer. “To see that in the kids,” she said, “it’s like, ‘Yes, he’s still here with us.’”
Bartusiak on TV’s “Big Bang Theory”: “Fun, but it presents scientists as savants and nerds, as socially inept. Actually, most scientists I know are Renaissance people.”

WHAT’S A BLACK HOLE?

Scientists believe a black hole results from a star collapsing inward upon itself, creating a greatly reduced mass with almost indescribably strong gravity – so strong that neither matter nor light can escape.
Suspense is a genre few science writers can claim. But Marcia Bartusiak (M.S. ‘79), who has mined astronomy and cosmology for seven books, has done a “Big Bang” of a job keeping readers on the edge of their seats.

Can Einstein’s general theory of relativity and minuscule quakes in space-time (known as gravitational waves) really be the stuff of page-turners? Absolutely.

“The best and most memorable writing tells a compelling story, and science writing is no exception,” Bartusiak says. “That’s what I always tell my students – find the narrative as you carry out your research.”

Readers of her seventh book, “Einstein’s Unfinished Symphony: The Story of a Gambler, 2 Black Holes and a New Age of Astronomy,” coming out this summer, will be treated to the exciting climax of a nonfiction story she first began telling nearly two decades ago.

In her early work life, Bartusiak’s career trajectory produced its own suspense.

How did someone who focused on liberal arts at American University circle back to a childhood interest in astronomy? This is where Old Dominion University enters the story.

In 1971, Bartusiak was a newly capped honors grad in communication when she talked her way—without a minute of TV news experience—into a job as the first female reporter at WVEC Channel 13. She found her niche in reporting about space exploration. “I remember covering a story at NASA Langley Research Center and I thought, ‘If I could do this 24/7, I would be in heaven.’”

The reporting took her back to age 7, when she had begun studying the heavens with her father, a Naval Reserve pilot and quality control engineer. But if science journalism was a career she wanted, there was a roadblock: Her undergrad studies had all but bypassed the sciences.

Cue ODU. While still at WVEC, she began night classes in the sciences. Lee Kernell, now an emeritus professor of physics, encouraged her to go full throttle and pursue a master’s degree.

Kernell remembers her distinctly: “Her Physics 111-112 performance was so outstanding that the following year the Physics Department offered her a teaching assistantship. One year later she joined Dr. Jacob Becher and me in performing research funded by the NASA Hubble Telescope project.”

Bartusiak (pronounced Bar-TOO-shack) received her master’s in physics in 1979. In one of her math classes as a graduate student, she met Steve Lowe ’79, and they married a few years later. They live outside Boston, where she teaches science writing at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

After ODU, Bartusiak won a job at Discover magazine. She has since written articles in periodicals such as The Washington Post and National Geographic, but her books have brought her the most recognition.

“Thursday’s Universe” (1986), a layman’s guide to the frontiers of astrophysics and cosmology, came first and was an immediate hit, landing a notable book designation from The New York Times.

Her upcoming book updates her third, “Einstein’s Unfinished Symphony: Listening to the Sounds of Space” (2000). It ramped up the suspense about the gravitational waves, which, if detected, would fulfill the last remaining prediction of Einstein’s theory of general relativity.

Bartusiak was there in the late ’90s when the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) was being built in Livingston, La. Her first “Unfinished Symphony” explained how the observatory’s 2.5-mile-long arms, positioned in an L-shape, and the laser beams running through them were designed to capture gravitational waves emitted by the most violent events in the universe.

Scientists expected one of the first intercepts to result from the collision of two black holes – that is, if black holes existed. Astrophysicists theorized that a wave from a black hole apocalypse would sound like a “chirp” by the time it got to Earth.

The LIGO experiment began in 2000, and Bartusiak began a long wait for good news. She kept writing.

“Black Hole: How an Idea Abandoned by Newtonians, Hated by Einstein, and Gambled on by Hawking Became Loved” appeared in 2015, revisiting LIGO. Adam Riess, a Nobel laureate in physics, called it “an engrossing and mind-bending read,” and the book was a semi-finalist for the PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award.

Only a few months after “Black Hole” was published, LIGO received two signals from the collisions of black holes, proving their existence. One “chirp” came from a black hole collision more than a billion years ago that gave off energy equivalent to a billion trillion suns. All the years and miles later, the wave was only four one-thousandths of the diameter of a proton.

“The New York Times highlighted the news. “We are all over the moon and back,” one awestruck scientist said.

“This is only the first few notes of all the music we are going to hear” from LIGO, Bartusiak says. Her new book will provide the details.

Jim Raper, former editor of Monarch magazine, has written extensively about scientific research at ODU. He salutes Marcia Bartusiak’s contributions to science writing.

Spring 2017
Honors College pushes students beyond academics

By Philip Walzer

John Gail, a recent business graduate, described the Honors College this way: “It’s not for someone who’s afraid to do a little extra work.” The Honors College has 700 students. The requirements include four honors or “contract” courses, with more challenging assignments; two research and community-service projects, and an e-portfolio. In turn, the students receive benefits including a $500 annual stipend, early course registration and – maybe most important – support from the dean, David Metzger, and his staff for their life goals.

“I love helping students to see that an education is more than a bunch of boxes to check off on a curriculum sheet,” Metzger said.

Graduates “are working on elephant preserves in Thailand, starting businesses in India,” he said. “Honors College students are making a difference in industry and government, here and abroad.”

Here’s a look at what three have accomplished, on and off campus:

WENDELL DAVIS ’17, biology

Wendell Davis is an aspiring heart surgeon who reads from his poetry almost every week at The Venue at 35th in Norfolk. Davis, who is 21, sees a logical connection between the arts and medicine: “Sometimes you have to look outside of the box and find your way around a problem.”

He was admitted early to Eastern Virginia Medical School under its joint program with ODU.

EVMS won’t be new to him: Davis participated in the Honors College’s medical research apprenticeship there in the spring of 2016, helping craft a program to better acclimate international students. He’s also worked in ODU biologist Lisa Horth’s lab, helping research how the ultraviolet light reflected by orchids attracts honeybees.

“He’s intellectually curious and always wants to learn,” said Doug Mills, a senior lecturer in biological sciences. “It always seemed to me, he was thinking about how he could apply the general principles of biology to improve medical care.”

Davis said the Honors College benefited him by requiring him to attend campus lectures. “If I wasn’t in the Honors College, I would have just gone to class. It definitely helped me step out of my comfort zone.”
PATRICK RYAN ’17, marketing and business analytics

Patrick Ryan, 26, credits the Honors College for helping him launch Exponential Partnerships, which helps new businesses with content marketing, search engine optimization and social media. Metzger "worked with me to shape my HC responsibilities around it, which opened the door for me to get that first crucial bit of traction."

Ryan worked 20 hours a week at Old Dominion’s Strome Entrepreneurial Center. "He is someone I think will be one of our greatest success stories because he gets both the academic theoretical side of things and how to make them actually work," said Jeff Tanner, dean of the Strome College of Business.

Ryan just signed on a big-name client, philanthropist Adam Braun. Ryan met Braun before he spoke at The Ted, and Braun hired him on the spot to help coordinate social media for a new project.

MEGAN WITHEROW ’18, computer engineering

Megan Witherow gets things done early.
She’s already been accepted into Old Dominion’s Ph.D. program in electrical and computer engineering, and she’ll take two graduate-level classes in her senior year. She also has been selected to succeed a graduating doctoral student in a research position at Old Dominion’s Vision Lab.

"She is sincere, she’s honest, and she is really hard-working," says Khan Iftekharuddin, the director of the Vision Lab. "With all of those qualities and the motivation she’s got, I think she is capable of doing excellent work."

She entered the spring semester with a perfect 4.0 GPA and served as treasurer of the student chapter of the Society of Women Engineers.

The Honors College awarded her three research grants of $1,500 each.

At the Vision Lab, she has been working to develop a system using a robot to help communicate with children on the autism spectrum. It provides feedback based on facial expressions. "Our goal is to help them live better lives," Witherow, 21, said.

See Megan Witherow in the Vision Lab at www.odu.edu/monarchmag/witherow
ngo Xuan “Adam” Nguyen lives the movie that was never made about his life.

Vietnamese immigrant who worked his way through college. Respected yoga and karate-do teacher known as “Grand Master Adam.” Catalyst for the construction of a Buddhist temple in Chesapeake. Soft-spoken advocate of peace and lovingkindness.

And the movie version that was made about his life? As Nguyen says with a laugh, the filmmakers “got it all twisted.”

The multitalented double graduate of Old Dominion University – with a bachelor’s degree in 1982 in business management and a master’s two years later in economics – stars in the 2016 indie “Eyes of the Roshi.” It’s a brutal tale about a wandering Vietnamese immigrant named Adam who chops down bullies and killers to protect himself and his friends.

When he saw the first version of the script, Nguyen (pronounced WIN) almost walked away. But he understood the director’s aim to reach a wider audience. So he didn’t challenge the violence, but he negotiated for additional scenes in which he demonstrates yoga and consoles troubled friends with Buddhist philosophy. He also wrote the music for the movie.

“Whatever else we did around him in the movie, the character ‘Adam’ had to be true to life to who (Nguyen) really is,” says Ethan Marten, who plays the arch-villain in the film and was among the team of producers.

Marten praises Nguyen, who had never acted, as a quick study. “First couple of days were rough, but he approached it like a new exercise or new posture by using his good discipline and with intelligent questions,” Marten says.

PHOTOS BY KRISTEN ZEIS

Mastering the journey: yoga, movie, martial arts

By Mike Knepler
He describes the real Nguyen as an empathetic but fun-loving man who wants to help others. Nguyen says his desire to alleviate suffering began years ago in Vietnam and has influenced almost every life decision, including coming to the United States in 1971 to attend college.

His goal, he says, was to study business management and return to Vietnam to use his skills to help impoverished people. Those plans derailed after North Vietnam defeated South Vietnam in 1975.

Nguyen worked his way through ODU with jobs at hotels, restaurants and grocery stores in addition to teaching yoga and karate-do – a martial art that encompasses body, mind and spirit – at studios such as Wareing’s Gym in Virginia Beach. He also assisted the American Red Cross with the local resettlement of Vietnamese refugees and organized cultural events at ODU.

In 1979, he married his wife, Nara ’78, whom he met through his refugee-assistance work. They have three sons, including Duy ’02.

Nguyen, a 10th degree black belt grand master of more than 10,000 yoga and karate-do positions and combinations, is celebrating his 50th year of teaching yoga. He established his Yoga International Institute in 1993 in Virginia Beach. His main studio – a sunlit room with large windows and a polished wood floor – is lined with charts and photos of Nguyen in various poses.

A smaller upstairs studio contains more yoga photos interspersed with several wall-mounted electric guitars. Nguyen has played the guitar since he was smitten with American surfing music in the early 1960s.

A descendant of Vietnamese kings, Nguyen began learning yoga at age 5 and teaching it at 15. His early start and longevity were not unusual in his homeland, especially in his family, which has taught “raja,” or royal yoga, since the 1700s, he says.

With a supple and sinewy body that belies his 64 years, Nguyen sleeps five hours a night – from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. – before rising to practice yoga on his own, meditate and then welcome students as early as 6 o’clock, seven days a week.

His best students, he says, are often senior citizens “who have been with me for almost 30 years” and “can do many things they couldn’t do before.”

Frank Reidy, a member of the ODU Board of Visitors, has practiced with Nguyen since about 2003. Reidy found that yoga helped him overcome pain from a torn rotator cuff and arthritic hips.

“I couldn’t walk more than about a half-mile before I got very sore,” says Reidy, 75. “From doing all these yoga stretches over the years ... I can walk 4 miles.”

That doesn’t surprise Nguyen. Yoga, he says, helps smooth the aging process by building strength, balance and “proper alignment.”

Buddhist philosophy is central to Nguyen’s life.

In 1989, his family bought the land for and helped construct the Chua Giac Hoa Buddhist Center in Chesapeake, the first Buddhist temple in the region.

“The name means enlightened flower,” Nguyen says, smiling at the thought. “We teach lovingkindness and peace, how to get along with each other, how to help each other grow and help each other do our best.”

Yoga is similar, he says, because “It’s about how we manage ourselves, our lives, our bodies, our spirit. ... It all ties together.”

Nguyen and Marten are discussing a film sequel about the wandering “Adam.”

This one will include the Buddhist temple and its array of large white statues imported from Vietnam. They sit in four meditation gardens that represent the stages of Buddha’s life: birth, enlightenment, teaching and death.

“This movie,” Nguyen says, “will be softer, not bloody, with no shootings, more compassion, good teaching, beautiful yoga techniques, more heart. Human-to-human decency. That’s what I teach.”

And that movie, he says, will be the one that he really lives.

Norfolk-based freelance writer and editor Mike Knepler hopes yoga will smooth the aging process for him, too … someday.
While Tuni Singh ’83 was honing her skills as an advocate and community activist, she didn’t know she’d one day employ them on her own behalf. Her chief cause now: herself – and other patients.

Diagnosed in 2014 at the age of 54 with Stage III invasive breast cancer, Singh has bucked the medical establishment and conventional courses of treatment, embracing alternative options – including cannabis oil and a regimen determined by a genetic profiling test.

The future can’t be predicted, but today “I feel great,” said Singh, who majored in political science and speech communication and works as a luxury Realtor in Miami. “I’ll continue to do my own research and make my own decisions. And I’ll never give up hope.”

In 2015, when her oncologist told her that her extremely aggressive form of cancer mandated an immediate start to chemotherapy, Singh refused, saying she wanted to do her own research.

Already a proponent of alternative treatment for medical ills, she began a diet emphasizing unprocessed organic foods such as spinach, Swiss chard, Granny Smith apples and bitter melon. She started taking supplements to build her immune system. She also investigated cannabis oil and began using it, even moving from Florida to Arizona, where she could procure it legally.

The results were dramatic. When Singh started taking cannabis oil, her circulating tumor cell count was 4 million. Five months later, it was 1.25 million.

In 2016, she underwent testing in the Foundation One program, which cross-matches an individual’s coding sequence of 315 cancer-related genes to available therapies; Singh’s previous treatment had been based on a 16-gene panel. She then switched her regimen and after only three weeks, her lung function had improved so much that she no longer needed a catheter.

“I’m incredibly excited about what she’s doing now,” said Dan Rubin, a naturopathic physician in Arizona who specializes in alternative treatments and has followed Singh’s case. “Patients don’t come more tenacious than Tuni: Not settling, information gathering, harnessing technology and the power of the mind. That’s Tuni.”

Singh’s previous advocacy included winning federal relocation assistance for low-income families forced to leave a housing development in Portsmouth, as well as founding – with her parents – Citizens First, a Chesapeake-based nonprofit organization promoting human rights.

These days, she said, she’s not out to promote a particular medical or alternative treatment. Her goal is to encourage patients to advocate for themselves. She recognizes that every cancer patient is unique and that what works for one might not work for another.

“The important thing is not to be complacent,” she said. “Ask questions, do your research, figure out all the options, and then decide what works for you. Be an active advocate for your treatment.”

Bobbie Fisher is a freelance writer in Norfolk.

Tuni Singh found a surprising source of support that changed her life. Find out more at www.odu.edu/monarchmag
Nate Tschohl is worked up.
He has a question.
“Do you know how many people around the world drown every year?”

Tschohl ’06 knows the answer. And it led the former Monarch swimming captain and assistant coach to create the International Water Safety Foundation last year to fund learn-to-swim initiatives around the world. He will start in Cambodia, which has one of the worst accidental drowning rates in the world.

“When you just don’t know about drownings, and then you do know, you’re like, ‘Well, why isn’t anyone doing anything about this?’” he says.

A recent World Health Organization study estimates 372,000 people drown each year. But Tschohl says the truth is probably closer to triple that figure because statistics aren’t available for deaths by flooding or boating accidents or for problem areas such as Africa and Southeast Asia.

“There’s $2.5 billion going into malaria,” he says. “But there’s so little money going into global drowning, it doesn’t even register.”

Tschohl quit his job selling insurance last year to expand his Virginia Beach-based startup Swimnerd, which developed and markets an innovative programmable pace clock.

His focus on drowning is a logical offshoot of his lifelong passion, says his fellow swim nerd Shaun Anderson.

Through Anderson, a former Penn State swimmer who teaches physical education at Norfolk State University and is a diversity consultant for USA Swimming, Tschohl learned of the scope of the drowning issue.

He has since led swim clinics in St. Croix and the Maldives with Anderson’s foundation, Diversity in Aquatics, and he participates in an online forum for people who have lost children to drowning.

Tschohl’s foundation has begun to promote two-hour “Tread-a-thon” fundraisers with swim clubs around the world. After a 50-50 split of proceeds with the clubs, Tschohl hopes to donate $250,000 to a learn-to-swim project in Cambodia this year.

“Nate’s always looking forward to how he can save more lives,” Anderson says.

Statistics show exposing children to formal swimming lessons by age 4 reduces their risk of drowning by 88 percent. Exposure is a problem, though, Tschohl says.

A USA Swimming and University of Memphis study shows 40 percent of white children can’t swim. That number jumps to 60 percent for Latinos and 70 percent for African-Americans.

“Swimming should be something that’s passed down from parents to children, like riding a bike,” he says.

His mother, a nurse who routinely visited Haiti on mission trips, passed down the activist spirit to him. Tschohl’s goal: “To make a planet that’s 70 percent water, 100 percent water safe.”

Tom Robinson is a local freelance writer and avid swimmer. He can often be found in a Speedo (jammer!) at ODU’s “Scrap” Chandler pool.

For more information on Tschohl’s foundation, go to DrowningAwareness.org
TWO PROFESSORS WIN STATE AWARDS

Meet the two professors who this year received Outstanding Faculty Awards from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Old Dominion has had more winners – 31 – than any other Virginia school except for the College of William & Mary.

Jennifer Michaeli—The assistant professor of engineering technology (profiled in Monarch spring 2016) joined Old Dominion in 2012 after 18 years as a naval engineer in government and industry. Michaeli continues to focus on naval engineering.

**FUN FACT:** Shipbuilding is in her blood. Her great-grandfather came from England to Hampton Roads to build ships, and her grandfather, father, uncles and cousins worked at Newport News Shipbuilding.

Anatoly Radyushkin—The eminent scholar and professor of physics is an internationally recognized theoretical physicist, specializing in nuclear and particle physics. He has held a joint position with Jefferson Lab in Newport News since 1992. Radyushkin has also won the ODU Faculty Research Award and was named the Virginia Outstanding Scientist of the Year in 2004.

**FUN FACT:** Radyushkin started his research in the mid-’70s, when he was a grad student at Moscow University in Russia.

See Jennifer Michaeli and Anatoly Radyushkin talk about their work at www.odu.edu/monarchmag/facultyawards

A NEW CEREMONY FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Old Dominion University ushered in a new commencement ceremony in May exclusively for graduate students.

Old Dominion previously held three ceremonies in the spring, for graduates from different colleges in the University. This spring, there was a fourth – for the 785 graduates who received master’s and doctoral degrees.

Austin Agho, Old Dominion’s provost and vice president for academic affairs, said the ceremony accommodated the growth in the number of students who want to attend commencement.

The addition also reflects the University’s intensified focus on graduate studies, which led to the creation of the Graduate School last year, said Robert Wojtowicz, dean of the Graduate School.

New estimate of Old Dominion’s annual contribution to the regional economy from the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service.

$2.6 billion

**ODU is listed among the TOP 18 UNIVERSITIES with the best graduation rates for African-American students by Education Trust.**
Deans appointed for arts and letters, sciences

Kent Sandstrom, a sociologist who has been dean of North Dakota State University’s College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences since 2011, will take over as dean of the College of Arts & Letters on July 10.

Provost Austin Agho said Sandstrom “brings to ODU his stature as a scholar, strong vision for leadership, and passionate commitment to faculty and student success and inclusive excellence.”

During his tenure at North Dakota State, research grants to faculty more than tripled.

Gail Dodge, a professor of physics, was named dean of the College of Sciences, effective May 25. Agho praised Dodge’s “pragmatic approach to problem solving” and “longstanding commitment to the success of ODU’s faculty and students.”

Dodge was chairwoman of the physics department from 2005 to 2011. In 2015, she received the Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Dodge has been active, locally and nationally, in efforts to attract and retain women in the sciences.

Expanding online education in Virginia:

First there were televised classes in the ’50s. Then the Teletechnet program in the ’90s to reach remote locations in the commonwealth. Now comes the Online Virginia Network, Old Dominion University’s latest initiative to take education beyond the campus.

The network, launched in February in partnership with George Mason University, provides online classes in dozens of fields to any Virginian who wants to complete a bachelor’s degree.

“This online platform opens higher education, in an innovative way, to more than 1.1 million Virginians who began their college education but never finished,” ODU President John R. Broderick said.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO ONLINEVIRGINIA.NET

SHORTS

ROBERT W. MITCHELL ’87 and his wife announced a $3 million gift to the School of Accountancy in the Strome College of Business. The donation will create an endowment to finance scholarships, programming for accounting majors and faculty support. Mitchell owns and operates an accounting firm in Vienna, Va.

THE BATTEN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY received a $1 million grant from the Office of Naval Research to offer 15 workshops to members of the Navy on 3-D printing, computer-aided design and other subjects.

UPDATES

JANAY BROWN (profiled in Monarch summer 2016) was named one of three Virginia winners in the SCORE American Small Business Championship. The rising junior runs Full Belly Delights, a gourmet bacon business.

JOE JACKSON (profiled in fall 2016), who holds the Mina Hohenberg Darden Chair in Creative Writing, received the PEN/Jacqueline Bograd Weld Award for Biography – one of the nation’s top literary awards – for his book on Black Elk, a 20th-century Native American holy man.

Inventor ANKIT KOTHARI ’04 (profiled in fall 2016) is at it again. He received a patent late last year for his Smart Sun Visor, which can display different views of the road for a driver to improve visibility. He lives outside Richmond.
I t was a stupid question.

Just as you don’t ask a parent which child is her favorite, you definitely don’t ask David Harnage, Old Dominion University’s chief operating officer, what’s his favorite building on campus.

“Every one of them I ever built,” he responded with trademark brevity. “If it wasn’t my favorite, I wouldn’t have built it.”

Harnage, who has been at Old Dominion for 21 of the last 32 years, will retire at the end of June. He developed a reputation as the University’s master builder, overseeing construction of 17 buildings – from the Virginia Beach Center in 1999 to the Education Building this year.

“It’s something I enjoy,” he said. “I’m a novice at it. I’m fortunate that a lot of skilled architects have humored me and allowed me to be part of the process.”

Harnage is known for sweating what others might consider the small stuff:

“I believe in spending a lot of time on buildings – how do the materials work together, how does it fit into the campus, the shape of the buildings, the glass you use, the finishes inside the building. … All of these ingredients go together to make a successful building.”

Old Dominion’s president, John R. Broderick, said: “David was the heart, soul and architect for the way our campus looks today. His vision is one of the reasons why students elected to come here in record numbers and why faculty and staff appreciate our home-away-from-home feel.”

Former President James Koch, who promoted Harnage to vice president for administration and finance in 1994, called him “one of the most influential people in the University’s history.” Harnage, he said, “is the glue that has kept the institution together for several decades.”

Deb Świecinski, the associate vice president for financial services, has worked for or with Harnage for almost two decades. “It sometimes seems that he has a rough exterior,” she said, “but deep down he cares about people and will extend himself in any way to help them.”

That includes visiting them in the hospital, attending funerals of relatives – even returning unspent money on a meal plan to an employee’s family after his death.

“He does little random acts of kindness without seeking attention for them,” said Earl Nance, the university counsel.

Harnage left the university as vice president for administration and finance in 2000 for other ventures, first in higher education and then in business. He came back in 2011 as chief operating officer.

“ODU is the only university in the country I would have considered,” he said. “One of the things that makes this a great place is that an individual can make a difference here. At most universities, an individual becomes part of the mass and often gets lost in the mass. Not at Old Dominion.”

Harnage also is a hard worker. “I used to think I worked long days, but I’d come in and Dave would already be there,” Koch said. “Sometimes I’d leave, and he’d still be there.”

Broderick noted that Harnage wasn’t just the building guy: “His contributions were much more significant. His leadership in technology development, strategic planning and budgeting will remain key ingredients to ODU’s success long after he has retired.”

In budgeting, Koch and Świecinski cited his amazing memory for figures. Harnage’s contributions in information technology were honored in 2009 when Old Dominion’s IT hub was renamed for him.

In Broderick’s campus email announcing Harnage’s retirement, he wrote: “He arranged one of the best deals in Old Dominion’s history many years ago, when he secured a $7 million IBM supercomputer – for free.”

Which displays another of Harnage’s skills: He’s a savvy bargainer.

“He can negotiate better than anyone,” Nance said. “I never want to sell him a car because I’d probably have to pay him to take it.”
President John R. Broderick calls Harnage “the heart, soul and architect for the way our campus looks today."

Left, Harnage and his wife, Twila – accompanied by President John R. Broderick and Big Blue – were honored during a men’s basketball game earlier this year.

Harnage works behind the grill at the opening last year of the Broderick Dining Commons.

Harnage with longtime food worker Ruby Milteer at the Broderick Dining Commons.
Two decades ago, John Sokolowski was wondering what to do next as his long career as a Navy submariner was coming to an end. A story in The Virginian-Pilot about Old Dominion University moving into the emerging field of modeling and simulation caught his eye.

The serendipitous discovery set Sokolowski on his future path.

He started coursework at ODU while still in the Navy and began working full time at the university’s new Virginia Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center (VMASC) while completing his dissertation. Sokolowski made history in 2003 by becoming the first person in the world to receive a doctorate in the discipline of modeling and simulation.

He stayed at VMASC, becoming its executive director in 2009. In April, he retired from the position.

“It was a very interesting time, to help develop a program from scratch,” he recalled. “The more we got into this, the more we realized you could apply modeling and simulation technology to just about any area.”

As the field has matured, Old Dominion has become a leader, with nearly 50 Ph.D. graduates and hundreds of master’s recipients around the world.

Saikou Diallo, research associate professor at VMASC, said Sokolowski has been a strong mentor, friend and director.

“John allowed us to grow as individuals, collaborate with scholars from diverse backgrounds and expand the field of M&S into novel areas,” Diallo said.

Sokolowski voiced pride at how VMASC researchers have pushed modeling and simulation, which initially focused on military applications, into new, unexpected domains:

Diallo has modeled the spread of religions around the world. Joshua Behr has developed simulations to help vulnerable populations recover from catastrophic events. Other projects have involved health care, big data and cybersecurity.

“We have grown a group of research faculty that have come into their own,” Sokolowski said. “I think we’ll be able to compete for much larger contracts now that we’ve become nationally and internationally known.”

Sokolowski will stay on as a faculty member and teach classes in ODU’s Department of Modeling, Simulation and Visualization Engineering. And he’ll always be a Monarch.

He’s a football and basketball season-ticket holder, and his daughters (an engineer and a nurse) earned degrees from Old Dominion.

Brendan O’Hallarn is a public-relations specialist.
The way Victoria Time sees it, “African women carry too heavy a load on their heads and their backs, literally and figuratively.” The goal of her new book, “Women’s Social and Legal Issues in African Current Affairs: Lifting the Barriers,” is “to wake them up, not to feel sorry for them.”

Time, a professor of sociology and criminal justice, has taught at Old Dominion University for 20 years. She is a native of Cameroon, a country in central Africa. Time is quick to note that she faced few barriers herself.

“I was blessed to be born to parents who were world travelers and well-educated,” she says. “My siblings and I have been able to succeed in ways so many African women cannot even dream about.”

Time, for instance, left Cameroon to pursue graduate studies in the United States. She has five degrees.

Millions of African women are far less fortunate. She has seen mothers unable to send their children to school or, worse, unable to feed them. “I think about this constantly, especially having seen children die needless deaths from illnesses like malaria.” Ninety percent of the world’s malaria cases occur in Africa.

Girls as young as 12 are sold by their parents to old men in parts of Africa in exchange for money or cattle. “The root cause of these and numerous other despicable issues is poverty,” she says. Other hurdles include corruption, natural disasters, water scarcity and backward laws and customs.

“For decades,” Time says, “females have been raised to be nurturing, while getting an education was a priority only for males.” About 40 percent of adults in Africa are illiterate – and two-thirds of those are women.

Change “is coming from a number of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and female lawyers who specialize in women’s and children’s issues in Africa. … They are committed to teaching women how to become empowered,” she says, her voice expressing her joy.

Further progress relies on increasing accountability for aid to Africa (“It should stop when recipients misuse or embezzle funds”) and funding more and larger-stocked libraries. Her office at Old Dominion has more volumes than some libraries in Africa.

Time also advocates “ridding the country of unconscionable laws and practices that marginalize women,” improvements in technology, limits on trade tariffs and greater investment in adult education.

One hopeful sign: When Time left Cameroon in 1985, the country had just one university, and it did not confer doctorates. Now there are dozens, and at least three have Ph.D. programs.

“I will never forget where I came from,” she says with a broad smile. “And I have hope.”

Judy Baker-Travers lives in Williamsburg, where she writes and paints.
Were you required to watch polar bear safety videos for your spring break trip?
Petros Katsioloudis was.

Katsioloudis, Old Dominion University’s chair of STEM and professional studies, never expected his academic work to send him hundreds of miles north of Alaska, about as far from the weather of his native Cyprus as you can imagine.

But there he was in March, shivering on the ice on the frozen Arctic. He was helping ODU oceanographer Victoria Hill affix sensors that he designed and manufactured to floating devices that track indicators of climate change.

Katsioloudis said Hill "put us to shame" with her ability to adapt to the cold.

“She was fixing a dial on the sensor and taking off her glove, and we were there freezing,” he said, laughing.

“It’s really hard to describe to people who haven’t been what it’s going to be like,” said Hill, whose project, funded by the National Science Foundation, uses precision buoys to take continual readings of temperature, salinity and various spectrums of light in the Arctic Ocean.

“People don’t really even know how we collect our data,” Hill said.

Their trip represented a unique collaboration between the College of Sciences and the Darden College of Education.

Each professor gained valuable insight into the other’s research challenges. And the information they gleaned could help make climate change research more affordable and efficient.

Hill’s study seeks to measure such factors as the penetration of solar radiation beneath the ice to assess the changing Arctic climate. The buoys send back satellite readings every hour. The problem is, the devices eventually get destroyed in the harsh Arctic climate, so they need to be replaced almost once a year.

The trip allowed Katsioloudis to test a prototype of a light sensor that he designed in his STEM education laboratory in ODU’s new Education Building. It was produced at less than one-fifth of the price that such devices now sell for.

The team, which included an ODU videographer, a colleague from the University of Washington and a polar bear guard, flew 100 to 200 miles north of Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, landing on the sea ice to deploy the buoys.

Katsioloudis planted a Darden College of Education flag on one of the buoys. Among the other highlights for him was seeing a polar bear from the airplane and two seals playfully fighting on the ice.

The experience, he said, will improve his work in the warmer climate of Norfolk. “Being there and experiencing this will make me a better designer. It was awesome.”
Junior performs at South by Southwest

By Brendan O’Hallarn (Ph.D. ’16)

“Tell me, have you ever been in love?” hip-hop artist RobV asks on his new single, “Have You?”

Ask him, “Have you ever been onstage at a major music festival?” and the answer would be yes.

RobV, also known as Old Dominion University junior Vernon Robinson, delivered his upbeat rap music to a crowd of 500 at South by Southwest in Austin, Texas, in March.

He was part of a bill of nine hip-hop acts. “It was awesome, that’s all I can say. One hundred percent my best show yet,” he said.

Robinson, a 21-year-old communication major from Newport News, also promoted his fledgling music career at SXSW. “We had so many people we were trying to meet, handing out business cards, talking to other musicians,” he said.

His music expresses the view that life can get better. For Robinson, life will get better soon. Following up his South by Southwest performance, he plans to release an eight- to 12-song concept piece called “DOAP” (Diary of a Prophet), which tells the story of his musical self-discovery.

He’s still revved up about his SXSW appearance.

“Just to be around so many talented, motivated musicians, all chasing their dream, was amazing,” Robinson said. “It’s a great way to jump-start your creative energy. I can’t wait to see what’s next.”


THEY’RE ‘FLUSHED’ WITH SUCCESS AT CANNES

A guy’s on a disastrous blind date. He excuses himself to the bathroom, where he encounters more problems.

The five-minute short, “Flushed,” ends surprisingly well for the unlucky guy. Ditto for the filmmakers.

The movie, made by Old Dominion University students, was recently screened at the illustrious Cannes Film Festival in France. Two of the students got to attend the two-week festival, mingling with the rich, tanned and talented.

“I don’t think I’ve even processed it yet, to be honest,” said Jake Brinn, president of the ODU Film Club and writer, director and editor of “Flushed.” “I’ve always wanted to go to a festival like Cannes, but I can’t believe it’s happened so fast.”

He was accompanied by Chris Conner, cinematographer of “Flushed” and fellow student in the film program of the communication and theatre arts department.

“Flushed” competed against 44 other winners of Campus MovieFest, a nationwide short-film competition that was held for the first time at Old Dominion last year.

The young filmmakers also won rave reviews closer to home.

“Jake and his colleagues in the ODU Film Club are among the most talented, innovative, hard-working and imaginative filmmakers we’ve had at ODU in many years,” said Stephen Pullen, chairman of the communication and theatre arts department.

To watch “Flushed,” go to vimeo.com/185064454

Jake Brinn
Rachael Edmonds ’17: With discomfort comes growth

By Philip Walzer

Rachael Edmonds recently graduated with a bachelor’s degree in interdisciplinary studies, with an emphasis in leadership. She served as president of the Student Government Association during the last year. Don Stansberry, dean of students, calls her a “caring student body president who believes in doing the right thing and motivates others to be their best.”

She also successfully lobbied for Old Dominion University to include Alicia Garza, co-founder of Black Lives Matter, in the 2016 President’s Lecture Series. Garza’s appearance, Edmonds said, helped broaden the perspectives of those who heard her. It also attracted criticism, but Edmonds said: “When we’re uncomfortable, we grow from that.”

Q: Give me an example of how being uncomfortable helped you grow as president.
A: This year there was a huge change to the homecoming royalty court. (Two men were chosen Monarch Royals instead of king and queen.) My sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, has a history of running for homecoming queen and winning. But I’ve grown in learning the world is changing. It’s not always about straight males and females.

Q: What’s been your biggest achievement as president? Your toughest challenge?
A: Justin McLawhorn, our director of academic affairs, has made great strides to get free textbooks for students. We’re really trying to make the learning experience as accessible as possible for all students. The toughest challenge has been my critics. It’s hard to hear that people are not happy with what you’re doing. I’m a people pleaser.

Q: What have you learned about Old Dominion and its students through your experience in SGA that you might not have known otherwise?
A: Diversity is not black white red blue yellow. It goes well beyond race and gender: our off-campus populations and our veteran populations and our ability populations. We’re not all 18 to 22 on campus.

Q: What is the biggest misconception about the SGA? About Old Dominion?
A: We’re not all stuck-up, uptight know-it-alls. We’re all willing to learn, and we want to help in any way possible. The university gets painted as unsafe. We’re in the city, so that comes with its own can of worms. But those scary cases are few and far between. We are overall a very loving, open, safe campus.

Q: What’s your next step after you graduate?
A: I drank the higher-ed Kool-Aid. I’m looking to go into higher education, student affairs. My mentors here at ODU have really helped me see what else is out there for me to do. Who knew when you graduated from high school that you could work for a college?

Q: Does that mean you will never again run for office?
A: Yes. Politics are not my thing at all. I did this because I love helping people find their place in their environment and make sure their environment is conducive to what they’re doing.
At age 55, Katia Grillo is finally pursuing a childhood dream. The former businesswoman and grandmother from Brazil is studying physics at Old Dominion University.

“Physics gives you the answer to so many things; it gives you the sense of discovery with each new thing you learn,” said Grillo, who enrolled at Old Dominion in 2014 and plans to graduate in 2018.

The opportunity to study quantum mechanics and fluid dynamics opened up for Grillo in 2013, when she moved to Norfolk from Italy to help her daughter Allita de Oliveira Braga ’15, the oldest of her five children, care for her daughter, Athena.

Grillo lived in Brazil for her first 43 years. She attended Fundação Getulio Vargas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil’s top school for business administration. Why didn’t she choose physics then? Her father had wanted her to study there because he never got the opportunity himself.

She stopped one semester shy of completing the program and got married. But the skills she learned there earned her positions at international companies like Cargill, Western Union and Samsung.

Grillo found success in other areas as well. She knows six languages (Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, English, French and German), which helped her land a job in the Commercial Department of the U.S. Consulate in Sao Paulo as a translator and interpreter.

She even opened her own school in Brazil, providing foreign language instruction to students from ages 8 to 60. “The world will be a better place if we learn to communicate with each other,” Grillo said.

The challenges of physics haven’t totally surprised Grillo. “It is as hard as I expected, although it is more time-consuming than I thought it would be,” she said. Grillo regularly studies eight hours per day, and that excludes class time.

“She is hard-headed; nobody can tell her she can’t do something,” her daughter said. Braga, 33, also described her mother as a “revolutionary person, always pushing barriers,” with an impeccable work ethic.

When Grillo is not studying, she enjoys visiting the Chrysler Museum of Art, taking in the works of the great artists like Picasso and Renoir. She compares Norfolk to Italy, calling it “the American Venice,” with its many bridges across the Elizabeth and Lafayette rivers.

What connects her pursuit of business, physics and the arts is her eagerness to expand her knowledge. “I just want to keep learning,” she said. “The only thing no one can take from you is what you know. Whatever door opens, I want to have the chance to go look inside.”

Melvin James recently graduated with a degree in journalism. He is from Virginia Beach.
Maggi Buckley ’17 hardly let anything get by her. Not even her coach. The goalkeeper and senior captain for the women’s lacrosse team eclipsed head coach Heather Holt in March for career saves at the University. As of mid-April, Buckley was No. 4 with 432 saves. A two-time Dean’s List honoree, Buckley will graduate later this summer with a degree in physical education teacher preparation.
From Athletic Director Wood Selig

**THE MONARCHS** football team, in just its eighth year, became the fastest to reach 10 wins in NCAA Division I history. The 10-3 campaign was highlighted by ODU’s first-ever trip to a bowl game, the Popeyes Bahamas Bowl.

The team claimed a 24-20 win over Eastern Michigan University, but the university was the true winner that day with broad nationwide exposure.

The game, broadcast by ESPN, attracted about 3 million viewers. It also led to more than $160,000 in gifts to the Old Dominion Athletic Foundation.

Fans around the world were locked into the Monarchs’ success that December day, with more than 88,000 page views at ODUSports.com and more than half a million social media impressions.

In other sports, fan support for both men’s and women’s basketball was the toast of Conference USA. The men led the league in home attendance, while the women finished second. Nationally, the men’s team finished among the top 23 percent in attendance and the women in the top 18 percent.

On the wrestling mat, five Monarchs earned their way to the 2017 NCAA Wrestling Championships. Jack Dechow, Kevin Beazley, Michael Hayes, Alex Madrigal and Seldon Wright all qualified for the national event in St. Louis.

This past fall, our student-athletes also dominated in the classroom.

Twelve of our 18 sports were at or above a 3.0 GPA for the semester. We reached one of the goals in our strategic plan by achieving a department-wide cumulative GPA of 3.08. We also had 168 student-athletes (33 percent) on the dean’s list, with a GPA of 3.4 or above. Nineteen earned a perfect 4.0!

Construction of the Bennett and Blanche Mitchum Basketball Performance Center has been completed. The “Mitch” has been nominated by the Hampton Roads Sports Commission for the “best sports facility” award. The men’s and women’s basketball programs are in the process of moving into the privately funded $8.4 million center.

The $4 million upgrade to the L.R. Hill Sports Complex also is finished, with a 17,000-square-foot weight room, expanded locker rooms, additional offices and academic areas, and a new player lounge.

Our spring sports have enjoyed strong seasons across the board, with early-season team and individual championships. It’s a great time to be an ODU Monarch. Thank you for your support.

Kevin Beazley competed in the NCAA Wrestling Championships.

ATHLETIC SHORTS

**BETH ANDERS**, the former field hockey coach at Old Dominion University, was voted into the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame in January. Anders coached at Old Dominion for 30 years and her teams won the national championship nine times.

“I’m reading the list of inductees, going, ‘Holy cow, this is humbling,’” she told The Virginian-Pilot.

**JENNIE SIMMS** became the sixth Lady Monarch basketball player to score at least 2,000 career points. She also was named Conference USA’s Women’s Basketball Player of the Year. Simms finished the regular season second in the nation in scoring, with 25.7 points per game, and was named an honorable mention All-American. In April, Simms was drafted by the WNBA’s Washington Mystics.

Two football players – wide receiver **MARQUES LITTLE** and linebacker **DEREK WILDER** – came to the rescue of an injured moped driver in Norfolk in February.

They were driving back to campus when they saw a collision between the moped and a car. They stopped and found the moped driver unconscious in the street. Little blocked traffic with his car, and Wilder called 911.

**DEBBIE WHITE**, who retired last year as senior associate athletic director of external relations, will be inducted into the College Sports Information Directors Hall of Fame in June. She spent more than 35 years at Old Dominion, starting as assistant sports information director.
There are triplets by birth and then there are triplets by fate. When they aren’t filling out one-third of Old Dominion University’s baseball lineup, Turner Bishop and fraternal twins Kurt and Sam Sinnen form an uncommon trio.

They have been together for over a dozen years, playing baseball much of the time and being brothers full time, figuratively and literally.

When they were 8, all three played for the Tidewater Drillers, the region’s most storied AAU program. Matt Sinnen, father of the twins, coached the team and developed a soft spot for young Turner.

He knew the kid had a lot of talent. But he also sensed life was a bit unsettled at Bishop’s house. So one day he approached Eddie and Carolyn Bishop with an idea: Why not let Turner spend the night at the Sinnens’ until things calmed down?

“It became the never-ending sleepover,” said Kurt Sinnen, the older of the twins by two minutes. “And you know what? That was OK by us.”

Kurt Sinnen, Turner Bishop and Sam Sinnen in Monarchs’ dugout.

The baseball twins who became triplets

By Rich Radford
After a few years, the Sinnens were granted legal custody of Turner, who is two months older than the twins.

“Sometimes it takes a village to raise a child,” Matt Sinnen said. “Turner’s parents have remained closely involved. It was just that for Turner this living situation offered … stability.”

Stability turned into unity. Unity turned into fraternity.

For years, the trio formed the heart of a talented Kellam High School squad, which was one of the state’s best. And by the time college decisions needed to be made, all three were looking to Old Dominion.

While Sam and Turner received baseball scholarships, Kurt’s path was a bit more circuitous. He was asked to walk on.

“The crazy thing is that Kurt had the highest baseball IQ of the three of us,” Turner said. “He just thinks baseball.”

Kurt, however, didn’t have a golden arm like Sam and Turner. Instead, he earned his keep with his bat and his catching skills.

He became ODU’s everyday catcher – and a scholarship recipient.

And during the past two summers, Kurt earned most valuable player honors at all-star games in the Cal Ripken and Coastal Plains leagues.

Sam, meanwhile, has become one of ODU’s go-to pitchers and has twice been a second-team All-Conference USA selection.

The road to senior year hasn’t been quite so smooth for Turner. Two ACLs, suffered as a high-school wrestler, have been tough to overcome, and post-surgery aches and pains still linger. After two middling seasons as a pitcher, Turner was converted to the outfield, where he typically mans right field for the Monarchs.

But he’s not crying about his situation. He never did when he was younger, either. He just became one-third of the baseball-loving “Sinnen” triplets, enjoying the camaraderie of an unexpected-but-cherished brotherhood.

“They are very, very close,” said ODU head coach Chris Finwood. “It’s rare that you see one without the other two.

“I don’t think they’d really spent much extended time separate from one another until they went to play in different summer baseball leagues.”

As their ODU careers wind down, they anticipate a bit of sadness. All three would like to continue baseball at the professional level, but there is talk of “real” jobs and putting their degrees to work. Sam studied business management, Kurt majored in sport management and Turner focused on criminal justice.

Their biggest fear as their days at ODU approach the end involves another member of the Sinnen household. When the three gather for Senior Day, they are concerned there might be an unusual rain delay.

None of them knows how Tina Sinnen – the mom who has washed the uniforms, cooked the meals, driven the family baseball wagon, and cleaned and kissed the boo-boos that come with growing up – will respond.

“She’s going to have a terrible time with it,” Kurt said. “I’m afraid she might flood The Bud.”

Zach Rutherford might be feeling a pleasant draft in June.

Baseball America ranked the shortstop from Chesapeake as the 31st best college prospect for the Major League Baseball draft, which occurs in mid-June.

Rutherford’s junior season was his best yet with the Monarchs. As of mid-April, he was leading the team in RBIs and doubles and batting over .330. He also was shining in the field, topping Conference USA assists.

In a profile in The Virginian-Pilot in April, Rutherford said he wasn’t letting the great expectations get to him. “I’ve been able to do a good job of keeping pressure-free, just going out there and enjoying it,” he said. “It still feels like just a game.”

Rich Radford has made baseball pilgrimages to Wrigley Field and Fenway Park. His award-winning articles for The Virginian-Pilot are in the Baseball Hall of Fame’s library in Cooperstown, N.Y. He also coached youth baseball at Norfolk’s Fleet Park Little League for more than a decade.

In April, Will Morgan became the first Monarch to hit three doubles in a game since Chris Baker in 2010.
“LOVE” MEANS NO SCORE IN TENNIS.
But six students who played tennis at Old Dominion University in the ’90s also experienced the positive meaning of the word. They became three married couples after they graduated.

The wives – Lu Varverud ’99, Raquel Kohler ’99 (M.S. ’02) and Patricia “Patchi” Cancado ’02 – are sisters who grew up in Brazil, where they were childhood friends with one of the husbands, Alex Cancado ’00 (M.S. ’02).

The other two husbands – Johan Varverud ’99 (M.S. ’05) and Nic Kohler ’99 – grew up as friends in Sweden. After meeting on the courts at ODU, the three couples married and now live in the same Norfolk neighborhood with their seven children, ranging in age from 4 to 12. The Brazilian sisters’ parents retired to Norfolk two years ago to live near them.

“It’s wonderful to have my sisters and parents nearby,” Lu says. “We all like each other for real. We’ve always been friends. Our vacations are together, we take our kids to school together, and our kids are like brothers and sisters.”

This crazy tale of international togetherness began in 1993, when then-ODU tennis coach Darryl Cummings observed 17-year-old Lu playing in Florida. Cummings convinced Lu’s father to send her to ODU the following year to play for the Monarchs.

“It was terrifying,” she says. “I didn’t speak English well, and I was homesick. I hated it, and I was crying all the time.” In Brazil, she says, the average college student lives at home, and most middle-class families have maids. She wasn’t used to doing her own laundry, cooking or cleaning, calling it “culture shock.”

Life improved greatly when she was joined by her sister Raquel in the spring of 1996. Alex was the next Brazilian arrival, in 1997. It helped that he knew the girls since he was 11, but it was still a big adjustment, he says.
“I had to do everything myself at home, which I wasn’t used to, plus I studied too much. I felt I had to get an ‘A’ in everything, in addition to playing tennis, going on trips with the team and doing it all in English. But it was also exciting.”

Patchi arrived in 2000, joining her sisters in their apartment. She had already begun dating Alex in the summer of 1998 before leaving Brazil. While she says her adjustment was probably the easiest because of her sisters’ and Alex’s support, “I didn’t say a word for the first semester.”

Coach Cummings recruited numerous Brazilians for ODU tennis, including Alex’s brother Henrique Cancado ’08. But Cummings also found talent in the Land of the Midnight Sun. Johan and Nic grew up in nearby Swedish towns and met as pre-teens playing tennis for the same club. Before they started college, Nic visited his aunt in Virginia Beach for the summer and played in area tournaments. He met Coach Cummings, who stole him and Johan away from the Georgia college they had planned to attend. They began playing ODU tennis in the spring of 1996.

Their transition to ODU was not as difficult as it was for the Brazilians, Johan says. “We study English very early on. It was not that big of a move.”

The three relationships blossomed on campus, and the couples married between 2003 and 2005 at the same church in the sisters’ hometown in Brazil with the others in attendance.

And while love was blooming, the game that brought the six together also got a boost.

The men’s team was nationally ranked in 1998 in the Colonial Athletic Association, and Patchi’s team won the CAA championship in 2001 after her sisters had graduated. The couples are still involved with ODU tennis; Johan, Alex and Nic helped raise $25,000 last year for men’s tennis scholarships.

The six were interviewed in Patchi’s and Alex’s home, while their children were minded by their grandparents, who live nearby.

The couples sat in pairs so their stories would be easier to follow. But Lu and Patchi look so much alike, they could be mistaken for twins. Their outgoing personalities and sense of family came through, and their answers practically tumbled over one another.

All still look fit, though most no longer play tennis regularly. “I enjoy hitting in the summertime and the occasional doubles with my sisters and my dad,” Raquel says. But Nic plays almost weekly. And the couples have passed their love of the game to their kids.

Their careers have thrived. Today, Patchi and Raquel own TrendyPeas.com, an online home goods store, while Lu works as a radio station sales manager at Sinclair Communications. Johan is budget manager at Dollar Tree; Alex owns Rocketgenius, a software development company, and Nic is a vice president at PRA Group, a publicly traded debt-purchasing company. They credit the connections they made through ODU tennis and the career placement office with their success.

“Everything for all of us has been through ODU,” says Lu.

They not only aced tennis at the university. They also found life’s sweet spot as couples and friends.

Gail Kent is a freelance writer whose only tennis experience was as a phys-ed requirement in college. She suspects the instructor gave her a passing grade so that he would not have her in class again.
Check out these tidbits about Old Dominion University Libraries.

**NUMBER OF BOOKS CHECKED OUT PER YEAR**
54,795

**NUMBER OF ANNUAL VISITORS**
1,026,084

**OLDEST BOOK IN LIBRARIES**
Lutheran Bible written in German from 1550

**MOST CIRCULATED BOOK**
Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "Beloved"

**OTHER LOCATIONS:** It’s not just Perry. The library has branches at the Barry Arts Building and Diehn Center for the Performing Arts.

**TOTAL NUMBER OF E- AND PRINT BOOKS**
2,595,256

One of the most unusual holdings: Framed piece of cable used in first trans-Atlantic telegraph connection in 1858
Looking for a good book to read?

**SUMMER’S HERE.** Time to curl up on the couch or the beach with a good book.

Here are some unusual reading suggestions – from fiction to religion to the drug epidemic – from Old Dominion University administrators, professors, staff members, students and alums:

**Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church, by N.T. Wright**
I found this to be a refreshing return to many familiar New Testament passages that I thought I understood. For anyone who is willing to experience significant paradigm shifts to their understanding of some of the most oft-quoted Biblical verses, I heartily recommend this book!

*John Adam, professor of mathematics*

**Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today’s College Student, by Arthur Levine and Diane R. Dean**
A must read for anyone in a higher-education setting or the workplace. This book provides a detailed and well-researched perspective of today’s college-aged students and shows how they are wired vs. how we are wired, and the generational disconnect that exists.

*Stephanie Adams, dean, Batten College of Engineering and Technology*

**Everything, Everything, by Nicola Yoon**
You can relate to the daughter – who loves her mother but also wants to experience life, love and the world like a normal teenage girl – and to the mother, who lost her husband and son and didn’t think she could handle losing her daughter, too. This story was heartfelt and real, and I think it’s a great summer read.

*Domanique Burke ’08, transfer evaluation coordinator, Office of Admissions*

**The Alchemist, by Paulo Coelho**
This is a personal favorite, which I have read only a time or two (or three). The main character is a young Spanish shepherd whose journey to Egypt is told in such a magical way that the reader is propelled through his wanderings and traveling along with him.

*Kristyn Danson (M.P.A. ’10), director of constituent relations, Alumni Association*

**Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic, by Sam Quinones**
Quinones connects the historical dots on a drug crisis that continues to tear through the lives of families across the United States and does so in a compelling, thorough fashion. Dreamland is a gripping, must-read piece of nonfiction.

*Irvin B. Harrell, coordinator of strategy and marketing, College of Health Sciences*

**Mother Night, by Kurt Vonnegut**
This book got me hooked on Vonnegut and his black and satirical outlook on life. It makes you question the classic definitions of “good” and “evil,” and will make you realize that human nature, whether good or bad, is the same everywhere, regardless of borders or nationalities.

*Zach Moeller ’16*

**The Vegetarian, by Han Kang**
It’s a novel in three acts about a woman who gives up eating meat after a troubling dream, told from the perspectives of her husband, then her brother-in-law and, finally, her sister.

*Sheri Reynolds, chair of English department and Morgan Chair of Southern Literature*

**A Beautiful Constraint, by Adam Morgan and Mark Barden**
They say that necessity is the mother of invention. What Morgan and Barden do is show you how to build business processes that transform constraints from barriers that stifle solutions to necessities that give birth to invention.

*Jeff Tanner, dean, Strome College of Business*

ALUMNI BIG BLUE BOOK CLUB
No matter your distance from campus, discover new books with the ODU Alumni Big Blue Book Club. The exclusive online discussion space allows all Monarchs to participate and features a new book every two months. For more information about the BBBC, contact Kristyn Danson at kdanson@odu.edu or 757-683-3097.

Or how about a new book by an ODU faculty or staff member? Go to www.odu.edu/monarchmag for more reading ideas.
When the football team won the Popeyes Bahamas Bowl, it was an amazing opportunity to show the world the spirit of the Monarch. The region, the state and the nation witnessed the pride and enthusiasm of Old Dominion University.

Whether to support ODU football, the new Education Building or scholarships for our outstanding students, alumni always soar to the occasion. As the university continues to excel, you will have countless opportunities to stay connected with your alma mater and share your love for ODU. The more alumni get involved, the more robust and valuable the network becomes.

The Office of Alumni Relations is dedicated to keeping our more than 140,000 graduates connected to one another and to ODU. Our programs and events are ever-evolving to meet your needs and interests.

In July, the Alumni Association is kicking off the Monarch Cobia Classic, a fishing tournament created to serve as one of the association’s principal fundraising events. The tournament joins our two annual signature events, the Alumni Association Golf Tournament in May and the Alumni Honors Dinner during Homecoming week. Proceeds from the tournament will benefit the ODU Alumni Association Scholarship Fund and the ODU Student Fishing Club.

Anglers will compete for cash prizes, reels, rods, outdoor equipment, gift cards and more. The top cash prize is $5,500, and the second place cash prize is $2,500 for cobia. The competition will consist of two days of fishing and conclude with a dock party on July 15, with live music and special guests.

To find out more about the Monarch Cobia Classic and additional programs, go to ODUalumni.org and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. When you’re on campus, please stop by the Barry M. Kornblau Alumni Center to say hello.

Remember, you are as much a part of ODU – its history and future – today as you were when you were a student. Like football champions, our alumni are winners.

Joy L. Jefferson
Associate Vice President of Alumni Relations

Gloria Greene and Blair McKenzie met at the Norfolk Division in the 1946-47 school year and started dating in the summer of 1947. They tied the knot in the fall of 1949 and have been happily married for 67 years.

1960s
Jeff Littman ’67 (M.B.A. ’75) has launched a new business, Bloom Mineral Beauty, and is the exclusive U.S. distributor of a line of skin care products made in Jordan. Bloom’s products contain minerals from the Dead Sea, which some say have positive effects on skin. Littman also is president of export business Sterling Wholesale. Both companies are based in Chesapeake.

1970s
Suzanne Styers Boundy (M.S. ’70) is always looking out for Monarchs – the butterflies, that is. Boundy’s backyard in Bethlehem, Penn., is a Monarch Waystation, certified by MonarchWatch.org and the University of Kansas. The National Wildlife Federation has listed her yard as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat since 2005. Boundy has retired as director of the dental hygiene program at Indiana University School of Dentistry, Indianapolis.

Marilyn L. McRee (M.S. Ed. ’73) ended a nearly 50-year career and three-state tour in public education in December. McRee taught school during her husband’s Navy career, and when the couple returned to her hometown of Madison, N.C., in 1980, she worked as a classroom teacher, assistant principal and principal. After retirement, she served for eight years on the Catawba County Schools board of education.
Mike Herron ’76 has received the Silver Medal Award from the Advertising Federation of Greater Hampton Roads. The honor recognizes outstanding contributions in local advertising. Herron is publisher of Inside Business, a division of Pilot Media. ODU benefits from his other passion in life, rugby. Herron recently became director of men’s rugby at Old Dominion and he is head coach of ODU’s Rugby 7s team. Herron is married to Elyse, a 1977 graduate of ODU.

1980s

Adriane M. Brown ’80 (HON ’09) was tapped by Allergan PLC to join its board of directors in February. Brown is president and COO of Intellectual Ventures LLC, a private company that invests in and develops inventions to solve global issues.

Michael G. Goldsmith ’88 (M.A. ’98) stepped aside as Norfolk police chief on Dec. 1 to become a deputy city manager, overseeing public safety and neighborhood issues. He began as a Norfolk patrol officer in 1989 and rose through the ranks to earn the top job in June 2012. Goldsmith also has an M.B.A. from the College of William & Mary.

1990s

Linda Ciola Wettstone ’90 has worked in information systems for the Senate of Virginia clerk’s office for 15 years, keeping 40 senators and their staffs digitally connected to conduct the work of the Commonwealth. In 2016, Wettstone became chairwoman of the National Association of Legislative Information Technology, a subgroup of the National Conference of State Legislatures, a professional group pledged to enhance quality and efficiency for all U.S. state legislatures. In January, the Virginia Senate passed a resolution recognizing Wettstone’s service as senior systems analyst and NALIT chairwoman.

Glenn Anthony Deibler (M.B.A. ’91) was promoted from assistant principal to principal at Christiansburg High School (Va.) in August. He was the principal at Floyd County High School prior to landing the assistant’s job at Christiansburg. The transfer cut his daily commute from 1 1/2 hours to 2 minutes each way.

Nickie D. Mills ’92 was named city engineer for Staunton (Va.) in August. He is a licensed professional engineer in Virginia and has more

Helping students grow – and love – fruits and vegetables

The farm-to-table movement is sweeping restaurants. Scott Richardson ’93 wanted it to reach students, too.

For his initiative, the Warren County school district in Georgia received the Golden Radish bronze award last fall from the Georgia Farm to School Alliance.

Richardson is the food services director and career technical education director for the district, which has 630 students. Along with the agricultural teacher, Richardson built 14 raised garden beds outside the schools to teach students, in the agricultural area near Augusta, the fundamentals of farming.

While collecting vegetables, the elementary school children asked to taste what they grew. This gave him the idea to serve the vegetables in the cafeterias.

The gardens feature 16 fruits, vegetables and herbs, including tomatoes, lettuce, bell peppers and onions. They provide a large selection for the salad and condiment bars, as well as ingredients for such dishes as baked pasta and breakfast fruit parfaits.

“This morning, we brought in three large purple cabbage heads for coleslaw,” Richardson said. “A big benefit is seeing students eat more salads. The overall vegetable consumption has increased.”

He’s seeking grants to expand the garden to include blueberries and corn.

Richardson, a graduate of Norview High School in Norfolk, played in Old Dominion University’s band and sang in the choir. Apart from his administrative duties, he serves as the director of the band in Warren County.

He has also helped ODU’s football team. Along with Warren County High School’s coaches, Richardson recruited graduate Torrez Wentz to attend ODU. Wentz plays defensive tackle for the Monarchs.

—Susan Smigielski Acker ’87
Fellowship gives her policy lowdown

Stephanie Flores ‘16 knew early in life that her calling was public service. Now she’s pursuing her dream as a Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Public Policy Fellow in Washington, D.C.

The 10-month paid fellowship offers exposure to the legislative process, leadership development and professional networking. She now works with the nonprofit Center for Law and Social Policy to advocate legislation that helps low-income families.

An early highlight was meeting then-President Barack Obama backstage at the institute’s annual Awards Gala in September. She met then-Vice President Joe Biden during the House Democratic Caucus in December.

The Ecuador native graduated with a double major in economics and international business administration. She received the John R. Broderick Diversity Champion Award in 2015 and the Kaufman Award for service and leadership last year.

Before attending Old Dominion University, she served her adopted country in the U.S. Navy at Naval Station Norfolk. That is when she discovered the campus.

Now she’s learning the legislative process firsthand. “I’ve gained a better understanding of policy issues facing communities and how to propose effective solutions,” Flores said.

What has most surprised Flores about her fellowship is the access she’s had to government, business and nonprofit decision makers.

For example, she provided policy summaries to the legislative director for then-U.S. Rep. Xavier Beccera of California. Beccera, now the state’s attorney general, also offered her career tips.

After her fellowship, Flores will apply to law school to study public interest law. She hopes to concentrate on civil rights.

— Susan Smigielski Acker ’87

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— Susan Smigielski Acker ’87
students I have taught have left their imprint on me and they continue to motivate me to be the best teacher I can be,” Walck said.

Robert Montague Jr. (M.P.A. ’98) was promoted to director of the department of public utilities in Virginia Beach in October. He has been an administrator and manager in public utilities since 1995.

Luke Ritter (M.B.A. ’98) was recruited in January as chief executive officer of Fairlead Integrated, a division of Fraser Optics. The company develops applications in optical technology for national defense, home security and law enforcement.

2000s

Rob Wilber ’00, chief financial officer for Seward Marine Corp. in Chesapeake, received his CPA license in December. Congratulations!

Lynn Brooks ’01 pursued a career in nursing and life as a wife and mother, yet always felt a tug to become a Catholic nun. In August, at 54 and with two grown sons, Brooks became a postulant with the All Saints Sisters of the Poor, a cloistered community in Catonsville, Md.

Ken Baibuena ’02 is working at George Mason University as a communications and marketing officer for the College of Education and Human Development. The college’s Graduate School of Education was ranked No. 46 last year by U.S. News and World Report.

Jimmy F. Blackmon (M.S. Ed. ’02) is a retired Army colonel and former commander (2008-10) of Task Force Pale Horse, the elite helicopter flying force that served ground troops in the Afghan War. Blackmon wrote “Pale Horse: Hunting Terrorists and Commanding Heroes with the 101st Airborne Division” (2016), with a foreword by retired Gen. Stanley McChrystal.

Charles Bohs ’05 is the owner/operator of a new Chick-fil-A in South Riding, Va., in Loudoun County. The restaurant’s Facebook page proudly notes the outlet added 100 jobs in the county and has supported many community events since its September opening.

Tiffany M. Ray ’07 (M.B.A. ’09, Ph.D. ’16) received her Ph.D. in higher education in December. She is the interim dean of enrollment management at Thomas Nelson Community College in Hampton.

SHE’S OFF-CAMERA, PROMOTING ESPN STARS – Jay Harris isn’t the only ODU alum attracting attention at ESPN.

Gianina Thompson (B.A. ’11, M.A. ’12), ESPN’s senior publicist for the NBA and Major League Baseball, last year was named a “Rising PR Star 30 and Under” by PRNews. She also was featured in an interview with Black Enterprise magazine in January.

But Thompson, 26, deflects the praise to her colleagues: “I have the blessing of being surrounded by people who make me better.”

At ESPN, her main job is to promote the network’s on-air personalities on print, digital and TV platforms. She has successfully pitched pieces to such publications as Sports Illustrated, Forbes and Men’s Fitness. Other responsibilities include analyzing TV ratings, serving as a spokeswoman and writing for ESPNW.com, which gives a voice to female sports fans.

Thompson previously worked in public relations for Hampton University and the Washington Redskins. When she got the offer to work at ESPN in 2015, she didn’t hesitate. “The question is why wouldn’t you want to work for ESPN?” she said.

What she loves most about her job is the unpredictability: “No day is like the day before. There’s always a different story line. Sports collides with entertainment, music and even fashion, and I love that.”

At ODU, she earned both degrees in communication. Her master’s thesis examined the factors influencing male and female college athletes to go professional. Outside the classroom, she was on the women’s rowing team, and worked at WODU and the Mace and Crown.

As for her future, Thompson said, “I honestly just want to grow as a sports professional and be someone who’s continuing to make an impact.”

–Philip Walzer
Jennifer VanCuren ‘08 decided at 8 years old that it would be cool to check out her own book from the library. First, she had to write it. Last fall, the adjunct English professor at Lord Fairfax Community College fulfilled both childhood dreams. She published her first novel, *When Shadows Fade* (2016), and was the first to check it out from her Middletown, Va., library. Library card, please.

Jim Redick (M.P.A. ‘09), Norfolk’s director of emergency preparedness and response for five years, received the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Clayton R. Christopher Memorial Award at the IAEM conference in October. The award cited Redick’s outstanding contributions to the emergency management profession.

2010s

John Mayen Deng ‘14 has written an account of his life as “a Lost Boy of Sudan.” The book, *A Lost Boy Found: Never Give Up* (2016), is available online in several formats. A percentage of the profits will be donated to Medical Mission for Refugees in Africa.

Kayla Antal ‘15, an international studies graduate, and Chad Nuber happily announce their engagement and plans for a fall wedding.

FUTURE MONARCHS

Rebecca Gibson Bolte ‘02 and her husband, Steven Bolte, announce the birth of their daughter Daphne Elizabeth on Sept. 7, 2016. Big sister Annaliese and big brother Joshua are very happy to welcome their new little sister.
OBITUARIES

Hussein Abdel-Wahab, a professor of computer science, died in New York on Dec. 24, 2016. He was 69. Abdel-Wahab joined Old Dominion in 1980 and was appointed a full professor in 1994.

Faculty members praised his devotion to his students. “Hussein had a passion for teaching and always put students’ interests in front of his own,” said Ravi Mukkamala, associate dean of the College of Sciences and acting chairman of the Department of Computer Science.

Abdel-Wahab, a native of Egypt, ranked fifth among half a million students in the country’s College Entrance Examination in 1964. He was an expert in communication networks and systems security. Abdel-Wahab developed XTV, a system to share X Window applications with remote users. The Department of Computer Science and College of Sciences held a memorial service for him in January.

Jill Dustin, an associate professor in the Department of Counseling and Human Services, died on Jan. 30. She was 57.

Dustin served as an associate editor of the Journal for Human Services. She was known for her kindness, wisdom, wit, cheer, contagious enthusiasm for life and courage,” Jane Bray, the dean of the Darden College of Education, wrote in a letter to the college.

At Old Dominion, Dustin served as coordinator of the human services program from 2005 to 2009. In 2007, she was named a University Professor in recognition of her strong undergraduate teaching.

Dustin served as an associate editor of the Journal of Human Services. She twice received the Most Inspiring Faculty Member award from the Darden College of Education.

Dustin also won $7,250 as a contestant during an episode of “Wheel of Fortune” in 2002. “It was possibly the most fun I had in my life,” she said at the time.

Justin Friberg, a professor emeritus of political science and geography, died on Feb. 2. He was 77.

Friberg taught at Old Dominion for 25 years, retiring in 2007. He previously taught at Syracuse University, the University of Kentucky and Virginia Tech.

“Justin was a gifted and passionate instructor,” said Tom Allen, an associate professor of geography at Old Dominion and a former student of Friberg’s. “For several years he led study abroad classes to Costa Rica and many students returned with life-changing appreciation for our global environment.”

Friberg enjoyed attending Lady Monarchs basketball games, and he and his wife, Debbie, loved visiting lighthouses. Their favorite was in Ocracoke, N.C. When asked what he was most proud of, Friberg would say: “My children.”

Osama Kandil, eminent scholar and professor emeritus of mechanical and aerospace engineering, died on Oct. 26, 2016, at his home in Norfolk. He was 72.

Kandil taught at Old Dominion for nearly 40 years. He joined the faculty in 1978 and was designated an emeritus in 1990. He was the founding chairman of the Department of Aerospace Engineering in 1993 and led the department until 2002. He retired in 2014.

Kandil’s specialties included computational and theoretical fluid dynamics and aerodynamics. “Professor Kandil was a great engineering teacher and a mentor who educated thousands,” said Oktay Baysal, a professor and emeritus scholar of mechanical and aerospace engineering and former dean of the Batten College of Engineering and Technology.

“His contributions to ‘fluid-structure interaction’ have improved airplane designs and may have saved lives,” Baysal said.

Kandil was an associate fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and received a NASA “Turning Goals into Reality” award for his contributions to sonic boom research. He also won an Outstanding Achievement Award in 2011 from The Friends of the Old Dominion University Libraries.

Harry Kuper, an associate professor emeritus of chemistry and biochemistry, died at his home in Virginia Beach on July 30, 2016. He was 87.

Kuper taught at Old Dominion from 1968 to 1993. He co-wrote a textbook, Principles of Chemistry, and was a member of the American Chemical Society.

Kuper received his bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Furman University, where he later taught; his master’s from Purdue, and his doctorate from the University of Tennessee.

Outside work, he was a member of Wycliffe Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach, where he sang in and directed the choir and served as a deacon and elder.

Rita Marie Marlier, a ceramic sculptor who taught in Old Dominion University’s Department of Art for 28 years, died on Sept. 17, 2016. She was 86.

“Rita was well liked and remained involved in the art department even after retiring” in 1995, said Peter Eudenbach, the chairman of the department. Ken Dailey, a retired professor of art, said Marlier maintained strong ties with the local art community and brought those experiences into the classroom.

Marlier was the first woman to graduate from Carnegie Mellon University with a master’s degree in sculpture. Marlier also taught clay and drawing classes for plastic surgeons at Eastern Virginia Medical School and served as artist in residence for Norfolk Public Schools.

She lived in the Willoughby Spit section of Norfolk and drew a wide circle of friends, including bikers, fishermen and firefighters.
In Memoriam

Received July 1-Dec. 31, 2016

Frank A. Davis Jr. ’37 of Norfolk, 12/2/16
George W. Elliott ’39 of Virginia Beach, 8/6/16
Joseph E. Franklin Jr. ’41 of Norfolk, 10/2/16
Robert “Eddie” Friend Sr. ’41 of Virginia Beach, 7/2/16
Norman P. Powers Sr. ’42 of Virginia Beach, 11/25/16
W. Earl Henley Jr. ’44 of Norfolk, 7/19/16
Barbara Patterson Pyle ’45, formerly of Norfolk, 8/1/16
Miriam W. Gray ’47 of Norfolk, 10/13/16
Lucille Brent Hickman ’47 of Virginia Beach, 8/25/16
Bernard H. Miller ’47 of Virginia Beach, 8/25/16
Charles G. Nusbaum Sr. ’47 of Virginia Beach, 8/25/16
G. Richard Baldwin ’48 of Virginia Beach, 7/2/16
Edgar J. Smith ’48 of Portsmouth, 8/13/16
Edna Bean Beacham ’49 of Portsmouth, 12/3/16
Wilmer B. Poteate ’50 of Hatteras, N.C., 9/17/16
Montgomery Knight Jr. ’52 of Norfolk, 10/13/16
David B. Oglesby Jr. ’54 of Virginia Beach, 9/16/16
Harry H. Knickerbocker ’57 of Virginia Beach, 12/11/16
Eugene L. Bradshaw ’58 of Basye, Va., 8/7/16
Elizabeth C. Rollins ’58 (M.S. Ed. ’66) of Norfolk, 11/22/16
Daniel D. DeHart ’59 of Virginia Beach, 12/27/16
Paul B. Reynolds ’59 of Gloucester Point, Va., 7/31/16
George M. Blair ’60 of Suffolk, 12/11/16
David R. Conner ’60 of Gloucester, Va., 11/23/16
Shirley Wesley Isrow ’60 of Virginia Beach, 9/9/16
Mary Hux Kent ’60 of Virginia Beach, 10/27/16
Rouie Smith Miller ’60 (M.S. Ed. ’85) of Virginia Beach, 12/28/16
Charles W. Clay Jr. ’61 (M.S. Ed. ’70) of Virginia Beach, 11/28/16
Clay N. Johnson ’61 of Portsmouth, 10/11/16
Gerald E. Tiedemann ’61 of Virginia Beach, 12/13/16
Elizabeth E. Daniel ’63 of Norfolk, 10/27/16
Thomas B. Rue ’63 of Napa, Calif., 11/27/16
Cato G. Bennett Jr. ’64 of Norfolk, 9/6/16
George E. Lee Sr. ’64 of Virginia Beach, 8/24/16
F. Michael McGrath ’64 of Chesapeake, 9/11/16
C. Darryl Toler ’64 of Brunswick, Ga., 8/5/16
Bernard G. Woodard ’64 of Chesapeake, 9/11/16
Edwin B. Powell ’65 of Norfolk, 8/27/16
Mary Zoby Riley ’65 (M.S. Ed. ’77) of Corolla, N.C., 9/26/16
Stanley Berent ’66 of Ann Arbor, Mich., 8/25/16
Charles H. Brown Jr. ’66 of Chesapeake and Tyner, N.C., 7/28/16
William C. DeLoache ’66 of Virginia Beach, 7/28/16
Michael H. Resh ’66 of Port Saint Lucie, Fla., 9/13/16
Dandridge M. Hux ’67 of Portsmouth, 7/21/16
Lee E. McDaniel III ’67 of Virginia Beach, 9/30/16
Kathleen R. Mullins ’67 of Norfolk, 10/30/16
Carolyn Merion Pollie ’67 of Virginia Beach, 7/28/16
Arthur R. Schmidt ’67 of Chesapeake, 8/12/16
Nicholas F. Vislocky ’67 (M.S. Ed. ’75) of Norfolk, 9/23/16
James R. Craft III ’68 of Norfolk, 12/17/16
B. Rosanne Hauck May ’69 of Chesapeake, 9/8/16
Bonna M. Haywood ’69 of Norfolk, 6/28/16
Joyce Ann P. Weisenborn ’69 of Wake Forest, N.C., 7/23/16
Lt. John P. McTeela, USN (Ret) ’68 of Norfolk, 9/9/16
Irene Hudak Childers ’69 (M.S. Ed. ’75) of Virginia Beach, 10/10/16
G. Richard Baldwin ’69 of Norfolk, 8/10/16
Lt. William M. Morse Jr., USN (Ret) ’73 of Norfolk, 9/3/16
Cmdr. Johnie L. Perry, USN (Ret) (M.S. Ed. ’73) of Orlando, Fla., 12/25/16
Russel R. Turner ’73 of Kill Devil Hills, N.C., 8/1/16
Robert J. Yates ’73 of Portsmouth, 9/3/16
Ronald K. Newby ’74 of Grants Pass, Ore., 7/7/16
Billy B. Ottinger ’74, ’87 of Virginia Beach, 11/4/16
Linda Estes Partridge ’74 (M.S. Ed. ’89) of Virginia Beach, 12/20/16
Constance Fair Roman ’74 of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 7/2/16
Lt. Col. John K. Smola, USMC (Ret) (M.S. Ed. ’74) of Monona, Iowa, 12/11/16
Brenda Privett Cutchin ’75 of Chesapeake, 9/15/16
Edward J. Manley Sr. ’75 of Virginia Beach, 8/8/16
George E. McGovern (M.S. Ed. ’75, C.A.S. ’86) of Virginia Beach, 8/7/16
J. Kenneth Mull ’72 of Newton, N.C., 12/2/16
Betty Dale Ridinger ’72 of San Antonio, Texas, 8/27/16
Valentine Morris Ripley (M.S. Ed. ’72) of Suffolk, 10/24/16
Barry L. Thomas ’72 (M.S. ’75) of Bedford, Va., 7/16/16
Peter S. Viele ’72 of Virginia Beach, 8/21/16
Robert P. Bishop ’73 of Chesapeake, 10/17/16
Kenneth J. Bleck ’73 of Great Neck, N.Y., 9/15/16
Patricia Person Draper ’73 (M.S. Ed. ’80, C.A.S. ’87) of Boykins, Va., 12/24/16
George F. Maier ’73 of Fort Myers, Fla., 12/26/16
Lt. William M. Morse Jr., USN (Ret) ’73 of Norfolk, 9/3/16
Cmdr. Johnie L. Perry, USN (Ret) (M.S. Ed. ’73) of Orlando, Fla., 12/25/16
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Edward J. Manley Sr. ’75 of Virginia Beach, 8/8/16
George E. McGovern (M.S. Ed. ’75, C.A.S. ’86) of Virginia Beach, 8/7/16
Judith Burnside Peoples ’75 of Louisville, Ky., 1/5/16
CWO Philip W. Schroeder, USN (Ret) (M.S. Ed. ’75, C.A.S. ’82) of Virginia Beach, 9/5/16
J.E. Windom Jr. (M.S. Ed. ’75) of Greenville, N.C., 7/3/16
Sheldon C. Worrell Jr. (M.S. Ed. ’75) of Newport News, 10/29/16
George “Rusty” Brown ’76 of Norfolk and The Villages, Fla., 8/12/16
Roy R. Fitz (M.B.A. ’76) of Cedar Bluff, Va., 8/24/16
Stephen C. Hilton ’76 of Kingwood, W.Va., 7/6/16
Glenn A. Massie ’76 of Staunton, Va., 12/15/16
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Bertie S. Selvey (M.S. Ed. ’80) of Richmond, Va., 9/7/16
Stephen D. Wright ’80 of Virginia Beach, 9/16/17
Marie G. McFetridge ’81 of Pensacola, Fla., 7/30/16
Mary R. Townsend (M.S. Ed. ’81) of Virginia Beach, 10/11/16
Cmdr. Donald L. Edwards, USN (Ret) ’82 of Virginia Beach, 9/8/16
George A. Phillips (M.S. ’83) of Yorktown Heights, N.Y., 8/19/16
Jeffery A. Reihner ’83 of Waynesboro, Pa., 10/25/16
Maura Cowan Ryan ’83 of Gloucester, Va., 11/25/16
Harry K. Burcher ’84 of Santa Cruz, Calif., 8/8/16
Anne C. Blanchard ’85 of Norfolk, 12/17/16
Susan A. Chantry ’85 of Nags Head, N.C., 11/3/16
Michael R. Toothman ’85 (M.P.A. ’03) of Chesapeake, 8/7/16
Adrienne G. Agami (M.S. Ed. ’86) of Virginia Beach, 7/23/16
Don Evans Jr. ’86 of Show Low, Ariz., 9/25/16
Kelley A. Matthews ’87 of Virginia Beach, 11/15/16
Judy G. May ’87 of Chesapeake, 7/22/16
G. Jeffrey Vensprille ’87 of Virginia Beach, 8/24/16
Sue Styles Bailey ’88 of Dawsonville, Ga., 9/5/16
Cynthia A. Bradbury (M.S. ’88) of Boise, Idaho, 10/22/16
Jane L. Leighton ’88 of Portsmouth, 12/4/16
Calvin L. Mercer Jr. ’88 of Virginia Beach, 8/4/16
Tammy Lea Aldridge Young ’88 of Virginia Beach, 10/19/16
Karen A. Moore (M.S. Ed. ’89) of Norfolk, 7/14/16
Leonard “Pete” T. Parker (M.S. Ed. ’89) of Franklin, Va., 10/13/16
Emily J. Holcombe (M.S. Ed. ’92) of Suffolk, 9/1/16
CPO Dean C. Ashman, USN (Ret) ’93 of Virginia Beach, 12/3/16
Owen J. Barlow ’93 of Wilming- ton, N.C., 11/3/16
Cdr. Gwinn E. Corley, USN (Ret) ’93 of Pensacola, Fla., 10/14/16
Annie K. Michel ’93 (M.S. ’94) of Portsmouth, 10/18/16
Ferne Hughes Hairston ’00 of Greensboro, N.C., 11/19/16
Kelly A. Matthews ’00 of Virginia Beach, 8/18/16
Veronica M. Wood ’00 of Newport News, 10/25/16
Glenn L. Duggins (M.S. ’07) of Fleming Island, Fla., 11/4/16
Roger C. Romero ’00 of Virginia Beach, 7/29/16
Emma F. Richards ’00 of Culpeper, Va., 8/9/16
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Janice E. Duffy ’06 of Prescott, Ariz., 4/18/16
John R. Clarke ’09, ’10 of Charlo- tottesville, Va., 12/2/16
Stephanie C. McNeir (Ed.S. ’09) of Newport News, 12/26/16
Tyler J. Slawson ’10 of West Palm Beach, Fla., 9/12/16
Charles A. Hsu ’12 of Fairfax, Va., 12/1/16
Winston K. Bishop III ’14 of Frederick County, Va., 9/14/16

Spring 2017 59
How to detach from work

By Andrew Bennett

H ow do you unwind after work? Are you as successful as you’d like to be?

A study I recently co-wrote for the Journal of Applied Psychology outlined our intriguing research findings on how individuals unwind after work. After-work experiences can help people replenish the mental and physical resources they expend each day on the job. Relaxing, trying something new or challenging, and just keeping your mind on something not work-related can all be beneficial. In addition, just as you should vary your workout routine, we found that people benefited by using a combination of approaches each evening.

Although not thinking about work is helpful for most people, we found that employees who have more control over their work actually prefer thinking about it when they’re not there. This isn’t problematic if they have a positive or neutral attitude about their jobs.

The most surprising finding for us was that supervisors influence how employees unwind. We surveyed hundreds of bosses, and their communications with employees after work had a direct influence on how well those employees disconnected from work. An employee’s relationship with the boss also influences unwinding. Those with better relationships felt that they needed to stay more connected with work during off-hours.

How can our research help workers and bosses remove stress and increase job satisfaction?

For employees:

- It’s important to find strategies each day to recover from the stress you build up at work. Take time to relax in whatever way works best for you. In addition, challenge yourself to try other forms of de-stressing, such as cooking a new meal for dinner, playing a musical instrument or increasing your expertise in another hobby.
- If you like to stay connected with work when you’re home, make sure you find outlets every day to prevent burnout.

If you’re in a management role, how can you help your employees?

- Be aware how your practices are perceived. For example, if you’re sending emails to employees at 11 p.m., do they feel the need to respond that night or the next morning?
- Help others set boundaries. Technology is fantastic at keeping us engaged with work, but it’s harder for employees (especially the high performers) to detach if you’re always texting or sending emails. Have a conversation about if or how often you expect employees to respond before or after work hours.
- Even if you feel you have an ideal relationship with your workers, emphasize the need for them to disconnect (from work and from you) when they leave the office.

Andrew Bennett is an assistant professor of management in Old Dominion University’s Strome College of Business. He’s still working on unwinding but usually stops checking work email by 8 p.m. and has found binge-watching shows over one or two weeks to be very helpful.
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Last Look

Welcome, future Monarchs!

A record 4,070 prospective students, relatives and friends got a taste of Old Dominion University at Admitted Students Day in March. They came from as far as California and Connecticut. During the all-day event, they did the “Ice Cream and Cake” dance, checked out residence halls, received early pointers on summer internships and jobs, and learned about academic programs from modeling and simulation to special education. About 500 faculty, staff and student volunteers helped show them the way.

*Photos by David Hollingsworth*
Joseph Fleischmann was born in Nuremberg, Germany, on October 17, 1925. At the time of his birth, the picturesque city was known for, among other attributes, its medieval architecture and the Kaiserburg Castle, its most famous landmark. In the coming years, Nuremberg would become part of Adolf Hitler’s landscape, and 20 years later, at the Palace of Justice, it would be the location of the Nuremberg Trials, a series of 13 military tribunals held between 1945 and 1949, where Nazi war criminals were brought to justice.

Joe’s father had immigrated to the U.S. in the late 1930s and was preparing for his family to join him. Finding his dad’s absence really difficult, young Joe launched a plan to run away and find him in America. He planned to stow away on a ship docked in Le Havre, France, bound for the United States. Unfortunately, once the U.S. and French consuls declined to accommodate him with the needed legal documents, he returned home.

The family began seeing Hitler’s plans at work. Early in 1938, when the largest synagogue in Nuremberg was razed, the explanation was that “the Asian architecture clashed with the historically Germanic architecture of the area.”

Things would become worse.

On November 9, 1938, the Nazi government unleashed a program in Germany and Austria, now known as Kristallnacht or The Night of Broken Glass, destroying nearly 200 synagogues, ransacking thousands of businesses, and killing 100 Jews, including Joe’s great uncle, Jakob Schloss. Thousands of others were moved to concentration camps.

By happenstance, 13-year-old Joe was visiting his grandfather that unforgettable night. They would later learn that a fanatical neighbor had argued with Joe’s mother, slapping her out of anger that her husband was in America, escaping the concentration camps. To protect Joe from being taken in his father’s place, Joe’s grandfather hid him in his attic for a week until the family could safely escape Germany.

They were lucky.

The family was reunited in Norfolk, Virginia, where Joe would attend Norfolk Public Schools until June 1940. At age 15, he began working 62-hour weeks—earning just $10—to assist with the family’s living expenses.

His schooling became limited to three nights a week at Maury High School, where he took English classes.

Having seen firsthand the ravages of Hitler’s plans, in 1944, 19-year-old Joe joined the U.S. Army 343rd Infantry Regiment (Blackhawks) in Europe. During combat, he lost half of his hearing ability. He was then sent to the Philippines for amphibious training to prepare for the February 19, 1945, assault on Iwo Jima.

Following the military, Joe returned to Norfolk, where he worked as an auditor for the U.S. Treasury Department. At night, he attended the Norfolk Division of William and Mary, now ODU, from which he received his bachelor of science degree, cum laude, in business administration in June 1956.

Because Joe loved academia, when the head of the business department asked him to teach accounting courses at night, Joe readily agreed. He received his C.P.A. certificate in 1954 and taught until 1963.

Joe lived his life aware of having barely escaped death in the Holocaust and mindful that only through several complex twists of good fortune did he survive WWII.

Joe never married. He intentionally lived frugally in order to set up a charitable remainder trust that would benefit several local charities following his death. His gift to ODU established the Joseph Fleischmann Scholarship Endowment for pre-med or nursing students in the College of Health Sciences.

What a fitting tribute to Joe that he will share a twist of good fortune with future ODU students!
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