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Virginia Magazine does not publish
unsolicited articles.

The University of Virginia Magazine (ISSN 0195-8798) is published four times yearly by the Alumni Association of the University of Virginia in March, June, September and December. Editorial and business offices are in Charlottesville, VA 22903. Periodicals-class postage is paid at Charlottesville, VA, and at additional mailing offices (USPS 652-480).

POSTMASTER: Please send Form 3379 to Virginia Magazine, P.O. Box 400314, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4314. Phone: 434-243-9000

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to earn
people’s
trust.”**

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ON THE COVER: Photo by Adam Ewing



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Coverage in a breakneck news cycle

Hello, readers! As I write this letter, January is coming to a close. Charlottesville has been digging its way out of snow and ice for days and is hoping to avoid another storm this weekend.

Iceberg: arguably good in the context of lettuce, objectively terrible on my driveway.

Here at the magazine, we're pushing through production to finish our quarterly cycle. Our ad director has been working with clients since October. Our five-person editorial team has been planning, reporting, writing and editing since November. Our creative director has been planning illustrations, coordinating and directing photo shoots, and designing for the past month. Now all these pieces will go through a rigorous proofing process before we go to press in early February.

But editors plan and newsmakers titter quietly to themselves. Because of the time it takes to print, bind and ship more than 170,000 copies, it will be March before this one hits your mailbox. Any number of things might have happened by then. (I certainly hope the weather's nicer.)

In the year and change since I've become editor of this magazine, the pace of the news that interests UVA alumni about their alma mater has accelerated dramatically.

Just in January: UVA's 10th president has started his tenure (see Page 42); nearly 1,000 pages of text messages between BOV members have been released to the public;

and five BOV members have resigned, reportedly at the request of the newly elected governor, who then appointed 10 new members (see Page 26). Not to mention that that new governor is the commonwealth's historic first female governor and a 'Hoo: **Abigail Spanberger (Col '01)**.

In the past, any of these stories could have occupied an enormous amount of our energy and coverage. But now we're watching all of them and updating stories and plans constantly. In the magazine you hold in your hands, we work to give readers context behind the news stories, which takes time to report.

But in between these issues, you can find more up-to-date news coverage at uvamagazine.org and in our monthly emails. Don't get them? Email uvamag@virginia.edu.

We also know that news stories aren't the only ones that interest our readers. In this issue you'll also find articles about Newcomb Hall (see Page 48), UVA research into GLP-1s (see Page 36), alumni memories of student self-governance (see Page 62), and tips from UVA experts on making and keeping friends (see Page 54).

As always, thanks for reading.

JUDY LÊ
Editor-in-Chief, *Virginia Magazine*



WINTER 2025

The winter issue of *Virginia Magazine* capped a momentous year for the university. I'm grateful for an alumni magazine that produces unflinching reporting in uncertain and even embarrassing times for our beloved alma

CORRECTION

In the Winter 2025 UDigest story "The newest 'Hoos, by the numbers," the map of China incorrectly included Taiwan. We apologize for the error.



Letters ▶

mater. Too many alumni magazines resort to boosterism and fluff (ask me how I know—I've got three degrees from three different universities). I've relied on your coverage to get a better understanding of student, faculty and administrator life on Grounds. Thank you, and please, keep up the excellent work.

Suzannah Evans Comfort (Col '03)
Bloomington, Indiana

I appreciate the clarity you were able to distill from the terrible assault on the school, and indeed all colleges. The funding hammer mill unleashed against academia is an appalling attack on freedom of speech and freedom of political thought.

The university has done a great job of weathering the storm.

This is a low point in our political and academic history.

My thanks to Ms. Lê and Mr. Miller, and of course to Interim President Paul Mahoney.

Jim Leone (Com '65)
Deltona, Florida

THE FUTURE OF STUDENT SELF-GOVERNANCE

I was very impressed with the quality and depth of the recent article on student governance. As a UVA student, resident, fellow and faculty member over nearly four decades (1978-2017), I experienced many of the challenges facing student governance described in the article. It is my firm belief that current and future students will continue to rise to these challenges and make needed changes that will affirm the trust, dignity, respect and courage that are at the heart of the true UVA community.

Valentina Brashers (Med '82, Res '85, Fellow '88)
Livermore, Colorado

The election of Howard the Duck was not apathy. Think about what it takes for a write-in fictional candidate to be elected! That's not apathy. As a person who wrote in Howard the Duck, I recall knowing more about this fictional cartoon character than I did about any of the live candidates who were running. Think of it as a bit more of a protest vote about how disconnected people involved in student governance had gotten from the body of students at the university as a whole. That's how I thought of it, but I don't recall knowing how others were considering it. Likely, some students just thought it was funny.

Marianne L. Padgett (Col '81)
Annandale, Virginia

The section on University Guides in the article "The Future of Student Self-Governance" in the Winter 2025 edition of *Virginia Magazine* upset me.

I joined the Guides in 1975. The primary selection criteria were GPA, other activities and—importantly—performance in giving a historical tour or an admissions tour to experienced Guides. I have no recollection of any events at which new Guides were coerced into overconsuming alcohol. I occasionally drank too much and saw others drink too much, particularly



during my first year in an Old Dorm. But forcing a new Guide to drink is not something we would have done.

Moreover, I never failed to give a tour I signed up for and I do not recall ever hearing that another Guide had done so. We printed our names on a schedule, and we felt obligated to give that tour.

Finally, I was never told that any tour I gave was too positive or negative about UVA. On admissions tours, I felt obligated to tell prospective students what life as a UVA student was really like. I usually took them through one of the Old Dorms. I enjoyed being a Guide. I am sorry that the university terminated its Special Status Agreement with the Guides. Shame on those responsible.

Robert Kantner (Col '77)
Addison, Texas

I thought the article on the future of self-governance was interesting and informative. It recapped well the various elements of self-governance, from the former Pep Band to the Honor Committee. I was left to wonder what the cover photo was intended to communicate. The five student leaders seemed to coordinate a slovenly appearance and a surly, almost defiant facial expression. The image left me puzzled.

Hunter Hollar (Col '71)
Crozet, Virginia

I was first introduced to the university's Honor System when the student Guide provided the basics of the system during the initial tour. But it really hit home when, soon after matriculating, I observed students leaving their books outside the entrance to Alderman Library while they were there for various reasons. It made a big impression on me.

Tom Allan (Col '66)
Suffolk, Virginia

It is only with responsibility of self to conduct of Honor that student governance endures. When this basic principle of behavior appears to require layers of management (although well-meaning) to be effective, the tradition erodes into a bureaucratic morass. Students who are unable or unwilling to commit to honorable behavior must be allowed to fail and depart the university. Blessed with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes, they may flourish elsewhere.

"We do not lie, cheat or steal nor allow among us those who do." It was just that simple at the University of Virginia for most of us in the '50s and early '60s and hopefully for a great many today!

Ron Roberts (Com '63)
Shoreline, Washington

IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM

Mr. Mahoney is the perfect person for president of the University of Virginia.

Dennis James Hughes (Educ '70)
Knoxville, Tennessee



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UVA-DOJ DEAL PAUSES INVESTIGATIONS, ADDS REPORTING REQUIREMENT [U-DIGEST]

I was disappointed and dismayed to learn of the university’s agreement with the Justice Department. An agreement requires trust as a keystone, and any individual or organization that places trust in today’s Pam Bondi-led Justice Department demonstrates naivete and foolishness. Deals made with the devil are bound to eventuate in a severe burn, and perhaps a conflagration. I sadly and ruefully await the dropping of the next shoe.

Richard P. Dibala (Med '75)
Mansfield Center, Connecticut

This sounds like the school is caving to Trump. If UVA can’t or won’t stand up and resist the king, many students and graduates are being disrespected—as is founder Thomas Jefferson. The Constitution is being ripped apart and needs to be defended, not ignored.

Jerry Sviatko (Educ '76)
Alexandria, Virginia

As a longtime financial supporter and alum, I implore UVA to not agree to the demands of this corrupt Justice Department. It will destroy the integrity and reputation of UVA.

Anne Constant (Educ '72, '79)
Bethesda, Maryland

Horrible. This is not the UVA of old.
Phillip Oliver (Darden '68)
Tifton, Georgia

UVA REJECTS TRUMP ADMINISTRATION COMPACT FOR PREFERENTIAL FUNDING [U-DIGEST]

As a UVA alum, I was initially relieved when *Virginia Magazine* reported that the university had refused to sign Trump’s compact. But I now know that Mahoney had, in fact, entered into a DOJ agreement that mirrors the compact’s most troubling provisions. I am deeply concerned by the actions of UVA’s board and interim president.

In times when our democracy, academic freedom, and basic human decency are under direct threat, honest coverage and rigorous education are essential. Elite educational institutions need to lead and set an example for their students. The *Virginia Magazine* editors, the university’s board and Mahoney know better—and must step aside and let others do better.

Eleanor Trice (Col '90)
Alexandria, Virginia

TWO PARTS OF DOJ INVESTIGATION CLOSED, MAHONEY SAYS [UVAMAGAZINE.ORG]

I sincerely hope that the university will refuse to sign the compact proposed by the Trump administration. It would lead to a lack of academic freedom for everyone in the community and would allow federal oversight of curriculum, which belongs to the faculty and the administration of the university. For 50 years I have been proud to be an alumna of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. As a teacher for 40 years, I sent a number of students to the university because I believed it to be one of the finest institutions in the

United States. I hope that my trust is not misplaced. When I was a student, “What would Mr. Jefferson think or do?” seemed to be asked before any major decision. I am convinced that Mr. Jefferson would be telling the university to refuse to sign. After all, he helped found this country, wrote the Declaration of Independence, and was opposed to tyranny of despots and would-be despots.

Ann Rose McBride (Grad '75)
Louisville, Kentucky



THE FIGHT FOR UVA [FALL 2025]

Thank you for providing thorough background detailing tensions between President Ryan and the Trump administration. Context is everything. When I entered UVA in 1965, I wore a coat and tie to class; and in 1969, I wore a coat and tie to join others on Grounds to call for civil rights, specifically urging the university to admit women and people of color. Over many years, I’ve celebrated changes on Grounds, and whenever I visit, I’m pleased to see female students and students from many different racial and cultural backgrounds. Over decades, the university has made much-needed strides in diversity and inclusion, with UVA becoming stronger, not weaker, as a result. That is the most significant context underlying the tensions that resulted in President Ryan’s resignation. It is reprehensible to have a federal administration that places pressure on this university and others to undo the good things we’ve worked so hard to achieve. The attempt to use federal grants as rewards and punishments constitutes nothing less than bribery and extortion.

Jack Greer (Col '69)
Shenandoah, Virginia

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Rebecca White | 434.531.5097 | rebecca@loringwoodriff.com | buildwithpeak.com



I was very upset that UVA folded to Trump. In essence, the university gave in to a threat to remove the federal government funding awarded to faculty. I would guess that the political appointees on the Board of Visitors saw their role as humoring Trump or, more believably, feared Trump. Well, humoring an autocrat is a deadly game.

It seems to me that the university, as Harvard has done, could sue the federal funders and provide some research funds out of the university endowment. Why sacrifice a good president? Why bow to an autocrat throwing his perceived weight around?

As a graduate student and then faculty member at UVA, I know the Honor Code and the place it holds for all students and faculty. The BOV should have reread it and decided that education obstructed by a would-be autocrat is not a UVA value and decided to fight for educational freedom. Harvard has set a fine example for higher education in the United States. I hope other institutions of higher education follow its lead. I also hope that fellow alumni recognize the inappropriateness of

the current federal administration's actions against institutions of higher education.

Patricia A. Rowell (Nurs '80)
Alexandria, Virginia

A WHOLE NEW BALLGAME [FALL 2025]

The whole purpose of attending a top-tier school is to gain knowledge that will prepare a student for life as a person who will contribute to the growth of society. The whole process of overpaying a coaching staff, paying students to participate in sports and attempting to gain revenue through media seems to me contrary to the reason for operating an institution of higher learning. Many renowned institutions of higher learning reduce the emphasis on sports, except those played on the intramural level, and still maintain their status—think of MIT, Caltech and others. Maybe UVA should follow that example and not attempt to ride the popular wave of sports enthusiasm. Alumni can be proud of the accomplishments of UVA setting sports aside.

John O. Hunnicutt (Engr '68)
Ashburn, Virginia

VOX ALUMNI

Send Us Your Thoughts

We welcome your letters.

The *Virginia Magazine* letters section is part of the UVA Alumni Association's broader Vox Alumni initiative, aimed at gaining greater understanding of alumni views and sharing insights. For letters intended for publication, please limit your remarks to 200 words and include your name, school, class year, city and state. We may not be able to publish all submissions, and we edit for length, clarity, style and civility. We give preference to letters that address the content of the magazine. The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Alumni Association.

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

HARNESSING THE POWER OF THE ALUMNI NETWORK

There's nothing quite like springtime on Grounds. Student life is bustling, alumni events are in full swing, and the beauty of Charlottesville is undeniable. At the Alumni Association, we embark on this season with a renewed commitment to our mission of serving as the heartbeat of the Wahoo experience for life.

Our aspiration is to create the most actively engaged, tightly connected alumni network in the nation—a proud family of Hoos committed to making a lasting impact at UVA and beyond. That is why we are investing in a variety of new programs, including expanded career and industry-focused offerings.

From Career Development Week, an annual weeklong career learning event series, to regular Let's Network gatherings for our nine industry-aligned Alumni Professional Networks (APNs), to drop-in

virtual career advising sessions, to interactive half-day industry summits in cities across the country, the Alumni Association is harnessing the power of the UVA alumni network to serve Hoos across fields and experience levels.

More information about upcoming career programming—along with other signature spring events—is included on the next page. We hope you'll join us in unlocking the full potential of our alumni community.

Wahoowa!

Lily West (Darden '12)
President & CEO,
UVA Alumni Association

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF MANAGERS 2025–2026

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Young Alumni Council Rep.

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Jefferson Trust Rep.



THIS YEAR, the Alumni Association is expanding programming that connects Hoos across industries and throughout their career journeys.

In February, the Association's Government and Public Service Alumni Professional Network (APN) brought alumni together at the UVA Northern Virginia campus for an afternoon of career support, networking, and resource sharing. Attendees participated in 1:1 career advising sessions and joined a discussion on the ways emerging AI technologies are shaping public-sector work. APN events like this one build community within a community and enrich the UVA alumni network.

The Alumni Association holds a unique ability to channel the impact of our alumni community. At its heart, our career engagement programming strives to strengthen alumni connections across industries, generations, and career stages in ways that are both relevant and lasting. Whether you are exploring new paths, building your professional network, or navigating times of uncertainty, we are excited to continue building these connections with you and for you.



9,000+

alumni affiliated with one or more APNs in FY25



700+

Hoos engaged in the Association's second-annual Career Development Week in FY25



CONSTRUCTION is well underway on the Alumni Association's new Home for Every Hoo. Be sure to follow along at [UVAalumni.org/new-home](https://uvaalumni.org/new-home) as we continue to share updates and photos of the progress on our way to a spring 2027 grand opening!

UPCOMING UVA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Alumni Association Spring Giving Day

March 11

When our community gives, we ignite lifelong engagement together. Join us to make a collective impact!

Let's Network: Media, Sports & Entertainment

March 19, 2-3 p.m. ET

Join Hoos in the media, sports, and entertainment industries for an hour of industry-focused virtual networking featuring a special guest, small-group conversations, and a timely discussion on "How AI Is Transforming Creative Careers—and How to Stay Future-Ready."

Brave Kind Good: Unlocking Your Full Potential

March 25, 8-9 p.m. ET

Join College Compass and Brave Kind Good in a virtual conversation on decision making, goal setting, and leadership skills, for 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th graders to unlock their full potential to make positive and impactful choices.

Ridley Scholarship Program Giving Day

April 1

Celebrate Dr. Ridley's birthday with a gift on Ridley Scholarship Program's Giving Day.

Black Alumni Weekend

April 10-12

All alumni are invited to join us for an unforgettable weekend of connection, laughter, and lifelong memories as we build on a tradition over 40 years in the making.

Reunions 2026

June 5-7

Hoos with class years ending in 1 and 6 are invited to Bring it Back to Grounds for a weekend to remember.

Alumni Family Day

June 12, 8 a.m. -3:30 p.m. ET

Alumni families with high schoolers graduating in 2027 and 2028 are invited to join College Compass and the UVA Office of Undergraduate Admission for this day-long program in Charlottesville offering insight on the college search and application process.



SCAN TO REGISTER AND TO SEE MORE EVENTS

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U Digest



A SEASON TURNED UP TO 11

Shaking off the disappointment of an overtime loss to Duke in the ACC Championship game, UVA bounced back to beat Missouri 13-7 in the Gator Bowl on Dec. 27, completing a season for the ages. Picked 14th in the 17-team ACC, the Cavaliers finished 11-3, the most wins in the program's 137-year history. Along the way, the "Cardiac Cavs" won three overtime games, beat Virginia Tech to reclaim the Commonwealth Cup and drew an average of 48,776 fans to Scott Stadium, the most since 2008.



Total first-year applications to UVA surge to 82,089

BY SARAH LINDENFELD HALL

Over the past decade, the number of prospective first-years applying to UVA has climbed steadily. But in this year's admissions cycle, total applications surged—to 82,089, a 27 percent jump from last year's 64,457 and a 153 percent increase from 2016, when 32,377 students applied. The previous high increase in the past decade came in 2021 when applications rose year-over-year by about 17 percent.

This year's record-breaking numbers came as UVA made applying slightly easier. Except for nursing school applicants, prospective students no longer had to submit supplemental essays beyond the Common Application's personal statement.

The university "can't speculate on any specific driving forces behind the greater application numbers this year," Bethanie Glover, UVA's deputy spokesperson, said in a statement.

Eliminating the short answer prompts, Glover said, creates a leaner application and eases the burden on students. One recent prompt, for

example, asked applicants to write in 250 words or less about how their individual background, perspective or experience would serve as a source of strength for them or those around them at UVA.


"High school seniors are applying to more colleges and universities than ever, which requires completing a large number of short answer essay responses during their already busy fall semester," Glover said. "Our hope is that this will lighten the load and reduce stress and anxiety around the college application process."

UVA's public peer institutions retained their supplemental essays for applicants this year, including UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of Michigan, UC Berkeley and UCLA.

UVA admits students through three separate rounds—early decision, early action and regular decision—with application deadlines in November and January. Notifications for regular decision applicants will arrive by April 1. For the early decision and early action rounds, UVA has already notified applicants.

In late January, UVA offered admission to 7,151 early action applicants with an offer rate of 23 percent for Virginia residents and 9 percent for out-of-state students, according to the admissions blog. Just under 4,000 students typically make up the first-year class.

In December's early decision round, UVA extended binding offers of admission to 1,225 future 'Hoos, with an offer rate of 25 percent for Virginia residents and 23 percent for out-of-state students.

For context, across all admissions rounds, acceptance rates for last year's Class of 2029 were 23 percent for in-state applicants and 12.5 percent for out-of-state. 



 **This year's record-breaking numbers came as UVA made applying slightly easier.**



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Murder victims Devin Chandler, Lavel Davis Jr. and D'Sean Perry

Former student gets life for 2022 shootings

Survivor says sentence gives “a little bit of peace”

BY ED MILLER

Imposing the maximum penalty for what prosecutors termed “unfathomable acts of harm,” an Albemarle County Circuit Court judge in November sentenced former UVA student Christopher Darnell Jones Jr. to five life sentences for the 2022 murders of football players **Devin Chandler (Col '24), Lavel Davis Jr. (Col '24) and D'Sean Perry (Col '23)**, and the shootings of students **Mike Hollins (Col '23, Educ '24) and Marlee Morgan (Com '25)** as they all returned from a class trip to Washington, D.C.

Family members of the slain players had waited three years for some measure of justice, as well as for answers about the events leading up to the shootings.

“My question is why? We all want to know why,” Happy Perry, mother of D'Sean Perry, testified.

The facts of that night were not in dispute; Jones confessed to the shootings. A pair of heavily redacted reports related to the events, released in March 2025, did not reveal much new information.

Over five days of often harrowing testimony, however, a more complete picture emerged: details of Jones' troubled upbringing and his time at UVA, accounts of his actions leading up to and on the day of the shootings, as well as victim and witness accounts of the shootings themselves and of the trauma and anguish still suffered by survivors and relatives.

“This is a life sentence for all of us,” said Brenda Hollins, Mike Hollins' mother. “It's a life sentence, and we didn't ask for that.”

Initially charged with three counts of aggravated murder, which would have carried mandatory sentences of life without parole had he been convicted at trial, Jones in November 2024 pleaded guilty to the lesser charge of first-degree murder, which has a sentencing range of 20 years to life. He also pleaded guilty to two charges of aggravated malicious wounding, which carry the same sentencing range.

Jones was initially set to be sentenced in early February, but the hearing was delayed until November. It began four days after the third anniversary of the shootings.

Family members, survivors and UVA officials filled all seven allotted rows of the courtroom throughout the week. Boxes of tissues were lined up for them each morning on the partition dividing spectators from the main part of the courtroom.

More than 20 witnesses testified, with the defense and prosecution laying out contrasting narratives of what led Jones to shoot five fellow students as the bus carrying them neared the Culbreth Road parking garage around 10:15 p.m. that Sunday night.

Lawyers for Jones argued that he was in the throes of a mental health crisis when he committed the crimes. They asserted repeatedly that Jones was experiencing extreme paranoia and cognitive distortion that made him perceive threats where none existed.

“Christopher was severely mentally ill but not filled with evil intent,” public defender **Nick Reppucci (Col ’92, Law ’96)** said in his closing arguments.

A 61-page mitigation narrative submitted by the defense detailed Jones’ impoverished upbringing and the mental and physical abuse and “severe trauma” he suffered as a child. Defense witnesses testified that despite growing up in a home one relative described as “a war zone,” Jones became a star athlete and student leader at Petersburg High School, south of Richmond, and won a partial academic scholarship to UVA, where he was also a member of the football team in 2018. Many of the same witnesses said that by the summer of 2022 Jones had become a completely different person, unrecognizable from the young man they had known.

“It felt like nothing we could have said was getting through to him at that point,” said Antonio Clarke Jr., a cousin who grew up with Jones.

Prosecutors did not dispute that Jones had mental health issues but said he acted rationally in planning and committing the crimes, and when making his escape. They also said Jones lived a “double life”—one in which he was a polite, hardworking high achiever and another in which he used and sold drugs, had violent outbursts, and stockpiled guns in his dorm room.

“This was not a freak psychotic episode,” Albemarle Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney Richard

Farley said in the prosecution’s closing argument. “This was a criminal episode.”

According to the defense, Jones’ downward spiral at UVA began in November 2019, when he was stabbed during a brawl involving football players and local residents outside a restaurant near the Corner. Jones needed 20 stitches and two staples to close the wounds on his face and head. The incident shattered the sense of safety he’d felt at the university, the defense argued in court and in the mitigation report. Jones met with a university dean and then briefly with a UVA police officer but was not interested in pursuing the case, and charges were never filed, according to the report.

Jones also struggled during the pandemic. Forced to move back to Petersburg, Virginia, he took classes online while working a series of low-wage jobs to support himself and his grandmother. Jones also began selling marijuana, according to the report.

When his sister was severely injured in a car accident, Jones’ mental health declined further. He began “taking whatever pills he could get his hands on” and was soon mixing them with alcohol, according to the report.

Jones in August 2020 was charged with felony hit-and-run. Then in February 2021, after a traffic stop, he was charged with carrying a concealed 9 mm pistol without a permit; he had to forfeit the gun. He attempted to buy another gun but couldn’t because of his conviction on the felony hit-and-run charge, the report said. Later, after that conviction was reduced to a misdemeanor on appeal, he bought a rifle and then a Glock 45 9 mm pistol.

A planned semester leave of absence from UVA turned into a year. Jones returned in August 2022.

Back at school, Jones was “all over the place” mentally, testified **Alexis Stokes (Col ’23, Educ ’24)**, a friend who was on the trip. He was “very paranoid,” believing that people were out to harm him.

“My heart has been broken in a way that can never be repaired.”

—*Dalayna Chandler, Devin Chandler’s mother*

According to the mitigation report, Jones focused much of his paranoia on a mutual friend of his and Stokes’, a student with whom he’d had a brief romantic relationship. The three students remained friends after the relationship ended, but Jones became convinced that the student was trying to set him up to be harmed, according to the report.

The prosecution painted a different picture of Jones.

Farley, the assistant commonwealth’s attorney, said Jones’ motive for the shootings was jealousy. The student with whom he’d had a romantic relationship was on the trip and sat with the football players at dinner after the show, he said.

In text messages to a mentor before the shooting, Jones claimed that the football players had bullied him. “[T]his entire trip these boys have been (messing) wit me... tonight I’m either going to hell or jail. I’m sorry,” he wrote.

Multiple witnesses who were on the bus trip testified that the football players had barely interacted with him.

“The case is truly about anger and sexual jealousy,” Farley said.

Prosecutors also said that after shooting the players, Jones turned to the student and said, “You’re lucky I don’t shoot women.”

Jones cursed out the players as he left the bus and made his escape on foot, prosecutors said.

He ditched his red jacket, red hoodie, phone and gun, and donned a mask. Roughly five minutes after the shooting, when police were looking for an unnamed suspect in a red jacket and hoodie, Jones was stopped by a UVA police officer at the corner of Rugby Road and University Avenue. Body-camera footage played in court showed

“All the families wanted justice for the lives lost and the long-lasting grief that we’ve all been experiencing.”

—Survivor Mike Hollins (Col '23, Educ '24)

the officer questioning Jones, who when asked said that he had not heard any shots. Asked whether he was a student, Jones produced his ID card. He also complied when the officer asked him to lift his shirt to show that he didn't have any weapons.

When information about the shooting came over the police radio, Jones feigned surprise. “Oh my goodness, what?” he said before the officer let him go.

UVA was locked down for just under 12 hours, until Jones was arrested the next morning near his mother's house in Henrico County, around Richmond.

Prosecutors presented additional evidence that they said showed Jones' true nature. On the final day of the hearing, over the objection of the defense team, they introduced into evidence a pair of jailhouse phone calls Jones had made earlier in the week. In the recordings, Jones referred to the three murdered players as growing up comfortably in better circumstances than he did. He was also heard laughing about the case.

“That's the real Chris Jones,” Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Susan Baumgartner said.

In his closing argument, defender Reppucci asked Judge Cheryl Higgins to impose a sentence of 40 years of active incarceration, a significant punishment but one “tempered with mercy,” he said. Reppucci said the stabbing at UVA was a turning point and that Jones no longer felt secure there.

The prosecution said UVA had no shortage of support in place, had Jones sought it.

“UVA provided the most nurturing environment that this man will ever exist in,” Farley said. He added: “He could have gotten treatment. Instead he committed mass murder.”

Baumgartner said the mercy the defense requested had been granted in the plea agreement, which allows Jones to

apply for geriatric release—conditional release for anyone convicted of a felony who has served at least 10 years of their sentence and is 60 or older.

Dressed in a suit for much of the hearing, with his hair closely cropped, Jones sat impassively for most of the week, with one hand bound by a chain around his waist.

He addressed the court for about 20 minutes before the sentence was handed down. Sobbing heavily, he apologized to family members of the three students killed, and to Hollins and Morgan. Many stood up and left the courtroom as he began speaking.

“I'm so sorry,” he said. “I know that doesn't change anything.”

Jones said he did not expect forgiveness. “I know y'all don't forgive me,” he said. “I don't forgive myself.”

As to the length of his sentence, Jones said: “I never said I wanted anything less than life. I don't deserve anything like that.”



Jones

Trauma from the crime remains fresh, particularly to those directly affected.

Kwamie Green, an aunt of Lavel Davis Jr., spoke for the family and said the past three years have been “a nightmare we cannot wake

up from.”

Delayna Chandler, Devin Chandler's mother, said, “My heart has been broken in a way that can never be repaired.”

Students who went on the trip testified to being fearful in public places, to being hypervigilant and to having flashbacks, among other lingering effects.

“People say it gets better, but it really doesn't,” Stokes said. “You just learn to cope with it.”

Family members and survivors assembled again after Higgins completed her deliberations, which took about an hour.

In explaining her sentencing decision, Higgins acknowledged that Jones' psychological function was “severely compromised.”

“But these distortions did not interfere with his ability to complete actions,” she said. “He acted knowing that what was contemplated would lead to dire consequences.”

Higgins also cited the “execution-style” manner of the killings and the vulnerability of the victims. “The court finds these facts do merit a life sentence,” she said.

Relatives of the victims began quietly weeping as she announced the sentences. After Higgins left, many of them applauded and embraced.

Outside the courthouse, as a light rain fell on that Friday evening, Mike Hollins stood in front of a bank of television cameras.

“All the families wanted justice for the lives lost and the long-lasting grief that we've all been experiencing,” Hollins said. “To add onto that, we just wanted to look for a little bit of closure out of what happened.”

Hollins said he had “a little bit of peace” knowing that Jones won't be harming anyone else. He also said he was grateful that the truth of what happened that Nov. 13 had come to light, not just for the families but for the entire community.

“Just to connect the fine nuanced dots that led up to the event,” he said. “I think that definitely helped.”

Ed Miller is senior writer of Virginia Magazine.

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GOV. SPANBERGER OVERHAULS BOV

BY MARTHA CARR

In one of her first official acts as governor, Democrat **Abigail Spanberger (Col '01)** in January appointed 10 new members to the Board of Visitors, assuming majority control of the governing body after a turbulent year marked by pressure from the Trump administration, the ouster of popular President **Jim Ryan (Law '92)** and the ascension of Darden School of Business Dean Scott Beardsley to the university's top post.

A day before Spanberger's inauguration on Jan. 17, five board members resigned, reportedly at the urging of the incoming governor, including Rector **Rachel Sheridan (Col '94, Law '98)**, Vice Rector **Porter Wilkinson (Law '07)** and Paul Manning, who gave \$100 million to the university in 2023. According to written accounts by Ryan and Sheridan, all three interacted with Justice Department officials in the run-up to Ryan's forced resignation.

Five more seats on the 17-member board had been vacant since summer, when the Senate Privileges and Elections committee did not confirm Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin's appointees.

FROM RESIGNATIONS TO REPLACEMENTS

Spanberger's picks include high-powered executives in business, finance, law and medicine, many of whom have been active at the university for years.

All are alumni, and four have served on the BOV before: **Peter Grant II (Col '78, Darden '86)**, a private equity investor who chaired the university's recent \$6 billion capital campaign; **Victoria Harker (Col '86)**, a former Tegna executive who was appointed by Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell in 2012; **Evans Poston Jr. (Darden '17)**, a director at Troutman Strategies who



Gov. Spanberger delivers her inaugural address on Jan. 17, 2026.

was appointed by former Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam in 2018; and **Carlos Brown (Col '96, Law '99)**, an executive vice president at Dominion Energy who served as vice rector from 2023 to 2025.

Five of Spanberger's appointees—Harker, Poston, **Rudene Haynes (Col '96)**, **Owen Griffin Jr. (Com '93, Grad '94, Darden '99)** and **Michael Bisceglia (Col '79)**—have each given tens of thousands of dollars to Virginia Democrats, including Spanberger, according to the Virginia Public Access Project (VPAP), a nonprofit that tracks campaign contributions. Bisceglia served on Spanberger's transition team and gave the most to her election effort: \$24,000 to her gubernatorial campaign and \$12,500 to the inaugural committee.

Grant, on the other hand, has contributed exclusively to Republican candidates, including Youngkin. Harker also gave \$6,600 to the Spirit of Virginia PAC, which supported Youngkin and other GOP candidates, in 2023.

Other GOP donors currently sit on the board, including **Marvin Gilliam Jr. (Col '78)** a former coal mining executive who has donated more than \$1.7 million to Virginia Republicans since 1998, and **John Nau III (Col '68)**, owner of a beer distribution business, who has given \$1.3 million to Virginia GOP candidates since 1999, according to VPAP.

A SEARCH UNDER SCRUTINY

Shortly after Spanberger was elected by a 15-point margin, she issued a letter asking the board to delay selecting a new president. The Faculty Senate and nine deans also called for a pause. The BOV acted otherwise, inking a five-and-a-half year contract with Beardsley on Dec. 19.

In an appearance before a Virginia Senate subcommittee on Jan. 12, then-Rector Sheridan defended Beardsley's hiring, saying the board needed to stabilize leadership and earn trust on Grounds. She also said Beardsley was far from a political ideologue.

Jeri Seidman, chair of UVA's Faculty Senate, said now that Spanberger has made changes to the board, it is time to let members get to work.

"We need to trust the newly constituted board in a review of the presidential search process rather than presuppose the outcome," Seidman wrote in an email. "Whether it feels the search and appointment were proper and affirms the presidential selection or initiates a new search, I hope the board communicates as much information as it is able in order to help the community understand and accept its decision."

CONTRACTS AND COSTS

Still unknown is what the new board will do regarding Beardsley, 62.

JAY PAUL

According to his contract, Beardsley's compensation package includes \$1.3 million in annual base pay, a \$250,000 yearly deferred compensation plan, housing in the president's residence, a car allowance, and the potential to earn both merit and cost-of-living raises.

If terminated for a reason not specified in the contract, UVA would be on the hook to pay Beardsley 12 months' salary and 12 months' sabbatical leave, plus any sabbatical time already vested. That could mean a hit of more than \$3 million if, for instance, two-thirds of the board determines the search process was flawed and votes to remove him or return him to his faculty position.

Beardsley's deal also guarantees him 10 years of employment as a Darden faculty member at 60 percent of his presidential pay or his prior dean's salary, whichever is less. If he is terminated without cause from that position, UVA must pay him a sum equal to the greater of 24 months or half the remaining months of the 10-year period's compensation.

Beardsley said in an interview last month that the board approached him with a contract largely modeled after those of prior presidents. "The idea that you have a contract and there might be uncertainty and 'What do you do if...?' This is not unusual," he said.

Spanberger's move to overhaul the board is the latest in a national fight over the future of top-tier universities. The Trump administration has intensified scrutiny of institutions it argues are too progressive, deploying tactics such as withholding research funding and launching DOJ investigations into admissions practices and diversity, equity and inclusion policies. Faculty and students have countered in protests and public resolutions that these actions undermine institutional autonomy and pose a serious risk to academic freedom.

In October, interim President Paul Mahoney entered into an agreement with the DOJ to pause five federal investigations into UVA around what the department called potential illegal discrimination. ▼

Martha Carr is associate editor of Virginia Magazine. Senior writer Ed Miller contributed to this report.

A NEW MAJORITY Changes to UVA's Board of Visitors

NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Michael C. Bisceglia
(Col '79)
Richmond, Virginia



Carlos M. Brown Jr.
(Col '96, Law '99)
Glen Allen, Virginia



Robert G. Byron
(Col '73, Law '76)
Charlottesville



Peter M. Grant II
(Col '78, Darden '86)
Charlottesville



Owen D. Griffin Jr. (Com '93,
Grad '94, Darden '99)
Norfolk, Virginia



Victoria D. Harker (Col '86)
McLean, Virginia



Elizabeth H. Hayes (Law '78)
Arlington, Virginia



Rudene M. Haynes (Col '96)
Midlothian, Virginia



C. Evans Poston Jr.
(Darden '17)
Norfolk, Virginia



Mohsin Syed
(Col '02, Law '08)
Arlington, Virginia

CONTINUING BOARD MEMBERS

Appointed by former Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin and remaining on the board.



Daniel M. Brody (Col '73)
Charlottesville
Term ends June 30, 2028



Marvin W. Gilliam Jr. (Col '78)
Bristol, Virginia
Term ends June 30, 2028



Paul C. Harris
Richmond, Virginia
Term ends June 30, 2027



John L. Nau III (Col '68)
Houston
Term ends June 30, 2027



David O. Okonkwo (Col '94,
Intern '01, Res '06)
Pittsburgh
Term ends June 30, 2028



Amanda L. Pillion (Educ '97, '99)
Abingdon, Virginia
Term ends June 30, 2026



David F. Webb (Col '82)
Charlottesville
Term ends June 30, 2028

NONVOTING MEMBERS

Faculty and student representatives.



James H. Lambert (Engr '90, '94)
Charlottesville
Term ends June 30, 2026



Gregory D. Perryman Jr. (Col '26)
Charlottesville
Term ends May 31, 2026



Dear Members of the Faculty:

In July, J.J. Davis, Brie Gertler, Porter Wilkinson, and I addressed the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate and later a special meeting of the full Faculty Senate. In our meetings, we explained that legal counsel for the University had instructed all of us, in the strongest possible terms, that we could say very little about the ongoing negotiations with the Department of Justice and related events. We had also offered to provide a full briefing—including all of the details in this letter—to Faculty Senate Chair Jeri Seidman in the spirit of shared governance, but she asked to know only whatever more limited set of facts could be shared with the entire Faculty Senate. Now that there is an agreement with the Department of Justice that suspends the pending investigations, I have more latitude to share what I know. I hope that doing so will dispel some of the rumors and misinformation that have been circulating, and help the community move forward.

Throughout the U.S. Presidential transition and the early months of 2025, Trump administration officials made clear their belief that many universities had engaged in widespread defiance of the Supreme Court's 2023 decision in *Students for Fair Admissions*.



November 14, 2025

Dear Faculty Senators,

Yesterday, I received a forwarded copy of Rachel Sheridan's accounting of my resignation. I have also seen a letter from Governor Youngkin to Governor-Elect Spanberger, which also touches on the subject

James E. Ryan
President Emeritus
Professor of Law
Professor of Education

From the Desk of Paul B. Manning

Dear Fellow Visitors & Faculty Senate,

Recent coverage of the Department of Justice's interactions with my resignation, has raised understandable questions about what has been mentioned in some of these discussions, and in my role as a Visitor, I want to share my perspective directly for the record.

To begin, as a volunteer member of the BOV, I accept the responsibility that was enshrined in the Code of Virginia - to the Community with responsibility, seriousness and always endeavor to conduct myself with integrity.

Jim Ryan is a friend, and I respect him as an educator and as a member of my family and I chose to make a significant gift to create the University of Virginia. I believed in his vision for accelerating science and research, and I continue to believe UVA is stronger in this regard because of it.

from the account of Rector... response to or a point-by-point... here will be time for that... er, so I would have a... would release it publicly... me to respond, and I

think present an accurate... am sorry for the slight... appropriate to do so on the

The challenges UVA faced earlier this year were outlined in my resignation letter from the DOJ from April to June. My involvement with these matters was limited to the DOJ's request. At Jim's request, I agreed to speak with officials from the DOJ to understand the risks to the University presented by these letters. I met with DOJ officials, and that call also included UVA's legal counsel,

After this conversation, the content of which I shared with Jim in the aforementioned letters, it was clear to me the DOJ was preparing to take UVA immediately if certain steps were not taken, including a potential loss of material federal support would not have been directly jeopardized the work and livelihood of our faculty and staff.

PIECING TOGETHER THE LAST DAYS OF RYAN'S PRESIDENCY

BY JUDY LÉ

Since the moment then-President **Jim Ryan (Law '92)** announced his sudden resignation in June, members of the UVA community have clamored for answers. What happened leading up to his resignation? Who met with the Department of Justice and when?

Over the past few months, a mountain of communications—either written for release or produced in response to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests—about that period have become public. In November, then-Rector **Rachel Sheridan (Col '94, Law '98)** and Ryan each broke their respective months-long silences and sent

their personal accounts to the Faculty Senate. In December, then-Board of Visitors member Paul Manning, mentioned in both Ryan's and Sheridan's letters, followed suit. And in January, UVA produced nearly 1,000 pages of text messages among BOV members in response to a FOIA request.

Taken together—and even when sometimes conflicting—they provide some answers and reveal surprising details of the turbulent last months, and even hours, of Ryan's presidency.

THE DEI RESOLUTION

"The trouble began," according to Ryan's account, when UVA received a

resolution regarding diversity, equity and inclusion drafted by the office of Gov. Glenn Youngkin, a Republican. Ryan wrote that the sweeping resolution, filled with "inflammatory rhetoric," was the first one he'd seen drafted by the governor's office on behalf of the BOV.

The BOV ultimately passed a milder resolution that directed the university to ensure that it complied with federal civil rights law; dissolve the Division of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Community Partnerships; move permissible programs to a new organizational home; and update the board within 30 days.

Ryan immediately stated that he would comply, and did, he wrote. But the university has not given any public update about that directive's implementation. Ryan blamed the silence on the BOV, writing that while UVA

PHOTO: UVA COMMUNICATIONS

> According to all accounts, BOV members Rachel Sheridan, Porter Wilkinson and Paul Manning met with the Department of Justice.

administrators had updated the board before its 30-day deadline and prepared a message for the community, Sheridan and other board members wanted to meet to give feedback before communications went out. Later, after the DOJ began its investigations, board members continued to insist that the university not update the community until they had delivered a response to the DOJ.

“Which meant continued silence, which worried our community and buttressed the false narrative that we were dragging our feet,” Ryan wrote.

INTERACTIONS WITH THE DOJ

According to all accounts, Ryan never met or interacted with the DOJ. Everything from the DOJ was reported through Sheridan; Manning; and **Porter Wilkinson (Law ’07)**, Sheridan’s then-vice chair on the BOV’s Audit Committee who would go on to become vice rector, Ryan and Sheridan both wrote.

Sheridan wrote that she interacted with the DOJ three times—once in person and twice by phone—with legal counsel for UVA, including outside counsel, leading the interactions.

The in-person meeting took place Tuesday, June 3, about two months after the DOJ opened investigations into UVA and a few weeks before Ryan would resign. Sheridan and Wilkinson, along with counsel, met with department officials. Ryan wrote that he offered to attend the meeting but was told he was not invited; Sheridan wrote that neither Ryan nor then-Rector **Robert Hardie (Col ’87, Darden ’95, ’99)** wanted to attend, so she and Wilkinson “reluctantly agreed” to Ryan’s request that they go instead.

At that meeting, Sheridan wrote, DOJ lawyers indicated that they “lacked confidence in President Ryan to make the changes that the Trump administration believed were necessary to ensure compliance” with federal law. Sheridan wrote that she fully briefed Ryan and the BOV afterward.

The second interaction was a call on Tuesday, June 24, and included Sheridan, Manning and counsel, she

wrote. Manning wrote that, between that meeting and the letters, it was clear that “the DOJ was prepared to suspend federal funding to UVA immediately if certain steps were not taken, including a change in university leadership.” Ryan wrote that Manning told him DOJ lawyers threatened to “bleed UVA white” if he didn’t resign.

The last call with the DOJ was on Thursday, June 26, at Ryan’s suggestion. Even before these events, Ryan had grown increasingly inclined to leave UVA’s presidency before his contract ended; among other reasons, he had hit a milestone with the Honor the Future campaign and was finding it untenable to work with the “increasingly combative” BOV members, he wrote. On June 25, he told Sheridan and Manning that the 2025–26 school year would be his last, and he asked Sheridan to convey that to DOJ lawyers to see if it would improve UVA’s situation with the department.

The DOJ official made clear that Ryan’s resignation needed to be more immediate, Sheridan wrote. That day, *The New York Times* published a story using anonymous sources saying the DOJ had been pressuring Ryan to resign in order to resolve its investigations. Department lawyers were angry and surprised by the story and expressed as much to UVA counsel, she wrote.

Throughout this time, UVA administrators and counsel were also gathering information to respond to the DOJ’s investigations, Ryan wrote. “[A] pattern evolved. We assembled voluminous information ... and a few days before the deadline for submission, we would receive another DOJ inquiry asking about another school. ... Each time the scope of the DOJ inquiry expanded, our lawyers asked for and received extensions for submission of material.

“At several points, I suggested we

submit what we had already put together and ask for an extension only with respect to the most recent inquiry, but I was told we should take the extensions and wait to submit a comprehensive response. Which meant that, by the time I resigned, we had yet to respond to the DOJ’s inquiries, despite receiving seven letters and despite having assembled hundreds of pages of responsive information.”

He added: “There was never any finding of any legal liability by the DOJ prior to my forced resignation.”

RYAN’S RESIGNATION

Around 1 p.m. on Thursday, June 26, Sheridan and counsel called Ryan to discuss their final call with the DOJ, Ryan wrote. The DOJ lawyers were upset about the *New York Times* story and said he needed to resign, effective before students returned in the fall, by 5 p.m. that day or DOJ would take or block hundreds of millions of dollars from UVA.

Ryan wrote that Sheridan and the lawyers told him the DOJ had offered “an amazing deal—unlike any the lawyers had ever seen,” granting blanket immunity: Investigations would be stopped, there would be no financial penalties, and agencies would not cut off research funds. Ryan wrote that he asked repeatedly throughout the afternoon, as his 5 p.m. deadline approached, for Sheridan and counsel to get this deal in writing, and to see it. Ryan wrote that Sheridan told him at least part of the deal was in writing, but for fear of another leak, he could not see it.

Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division **Harmeet Dhillon (Law ’93)** has publicly denied the



For a detailed timeline of 2025, see Page 32.

claim that she or anyone from her office demanded that Ryan resign as part of an agreement.

In his letter, Ryan narrated the tense afternoon as the pressure built up. He gathered colleagues to try to work through the best course of action. They unsuccessfully tried to forestall or see if this was a bluff, but signs indicated it was not. Sheridan, counsel and Manning called “a couple more times.”

“I was repeatedly told that 5 pm was the point of no return,” he wrote.

Ryan spoke with Hardie, who had only recently been briefed on the situation. Hardie told Ryan there was no good option but that they should take the deal, Ryan wrote. Finally, he wrote, “around 4pm one of my closest and wisest colleagues said: ‘If you don’t have any Board support, it’s over. You can’t fight this on your own.’”

At 4:25, Ryan submitted his letter of resignation to Hardie and Sheridan. He announced it the next day.

WHO KNEW

Sheridan and Ryan both presented narratives of board members working at times without the knowledge of the rector, who is elected by members of the BOV as their presiding officer—the first one having been Thomas Jefferson. At several points, according to the letters, Sheridan and Manning reportedly spoke with Ryan and/or the DOJ without then-Rector Hardie’s knowledge.

A July text message from Hardie to Manning and Sheridan reveals his perspective: “I have had almost a month to think about this. And something that doesn’t sit well with me is that I didn’t know as Rector that both of you were speaking with

DOJ at Glenn Youngkin’s suggestion well before you told me on the Wednesday before Jim resigned. I was the Rector of our board and I didn’t find out until the clock on the bomb was ticking. If I had known before, I would have enjoined Senators Warner and Kaine and others, and perhaps we could have avoided the

shitshow that UVA now encounters. This is really upsetting to me.”

Both Manning and Sheridan responded to tell Hardie that his assertions were incorrect. Sheridan responded with the events that she later described in her letter to the Faculty Senate, including that Hardie and Ryan had been the ones who had asked her to attend the first DOJ meeting. It’s the last message in the text chain.

While Hardie did not put out a public statement and has not responded to interview requests, the *Cavalier Daily* reported that he had twice confirmed that his recollection of events aligned with Ryan’s.

In her letter, Sheridan wrote that she and Wilkinson briefed UVA leadership and her fellow BOV members after the June 3 meeting with the DOJ; in Ryan’s telling, she told him privately that they basically insisted he resign but left that part out when they briefed the board.

It’s also unclear what, if anything, rank-and-file members knew or thought about the other interactions; most have kept quiet. Ryan wrote: “The entire Board should have had a chance to weigh in on this decision, which unfolded over three weeks. This is not a decision that should have been made by a tiny subset of the Board and especially without informing the Rector and Vice-Rector—the latter of whom was kept entirely in the dark, as far as I know.”

The faculty representative to the BOV during this time, Michael Kennedy, told the Faculty Senate in July that he learned of the increasing DOJ pressure from the *New York Times* article and that he had spoken to other board members who reported the same.

While Sheridan wrote numerous times that the decision to resign was Ryan’s, she did not indicate willingness

➤ Ryan’s 12-page letter is peppered with questions that have still not been answered several months after his resignation.

to fight the Trump administration if Ryan chose not to resign. “I know that many believe that the Board should have refused to accept President Ryan’s resignation and essentially dared the Department of Justice to pursue enforcement actions,” she wrote. “The outcome of that fight would have been highly uncertain, and no legal process or even victory in court could have protected the university from much of the resulting harm.”

Ryan wrote that, with the encouragement of some colleagues, he considered refusing to resign and forcing the BOV to fire him—he wanted the board to meet to discuss that but was told there wasn’t time. He also considered going public but that it “felt like a hostage situation, where the kidnapper threatens harm if you do not keep information about the demands confidential.”

Ryan’s 12-page letter is peppered with questions that have still not been answered several months after his resignation. They include whether the threats to UVA were real “or whether the idea came from the Board members who spoke with the DOJ lawyers, our own lawyers, the Governor, or some combination of that group.”

“We were committed to following the actual law,” he wrote. “We were also open to changing policies and practices if they were not working well or if there were persuasive, principled reasons to change course. At the same time, I was never going to give up the core values of UVA or my own principles to satisfy the prevailing political winds or the political ambitions of some.

“In the end, that may have been the real problem, though I will probably never know.”

Judy Lé is editor-in-chief of Virginia Magazine.



For a story on the new governor’s overhaul of the BOV, see Page 26.



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A TURBULENT YEAR

Take a look back at the major twists and turns in 2025 that shaped ninth UVA President **Jim Ryan (Law '92)** last year and ended with the hiring of Darden School of Business Dean **Scott Beardsley** as UVA's 10th president.



JANUARY

Jan. 21: President Trump signs an executive order “ending illegal discrimination.”

Jan. 30: After a Jan. 28 Trump executive order and a letter from Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares directing them to do so, UVA and VCU say they will stop providing gender transition care to anyone younger than 19 years old.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 6: UVA launches a search for a new provost after Ian Baucom announces he will leave his post to become president of Middlebury College.

Feb. 13: A federal judge temporarily blocks the Trump executive order regarding transgender care for people under age 19; UVA resumes such treatments.

Feb. 14: The Trump administration's Department of Education (DOE) Office for Civil Rights sends a Dear Colleague letter to educational institutions expanding the definition of unlawful discrimination from the 2023 Students for Fair Admissions decision to include any practice that treats students differently from one another on the basis of race, threatening a loss of federal funding for educational institutions that don't comply.

Feb. 21: At a special meeting, the Board of Visitors (BOV) passes its Resolution on

Gender Care and Proper Board Governance, saying it had not been consulted regarding the changes in transgender care and once again limiting such care for new patients under 19.

Feb. 25: The BOV learns the outcome of the investigation into Health System leadership in response to a Sept. 5, 2024, letter from UVA Physicians Group (UPG) faculty. Afterward, President **Jim Ryan (Law '92)** accepts Health System CEO Craig Kent's resignation. **Mitch Rosner (Res '00, Fellow '02)** is named interim Health CEO and will take the role more permanently in September.

MARCH

March 7: The BOV approves a resolution dissolving the Division of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Community Partnerships. The resolution references the 2023

SCOTUS decision barring race-conscious admissions practices, Trump's Jan. 21 executive order and the DOE's Feb. 14

Dear Colleague letter. In a letter in November, Ryan would say this resolution came directly from the administration of Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

March 7: Ian Baucom leaves for Middlebury; Brie Gertler takes over as interim provost.

March 26: Gov. Youngkin fires his appointee **Bert Ellis (Col '75, Darden '79)** from the BOV and appoints **Ken Cuccinelli (Engr '91)** to fulfill his term.



Ryan

APRIL

April 11: A Department of Justice (DOJ) letter to 70 schools including UVA asks that they certify that they don't use race-conscious decision-making in undergraduate admissions.

April 18: A second DOJ letter adds UVA law school admissions to its certification request.

April 24: A federal court enjoins the DOE from enforcing the Feb. 14 Dear Colleague letter broadening the definition of unlawful discrimination.

April 28: A third DOJ letter details a complaint that UVA has not complied with the BOV's March 7 resolution and demands proof that it has been “fully and completely satisfied and accomplished.”

April 29: At a special meeting, the BOV approves a resolution called “Advancing Free Inquiry and Viewpoint Diversity at UVA.” The resolution notes that UVA had made progress in implementing the March 7 resolution.

MAY

May 2: A fourth DOJ letter details a complaint of antisemitic discrimination, harassment and abuse. It will be one of the two investigations closed in September.

May 22: A fifth DOJ letter informs UVA of a compliance investigation about the medical school's admissions practices.

May 28: UVA sends internal guidance to schools and units to assess compliance with the March 7 BOV resolution

regarding diversity, equity and inclusion. Law firm McGuireWoods will be tasked with conducting this internal compliance review.

JUNE

June 6: The BOV elects **Rachel Sheridan (Col '94, Law '98)** as rector and **Porter Wilkinson (Law '07)** as vice rector, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2027.

June 9: Virginia Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections defeats Youngkin's appointment of **Ken Cuccinelli (Engr '91)** to the BOV, leaving it at 16 members. The decision will be challenged in the courts and ultimately stand.

June 16: A sixth DOJ letter says the department has received complaints that President Ryan, his administration and certain faculty members have been trying to defy and evade federal antidiscrimination laws. It expands the compliance review to include the School of Nursing, Darden School of Business, School of Education and McIntire School of Commerce.

June 17: A seventh DOJ letter details a complaint from a UVA student about admissions into the Batten School of Public Policy and McIntire. It says, in part, that “dramatic, wholesale changes are required.” It will be one of the two investigations closed in September.

June 26: *The New York Times* reports that the DOJ has privately demanded the departure of President Ryan to help resolve its

investigation.

June 26: The DOJ suspends investigations pending settlement negotiations.

June 27: President Ryan announces that he will resign effective July 11. UVA COO J.J. Davis will be acting president until an interim president is named.

June 30: Gov. Youngkin appoints **James Donovan, John Harris (Com '82), Eugene Lockhart (Engr '72, Darden '74)** and **Calvert Saunders Moore (Col '90)** to the BOV.

JULY

July 4: Twelve of 14 academic deans send a letter to the BOV requesting an accounting of the events leading up to President Ryan's ouster.

July 11: Jim Ryan's last day as president of UVA.

July 11: The Faculty Senate approves a resolution of no confidence in the BOV for "not protecting the university and its president from outside interference" and for not consulting with the body in times of crisis.

July 14: University of Texas System Board of Regents announces that UVA medical school Dean Melina Kibbe, who had been named in the 2024 letter of no confidence from UPG physicians, would become president of UT's Health Science Center at Houston. A few days later, it is announced that University Medical Center CEO Wendy Horton will also depart UVA, for the University of California San Francisco Health Center.

July 25: UVA announces the 28-member Special Committee on the Nomination of a President to identify and recommend a 10th president to the BOV. Eight members of the BOV ultimately serve on the committee, with Rector Sheridan as chair.

July 29: U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi releases guidance to all federal agencies expanding the interpretation of unlawful discrimination.



Mahoney

to decline to sign on to the Trump DOE compact.

Oct. 22: Interim President Mahoney signs a deal with the DOJ that pauses the

five remaining investigations and assures compliance with the July 29 guidance from the U.S. attorney general.

Oct. 24: The Faculty Senate adopts a resolution expressing grave concerns regarding the Oct. 22 agreement with the DOJ and calls on Rector Sheridan and interim President Mahoney to clarify the circumstances and negotiations that led to the agreement and what it will require of UVA.

AUGUST

Aug. 4: At a special meeting, the BOV elects former law Dean Paul Mahoney as interim university president. Also, Catherine Lindqvist of UVA's Executive Internal Search Group says it's in the process of retaining an external search firm and that the search could take "anywhere from four to six months."

Aug. 22: The presidential search committee meets for the first time.

Aug. 28: Virginia Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections defeats Gov. Youngkin's last four BOV appointments, leaving the BOV at 12 members.

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 9: UVA announces that it's launching another search for a provost after the spring search was unsuccessful.

Sept. 12: At a BOV meeting, interim President Mahoney announces that two DOJ investigations—from May 2 and June 17—are closed.

OCTOBER

Oct. 1: The Trump administration Department of Education (DOE) invites UVA and eight other institutions to join what it calls a "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education" for preferential funding.

Oct. 17: Through a letter from interim President Mahoney, UVA becomes the fifth school

NOVEMBER

Nov. 3: At a meeting of the presidential search committee, Sheridan gives notice that the committee would hold closed meetings at undisclosed locations within 15 days to interview candidates.

Nov. 12: In a letter, Gov.-elect **Abigail Spanberger (Col '01)** urges BOV Rector Sheridan and Vice Rector Wilkinson to refrain from selecting finalists for the president until she can appoint members to fill the final five vacancies to the board after she is inaugurated Jan. 17.

Nov. 13: Outgoing Gov. Youngkin responds to Gov.-elect Spanberger's letter, criticizing her and defending the search process.

Nov. 13: In a letter to the Faculty Senate, Rector Sheridan outlines her view of the events that led to President Ryan's resignation.

Nov. 14: The Faculty Senate adopts a resolution requesting that the presidential search be ceased until the



Beardsley

BOV is at a full confirmed complement and calls for Rector Sheridan and Vice Rector Wilkinson to resign.

Nov. 14: In response to Rector Sheridan's letter, former President Ryan sends a letter to the Faculty Senate outlining his view of the events that led to his resignation and his remaining questions.

Nov. 21: The presidential search committee and the external search firm release statements defending their work and stating that they would continue on their initial timeline but were not yet at the point of selecting finalists.

DECEMBER

Dec. 1: Nine of 14 academic deans send a letter to the BOV recommending it postpone the selection of a president.

Dec. 1: BOV member Paul Manning sends a letter to the BOV and the Faculty Senate detailing his account of the events leading up to President Ryan's resignation.

Dec. 11: At a presidential search committee meeting, Sheridan announces that the committee will be holding closed meetings at undisclosed locations over the next 15 days to conduct further interviews.

Dec. 12: The Faculty Senate adopts a resolution that any UVA president elected by a BOV without its full 17-member complement will not assume their position with the body's confidence.

Dec. 19: Academic class exams end. At a special meeting, the BOV unanimously elects Darden Dean Scott Beardsley as UVA's 10th president, effective Jan. 1, 2026, for five years and six months. 📌

Student Life



Kabir Suri (left) and Lucas Schatz play a house show with their band, Mona Lisa.

OLD MUSIC, NEW CROWD

UVA's cover band scene

BY KIKI McLAUGHLIN

Kabir Suri (Engr '27) has played bass guitar in his cover band, Mona Lisa, all over Grounds, but he most loves performing on a porch just across the street from his residence.

Students gather in the yard to rock out to familiar hits spanning decades and genres. After playing for the crowd, Suri crosses the street and climbs onto his roof to watch the rest of the show with his roommates and friends. "The whole neighborhood can come over and watch it," he says.

Shows performed by cover bands make up their own corner of the student social scene and can be found in basements, yards, fraternity houses and bars. **Carter Horner (Col '27)**, who plays in the band



Kerry Hill lead guitarist Carter Horner

Kerry Hill, says he often sees around 100 people in attendance at any given moment, but crowds can grow much larger throughout the night: "It's an ongoing show, and you can come at any time and leave at any time. It's a very fluid experience."

The genres and eras of music played at these shows can be just as fluid. Suri says

that while he started out playing country music, his band also delves into rock and even experimental psychedelic songs. Kerry Hill's lineup this year includes music from the Eagles, one of the biggest bands of the 1970s, and the Strokes, who have been active since the late '90s. **Isabel Xiao (Col '27)** frequently performs early-2000s hits by Amy Winehouse and Carrie Underwood, but she most loves "stuff you can really headbang to," like Led Zeppelin.

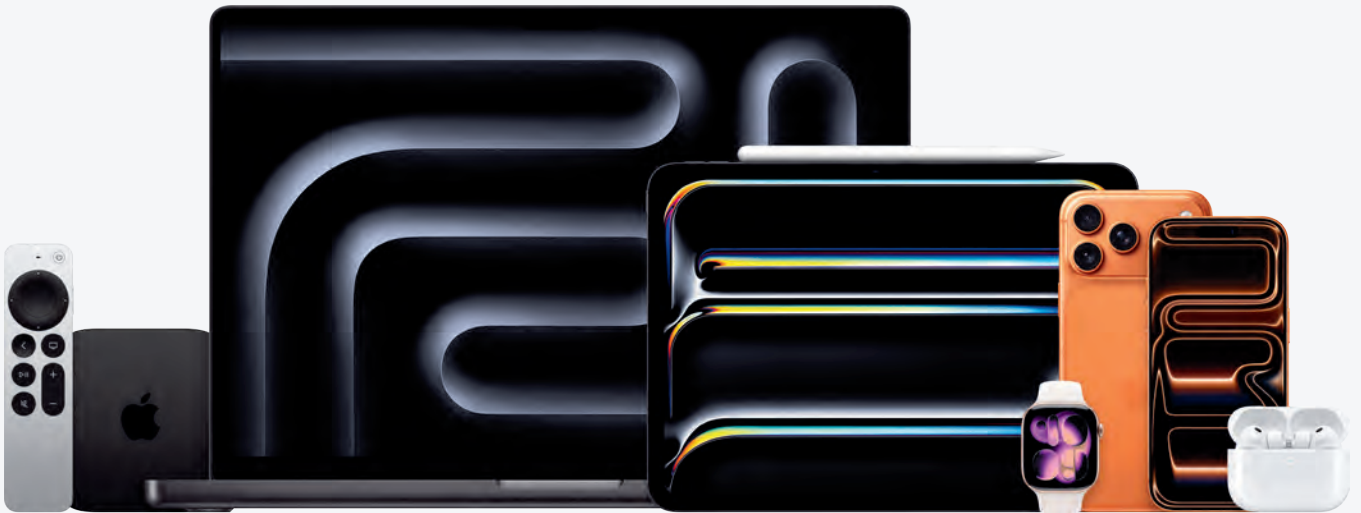
The variety of genres allows for a broad appeal, rather than dividing audiences, the students say. Horner, who is also the events director for the student music group University Records, frequently co-hosts events with other groups. He says Indieheads shows attract fans of alternative music, while student radio station WXTJ creates a space for lovers of jazz and funk. "These collaborative shows are a way to mix audiences and those groups," he says. "It's a great way to bring together the broader music community at the university."

The musicians describe a feeling of intimacy around playing for peers, particularly with songs that audience members know and love. Horner remembers being nervous about adding a hastily practiced Weezer song to his set, only for an acquaintance in the audience to start moshing, transforming the energy of the crowd—and the performance. "You're right there up front," Horner says. "It's a relatively small setting, but it's loud, and you get to just be in that moment with everyone around you."

Stephanie Rasinski (Col '22) remembers working toward providing a sense of community trust around the shows when she was an Indieheads leader. "I got a ton of "This is a great alternative to frat parties because I feel safe," from peers in the audience, she says. "The music scene was lovely, because everyone ... just liked the experience of being near live music." 🍷

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Discovery

A Hidden Cost of Shedding Pounds

UVA researchers warn that GLP-1 drugs may reduce beneficial muscle mass

BY MARTHA CARR

They've been called the wonder drugs of our time. Weight-loss injections such as Ozempic, Wegovy and Zepbound have revolutionized the way physicians treat obesity and diabetes.

But a new study by UVA researchers finds that while the medications significantly reduce weight and blood-glucose levels, they can also cause patients to lose muscle mass critical to longevity and long-term cardiovascular health.

Zhenqi Liu, an endocrinologist at UVA Health, said he wanted to better understand this persistent side effect. So he teamed up with exercise physiologist Siddhartha Angadi at UVA's School of Education and Human Development to review a decade's worth of clinical studies that measured the effects of GLP-1 use on weight, body composition and overall fitness. **Nathan Weeldreyer (Educ '25)**, now a postdoc at the University of Alberta, also contributed to the analysis.

The researchers examined how the drugs affected patients' cardiorespiratory fitness—how strongly the heart performs, how efficiently the lungs take in oxygen and how effectively muscles use that oxygen.

Their findings were striking, they said. Despite GLP-1 medications' ability to lower weight and blood sugar, and improve certain markers of how well the heart works, there was no evidence the drugs were boosting patients' cardiorespiratory fitness. That's one of the strongest health predictors of how long and how well a person is likely to live, according to the peer-reviewed paper published in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*.

That is likely due to muscle loss. The review found that 25 percent to 40 percent of the weight people shed while taking GLP-1 medications comes from fat-free mass, or everything in the body that is not fat, including muscle.

This raises a particular concern for patients with obesity, who often begin treatment with lower muscle mass, and for older adults, who naturally lose muscle at a faster rate than younger people.



“One of the things that muscle does, and it’s very important, is allow for what we call independent living,” Angadi said. “Part of why we need it is to maintain our health span—how long you can live by yourself without needing external assistance.”

Muscle loss is also a serious issue for those who stop taking the drugs and regain weight, the researchers said.

“There is a high tendency to gain the fat weight back, not the muscle weight back,” Liu said. “At the end of the day, patients have more fat and less muscle compared to when they started.”

Because GLP-1 medications are still relatively new, Angadi noted that more studies are needed to understand how the loss of fat-free mass affects body composition, strength and functioning. A new generation of drugs is under development in hopes of preserving lean muscle mass, but those therapies remain years away. “We don’t know how that is going to go yet,” he said.

In the meantime, exercise and protein intake remain essential for anyone taking semaglutide, tirzepatide or similar medications, the researchers said.

“The one thing I would say, point-blank, is that exercise remains nonnegotiable,” Angadi said. Patients should aim for at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, five days a week, along with strength training two to three times weekly on nonconsecutive days. For protein, they should consume 0.54 grams to 0.73 grams per pound of body weight, or roughly 76 grams to 102 grams daily for someone who weighs 140 pounds. Protein powders and bars can help patients meet those targets.

“Basically,” Angadi said, “it’s far more important to be fit than to be skinny.”

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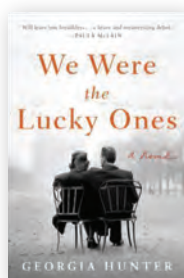
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From page to screen

BY SAM GROSSMAN

Here are six works by UVA alumni that have gotten a second life as a TV miniseries, a big-screen blockbuster, an animated children’s program and more.



***We Were the Lucky Ones* (2017)**

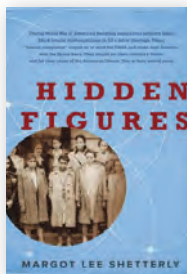
by Georgia Hunter (Col '00)

Inspired by the author’s own family history, this novel chronicles three generations of Jews in Poland beginning just before Germany’s invasion in 1939. Over the next six years, members of the Kurc

family navigate different paths in their efforts to survive the Holocaust. One is exiled to a Siberian gulag, one attempts to hide in plain sight with forged identification, and another tries to flee the continent. In 2024, Hulu adapted *We Were the Lucky Ones* into an eight-episode miniseries starring Joey King and Logan Lerman.



©HULU ORIGINAL



***Hidden Figures* (2016)**

by Margot Lee Shetterly (Com '91)

This *New York Times* bestselling nonfiction book follows a group of Black female mathematicians working at NASA from the 1940s through the '60s. Known as “computers,” they performed complex calculations that became essential to the country’s success in the space race. *Hidden Figures* inspired a 2016 Oscar-nominated film

of the same name that focused on three of the women—Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson—and revealed the discrimination they endured along the way.



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***Saint X* (2020)**

by Alexis Schaitkin (Grad '13)

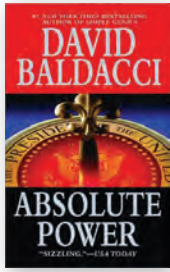
When Claire, the protagonist of Alexis Schaitkin’s debut novel, was 7, her 18-year-old sister was murdered during a family vacation on a fictional Caribbean island called Saint X. Nearly 20 years later, Claire meets one of the suspects by chance. He had been released due to insufficient evidence shortly after the crime. The encounter

sends her on an obsessive pursuit to discover what really

happened on that island—and to figure out who her sister really was. In 2023, Hulu released a TV show of the same name that ran for one season.



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Absolute Power (1996)

by David Baldacci
(Law '86)

The crime thriller that launched David Baldacci's career, *Absolute Power* follows professional burglar

Luther Whitney, who, after breaking into a billionaire's mansion, witnesses a murder involving the president of the United States. Whitney manages to escape—but not before Secret Service agents spot him. Now on the lam, he finds himself caught in a web of cover-ups, conspiracies and abuses of executive power. In 1997, Clint Eastwood directed and starred in a film adaptation that screened at the Cannes Film Festival.



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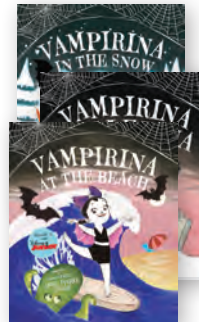


Something Borrowed (2005)

by Emily Giffin (Law '97)

In Emily Giffin's *New York Times* bestselling debut, consummate rule-follower and self-described nice girl Rachel confesses her love to her best friend's fiancé, Dex. She's had a crush on him since the two attended law school together—and it turns out he feels the

same way. They begin an affair, and as the wedding looms, Rachel must grapple with questions of morality, love and loyalty. Giffin made a cameo in the 2011 film adaptation of the novel that starred Ginnifer Goodwin, Kate Hudson and John Krasinski.



Vampirina series (2012-2018)

by Anne Marie Pace (Educ '89)

This children's picture book series chronicles the adventures of a little girl who is a ballerina and a vampire. Throughout the series' four books, she faces challenges relatable to many children—trying new activities, making new friends, hosting a sleepover—while also navigating the unique experiences of

being a vampire. (Think finding a ballet class that meets at night and learning to perfect her form without being able to see her reflection in a mirror.) The series inspired Disney Junior's *Vampirina* animated series, which ran from 2017 to 2021 and is still streaming.



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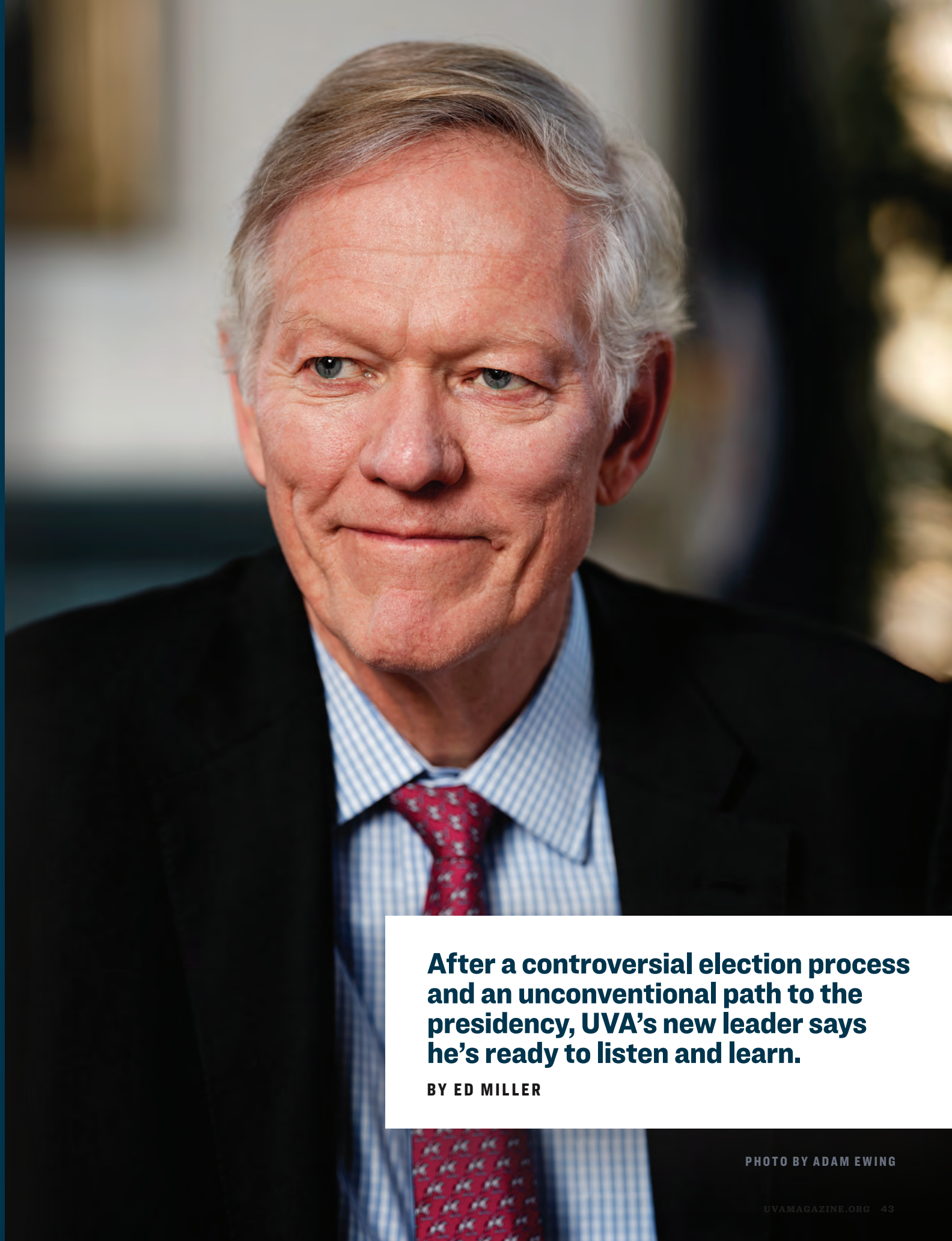
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“I have
to earn
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trust.”



After a controversial election process and an unconventional path to the presidency, UVA's new leader says he's ready to listen and learn.

BY ED MILLER

PHOTO BY ADAM EWING

“I felt like I was qualified and that I could add a lot of value. But at the end of the day, I was surprised that I actually made it all the way through.”

—UVA PRESIDENT SCOTT BEARDSLEY

Scott Beardsley wrote the book on nontraditional college presidents. Published by UVA Press in 2017, *Higher Calling* studied the rise of leaders who did not come up through the traditional faculty tenure-track path, but from the worlds of business, law, government or the operations side of college administration.

Beardsley didn't just write about them. He aspired to join their ranks. In January, his ambition was realized when he became the 10th president of UVA.

Like those in his book, Beardsley's route to a college presidency was unconventional. He had no higher education experience when he left a 26-year career at consulting giant McKinsey & Company to become dean of the Darden School of Business in 2015.

The circumstances of Beardsley's election were also outside the norm—and unprecedented in university history. The Board of Visitors voted to elect Beardsley on Dec. 19, the last day of academic exams, at a special meeting, despite calls from both inside UVA and in Virginia's government to cease the presidential search. Members of the United Campus Workers of Virginia and the American Association of University Professors protested outside the meeting.

After Beardsley took office Jan. 1, faculty groups continued to question the legitimacy of the selection process—which took just less than four months—calling it rushed, opaque and politically motivated. Many also questioned whether the board, which had just 12 members and did not have the number of UVA alumni or Virginians called for in state code, was properly constituted.

Five members of the board that appointed Beardsley, including then-Rector **Rachel Sheridan (Col**

'94, Law '98) and then-Vice Rector **Porter Wilkinson (Law '07)**, resigned in January at the request of incoming Democratic Gov. **Abigail Spanberger (Col '01)**, it has been widely reported. Spanberger replaced those five with her own appointees and also filled five vacancies, giving her appointees a 10-7 majority on a board previously made up of members appointed entirely by former Gov. Glenn Youngkin, a Republican. (See story, Page 26.)

Beardsley said he takes over in this partisan environment with no political agenda—but with awareness that some have questioned his decision to take the job given the concerns raised about the process.

“I knew some people thought no one should be selected at all,” he said. “But basically, at the end of the day, it was my love for the university and my belief in the mission, and that we need somebody to bring stability and to contribute.”

Beardsley said he was surprised when he received the call informing him that he'd been selected.

“Leading the University of Virginia is such an incredible honor,” he said in an interview with *Virginia Magazine*. “I figured the competition would be incredibly strong.

“To have assumed that I would be the president is just not consistent with who I am, which is a very humble person. I felt like I was qualified and that I could add a lot of value. But at the end of the day, I was surprised that I actually made it all the way through.”

Many of those who worked for or with Beardsley at Darden were not as surprised. They point to Darden's ranking in 2025 as the No. 1 public business school by *U.S. News & World Report*, the first time the school has achieved that distinction. They cite Beardsley's strategic vision, his fundraising prowess and his ability to build bridges with other schools across Grounds.

“Scott is a man of action,” said **Frank Sands (Darden '94)**, immediate past chair of the Darden Foundation Board of Trustees. Sands called Beardsley's academic and business credentials “the best of both worlds.”

John Macfarlane (Darden '79), who served on the Board of Visitors when Beardsley was hired at Darden, said he was among those who nominated him for the presidency. Macfarlane said Beardsley is “perfectly suited” for this moment in higher education, in which federal and state funding is declining and the value of a college degree is being challenged by rising tuition and the threat to some entry-level jobs posed by artificial intelligence.

“What the university needs now—and what every school needs now—is someone with practical business experience,” Macfarlane said.

Others say Beardsley must work to win over those who question the legitimacy of the selection process. David Leblang, a politics professor who served on the presidential search committee, said that although Beardsley is equipped to be a “great” president, he will face an uphill battle to win over those, like himself, who believe Beardsley should



not have accepted the job given the calls for delay.

“It just raises a whole set of questions about governance,” Leblang said.

Emphasizing the need for insituational stability, the Student Council in late January passed a resolution supporting Beardsley, while also criticizing the selection process.

Student Council President **Clay Dickerson (Col ’26)** met with Beardsley before the resolution passed, and secured commitments to fund several council priorities, he said.

Dickerson said his meeting was “entirely separate” from the resolution. “He knows he has to earn our trust. It can’t be bought, and it wasn’t bought.”

Jeri Seidman, chair of UVA’s Faculty Senate, said in an email that Beardsley will need to have some difficult conversations to build trust.

“He needs to listen widely, and he needs to stand in the awkward and uncomfortable space during that listening,” Seidman wrote.

Beardsley said he is ready to listen. “I don’t believe I deserve anything in particular,” he says. “I have to earn people’s trust.”

Born in Maine and raised in Alaska, Beardsley earned a degree in electrical engineering from Tufts University and an MBA from MIT. In 1989, he began a career at McKinsey that took him to 40 countries. According to his book, he was elected as a senior partner in record time, leading McKinsey’s strategy practice. He then took over the firm’s leadership development program, a “huge university-like engine,” as he described it in his book.

Beardsley was considering a career shift when he applied for the Dartmouth presidency in 2012, ignoring the “obvious fact that Dartmouth would never have considered someone with my lack of credentials for that role,” he wrote. Despite his lack of academic bona fides, he received a first-round interview with a well-known search firm, Issacson, Miller.

Beardsley writes that the firm told him his nontraditional background and lack of a Ph.D. made him a long-shot candidate. That assessment was confirmed when he applied for the Yale presidency and didn’t receive a response, and again when he was told he was the token “non-traditional” candidate by an unidentified

East Coast liberal arts college where he applied to be president, he wrote.

To boost his credentials, Beardsley pursued a doctorate in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania. The two-year program required a monthly commute to Philadelphia from his home in Brussels, Belgium.

Beardsley wrote his thesis on nontraditional leaders in higher ed, interviewing presidents as well as search firm executives. One of the executives he interviewed, Ken Kring of Korn Ferry, was leading the search for a new Darden dean and encouraged him to apply, Beardsley said.

At Darden, Beardsley took over a school that had made strides under Robert Bruner, who served as dean from 2005 to 2015 and elevated the school’s reputation and rankings. Beardsley came in as an outsider but quickly earned everyone’s respect, said **John Fowler (Col ’79, Darden ’84, Law ’84)**, chair of the Darden Foundation’s board of trustees.

As dean, Beardsley talks with community members outside the Rotunda.

“You see some CEOs come in and say, ‘Here’s five things I’m going to do,’” Fowler said. “Scott had a more thoughtful, consultant-like approach: ‘Let me get here, let me listen to all the different constituents and evaluate and synthesize what I learn. Then let me lay out a vision and a plan and define what issues we are going to address.’”

“Scott came in and did the analysis that a consultant does. The big difference is, he then truly executed on it.”

One example of that execution is the opening in 2018 of Darden’s Northern Virginia campus, called UVA Darden DC Metro. Located in Arlington, it’s home to Darden’s executive MBA and part-time MBA programs, as well as executive education programs and a Master of Science in business analytics co-sponsored by the McIntire School of Commerce.

Expanding to the D.C. area had been discussed for the better part of a decade, said **Michael Lenox (Engr ’93, ’94)** who has been on the Darden faculty since 2008 and currently serves as interim dean.

“I had been a part of at least two different faculty working groups looking into D.C.,” Lenox said. “Scott came in and said, ‘Let’s go do it.’”

Beardsley approached Sands and his father, **Frank Sands Sr. (Darden ’63)**, owners of the investment firm Sands Capital, about sponsoring the new venture, the younger Sands said.

“We said, ‘Yes, if you’re actually going to do it,’” Sands said. “And he did it.”

Another major initiative completed during Beardsley’s tenure is the Forum Hotel. Opened in 2023 with 198 guest rooms and 22,000 square feet of gathering and classroom space, it houses Darden’s executive education and life-long learning programs. It replaced the aging Inn at Darden, where some long-term clients no longer wanted to send their executives, Beardsley said.

A year after the Forum opened, workers broke ground on Darden’s first dedicated student housing, which is scheduled to open in 2027. Darden also added 70 new faculty during Beardsley’s

tenure. As the school’s chief fundraiser, he helped bring in \$523 million for Darden—and helped grow its endowment to more than \$1 billion.

Happily situated in Pavilion I on the Lawn, Beardsley began his 11th year at Darden in 2025. He said he was contacted over the years by schools gauging his interest in various roles but was happy in Charlottesville and at UVA.

“I loved Darden, and in a way, Darden was like leading about the same size and scope of a small liberal arts college,” he said. “I mean, roughly. Of course, it’s different because it’s a business school and you don’t have athletics and stuff like that reporting to you.”

“But my main focus was on Darden and just doing the best job I could.”

The tumultuous events of 2025 created a new opportunity. UVA’s ninth president, **Jim Ryan (Law ’92)**, resigned under pressure from the Trump administration’s Department of Justice on June 27. Former Law Dean Paul Mahoney was appointed as interim president Aug. 4. In October, he signed a deal with the DOJ but declined to sign the Trump administration’s “Compact for Excellence in Higher Education.”

Scott Beardsley teaches a seminar in Pavilion I, his home when he was Darden’s dean.

Beardsley said he chose to pursue the job because he believed his experience matched the qualities UVA was seeking in a president.

“For example, they wanted somebody comfortable with strategy and developing a vision,” he said. “Well, I used to lead the strategy practice for McKinsey. I said, ‘OK, I know how to do that.’”

Beardsley also brought a deep knowledge of UVA, a familiarity with athletics—he played intercollegiate tennis at Tufts—and an appreciation for the health system, he said.

Beardsley’s track record at Darden, which is financially self-sufficient, established that he could meet the requirement of being a good financial steward, he said.

“I thought, well, OK, I can contribute in some way to these parts of the mission,” he said.

Beardsley is not the first UVA president who did not begin their career in academia. **Colgate Darden (Col 1922)** served two terms in Congress and one as Virginia’s governor before becoming the university’s third president in 1947.

In speeches in his first weeks in office, Beardsley outlined a few broad priorities. In time, he will produce a more detailed strategic plan, he said.



“He needs to listen widely, and he needs to stand in the awkward and uncomfortable space during that listening.”

—JERI SEIDMAN, CHAIR OF UVA'S FACULTY SENATE

“We’ll update it, but I think the general direction of the university is a good one, so we don’t need one immediately,” he said.

In an address to the university’s fundraising community two weeks after he took office, Beardsley said he hopes to focus on what he called “human-centered innovation” and how artificial intelligence is reshaping the workforce and society.

Beardsley recently completed coursework for a master’s degree in practical ethics from Pembroke College at the University of Oxford. His focus was the ethics of artificial intelligence.

“I think that one of our opportunities as a university is to ensure that [AI] is used for ethical purposes, that it’s used to advance the human cause and not just advancing itself,” he said. “So I think that’s something we’ll have an opportunity with the faculty, the staff, the students, and with alumni and actually industry partners to think about how we can take that to the next level and help our students be ready to lead in an AI world.”

Beardsley also said he’ll continue to champion financial access. As a “need-based” student, scholarships helped pay for his own education, he said.

“Making UVA a place that is affordable and accessible to all no matter what your background, I think, is a noble cause,” he said. “But it’s also the right way to stay the most excellent university because you can get the best people coming here and changing their lives.”

Beardsley also said he’ll focus on wellness for students, faculty and staff, as well as student outcomes.

Of his overall approach, he said: “I’m not here to fix problems per se. I think more to seize opportunities. It’s not

always about a big bang. Sometimes it’s about just taking something you’re already doing, [and] doing it just a little bit better.”

In his book, Beardsley wrote that university leaders “must operate and succeed in inherently and increasingly volatile and complex environments that include the various power brokers in shared governance.”

It’s an apt description of the task ahead as he assumes the presidency. In his first weeks on the job, Beardsley testified before a Virginia Senate subcommittee and also met with Spanberger, who had called on the BOV to wait to name a president until she had filled vacancies on the board after her Jan. 17 inauguration. (The Faculty Senate and nine of the 14 UVA academic deans—which did not include Beardsley—had also called for a pause in the process.)

There’s also the matter of what, if any, influence the Trump administration will attempt to exert over UVA. Beardsley said in late January that he had not spoken to anyone in the federal government but that “of course, we obey the law.”

Here on Grounds, Beardsley will work for a much different board from the one that elected him. He said he’s ready to listen and hopes to come to a “shared understanding of where we are.”

Beardsley signed a contract through June 2031 that pays a base salary of \$1.3 million. The terms of his contract were called into question by a pair of researchers at George Mason University, who wrote in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* that it was structured in such a way as to make it prohibitively costly for a new board to rescind his appointment.

If terminated without cause, Beardsley would be owed 12 months’

salary and 12 months’ sabbatical leave, plus sabbatical time already vested. He would also be entitled to remain on the Darden faculty for 10 years at 60 percent of his annual salary as president or an amount equal to the salary of the Darden dean, whichever is less.

The terms are more generous than those in the contract of former President Ryan. UVA was obligated to pay Ryan 12 months’ salary and any vested sabbatical pay but not the additional year of sabbatical pay. Ryan was not guaranteed faculty employment but was eligible to earn 75 percent of his salary as president, which was \$1.1 million as of July 1, 2024.

Beardsley said the contract was prepared by the BOV and that there was not much time for negotiation. As for the buyout provision, he said: “The idea that you have a contract and there might be uncertainty and ‘What do you do if ...?’ This is not unusual. I think they probably did something they felt was commonplace.”

Working in 40 countries taught him how to bridge cultural and political divides, Beardsley said. His approach in general is to focus on what unites various stakeholders, he said.

“What do we all share together? And to tap into that strength that we have, recognizing that there are differences as well that sometimes need to be ironed out or that can’t necessarily be ironed out, but at least could be understood.

“Maybe we agree to disagree.”

Asked what success in his job would look like in a year, Beardsley said results often come from focusing on the journey, rather than the destination.

“It’s about getting UVA focused on our mission, focusing on the basics, educating the next generation of students, taking care of our patients every day, helping our faculty with thought leadership, raising money to support the mission, helping our athletics teams perform at their highest levels, and doing that to your fullest extent.

“In a way every day, but let’s say every year, if you do those things, eventually they will add up to bigger victories.”

Ed Miller is senior writer of Virginia Magazine.





UVA's Common Ground

How Newcomb Hall evolved from 'Darden's Folly' to a home base for generations of students

BY SARAH LINDENFELD HALL

It was 1949, and **Colgate Darden (Col 1922)** expressed plenty of worry in his first annual report as UVA's president. He wasn't concerned about the university's ability to prepare young men for their careers as much as something that he considered "far more substantial and lasting"—cultivating what then College Dean Ivey Lewis called, in an attached report, "trained intelligence and disciplined minds."

Standing in the way of that goal was the dominance of fraternities, Darden wrote. Though they represented only one-third of the student body, he warned, they created a "barren and petty society in which social advancement is more sought after than solid academic achievement, and in which talent finds itself overshadowed and in danger of being

inundated by mediocrity."

He prescribed one primary remedy: a student activities building that would provide a space where every student, regardless of "membership in any organization," could "profit to the fullest by his stay here."

The building was part of Darden's grander plan to democratize UVA, which also included enrolling more public school students, according to Encyclopedia Virginia, a project of Virginia's state humanities council. And he was successful on a variety of fronts, including the construction of a dedicated student union.

That building—Newcomb Hall—opened its doors in 1958. It included a new dining hall, replacing one inside Garrett Hall, along with new space for student activities and events.

For 68 years, Newcomb has

meant different things to different students. For some, it has provided simply a place to grab food between classes. But for others—particularly those seeking alternatives to Greek life or spaces to gather on Grounds—Newcomb has fulfilled Darden's vision precisely.

From its opening, Newcomb became woven into the daily rhythm of student life. Diverse groups—from international students in the building's first weeks to Black students forming their own Greek organizations in the 1970s—found space here when options were scarce. Student leaders strategized in its offices. Student workers bonded during shifts. Between classes, students popped in for study sessions or events. And these small daily moments added up, becoming central to their college experience. →

The Push for a Student Union

Long before Newcomb Hall opened, Madison Hall, built in 1905 as the first university-based YMCA in the country, provided some spaces for students to meet. Student publications and other groups had their offices in the building, which also hosted concerts, lectures, pep rallies and dances.

According to **Virginus Dabney (Col 1920, Grad 1921)** in his book *Mr. Jefferson's University*, a group called the Student Union had operated before World War I and was revived in 1933 on the redecorated lower floor of Madison Hall. It ran a used book exchange and social spaces for activities like ping-pong and badminton.

A decade later, in 1943, the Dry Dock, a lounge and soda fountain with a nickelodeon and pinball machines, opened in Madison Hall's basement and was "pronounced a howling success," Dabney wrote. "It was said to be the first thing remotely describable as a student union that the university had ever had."

By the time the Dry Dock opened, discussions about the construction of a dedicated student activities building were already a decade old and becoming more than talk. At a 1945 Charlottesville Rotary Club meeting, Lucius Moffatt, a Romanic languages professor, promoted plans for a "student union" building that would be "comparable to the best in this country," he told the crowd, according to a *Daily Progress* article.

As Virginia's governor from 1942 to 1946, Darden had championed the project. By his 1949 report as UVA's president,

the need felt urgent. During the 1947-48 academic year, reports surfaced of what was characterized as a general "whooping up"—unchaperoned girls and women being "entertained at all hours" in Lawn and Range rooms, and "drinking of alcoholic liquors."

With Darden's support, Student Council leaders stepped up with measures to improve student behavior, including a plan to open first-floor suites in dorms as temporary lounges for mixed parties, supervised by chaperones from the Charlottesville community.

Still, a student activities building—the best solution, as Darden saw it—remained unfunded. State lawmakers balked at approving construction funds amid budget pressures that included rising inflation and a shortage of building materials because of military needs. The first \$500,000 for the project, then estimated to cost about \$1.5 million, finally came in March 1950. But it was a short-lived win; by November, construction on the student union and other projects on Grounds was deferred indefinitely.

It would be several years before momentum returned. In 1954, shortly after the death of UVA's second president, **John Lloyd Newcomb (Engr 1903)**, Darden named the planned building in his honor. While president, Newcomb also had been an early proponent for a student activities building at UVA.

Students were invited to offer thoughts on the design. And Porter Butts, a nationally recognized student union expert from

the University of Wisconsin, was called in as a consultant. Butts would consult on the design of more than 100 student union buildings during his career.

Construction ultimately began in the summer of 1956, timed to start after June finals in the education school because the excavation would be so loud. When Newcomb Hall opened at the start of the 1958-59 academic year, it received statewide coverage and was described as "ultra-modern." The total cost came in at \$2.5 million.

When Darden retired in 1959, he considered the building a crowning achievement—though plenty had derided the project before and after it opened. Through the years, amid worries that it was an attempt to quash Greek life or an effort to turn an elite "gentleman's university" into nothing more than another big state university, it was derided as "Darden's Folly."

Some students nicknamed it "The Palace," making fun of its well-appointed rooms, *The Daily Progress* reported. But they also were filling up the spaces.

"Many students have remarked that they don't know how we've gotten along without it," then-Student Union President **Kendrick Dure (Col '59, Law '65)** was quoted as saying in a *Roanoke Times* article when the building opened.

Within weeks, the building was drawing crowds for events. In October, the International Students Club held a dance



Construction on Newcomb Hall in the 1950s



to mark United Nations Day, featuring a dance performance by **Reiko Kamata (Grad '59)**, then a graduate student in foreign affairs from Japan, and singing from Welsh students.

Notable speakers came. In November 1958, future U.S. Attorney General **Robert F. Kennedy (Law '51)**, then chief counsel for a Senate committee that investigated labor racketeering, drew 500 to the new building to discuss labor corruption. The event was a Kennedy family affair: Robert had led UVA's Student Legal Forum during law school, and his brother, **Ted Kennedy (Law '59)**, the future U.S. senator, held the same position at the time and introduced him.

Still, student life was strongly centered around the fraternity system that Darden had critiqued. And by the time Newcomb Hall opened, students had managed without it for so long that the community didn't quite know what to make of it, remembers **Beverley Crump (Col '63, Law '68)**, who was involved in the University Union and PK German while an undergrad and served on Student Council while in law school.

"University-wide events were already being handled without a student union," Crump says. "Newcomb was a new idea and a new function. It provided a great space for a cafeteria, and I think that was well-used. It provided offices for the student organizations. It wasn't the center of student life."

Changes to the Building

Through the decades, the building evolved, along with the students who relied on it.

The building's basic layout has remained fairly consistent since it opened. The main dining hall is on the second floor; the Ballroom, which has hosted dances like the Restoration and Colonnade balls, is on the third floor; and offices for student groups such as Student Council and the Honor and Judiciary committees are on the fourth floor. The *Cavalier Daily*, once on the fifth floor, moved to a renovated basement space in



1992 due to stricter fire codes.

"For a substantial fraction of the university's existence," the paper's editorial board wrote, "the fifth floor of Newcomb Hall has been the Grand Central Station of information on Grounds. ... Now we are ready to launch a new era of late nights and tight friendships closer to sea level."

The building has also undergone several major renovations. In 1981, UVA added 15,000 square feet, creating a multiuse meeting room and expanding the university's bookstore there. Thirteen years later the bookstore moved out of Newcomb, relocating to a new building and parking garage next door.

In 1995, UVA launched a two-year project to add 6,200 square feet to Newcomb, according to *Corks & Curls*. The project forced about two dozen student groups, including Student Council, the Honor and Judiciary committees, and the *Cavalier Daily*, to temporarily relocate.

The most recent transformation came in 2013, when UVA completed a three-year renovation. That project expanded seating in the dining hall and Pavilion XI, nicknamed "The Pav"; added 16,500 square feet to the building; and renovated 85,000 square feet of the existing space. For several months during the renovation, a temporary dining hall, dubbed "N2," was set up in front of Peabody Hall.

Beer and Bowling

The building's amenities told their own story, shaped by shifting student interests and state drinking laws.

In the 1970s, when the legal drinking age was still 18, a student beer hall opened on the first floor of Pavilion XI and became a popular hangout with bands and beer. **Clara "Kiki" Steele Eden (Col '80, Med '88)** remembers disappearing into the dark space as she entered to dance. "It had lots of music," she says. "It was an alternative place to go, and I enjoyed that."

But serving beer on a college campus proved more difficult as the drinking age changed to 21 in the 1980s. By 1985, plans were in the works to convert the night spot into a "daytime student hangout," according to the *Cavalier Daily*. Beer taps moved to a back room, and the serving area was converted into a coffee bar and new home for Newcomb's then-popular Sweet Shop, which sold pastries.

In 1986, UVA had to crack down on ongoing underage drinking in the space, according to the *Cavalier Daily*. To prevent students from serving underage friends, pitchers of draft beer were no longer sold, and bottles of beer could be purchased only one at a time. By 1990, plans were in the works to end beer sales altogether. The reason: too few customers.

Other amenities also faded with time. Newcomb Hall Lanes, a bowling alley

UVA's Gamers Club holds a festival in Newcomb in 2006.



LEON CHEN

included in the original design, closed in 1968 because of the sport's "lack of popularity," the *Cavalier Daily* reported. And long before streaming services, small listening rooms with record players and a library of records once took up spaces across from the Ballroom, remembers **Yolanda Burrell Taylor (Col '76)**. "They were small rooms, but a few people could gather and listen or just talk."

Communities Within

Much of life in Newcomb has played out behind closed doors and in quiet corners—in the offices where student leaders strategized, the meeting rooms where groups gathered, and the communal spaces where students studied or connected over curly fries.

Sometimes the building's simplest features have brought students together. The ride board, where students posted requests for lifts home, became an unexpected matchmaker, forging a few romances. Before TVs in dorm rooms and smartphones, Newcomb's televisions drew crowds that gathered to witness Jack Ruby shoot Lee Harvey Oswald in

1963, the moon landing in 1969, and the O.J. Simpson verdict in 1995.

And then there were the routines—shifts working in the dining hall or movie theater, hours-long student governance meetings, and visits to the bank and bookstore.

"In the '80s, everything was in Newcomb Hall," says **Debra Haas (Col '85)**, who served as co-chair of University Union. Newcomb felt so much like home base to Haas that she'd leave her belongings on a window seat near the Union office where she studied. She was there so often that friends looking for her knew to check the spot.

Leon Chen (Col '07) and his sister **Vicky Chen (Engr '08)** spent countless hours as projectionists in Newcomb's movie theater with a tight-knit community of co-workers. They spliced reels together, adjusted focus and framing, and played at least one prank on an unsuspecting audience. Ahead of a screening for the 2006 Samuel L. Jackson vehicle *Snakes on a Plane*, Leon played a trailer—for the same movie.

"I was in the theater for one of those, and the people watching it were really hyped up to watch the movie," Vicky says. "So when they saw the trailer, they were cheering."

Both siblings were also members of UVA's Gamers Club, which held events in Newcomb. After club meetings, attendees would often head to Newcomb to eat dinner together, Vicky remembers. "For me, a lot of my college memories are over there."

Eden remembers the camaraderie with other student workers who, like her, had to work to stay in school. They toiled in Newcomb's basement dish room, loading stacks of dishes into a giant dishwasher. "It was hot as can be down there and messy," she says. Later, while working in the bookstore, Eden once sold basketball star **Ralph Sampson (Col '83)** a single pencil. "I was starstruck," she says.

Eden had not known Newcomb's origin story. But in her mind, Darden's effort to provide an alternative to Greek life succeeded. "That served that purpose for me," she says.

A 'Center for Entertainment'

As president, Darden's vision of an expanded student body meant opening UVA's doors to a broader range of white men. He supported "separate but equal" schools and barred **Gregory Hayes Swanson (Law '53)**, UVA's first Black student, from living on Grounds. He named Newcomb Hall after a supporter of eugenics, a pseudoscience based on false claims of Black genetic inferiority. So it's likely Darden never imagined that the building he long championed would become a vital hub for Black students seeking community and belonging.

In the 1970s, as more Black students entered UVA, Newcomb Hall became essential infrastructure for building community at the predominantly white university. Taylor was a charter member of Delta Sigma Theta, UVA's first Black



YOLANDA TAYLOR

UVA's first Black sorority hosts a charity event in Newcomb in 1975.

sorority, formed in 1973. She remembers holding step shows in Newcomb's Ballroom and meetings in its conference rooms. Without a house of their own, Newcomb helped serve that purpose. "We did not have deep pockets," she says.

By the late 1980s, the building had become the center of Black student life. **Tahnee Jackson Whitlock (Col '92)** remembers meeting up at noon with other Black students at the Black Bus Stop, the UTS stop in front of Monroe Hall, to walk over to Newcomb for lunch, and spending countless hours there between classes.

"I don't know if those are the people [Darden] wanted up there, but it was mission accomplished on the goal of having alternative social opportunities for people," Whitlock says.

Throughout her time at UVA, Whitlock was an active member of the Black Student Alliance, whose offices were also on the fourth floor. That's where she spent most of her time when she wasn't in class or studying.

"It was caffeine-fueled, and you were always on a mission in that office," says Whitlock, who helped organize a march against apartheid in South Africa.

The office was a hub for Black students and leaders, and home to the group's *Pride Magazine*. The alliance's monthly meetings and parties packed the Ballroom, and they regularly drew crowds for film festivals, symposiums and cultural events.

"It was another home for us, and it wasn't just us," Whitlock says. The office was steps away from other major student groups, including Student Council, the Honor and Judiciary committees, and University Union. That proximity created a cohesive community of diverse student leaders who discussed issues and made plans together, Whitlock says.

"It made for a really good opportunity for every single one of those organizations to collaborate," she says. "A lot of us became part of the Lawn, so it just solidified that experience."

For **Marjorie Boursiquot (Engr '96)**, Newcomb Hall was central to her social experience at UVA. She remembers



Since 1958, Newcomb has been woven into the daily rhythm of student life.

singing "Bridge Over Troubled Water," during Harambe, an annual peer adviser celebration, and watching dance troupes perform during CultureFest. At DJ parties in the Ballroom, the crowd would go wild when A Tribe Called Quest came on. While other parties centered on drinking with music, Newcomb's parties were focused on the music and dancing themselves, she says.

Newcomb offered something else crucial: a place to gather safely, without the tensions or risks Black students sometimes faced in predominantly white spaces and neighborhoods.

"It definitely was the center of entertainment for us," Boursiquot says. "And it was just a safe, easy place to go. Even if you were going to do something afterwards, you would go to the Newcomb party first."

Decades of Student Life

Nearly 70 years after it opened, Newcomb's cycle continues. New generations of students create the same rhythms that defined the experience for those who came before.

"The area is very busy," says **Angeline Ngo (Col '27)**, vice chair of programming for the University Programs Council. "It's not often that you go into Newcomb Hall and there's not something going on, even on weekends."

Spaces are sometimes booked months in advance, and the University Programs

Council regularly plans events that draw hundreds of students. Its Newcomb Hall Crawl, an event for first-years at the beginning of the fall semester, brings out 1,000 students to learn more about what the building has to offer, says chair **Bhavya Suggula (Col '26)**.

Sure, many students spend far more of their free time on the Corner than in The Pav. But for a big part of the student population, Suggula says, Newcomb lives up to Darden's original vision: a place for students to gather, regardless of their affiliations.

"I one thousand percent think so," Suggula adds. She's also chair of UVA's Pan Asian Council, which organizes big cultural events and shows in the building.

"Newcomb Ballroom, especially, everyone's fighting to death for," she says. "It's really hard accommodating everyone who wants to use it, but ... people want this big space to be able to showcase their community and what they stand for. And I think that's really meaningful." 📍

Sarah Lindenfeld Hall (Col '96) is a freelance writer based in Raleigh, N.C. She most likely first met her husband Chad Hall (Com '96) in passing in the Cavalier Daily offices in the basement of Newcomb Hall when they were first-years. But it's been so long that neither of them remembers the exact moment.



Making friends on adult mode

The healthy social ties that may have once felt natural are harder to come by once we grow up. UVA researchers offer insights and strategies.

BY CAROLINE KETTLEWELL
ILLUSTRATIONS BY DEREK ABELLA



Movies would have us believe that the one relationship certain to bring us lasting happiness is a romantic partner. Yet if we think about the relationships that accompany us through every stage of life, most are our friendships.

An extensive body of research has confirmed that social connections are more than just a nice-to-have. For instance, one long-running study led by UVA psychology professor **Joseph Allen (Col '80)**, which has followed a cohort of nearly 200 participants from their early teens into their 40s, has gathered robust data to demonstrate how strong connections benefit our health, well-being and success. Another study published in 2025, led by a researcher at Cornell University, suggests that social connections can even help slow the aging process.



It's worrisome, then, that more of us appear to be struggling to make and maintain social connections, so much so that the World Health Organization in June called social disconnection "a serious threat to global health." Trends in social isolation in the U.S., such as the decline in marriage and increase in single-person households, have been rising for decades. Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone*, which highlighted the decline in social engagement in the U.S., was published a quarter-century ago.

Still, a recent convergence of trends seems to have accelerated the problem. These include the explosive growth in digital technologies, the time demands of hustle culture and intensive parenting, the decline in social trust (barely one-third of Americans in a 2018 survey agreed that "most people can be trusted," according to the Pew Research Center), and the still-to-be-understood aftereffects of a worldwide pandemic.

"Loneliness and social disengagement have hit an all-time high in the last decade among most age cohorts for a lot of different reasons that are both internal and environmental in our society," says **Sareena Chadha (Col '21, Grad '24, '28)**, a Ph.D. candidate in the social psychology program who studies social connection.



If you're feeling that your own social connections aren't what you'd like them to be, how can you build more of them? UVA researchers and professors offer insights on the challenges that hold us back, along with tips for creating, deepening and sustaining the connections that help us thrive. →



Evaluate your friendship goals

There's no ideal number of friends. Some people are happy with one or two close friends, while others like being part of a larger social group. "It's all about what you need and what you feel you have," Chadha says. "One definition of loneliness is that your desired social connections don't match your actual social world."

Even if you have a great friend or a devoted partner, it's important to recognize that no one person can fulfill all our connection needs, says **Bethany Teachman**, professor of psychology and director of clinical training for the psychology department. One friend might be great for a long heart-to-heart, but you might also want to find someone who could share your enthusiasm for pickleball or the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Ask yourself what aspects of your connection needs are working well and what aspects are not, suggests Teachman. Then "put yourself in environments where it is more likely you'll have opportunities."

Start a conversation

No time in your schedule to add new activities? You can take advantage of the places where you already encounter people. The next time you're standing on the sidelines at your kid's soccer game or microwaving lunch in the office break room, try striking up a conversation with someone you might like to get to know better.

Easier said than done, you might think. What do I say? What if I make a social gaffe?

"It is easy to invent reasons why it will be difficult," confirms **Chris Welker**, a postdoctoral research associate in the psychology department's Emotion and Behavior Lab who studies conversation and how it relates to connection. "When we have a dearth



“**One definition of loneliness is that your desired social connections don't match your actual social world.**”

—Sareena Chadha, Ph.D.
candidate in social psychology

of information about interacting with someone, we tend to be pessimistic about how it is going to go.”

He's been surprised to find in his research just how common that pessimism is. "People tend to think their conversational skills are worse than their other everyday skills," he says.

But if you think about all the conversations you've ever had with strangers, how many have gone badly? "Once you get into the conversation," Welker says, "it tends to be easier than we expect."

Welker is particularly interested in how conversation both shapes and reflects the closeness of relationships and how, as a stranger becomes an acquaintance and then a friend, you build a shared history and insider language of jokes and references. But first, "there are these barriers that we have internally that have to be overcome in order to get to those conversations."

Research has not yet revealed, he acknowledges, the perfect conversation-starter in every situation. On the other hand, you don't have to come armed with brilliant bon mots.

Even topics as innocuous as the weather or your favorite coffee order "can be a way to learn about your partner and reveal some information about yourself," he says. "They can be more than small talk; they can be easy segues into deeper topics." Show genuine curiosity toward

the other person, really listen to their responses and be willing to share something of yourself as well. Then every conversation you have "provides fodder for future conversations," Welker says. "Use what you hear to perhaps dig into something deeper."

Even if most casual encounters never develop beyond the occasional friendly chat, "Recognize that, just like dating, it is not necessarily the case that the first date is the person you spend your life with," Teachman says. By making a small effort to get to know someone better, you're still strengthening your social skills and opening yourself up to friendship opportunities.

After all, every one of our friends was once a stranger. "You are not going to know in advance," Teachman says.

Even the small daily encounters we have add to our well-being. Researchers at the University of British Columbia, among others, have confirmed the power of these "weak ties" through several studies. "Putting yourself out there and having the social exchange, even with casual interactions, has positive benefits," Teachman says.

Take it step by step

A chat in the break room or at preschool pickup is pleasant, but how do you take the next steps that could turn an acquaintance into a friend?

It might seem obvious, researchers say, but when it comes to building connection, somebody has to go first.

Taking a friendship deeper can feel even more anxiety-inducing than starting a conversation. When you think about asking Darren from IT if he'd like to train together for a 5K, suddenly you're 10 years old again. Just as we can convince ourselves that we're uniquely terrible at starting a conversation, so too, says Teachman, are we prone to assume that everyone else is brimming with the confidence and social savvy we lack.

Her research focuses on social



anxiety, which is far more common than most of us might imagine. “We are constantly dealing with ambiguity in social situations,” she says. “We don’t have instant feedback, and we are constantly trying to read social cues.” One result, she says, is that people tend to overestimate both their own inabilities and other people’s social success.

“The issue is not that you feel anxious. Anxiety doesn’t have to be that big a deal,” she says. “It’s that you let the anxiety make choices for how you interact.”

She recommends thinking of the process of building connection as a hierarchy of steps. “You don’t have to do the hardest thing right away,” she says.

So “going first” at your kid’s soccer game could be simple. “I can just say ‘Hello’ and ‘How was your weekend?’” Teachman says. “That’s a step.” Then the next time, you might set your chair down next to that other parent’s and challenge yourself to talk with them a little more. And when you’ve gotten more comfortable, you could suggest taking the kids out for ice cream after the game.

It might feel awkward, but “an interaction doesn’t have to go perfectly to be valuable and lead to a deeper connection,” Teachman says. And she stresses that feeling anxious is a normal response to doing something challenging. “That doesn’t

mean anything is wrong. It’s just a hard thing to do,” she says.

Practice ‘radical kindness’

Sometimes things won’t go well. Maybe you hit it off with someone at a party, but they never reply to your invitation to get together. Or you blurt out an awkward comment to a new acquaintance. When that happens, just take it in stride, the researchers advise.

Once again, Teachman says, we tend to imagine everyone is noticing or judging us much more than is actually the case.

“It leads people to assign really negative meanings to a situation that isn’t that terrible,” she says.

“Sometimes you are going to get it wrong,” says **Alison Nagel (Col ’10, Grad ’15, ’20)**, an assistant professor in the psychology department.

Also, don’t assume it’s about you. “You’re at your kid’s soccer game and you make an offer, like ‘I can bring coffee,’ and for some reason that is not reciprocated. That can be so rough,” Nagel says.

Her advice is to practice “radical kindness” and recognize that you can’t know what the other person is going through at that moment. Maybe they just received bad news, they’re stressed about a new job or they had a fight with their partner. Radical kindness means “assuming

the best intentions, assuming that everyone is doing the best they can with what they have,” Nagel says.

And finally, remember that time-immemorial advice: There are plenty more fish in the sea. “Flaming out is part of figuring out who you do connect with,” Chadha says. “It would be maladaptive to befriend every person you meet.”

Invest the time

When things do go right, be patient. “It is a tough ask to say the first time I go for coffee with someone that we will have deeply understood each other’s souls, or that it was all fun and wonderful,” Teachman says.

Welker notes that research at the University of Kansas concluded that you need 50 hours just to turn an acquaintance into a casual friend, and as much as 200 hours to become close friends. Who has that much time in our overscheduled lives?

“The struggle is real,” Nagel says. Time for friends can seem like an unimaginable luxury. She recommends scheduling it the way you do any other important commitment. Put it on the family calendar where everyone can see it. When she gets together with two of her closest friends each month, “we make sure we have it on the calendar for the next month before we leave,”

she says.

Welker equates social connection to working out. When it’s been a long day or a long week, it’s tempting to skip the gym. “You set aside time,” he says. “It is good for you even if you don’t want to go.”

And when you’ve put in the many hours it takes to build a friendship, try not to let it languish. “It is important not to let go of the people who have known you through many stages of your life,” Chadha says. “You can always make new friends, but you can’t make new old friends.”

Caroline Kettlewell is a writer based in Richmond, Virginia.





DRIVEN BY THE MISSION

When faced with a challenge, I have always found it helpful to return to one basic question: What is our mission?

Over 26 years as a senior partner with a global management consulting firm and almost 11 years as the dean of the nation's top public business school, this question has helped me guide leaders and steer global organizations as they navigate complex challenges and rapidly shifting technological, economic and political landscapes.

As dean of Darden, I found that the school's mission to inspire responsible leaders through transformational learning experiences informed every decision our team made. Whether hiring a new generation of outstanding faculty members, launching forward-thinking projects like UVA's first AI institute, or pursuing fundraising and capital projects to give our students, faculty and staff much-needed resources, the mission was our touchstone.

As I begin my role as UVA's 10th president, my top priority is bolstering the university's affairs, earning trust and building on the excellent work of my predecessors to meet the challenges and opportunities of UVA's third century.

My team and I will be guided every step of the way by the key question: What is our mission and how can we deliver its full potential?

The University of Virginia is a public institution of higher learning guided by a founding vision of discovery, innovation, and development of the full potential of talented students from all walks of life. It serves the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world by developing responsible citizen leaders and professionals; advancing, preserving, and disseminating knowledge; and providing world-class patient care.

Two things stand out to me. First, UVA is a public institution with a mission of public service. This is an aspect of UVA that the presidents before me emphasized and that I plan to continue. One of the first things I did upon my appointment was to reach out to former presidents **Jim Ryan (Law '92)** and Teresa Sullivan, as well as former interim and acting presidents Paul Mahoney and J.J. Wagner Davis, to express my deep thanks for their service and listen to their advice, perspectives and counsel.

UVA is an extraordinary place, and I am committed to preserving what makes it special while thoughtfully improving where we can. Real progress often comes from the collective impact of many small, intentional changes—together, they can make a big difference.

UVA's service mission includes taking steps to make its education affordable and accessible for qualified students and their families. It includes preparing students to serve the public in their chosen professions at the world's best institutions—public, private and nonprofit—and encouraging alumni to continue the mission of service they began here on Grounds. It includes serving our community in the Charlottesville-Albemarle region and serving the commonwealth, the nation and the world through education, research, discovery and patient care.

Second, UVA is focused on excellence. In the last year alone, UVA was ranked the No. 2 best value public university in America by both *U.S. News & World Report* and *The Princeton Review*. *Time* ranked UVA as the No. 3 public school for leaders, and UVA Health University Medical Center is the No. 1 hospital in Virginia as ranked by *Newsweek*. In addition, LinkedIn, in a new look at career outcomes, ranked UVA the No. 1 public school for graduates'

long-term career success. Some other rankings indicate we have yet to achieve our full potential.

Rankings are not everything, but they provide some facts and feedback on important parts of our mission. They are also a good reminder that the university we are privileged to love and serve remains one of the very best places in the country to live, learn, conduct research, receive care and play collegiate sports.

As our family moves to Carr's Hill, I have been honored and humbled to have lived in Pavilion I on the Lawn for the last decade. It is a privilege to interact daily with our students, who never fail to inspire me and are always willing to pet our golden retriever, Lawnie.

> UVA is an extraordinary place, and I am committed to preserving what makes it special while thoughtfully improving where we can.

At the heart of UVA are also its faculty, health care providers and staff members. They do their jobs with dedication and passion, and a significant part of my role is ensuring they have what they need to thrive in their work.

Leading this community—and carrying out its mission—is the highest honor of my life. I cannot promise to do the job perfectly, but I can promise to do it with passion, resolve, humility and a deep love for the university, which I know we all share. I am optimistic for the future.

SCOTT C. BEARDSLEY
President of the University of Virginia

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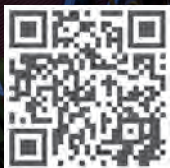
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NEW CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

The following alumni recently demonstrated their commitment to the University of Virginia Alumni Association and its important programs and activities by becoming Contributing Members of the Association.

E. Sharon Thornton (Col '90)

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Veronica C. Tysseland (Col '03)

Megan L. Brinsfield (Com '05)

Vanessa R. Arancibia (Col '08)

Katie A. Goodrich (Educ '08)

Harrison T. Kircher (Col '09)

Tyrssa K. Philpot (Col '10)

Audrey P. Benton (Col '13)

Lance C. Guthrie (Com '14)

Katherine G. Lawlor (Educ '20)

Paul Choi (Batten '21)

Ruth C. Alber (Col '22)

Ryan Daly DeBlon (Educ '22)

Kaitlyn Elizabeth Bare (Col '24)

Philip Franklin Berkley (Col '24)

Shaw B. Matthews (Col '24)

Lawrence V. Phan (Engr '24)

Janet Ann-Marie Porter (Nurs '24)

Mannix F. Green (Engr '25)

Johnson Li (Col '25)

Charles Y. Liu (Col '25)

John Louis Nocito (Com '25)

Edward Alexander Pasco (Engr '25)

Christopher Alan Turner (Col '25)

Jonah Zachary Werbel (Engr '25)

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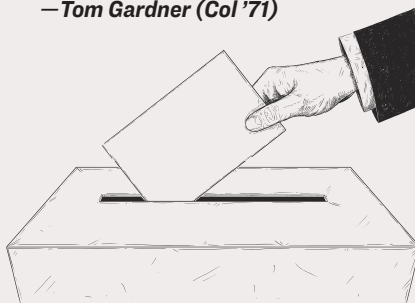
BY MARTHA CARR

What is your strongest memory of student self-governance at UVA?



“The sweep of the Virginia Progressive Party slate in the College of Arts and Sciences in spring 1969, leading to (the) resolution to admit women.”

—Tom Gardner (Col '71)



“When I was at the university from 1972 to 1976, we didn’t carry backpacks, but I remember how you could leave your bag, purse and books any place and not be concerned that they would be stolen. The Honor System then seemed like it guided a lot more than just academic behavior. I know it was not perfect, but it was deeper than just a fear of the single sanction. Somehow, being on Grounds made you part of this community of trust that felt special and unique.”

—Nan Warren (Col '76)



“The ‘Apartheid Protest Shanties Trial’ before the University Judiciary Committee in April 1986. The committee dismissed charges brought by the university against the student leaders of the Students Against Apartheid Coalition (SAAC), finding that the students did not violate the policy against camping on the Lawn. I was a second-year law student and the Law School Judiciary Committee representative on the panel that heard the case. In response, the university then adopted a new policy restricting ‘any structure or extended presence’ on the Lawn, which was promptly challenged by SAAC in federal court.”

—David J. Gogal (Col '85, Law '88)



Anti-apartheid protests on the Lawn after shanties had been removed and before they’d been reerected.

“Being part of the University Judiciary Committee (UJC) was one of the most meaningful experiences of my undergrad and, honestly, of my life. After a particularly difficult trial, a student thanked me for making them feel heard. They hugged me and said I helped make an intimidating and inevitable process feel understandable and less frightening. That interaction fulfilled me in a way no other college activity ever did. Having these important responsibilities be entirely student-run is what makes UVA unique and sets it apart from anywhere else.” —**Christina Propheeter (Col '25)**

“I served on an Honor trial committee in 1971. The weight of deciding a fellow student’s continued presence at the university was huge. If found guilty, there was only the single sanction available: permanent expulsion. We found that the evidence indicated that a student had cheated on an exam. He appealed, and the original committee got to decide if he could receive a retrial with a different committee. We did not agree. As I look back on it, that process was wrong. He should have been able to appeal to a new committee without our permission. While student governance was a very positive thing during my time on Grounds, it was not perfect.” —**Bill Mims (Darden '71)**

“As vice president of the E-school during 1963–64, I was a judge or juror for several Honor trials. I was always impressed with the seriousness that my fellow Honor Committee members exhibited. In one instance we used an electron microscope to try to determine if the student who was accused of cheating had erased his test answers and copied another student’s paper. We concluded that he had, in fact, cheated. No one ever thought of their role as a game. We always did our best, working together, to reach an appropriate decision.” —**Vic Bell (Engr '65, Darden '67)**

“When I served on the University Judiciary Committee as vice chair nearly four decades ago, we took our role in dealing with student misdeeds very seriously. One area of complaints came from landlords about student behavior. We developed a landlord-tenant agreement for students.”
—**Andrea Bear (Col '77)**



“The UVA Pep Band was entirely student run and managed, allowing for maximum creativity for our performances. I was on the committee that wrote the football game halftime performance shows in 1987, creating many memorable moments for fans. As a four-year member of the smaller basketball band, I felt we made a tremendous impact on the games through our student-curated music and cheers in relatively small venues.”

—**Avron Stoloff (Com '88)**

“Serving as counsel in University Judiciary Committee and Honor Committee hearings while a law student (1988–1990). It was a remarkable experience to be given that level of direct involvement in a wholly peer-led process. It came full circle during my 14 years as UVA dean of students (2007–2021), when I brought cases in the UJC, was represented by a student as my counsel and was questioned in hearings by the student panel. A core value of the university for so many years.”



—**Allen Groves (Law '90)**

For our next issue:

What was your favorite spot on the Corner? What do you remember about it? Share your story and photos at uvamag.com/timecapsules and we'll select some to feature in our Summer issue.

Class Notes

📍 Indicates a corresponding photograph or video online at uvamagazine.org/classnotes.

CM Indicates Contributing Member of the Alumni Association

'50s

Peter Barres (Col '58 CM) has retired from his career teaching at the Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut, and tutoring students in math. He spends his time building tiny houses and growing lima beans, tomatoes, butternut squash and string beans in his garden.

'60s

Byron Dickson (Arch '63 CM) participated in the 2025 Spirit of Virginia Award ceremony at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia, on June 10. Dickson designed the memorial, which was dedicated in 2001. 📍

Frederick L. "Rick" Greene (Col '66, Med '70 CM) received the 1819 Alumni Society Award, presented by the University of Virginia Medical Alumni Association. The award recognizes outstanding alumni who graduated from the School of Medicine over 50 years ago. Greene is the medical director of cancer data services for the Levine Cancer Institute in Charlotte, North Carolina. 📍

Charles M. Bryant (Col '67 CM) co-founded Spangler Bryant, a company dedicated to creating and producing Broadway shows and movies. His cofounder, David Spangler, is a composer of Broadway musicals, including *Hard Road to Heaven*. Spangler Bryant has optioned a book by writer Stefani Moore titled *Last Dance in Paradise*.

'70s

Carter Manierre (Engr '71) completed *Pop's War*, the illustrated true story of his father, Cyrus Manierre, a World War II soldier who parachuted into Nazi-occupied France to train and assist the local resistance forces. Betrayed to the Gestapo, he was sent to Stalag Luft I, a

prisoner of war camp, where he reunited with his brother, a B-24 pilot. 📍

Michael Cascio (Col '72) produced and co-directed a critically acclaimed documentary on the artist Edward Hopper for *American Masters* on PBS, the latest entry in a career that has brought Cascio four Emmys, two Oscar nominations and a "Producer of the Year" award. His work includes award-winning documentaries for National Geographic, A&E and HBO. 📍

Frank R. Scheer (Col '72) is in his 20th year as an adjunct professor of supply chain management at the University of Maryland Global Campus. He retired from a 28-year career in supply management at the U.S. Postal Service in 2018. 📍

Charles Snyder (Grad '73, '79) published *Murder at Knebworth*, a cozy historical murder mystery novel that follows an American couple navigating English high society in the period following the American Civil War.

Lawrence McCrank (Grad '74) completed his lifelong work, *The Tarragona Vortex: Conquest and Reconquest, Liberation and Restoration of Christendom in the Frontiers of Arago-Catalunya*, released by Trivent Publishing. *The Tarragona Vortex* began as a dissertation in medieval history at UVA under Professor Charles Julian Bishko. 📍

Mike McGrew (Col '75) published his second picture book, *The Boy Who Would Be Santa*, with Kharis Publishing. The book tells the story of Saint Nicholas, including his struggle after the death of his parents, his acts of charity, the miracles he performed and his historical evolution into Santa Claus. 📍

Bob Johnson (Col '77 CM) released a new EP, *Purer Eyes: The Songs of Bungalow Stokes*. The first track is about a painting on a wall in a Lambeth apartment during Johnson's years at UVA. The painter was **Asher Roth (Col '77)**, whose work also adorned Newcomb Hall's Pavilion XI for several years. 📍

Andy Claybrook (Com '78 CM) retired from 45 years of service as a CPA, the last 28 of which he spent as a self-employed personal financial specialist and certified financial planner. He and his wife live in Franklin, Tennessee, and look forward to spending more time with their eight grandsons.

William Gerstmyer (Arch '79, '83 CM) has been sailing from Maine to the Caribbean, making stops along the East Coast. This is his sixth round trip from Maine, where he spends his summers. 📍

'80s

Jane M. Everson (Educ '80, '83 CM) retired from a long career in academia. In retirement, she has been elected to her local school board and has published a nonfiction book exploring the lives of women who have influenced her life, entitled *Everyday Women, Extraordinary Wisdom*. 📍

Charles Napier (Col '81 CM) came out of semi-retirement to serve as director of infrastructure programs for the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority. His team was honored to receive the 2024 Governor's Award for Excellence in recognition of outstanding public service to Pennsylvania.

Shawn Grain Carter (Col '82 CM) was honored as a recipient of the HistoryMakers 2025 award for her distinguished career as a buyer and senior executive in the fashion and retailing industry. Grain Carter, a professor at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City, is the inaugural donor for the school's social justice scholarship. 📍


John Peebles (Col '82 CM) has started food4nj.org, an organization that provides groceries and other resources to families visiting their loved ones detained at ICE's Delaney Hall Detention Facility in Newark, New Jersey. The organization welcomes




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Class Notes

donations and invites volunteers to help at Delaney Hall. 

Elizabeth Atwood (Grad '83) published *Deadline: 200 Years of Violence Against Journalists in the United States* with the University of Missouri Press. She began researching the topic after the tragic death of her colleague, Rob Hiaasen, in the Capital Gazette shooting in 2018.


John Howard (Col '83 CM) published the 75th anniversary edition of Southern literary classic *The Bitterweed Path* by Thomas Hal Phillips. Howard is professor emeritus of arts and humanities at King's College London. 

Laura DeLuca (Col '85 CM) was named the director of the University of Colorado Boulder's study abroad program in Bali, Indonesia, focusing on sustainability and

social entrepreneurship. Students will learn about Bali's native plants, visit a Hindu temple, hear a presentation from the Biorock Indonesia coral restoration project and visit with social entrepreneurs at the Makadaya Impact Center. 

Andrew G. Lee (Col '85, Med '89 CM) received the 2025 Walter Reed Distinguished Achievement Award presented by the UVA Medical Alumni Association. The award recognizes professional accomplishments, outstanding innovation and exemplary leadership in the field of medicine.


Susan Monaco (Com '85 CM) was elected president of the Eastern Lenders Association. Monaco is the managing director and Federal Housing Administration chief underwriter at Dwight Capital. In addition to her professional responsibilities, she is a certified health coach, helping people get and stay well naturally.


Kevin Faulkner (Law '86) was named board chair for the National Diaper Bank Network. NDBN has distributed more than 1.4 billion diapers to families in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, operating through a network of more than 300 local basic needs banks. 


Scott Gakenheimer (Engr '86, Darden '90 CM) published his first book, *A To-Do List (And Some Don't-Do's) For Building Wealth*. Gakenheimer shares lessons from his personal finance journey, which allowed him to retire at 54 years old. In retirement, he splits his time between Charlotte, North Carolina, and Honolulu.


Ann M. Ryan (Grad '87, '98) published *The Ghosts of Mark Twain: A Study of Manhood, Race, and the Gothic Imagination* with the University of Missouri Press. The book examines Twain's uneasy relationship to Black culture and masculinity, even as he imagines a future in which Black men will gain authentic voice and agency.

Ritt Deitz (Col '88 CM) published a novel, *Settle Down*, through Ten16 Press. The surreal novel follows a young UVA graduate who returns to his Wisconsin hometown. UVA alumni who worked for UVA's catering services in the '80s will recognize glimpses of the Birdwood Mansion

kitchen and Newcomb Hall. Deitz is a professor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. 

Mauricio Velásquez (Col '88 CM) published his first book, *Tackling Toxicity: A Skill-Based Guide to Addressing Toxicity*, which provides strategies for creating healthy and successful workplace environments, as well as navigating difficult family and social situations. The book won an April 2025 International Impact Book Award. 

Lucie André (Col '89 CM) published her debut novel, *Never Ready*, inspired by her time at a leading modern dance company in New York City when it lost two of its nine men to the AIDS epidemic. The novel was featured in readings at the American Dance Festival in Durham, North Carolina; the Paul Taylor Dance Company in New York; and Spalding Nix Fine Art gallery in Atlanta. 

Sheronda Dorsey (Col '89 CM) was inducted as a board member of the National Society of High School Scholars Foundation in August. Dorsey, a retired Central Intelligence Agency senior executive, previously worked with the NSHSS Foundation as a CIA liaison for recruitment of talented students. 

'90s

Craig W. Sampson (Col '90, Law '93 CM) was named a fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. Sampson is president of Barnes & Diehl in Richmond, Virginia, and is a co-author of legal treatise *Family Law: Theory, Practice and Forms* (Virginia Practice series, 2025 edition).

Iliana Das Ewen (Col '92) founded Seen & Heard, a youth-powered nonprofit advocacy organization. Inspired by the values of leadership and community she learned at UVA, Ewen leads efforts to ensure that youth have the tools, platform and access they need to influence policies about their future.

Tina Schust Robinson (Col '94) will publish her first book, *Developing Your Business Leaders: A Guide to Investing at All Levels*, with ATD Press in March. The

Send us your updates

We want to share your news with the UVA alumni community. When submitting items for publication, please keep in mind the following guidelines.

- > Class Notes typically fall into the following categories: wedding, retirement, publication, birth, job or academic accomplishment.
- > Please limit your submission to 100 words. Submissions will be edited for style, content and length.
- > Once approved, all submissions are publicly visible. Do not submit anything you wish to remain private.



To submit your updates, scan the QR code or go to uvamag.com/submitnote.

book outlines the reasons and methods for investing intentionally in leaders. A seasoned public speaker, work-place consultant and executive coach, Robinson is grateful every day for her UVA education. 📖

Coleman Bigelow (Col '97, Darden '05 CM) released *Man's Best Friends*, his second flash-fiction collection, with Alien Buddha Press in October. According to his publisher, the collection "digs into the strange, tender and sometimes absurd ways people and animals collide." All proceeds from book sales support the ASPCA. 📖

Lucas Hobbs (Law '98 CM) was elected president of the Association of District Court Judges of Virginia at its 2025 meeting. He previously served as the association's secretary and treasurer. He is a General District Court judge in Virginia's 28th Judicial District and lives in Bristol, Virginia, with his wife. 📖

Peter Mina (Col '98 CM) founded The Mina Firm, a law practice focused on federal sector employment law and civil rights litigation in Washington, D.C. Mina spent more than 14 years working at the Department of Homeland Security, where he served as deputy officer for civil rights and civil liberties.

Jim Harshaw (Col '99, Educ '99 CM) released the 500th episode of his podcast, *Success for the Athletic-Minded Man*, in which he interviews world-class performers, including Olympic gold medalists, Navy SEALs, *New York Times* bestselling authors and others (including several Wahoos). 📖

'00s

Asmau Ahmed (Engr '00) was named the first chief artificial intelligence and data officer for Varo Bank, the first all-digital nationally chartered bank in the U.S., where she leads company-wide AI and machine-learning efforts. Ahmed was most recently on the leadership team at Google's X Development. 📖

Gabrielle Rhodes Crawford (Col '00 CM) was named Advanced Practice



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Class Notes

Provider of the Year for the Centra Medical Group. Crawford is the lead advanced practice provider at the general surgery and trauma department at Centra Health in Lynchburg, Virginia. She and her husband, **Kenneth Crawford (Col '01 CM)**, have three children.

Laura G. Griffin (Col '00 CM) was appointed clerk of court for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, becoming the court's senior executive. The court, widely known as the "rocket docket," handles high-profile cases involving national security and civil rights.

Amy Rector (Col '00 CM) and her colleagues from the Ledi-Geraru Research Project in northeastern Ethiopia were featured in an article in *The Washington Post* for their research on Australopithecus fossils, an early hominin that lived along-

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side the early human ancestors of the Homo genus. Rector is a paleontologist at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Aaron Peters (Engr '01 CM) and his wife, Stephanie, welcomed their fourth child, Sophia, on May 25, 2023, and their fifth child, Margaret, on July 24, 2025. 📍

Myron Santos (Col '01 CM) was accepted as a member of American Cinema Editors, an honorary society that celebrates excellence, mutual respect, and diversity and inclusion within the profession. He is also a member of the Motion Picture Editors Guild and the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. Santos, his wife and their daughter live in Los Angeles. 📍

Robert D. Weinberg (Col '01 CM) was promoted to partner at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti. Weinberg focuses his practice on family law and estate and trust litigation. He regularly handles custody matters both within and outside Pennsylvania, advocating for the best interests of minors. 📍

Cynthia Lawson Malhotra (Col '02 CM) continues to grow Art & Forge, the luxury brass and bronze decorative hardware brand she co-founded with her husband, Rish Malhotra. She recently debuted the Williamsburg hardware collection, created in partnership with Colonial Williamsburg and inspired by the region's timeless architectural and decorative traditions. 📍

David Meredith (Com '03) and his wife, Jamie, ran the 2025 Boston Marathon to raise money for The Children's Room, a nonprofit organization that provides grief support for children, teens and families. Their team raised over \$20,000 for the organization. 📍

Kieran Carter (Col '06 CM) launched her firm, Oakgrove Legal Strategies, which specializes in tax law, high-stakes litigation and legacy planning. Carter spent 10 years as a senior trial attorney in the U.S. Department of Justice's Tax Division. She also served in DOJ leadership, advising the deputy assistant attorney general on tax policy. 📍

Ralph "Doctor" Reiher (Educ '06) joined the Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission with a new reenacting impression of Gen. William Rickman, who

oversaw Virginia's hospitals during the Revolutionary War. In 2026, Reiher will participate in reenactments commemorating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in the Shenandoah Valley and elsewhere. 📍

Cara Goodwin (Col '07 CM) published her article "Kids and Sugar, Does It Equal 'Bad' Behavior?" in *CharlottesvilleFamily* magazine. The article discusses research showing little correlation between sugar consumption and small children's behavior and gives advice on handling sugar in a child's diet. Goodwin, a licensed clinical psychologist, lives in Charlottesville with her four children.

Jenny Hoffmann (Engr '07 CM) published her first book, *Open Up! Step into the Leader You Are Meant To Be*. The book draws on her journey—from surgical suites to horseback trails—to offer a framework for leadership rooted in vulnerability and authenticity. She invites readers to build trust and turn personal challenges into collective growth. 📍

Harrison Wade Reishman (Com '07) and Alexandra Ostrovskaja were married in August at the Hôtel du Palais Biarritz in Biarritz, France. Joining them were fellow UVA alumni and Lile suitemates **Jeffrey Whittemore (Engr '07)**, **Jeremy Dalton (Arch '07 CM)** and **John Gurski (Engr '07)**, and alumnus **Drew Reid (Col '07 CM)**. 📍

Lee Manion (Grad '08) published his second book, *The Recognition of Sovereignty: Politics of Empire in Early Anglo-Scottish Literature*, with Cambridge University Press. Situating medieval and early modern Scotland and England in a broader imperial context, the book shows how established discourse prevented more equitable political unions. Manion is a professor at the University of Missouri. 📍

Katie McCarthy Stefanic (Col '09, Arch '18 CM) and her husband, Alex, welcomed their first child, Claire McCarthy Stefanic, in June. The family lives in Midlothian, Virginia. 📍

'10s

Cristina Liebolt Foran (Col '10 CM)



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WILEY

Class Notes

and **Lincoln Foran (Col '10 CM)** made it to their 15-year UVA reunions with 2-year-old Susanna Walton Foran and 9-week-old Eugenia Lee Foran, who was born March 29, 2025. The Forans look forward to continuing to bring the girls to Charlottesville as they grow up. 🏠

Ruika Lin (Col '11 CM) launched *Fieldnotes from a Watcher*, an independent creative nonfiction journal. Prominent themes include families of origin and of choice, belonging, parenthood, grief, cross-cultural musings, and the creative process. Lin invites fellow UVA alumni to sign up as members or guest writers.

Molly Elizabeth Beauchemin (Col '12 CM) and her husband, **Rishi Paul Singh (Col '11 CM)**, welcomed their third child, Iris Oak Singh, in June. Iris and his two older sisters, 4-year-old Cypress and 2-year-old Lilac, have spent many hours in the same rocking chair that sat outside of their mother's former Lawn room, 32 East.

Courtney Johnson Corallo (Com '12) was promoted to partner at Keiter, a certified public accounting firm based in Glen Allen, Virginia. She also serves as board treasurer for the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. 🏠

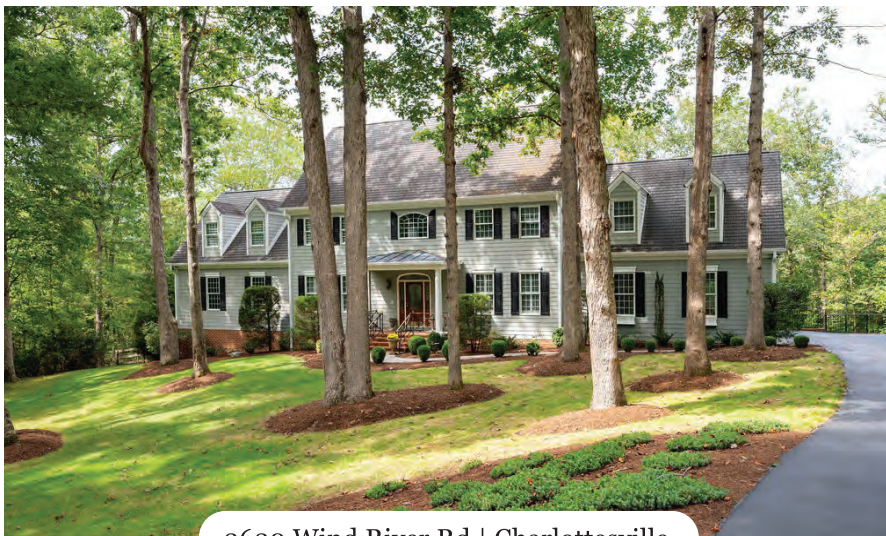
Katie Walker (Educ '12, '18), former associate vice president and chief budget officer at UVA, was named vice chancellor for finance and administration at Indiana University, Bloomington. She lives in Bloomington with her husband, **Andrew Walker (Arch '12)**, and her children, James and Lily.

Rowan Moody (Col '13 CM) was appointed chief advancement officer of the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland, Maine. She will spearhead its comprehensive capital campaign and guide strategies to grow philanthropic engagement and sustain long-term institutional growth. Moody previously worked for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. 🏠

Kathryn Wymer Clarke (Col '14) and **Philipp Clarke (Col '15 CM)** welcomed their son, Benedict Philip Maria Clarke, in October 2024. Benedict is the grandson of **John Wymer (Law '74 CM)** and the nephew of **Mason Wymer (Col '01 CM)** and **Sarah Wymer Raj (Educ '17, '21)**. 🏠

Carrington Kernodle Epperson (Col '18 CM) was a semifinalist for the 2025 *CharlottesvilleFamily* magazine MOMpreneur Business Grant, which recognizes mom-run businesses in the Charlottesville community. Epperson runs the Chanterelle Cafe, a cottage bakery specializing in vegan and allergy-friendly baked goods.

Grace Gillen (Col '18 CM) has joined Virginia Dental Solutions in Reston and Ashburn, Virginia. She received her doctor of dental surgery from Virginia Commonwealth University, where she graduated summa cum laude. Upon completion of her residency at Columbia University, she was awarded Overall



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Kathryn Albaugh (Com '19, Col '19) and **Dominic Wagner (Col '19)** were married Sept. 13, 2025, in Saint Michaels, Maryland. The couple met at the very end of their fourth year at UVA and have lived in New York City, Miami and, most recently, Baltimore. 📺

Anant Das (Com '19 CM) is lead executive producer and general manager of In My Own Little Corner Productions, which received the 2025 Norman Vincent Peale Award for Positive Thinking. The company released a professionally filmed musical and a documentary. The films share the story of actress Chrissy Whitehead as she confronts her bipolar II diagnosis.

Carlton Higby (Engr '19 CM) and **Wendy Wright (Col '19, Educ '19 CM)** were married in Arlington, Virginia, in September. The couple met in the Baker Street tube station in London while

studying abroad the summer after their second year at UVA.

'20s

Tuan "Megan" Doan (Col '24) joined the Institute for Defense Analyses as a research associate in the Cost Analysis and Research Division of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center in Alexandria, Virginia. At UVA, Doan studied applied statistics.

Lea Jih-Vieira (Engr '24) joined the Institute for Defense Analyses as a data science fellow in the Information Technology and Systems Division of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center in Alexandria, Virginia. Jih-Vieira studied information science at Cornell University before earning her master's degree in systems engineering from UVA.

Faculty & Friends

Rita Dove, Henry Hoyns Professor of Creative Writing, was officially inducted into the American Philosophical Society, to which she was originally elected three decades prior. The American Philosophical Society, founded by Benjamin Franklin, is the oldest honorary society in North America. 📺

Grace Elizabeth Hale, Commonwealth Professor of American Studies and History, received a Whiting Nonfiction Grant for Works-in-Progress for her forthcoming book, *They Don't Own Us: Harlan County, Kentucky and the Past and Future of American Workers*. The grant provides \$40,000 and publicity guidance through Press Shop PR. *They Don't Own Us* investigates grassroots workers' movements in the '60s and '70s and their impact on today's labor climate.



Investing in Alumni Families

Support

Invest in UVA's future alumni by supporting the Alumni Family Scholarship Program or by creating a named Alumni Family Scholarship.

Apply

Incoming UVA students who are *the children of UVA graduates* are encouraged to apply. The deadline to apply is **April 12, 2026.**



SCAN TO LEARN MORE

The Alumni Association congratulates its 2026 Alumni Family Scholar graduates



Sophie Chung
(Col '26)



Genevieve Forrer
(Engr '26)



Alyson Lucas
(Col '26)



Sophia Yoder
(Col '26)

In Memoriam

'50s

R. Allan Wimbish (Col '51, Law '55 CM) of Atlanta died Dec. 10, 2025. At UVA, he was a member of Delta Upsilon and Army ROTC. While in law school, he was elected to the Virginia Law Review editorial board. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War as a captain in the Transportation Corps and remained in the Army Reserves until his honorable discharge in 1964. He was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal and the United Nations Service Medal, among other honors. He made his career as an attorney for the Southern Railway and later the Norfolk Southern Railway. He lived in McLean, Roanoke and Virginia Beach, Virginia, before moving to Atlanta in retirement. In his later years, he enjoyed golfing, reading history, keeping up with the Cavaliers and volunteering. He loved his dogs and his loyal cat, Tux. Survivors include two children; two stepchildren; 12 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

James "Chief" Davant Latham (Col '53 CM)



of Memphis, Tennessee, died Sept. 15, 2025. At UVA, he ran on the track team,

served as Student Council president, and was a member of the Jefferson Literary and Debating Society, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Eli Banana and the IMP Society. After graduation, he spent three years as a junior officer in the U.S. Navy, serving on the aircraft carrier USS Coral Sea and at Naval Air Facility Atsugi in Japan. After his naval service, he moved to Memphis, where he became a successful commercial mortgage banker. Loved ones remember him as a man defined by service to others and being a founding member of the Boys and Girls Club of Memphis. He and his wife, Natalie, enjoyed hunting, fishing, hiking, canoeing and playing tennis. He loved his family and enjoyed sharing the great outdoors with them. He was predeceased by his brother, **Swayne Latham Jr. (Com '48)**. Along with Natalie, survivors include three children, including **James Davant Latham Jr. (Col '84 CM)** and **Swayne Latham II (Col '94 CM)**; and seven grandchildren.

Harry Hudnall Ware III (Col '54, Med '58 CM)



of Richmond, Virginia, died Nov. 25, 2025. At UVA, he was a member of St. Anthony Hall (Delta Psi), the Jefferson Literary and Debating Society, the IMP Society, T.I.L.K.A., Student Council and Eli Banana. He lived on

the Lawn his fourth year and competed on the swim team. After serving as a captain in the U.S. Army Medical Corps in Colorado, he returned to his hometown of Richmond in 1966. He co-founded the Virginia Women's Center, one of the largest medical practices devoted to women's health care in the state, and was president of the Richmond Obstetrics and Gynecological Society. At a time when obstetrics and gynecology were still practiced largely by men, he mentored and hired female doctors. He was a voracious reader and an avid runner and swimmer. He was predeceased by his son, **Hudnall Ware IV (Col '82 CM)**. Survivors include his wife, Betty; four sons; two stepchildren; 12 grandchildren; six step-grandchildren; and a sister.

Henry "Hank" James

Browne (Arch '55 CM) of Afton, Virginia, died Nov. 26, 2025. At UVA, he was a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon, the Honor Committee and Army ROTC. Throughout his career as an architect, he contributed to numerous landmark restoration projects, including the U.S. Treasury Building, Virginia's Executive Mansion, and the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials. In Charlottesville, he contributed to the design of the Downtown Mall as an adviser and president of the Downtown Merchants

Association. He also worked on the 1960s reconstruction of Monticello's wine room and numerous projects at the historic Michie Tavern. A founding member of Grigg, Wood and Browne, he mentored generations of young architects and advocated for historic preservation. He was also a writer and an accomplished painter. Survivors include three daughters, including **Kari Browne (Col '88)**; three sons-in-law, including **Clark Gathright (Engr '93 CM)**; two grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews, including **Andrews Browne (Com '98)**.

David Brownrigg Dillard (Engr '57 CM)

of Palm Beach, Florida, died Sept. 11, 2025. He was raised in Charlottesville, staying in town to study chemical engineering at UVA. He lived on the Lawn his fourth year. He continued his academic career after graduation, earning a Master of Science from MIT in 1961 and an MBA from Harvard Business School the following year. His professional journey took him to the World Bank Group and Lazard, where his sharp mind and global perspective left a lasting mark. He had a philanthropic spirit, serving as a board member and supporter of several institutions, including Dillard University, the Santa Fe Opera and Earthjustice. He also was a longtime financial supporter



New Orleans cotton trader shaped Jefferson Scholars program

Legendary cotton trader **Eli Tullis (Col '51)** made his bones betting on the future, and in the 1980s he spotted a transformational idea at the University of Virginia.

Tullis, who died Sept. 30 at age 96, was among a small group of alumni who saw enormous promise in a fledgling merit-based scholarship program called Jefferson Scholars, designed to lure top students who might otherwise choose elite universities such as Harvard or Yale. Enrollment at UVA had surged between 1965 and 1980 as the university attracted large numbers of female and minority students for the first time, according to the Jefferson Scholars Foundation. Tullis believed the moment had arrived to propel Virginia into the upper echelons of American higher education.

The idea was bold, but the finances were shaky. When Jimmy Wright arrived as president of the foundation in 1985, the full-ride scholarship program was struggling to stay afloat.

"We needed to raise \$500,000, which in 1985 was a ton of money, and Eli agreed to help do that," Wright said.

A fierce competitor on the athletic field and the trading floor, Tullis set to

work making personal appeals to potential donors. The money followed. Today, the Jefferson Scholars Program has awarded more than 1,000 scholarships to high-achieving students.

"Eli is a force of nature," Wright said. "Once he decides something needs to happen, he's not quitting until it does happen."

When Tullis enrolled at UVA in 1947, he struggled with severe dyslexia, according to daughter Rachael Gambel. The headmaster at Woodberry Forest School in central Virginia, the all-boys boarding school Tullis attended, had seen his potential and made a direct appeal to UVA. He was admitted—and he thrived.

"I think at the heart of his love for Virginia was that they accepted him," Gambel said.

After graduating with a degree in economics, Tullis began trading on the New Orleans Cotton Exchange for his father's firm, Tullis, Craig & Bright. After the exchange closed in 1964, he worked as a commodity broker for E.F. Hutton and Kohlmeyer & Co. and became a well-known figure on the New York Cotton Exchange. He eventually started his own firm, Tullis Trading Co., Inc.

In 1976, Tullis hired UVA economics grad **Paul Tudor Jones (Col '76)** and taught him the fundamentals of trading cotton futures. Tullis later fired Jones for falling asleep at his desk after a night out in New Orleans, an episode that the hedge fund billionaire recounted in a 2009 commencement address and described as pivotal to his success.

"I never would have achieved a fraction of what I did without him as a role model, mentor and teacher," Jones said in a statement to *Virginia Magazine* in December.

By all accounts, Tullis' life was large and consequential. But his work with the Jefferson Scholars Program ranked among his most meaningful accomplishments, Gambel said.

Over the years, Tullis and his wife of 48 years, Deborah Beard Tullis, endowed two Jefferson Scholarships and served on numerous committees and boards for the foundation. Tullis also served on the Alumni Association Board of Managers and as its president.

As a student, Tullis played varsity basketball and tennis and was a member of St. Anthony's Hall fraternity and the Z Society, as well as other clubs and committees.

"He felt you were supposed to excel and give back at every level because you had the privilege of being there," said daughter **D. Ashbrooke Tullis (Col '89)**.

Tullis was also an avid golfer, tennis player and dancer, and he remained active in New Orleans civic life as a member of the Rex Organization, among other groups. In 1997, he reigned as King of Carnival, a rare Mardi Gras honor.

Tullis was preceded in death by his first two wives, Mary Ferrell "Molly" Reily and Deborah Tullis.

He is survived by his third wife, Judith T. Tullis; six children; a stepson; 19 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. —**Martha Carr**

of UVA. He loved the ocean, music and adventure, and was an accomplished sailor and passionate world traveler. Survivors include his wife, Anna-Karin, and their three sons, including **Christopher Dillard (Col '91, Educ '96)**.

'60s

John B. Watts Jr. (Engr '61 CM) of Bellingham, Washington, died Sept. 17, 2024. Originally from North Carolina, he attended

UVA to study chemical engineering and joined Phi Sigma Kappa and Navy ROTC. After graduation, he was stationed aboard the USS Northampton in the U.S. Navy. He spent many years as a researcher for building

materials company Johns Manville. After moving to California and meeting his wife, Joan, he landed in Bellingham to work at Christensen Engineering, where he advanced Alaska pipeline interests. After his

First Black College graduate lived his life “to uplift a community”

Nia Raymond (Col '93) remembers the 2010 ceremony where UVA honored her father, **Amos Leroy “Roy” Willis (Col '62)**, as a bittersweet moment. Willis, the first Black graduate of the College of Arts & Sciences, received a plaque from then-President **John T. Casteen III (Col '65, Grad '66, '70)** to be placed outside his former Lawn room.

Raymond remembers thinking, “It’s 2010. This happened [over] 40 years ago. Like, why did this [ceremony] just happen?”

Willis, whom Casteen once called “not just a pioneer, but the pioneer” for civil rights activism at UVA, campaigned alongside other activists to desegregate the Corner. He excelled in his studies despite the challenges he faced as one of the few Black students on Grounds. He went on to a successful career in business and economic development and continued advocating for Black communities throughout his life. He died Oct. 16, 2025.

In 1959, Willis persuaded the UVA administration to let him enroll in the College by quoting Thomas Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence: “All men are created equal.” His impressive academic



performance earned him residence on the Lawn and a spot on the Dean’s List. He also received the Distinguished Military Science Award from the Army ROTC.

While at UVA, Willis joined the local chapter of the Virginia Council on Human Relations, a biracial civil rights organization. Along with several other students, including Virginius Thornton, the first African American admitted to the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, he picketed several segregated Corner businesses, including the University Theater. The chapter then committed itself to a campaign for comprehensive desegregation in Charlottesville.

According to Raymond, Willis had a complicated relationship with the university but was grateful for the education he received.

“It was the best education in the state of Virginia,” Raymond said. “He shouldn’t have had to get it that way; he shouldn’t have had to petition because of segregation.”

His time at UVA was marked by discrimination and racism from his classmates. “He would sit down at a lunch table, and people

would get up. I think there were maybe one or two white people that he would have considered friends,” Raymond said.

After graduating from UVA and serving in the U.S. Army, Willis headed to Harvard Business School, where he co-founded the Harvard Business School African American Student Union and persuaded the administration to accept more Black students. Despite intense pushback, Black enrollment in the subsequent class more than quadrupled to 27, according to the school’s alumni website.

Willis moved to California, where he embarked on a career in business and economic development. According to his son, **Maceo Willis (Col '94)**, he opened The Dock of the Bay in Berkeley, a community-owned upscale seafood restaurant and jazz club catering to Black intelligentsia. He served as the deputy administrator of the Community Redevelopment Agency in Los Angeles from 1987 to 1999. He was key in developing projects in the downtown area, including the Walt Disney Concert Hall. His son said that after the 1992 Los Angeles riots, Willis dedicated himself to revitalizing the historically Black Watts neighborhood, creating community spaces around the Watts Towers art installation and building a public library.

“He was very concerned about the Black community and Black prosperity, and that was how he lived his life, to uplift a community,” Raymond said.

He is survived by his wife, Dean; three children, including Nia and Maceo; four grandchildren; four siblings; and his former wife. —**Kiki McLaughlin**

retirement, he served on the Bellingham City Council. His expertise in pipeline engineering proved crucial when the Olympic pipeline ruptured and exploded in a local park, requiring the council to conduct an extensive technical review. He was an advocate for park and wilderness conservation

and spent many hours camping, kayaking and hiking with Joan prior to her passing. Survivors include his son, two nieces and several extended family members.

Henry Splawn Taylor (Col '64) of Santa Fe, New Mexico, died Oct. 13, 2024. Raised in Loudoun County, Virginia,

he studied English at UVA, where he was a member of *Plume & Sword*, a student-run literature review. He subsequently completed a master’s degree at Hollins University, by which point he had already published a book of poetry. He had a distinguished career as a poet and academic, teaching at Roanoke College

and the University of Utah before landing at American University, where he taught for 32 years and co-directed the MFA program in creative writing. A parodist, he frequently lampooned other writers through his poems. He was adept at composing sonnets and limericks, and his writing often lingered on

scenes from rural Northern Virginia. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1986 for his third collection of poems, *The Flying Change*. He had a lifelong love of horses. Survivors include his wife, Mooshe; two sons; and two sisters.

J. Gilbert “Gil” Baldwin (Col ’68, Med ’72 CM) of Charleston, South Carolina, died Oct. 26, 2025. At UVA, he was a Lawn resident and member of the Raven Society. A medical internship and residency took him to Charleston. He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps in Würzburg, Germany, from 1975 to 1977. He then joined the faculty of the Medical University of South Carolina and became a fellow of the American College of Physicians. Called to active duty in 1991 for one year with his Army Reserve unit during Operation Desert Storm, he returned to Charleston to establish the first MUSC office for internal medicine on James Island, where he worked until 2008. His most rewarding volunteer position was as medical director of Hospice of Charleston. He loved sports cars, travel and cooking. Remembered for his vibrant soul and wit, he embraced UVA’s Honor Code throughout his life. He is survived by his wife, Connie.

Neeley Charles Lewis (Col ’68 CM) of Bryan-College Station, Texas, died Sept. 25, 2025. At UVA, he studied government and foreign affairs and was a member of Theta Chi fraternity. After receiving his law degree from Baylor University and gaining admission to the State Bar of Texas, he began a 50-year

law career. His multifaceted legal practice included serving as the College Station city attorney and involved everything from high-stakes criminal defense work to helping people prepare for their deaths. His desire to help his state led him to politics, and he served in the Texas legislature. While in office, his accomplishments included increasing teacher salaries and retirement benefits and co-sponsoring the Child Safety Restraint Law, which requires young children to be secured in a child safety seat. Loved ones remember him for his hospitality, kindness and gregariousness. Survivors include his wife, Becky; his brother, **Stuart F. Lewis (Col ’73 CM)**; two children and their spouses; and five grandchildren.

Paul Zimmet (Col ’68 CM) of Ashburn, Virginia, died Oct. 20, 2025. At UVA, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi and Hillel. He remained in touch with his college roommates, reuniting with them every five years and meeting online to play bridge. A doctor of dental surgery, he ran a successful dental practice in Northern Virginia for over 30 years, retiring in 2007. He served two terms as president of the Virginia State Dental Board. He was active in the Parkinson’s research community and was a research advocate for the Parkinson’s Foundation. In his spare time, he loved reading, traveling with his family, biking and skiing. He frequently attended theater performances and Washington, D.C., sports games, particularly Nationals games. His family remembers him as a present father and

grandfather who showed up to every performance and school function despite his busy schedule. Survivors include his wife, Marcia; three children; five grandchildren; and a brother, **Steve Zimmet (Col ’64, Med ’68 CM)**.

’70s

Thomas Decker (Col ’70) of Virginia Beach, Virginia, died Dec. 1, 2025. At UVA, he studied psychology, leading him to a 40-year career at the Virginia Beach Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, where he worked to make a positive impact on the lives of young people. He had a private pilot’s license and loved taking to the skies in his spare time. He was an avid reader and enthusiastic photographer. He was predeceased by his wife, Beth. Survivors include four sons and three daughters-in-law, including **Christopher Decker (Col ’94 CM)** and his wife, **Megan Polson Decker (Col ’94 CM)**; eight grandchildren; a great-grandchild; two sisters; and a niece and nephew.

Lelia Jane Shields Evans (Educ ’71 CM) of Fairfax, Virginia, died Sept. 29, 2025. After graduating from Mary Washington College in 1968, she moved with her husband, **Kerr Stewart Evans Jr. (Col ’68, Law ’72 CM)**, to Charlottesville, where she earned her master’s in education with an emphasis on reading from UVA. During this time, she worked as a teacher in Albemarle County to support Stewart while he attended law school. She was a devoted member of her

church, serving many years on the altar, wedding and funeral guilds. Her hobbies included cooking, hosting parties, traveling, gardening, reading, and playing bridge and tennis. Along with her husband, survivors include four children, including **Sarah Evans Eiler (Col ’93)** and **Kerr Stewart Evans III (Col ’99 CM)**; and six grandchildren, including **Kelsey Eiler (Educ ’28)**.

Peter Edward Tenney (Col ’71 CM) of Brunswick, Maine, died Sept. 16, 2025. After graduating from UVA, he worked in the record department of the Harvard bookstore, fostering his love of classical music vinyl collecting. His subsequent teaching career led him to discover a passion for history, and he eventually became president of the World Affairs Council of Rhode Island. Through this role, he was able to meet notable intellectuals and politicians, as well as travel to China with a high school group. In 1993, he moved to New Hampshire to join Crossroads Academy, where he taught until his retirement in 2017. Students remember him as a thoughtful, creative teacher who always sported a bow tie. After meeting his wife, Alix Howell, he moved to Brunswick, Maine, where he became a docent at the Joshua L. Chamberlain Museum. Along with Alix, survivors include three stepchildren; three brothers; and several nieces, great-nephews and great-nieces.

June Welsh Echols (Educ ’73 CM) of Richmond, Virginia, died Sept. 1, 2025. Hailing from Ohio, she first attended the University of

Cincinnati to become a nurse. After several years in that profession, she earned her master's degree in education from UVA. After graduation, she taught English in the Lynchburg, Virginia, area. She was involved in several organizations in the city, including the Free Clinic of Central Virginia, the Point of Honor museum and Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. She and her husband, **Porter "Pete" B. Echols Jr. (Col '55, Med '58 CM)**, moved to Richmond in 2002 to be closer to family. She was predeceased by Pete. Survivors include two daughters; a son, **Burks Echols (Col '85 CM)**; a daughter-in-law, **Ann Carter "Boo" Refo Echols (Col '86 CM)**; two siblings; and two granddaughters, **Carter Echols (Com '22 CM)** and **Sarah Echols (Col '24 CM)**.

Mitchell Kahan (Col '73) of San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, died Oct. 16, 2025. At UVA, he studied art history and was a member of Pi Lambda Phi. He served as director and CEO of the Akron Art Museum in Akron, Ohio, from 1985 to 2013. Under his leadership, the museum evolved into a nationally and internationally celebrated institution. He lectured widely on 20th-century American art and received numerous accolades in his field. He was proud to have marched at the first National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1979 and to have helped start the Gay Community Endowment Fund of Akron Community Foundation. Loved ones remember him having a strong sense of wonder and appreciation for

beauty. Survivors include his husband, Chris Hixson; his mother; three siblings, including **Karen Kahan (Col '81 CM)** and **Barbie Kahan Wright (Col '77)**; two sisters-in-law and a brother-in-law; a nephew; and several cousins and their spouses.

Patrick Clifford Graney III (Col '75, Darden '81 CM) of Charleston, West Virginia, died Aug. 29, 2025. At UVA, he was a Lawn resident, the managing editor of the *Cavalier Daily*, Queen of the Imps, and a member of St. Elmo Hall, T.I.L.K.A., the Raven Society and ODK. A prominent entrepreneur in the coal, oil and gas industries, he expanded Petroleum Products Inc. from a local business to a multistate operation. He was inducted into the West Virginia Business Hall of Fame in 2014. He was dedicated to public service, working as financial strategist to the governor of West Virginia in the Office of Community and Industrial Development and as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Richmond Federal Reserve, among other endeavors. Survivors include his wife, **Jessica S. Graney (Col '75 CM)**; four sons, **Patrick C. Graney IV (Col '00, Darden '07 CM)**, **Gov Graney, Kevin Graney (Col '04, Darden '10 CM)**, and **Michael E. Graney (Col '13 CM)**; nine grandchildren; and two siblings, Sharon Bibb and **Michael R. Graney (Col '82, Darden '90 CM)**.

Mary Beth Krank Cameron (Arch '78 CM) of Fredericksburg, Virginia, died April 21, 2025. Along with a bachelor's degree in city planning from UVA, she held an

MBA from Temple University. She was a dedicated public servant, working at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1979 to 1989, during which time she oversaw the Community Development Block Grant Program for the Philadelphia region. She and her husband, **Beverly R. Cameron (Arch '78 CM)**, lived in Fredericksburg, where she raised her two sons full time. Later, she taught middle-school math at Holy Cross Academy. In her free time, she was an avid gardener, bird-watcher and crossword enthusiast. Along with Beverly, survivors include her two sons, **Matthew C. Cameron (Col '13 CM)** and **Brian P. Cameron (Col '19, Law '25 CM)**; daughter-in-law **Mengtian Xie Cameron (Com '14 CM)** and future daughter-in-law **Mary Garner McGehee (Col '19 CM)**; a grandchild; two siblings; and many nieces and nephews.

Thomas Carbonneau (Law '78, Grad '79) of State College, Pennsylvania, died Oct. 23, 2025. He was a scholar of international, comparative and domestic arbitration. A lifelong student, he held degrees from Oxford University, Bowdoin College and Columbia University in addition to his French and law degrees from UVA. He was a Rhodes Scholar. He held the Samuel P. Orlando Distinguished Professorship at Pennsylvania State University's law school and the Moise S. Steeg Jr. Professorship at Tulane University's law school. He was also a visiting professor at many universities across the globe. A prolific writer, he

authored more than 15 books and 80 scholarly articles on law, including a treatise on arbitration. He loved being a father and a professor and considered looking after his family and students his greatest pride and joy. Survivors include his daughter, his niece, three brothers and two sisters.

'80s

Nancy Jo Wilson Shuttleworth (Engr '81 CM) of Millsboro, Delaware, died Oct. 9, 2025. She received her bachelor's degree in applied math from UVA. She began her professional life as an anti-submarine warfare analyst at TRW. She then raised three children, reentering the workforce once they were all in elementary school. She spent the next two decades as a systems engineer supporting various national intelligence agencies, primarily in support of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, with a particular expertise in systems acquisition and systems interfaces. She was a lover of horses, excellent cook, breast cancer survivor and owner of many dogs. Survivors include her husband, Joseph; three children and their spouses; seven grandchildren; a niece; four nephews; and several cousins.

Virginia Hilton Hallock (Col '85 CM) of Anchorage, Alaska, died May 6, 2025. At UVA, she was a member of the first class of Jefferson Scholars, a member of ODK and a recipient of the

Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award. After graduation, she served as assistant director of Madison House. She later served as assistant dean of students at UVA. Her career in university administration culminated at Alaska Pacific University, where she served as interim president and provost. Under her leadership, the school transitioned to an Alaska Native-Serving Institution with expanded academic programs to meet the needs of all Alaskans, including a nursing program and an environmental and public health program.

Survivors include her father, **Harold H. Hallock (Col '59 CM)**; her sister, **Elizabeth Hallock Andrews (Col '87 CM)**; her brother-in-law, **Malcolm C. Andrews (Col '89 CM)**; and several nieces and nephews, including **Connor B. Andrews (Col '16, Batten '17 CM)**, **Patrick H. Andrews (Col '19, Med '25 CM)**, **Rachel Brown Andrews (Nurs '20 CM)**, and **Madeleine H. Andrews (Educ '22, '24 CM)**.

Andrew "Andy" Wicks (Grad '88, '92) of Charlottesville died Oct. 23, 2025. He received his undergraduate education at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, before earning graduate degrees in religious ethics at UVA. His academic path led him first to the University of Washington School of Business and back to the Darden School of Business in 2002, where he became the Ruffin Professor of Business Administration and Richard M. Waitzer Bicentennial Professor of Ethics. His popular "Ultimate Questions" class inspired his final

book, *Ultimate Questions: A Stakeholder Guide to the Business of Your Life*, which explores the partnership of ethics and business. He served as director of Darden's doctoral program, the Olsson Center for Applied Ethics, and the Institute for Business in Society. He worked on research collaborations with the UVA Medical Center on patient care and responsibility. Survivors include his wife, Cathy; two daughters; two grandchildren; two brothers; and his stepchildren and stepgrandchildren.

'90s

Kirsten Ann Hart (Educ '92, Col '92) of East Greenwich, Rhode Island, died Oct. 12, 2025. At UVA, she was a member of Sigma Sigma Sigma. She was a passionate and dedicated educator, working as a teacher for more than 30 years. Her mantra in the classroom was "Always be kind," and she was adored by students and colleagues alike. Born in Hawaii to a military family, she was no stranger to adventure and loved to travel, organizing unforgettable trips for her family. She enjoyed screen printing, painting, drawing, woodblock printing and crochet. Survivors include her husband, Brian; three sons, including **Duncan Hart (Col '20, Med '23, '26 CM)**; her parents; and her sister.

Carrie Reynolds Marshall (Col '96 CM) of Richmond, Virginia, died Aug. 9, 2025. At UVA, she was a member of Chi Omega sorority, where she forged lifelong friendships. She excelled academically, making the Dean's List every

semester and joining Phi Beta Kappa. In 2000, she met her husband, Tevis, with whom she had two sons. Loved ones remember her as a kind person with a gift for making people feel valued, whether through filling glasses at UVA tailgates, planning her high school reunions, bringing baked goods to teaching staff or simply listening to the problems of others. She participated in volunteer work, delivering fruit to seniors and raising funds through charitable events like "Bluegrass Bash" and "Gumbo for Good." Survivors include Tevis, her two sons, her parents, her brother and sister-in-law, and several nieces and nephews.

'10s

Doug Lebda (Darden '14 CM) of Charlotte, North Carolina, died Oct. 12, 2025. He was the founder and CEO of LendingTree, an online lending marketplace. He received his business degree from the Darden School while launching LendingTree and remained active at Darden, joining the Darden School Foundation Board of Trustees and frequently returning to mentor students. He also served on the board of the Atrium Health Foundation. Beyond business, he was a notable philanthropist, establishing the Lebda Family Foundation, which launched the Lebda Family Rural Healthcare Program, expanding school-based virtual medical care to children in underserved North Carolina communities. He loved fishing and

regenerative farming and gardening. Survivors include his wife, Megan; three daughters; his parents; and his sister and her family.

Faculty & Friends

Alec Horniman of Charlottesville died Nov. 9, 2025. He retired in 2021 as the Killgallon Ohio Art Professor of Business Administration after a 54-year career at Darden. He earned his undergraduate degree in political science from Middlebury College. After graduation, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army and spent much of his service with a Fort Irwin armored division in the Mojave Desert. After being honorably discharged, he earned his MBA from UCLA and his doctorate in business administration from the Harvard Business School. At UVA, he was known as a joyful and enthusiastic teacher who had a transformative impact on thousands of students. He was a founder and the first executive director of Darden's Olsson Center for Applied Ethics. In 2014, he received the Thomas Jefferson Award, the highest award for faculty at UVA. Survivors include his wife, **E. Clorisa "Clo" Phillips (Educ '78, '97 CM)**; three children; and two grandchildren.

Submit an obituary

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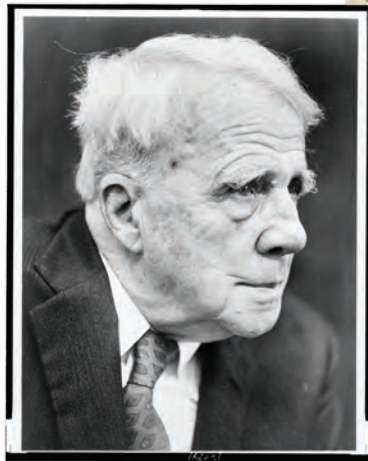
Retrospect



THE STAIRS NOT TAKEN

Robert Frost's bumpy elevator ride at Newcomb

BY SARAH LINDENFELD HALL



For more about Newcomb Hall's history, see the story on Page 48.

When poet Robert Frost visited Grounds in 1960, it wasn't his literary reputation that made headlines in Charlottesville—it was a “stubborn elevator” in Newcomb Hall. “Stops at Wrong Floors,” blared *The Daily Progress* on May 2, 1960: “Stubborn Elevator Delays Poet Frost.”

Frost had come to UVA to celebrate his friend **Clifton Waller Barrett (Col 1920)**, a retired shipping executive. Barrett was donating 250,000 books and manuscripts from authors such as Washington Irving, Ernest Hemingway and John Steinbeck, along with the most comprehensive collection of Frost's own works. They were being placed in the new Barrett Room inside then-Alderman Library.

As 300 invited guests eagerly waited for a luncheon with the distinguished

poet on Newcomb's second floor, Frost stepped into an elevator on the third floor with Barrett, President Edgar Shannon and others. What should have been a simple one-floor descent turned into an awkward comedy of errors, the newspaper reported.

The elevator went down to the first floor and then lurched back up, overshooting again before finally delivering the passengers to the second floor. Shannon, an English literature professor, joked: “It's obvious this group is literary-minded—we're not very mechanically inclined.”

The elevator wasn't the only quirky moment reporters captured. The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* noted that Frost, then 86, returned a girl's autograph book unsigned before taking it back. “Oh, I didn't put my name,” he said. “But then, mine's not important.”

When a fan asked whether Frost intentionally placed hidden meanings in his works, as some claimed, he said: “I didn't put them in. They got them out.”

Frost, who won four Pulitzer Prizes and was known for his trickster wit and layered meanings, visited UVA several times to speak, including in 1929 and 1952, as well as in 1961, months after reciting “The Gift Outright” at President John F. Kennedy's inauguration.

But his 1960 visit was to honor Barrett, whose collection grew with continued donations to UVA until his death in 1991 and now resides at UVA's Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library. When a reporter asked Frost if he agreed with Barrett's assessment that he was the greatest living American poet, Frost replied: “Make that the greatest of English-speaking poets, and I'll agree with you.”



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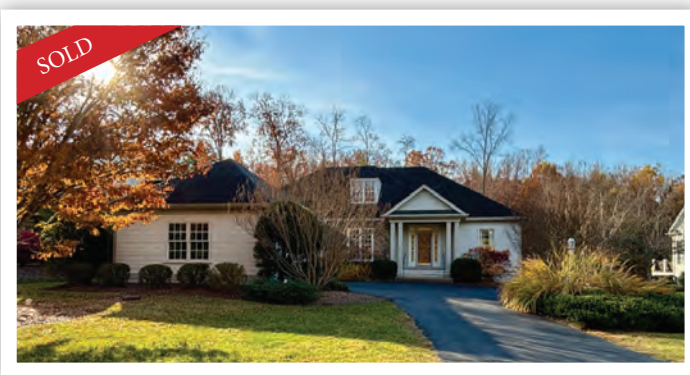
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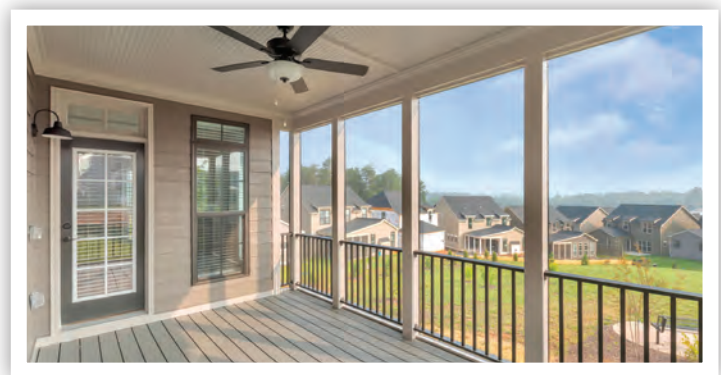
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