

VFIC Update

VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

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2008 H. HITER HARRIS, JR.
MEMORIAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE
IN UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING



Dr. Arthur H. Goldsmith
Professor of Economics
Washington and Lee University



(l. to r.) G. S. "Sandy" Fitz-Hugh,
VFIC Chairman, with
Dr. Goldsmith and Hiter Harris III

VFIC PRESENTS INAUGURAL HARRIS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING

At its recent Fall Leadership Luncheon in Richmond, the VFIC recognized Dr. Arthur H. Goldsmith, Professor of Economics at Washington and Lee University, as the 2008 recipient of *The H. Hiter Harris, Jr. Memorial Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching*.

Dr. Goldsmith was selected from a pool of "amazing and truly outstanding faculty members" nominated by the 15 private colleges in the VFIC, noted Board Chair G. S. "Sandy" Fitz-Hugh. "It is clear that he has had a truly remarkable career and has had a major impact on the lives of many students at W & L."

The Harris Award, which includes a stipend to support the recipient's scholarly research, was endowed at the VFIC by the family of the late Hiter Harris, Jr., a leading Virginia banker who was a member of the VFIC's Board from 1973 to 1998.

In announcing the creation of the Award, Hiter Harris III noted that "great teaching, and a personal commitment to student development, are attributes for which Virginia's small private liberal arts

colleges are known nationally. Our family wishes to highlight this very special component of the small private colleges by recognizing faculty members who truly exemplify these attributes."

This year's Harris Award recipient has dedicated his thirty year career to teaching undergraduates, with the last 18 years at W&L, where he is widely known for his outstanding work in the classroom and in working one-on-one with students to help them reach their full potential.

In material supporting his nomination, one of Dr. Goldsmith's former W&L students now at Yale Law School noted that the professor "has had a profound impact on my life, and I am not unique. I am merely one of many students at W&L who have found our passions under his guidance, a guidance that will extend beyond our college years. People such as Professor Goldsmith exemplify what a teacher should be: one who not only helps you believe you are destined for great things, but helps you achieve those goals."

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBER COLLEGES

Bridgewater College alumnus Steven Agee has been sworn in as a Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Agee was nominated by President George W. Bush and was confirmed on a 96-0 vote by the U.S. Senate. Agee had been a Justice on the Virginia Supreme Court.

Emory & Henry College has approved a new core curriculum that pushes familiar liberal arts programs – integrative study, service learning, and study abroad – into new realms, requiring students to integrate classroom work with study and research beyond the classroom and the campus.

Eight students from **Hampden-Sydney College** formed the delegation from Costa Rica in the most recent Model Organization of American States, held in D.C. The Model is a simulation of the regular OAS proceedings, in which the nations of North and South America diplomatically interact, with teams reflecting the positions of the nation they represent.

To supplement funding available to veterans through the new 21st Century GI Bill, **Lynchburg College** has created a new Veterans Award which will enable all eligible veterans to attend the college tuition-free.

Mary Baldwin College has implemented two new five-year undergraduate/graduate tracks – the Master of Letters in Shakespeare, and the Master of Arts in Teaching.

NEW COLLEGE PRESIDENT JOINS THE VFIC BOARD



Tracy Fitzsimmons
President
Shenandoah University

Marymount University has been awarded a major National Science Foundation grant to fund a new academic and scholarship initiative for undergraduate students with financial need who are pursuing degrees in Biology, Mathematics, or Computer Science.

Denise Sewell, a member of the Class of 2008 at **Randolph College**, was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study and do research in Morocco this year.

A book by **Randolph-Macon College** mathematics professors Dr. Bruce Torrence and Dr. Eve Torrence was published in September – *The Student's Introduction to Mathematica* focuses on how students can most effectively use the new version 6 of the software program Mathematica.

Roanoke College student Geoffrey Bader was tapped as an Undergraduate Research Fellow by the American Society of Plant Biologists. In addition to

funding research, the Fellowship gives him the opportunity to present his results at the Society's annual national meeting in Hawaii.

Dr. Charlotte Collins, professor of music at **Shenandoah University**, has been elected chair of the Commission on Accreditation of the National Association of Schools of Music.

Three **Sweet Briar College** students earned top 10 placements in competitions at the recent 1,600-student Phi Beta Lambda National Leadership Conference. Katelyn James placed in statistical analysis, Elizabeth Young in project management and Laura Jett in accounting principles.

Leland Melvin, a graduate of the **University of Richmond**, was an astronaut on the recent 13-day, 5.3 million-mile mission to the International Space Station aboard the space shuttle Atlantis.

Virginia Wesleyan College junior Lan Tran has been awarded a \$41,500 undergraduate research fellowship from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. Tran is researching the quality of drinking water and will have a paid internship with the EPA in the summer of 2009.

In a highly competitive application process, **Washington and Lee University** received a \$1.3 million grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to support the University's undergraduate biological sciences programs.



TWO VFIC COLLEGE PRESIDENTS ANNOUNCE THEIR RETIREMENT AS OF JUNE 30, 2009

Dr. Walter M. Bortz III
President
Hampden-Sydney College

Dr. Elisabeth S. Muhlenfeld
President
Sweet Briar College



SCHOLARSHIP DONOR HIGHLIGHT

Barbara and Donald G. Smith Endowed Scholarship

VFIC Honorary-Life Trustee Don Smith and his wife Barbara recently established an endowed scholarship fund which will provide annual and perpetual scholarships each year for VFIC students. In establishing the award, Mr. Smith noted:

“We can’t think of a better way to invest in future generations other than by creating this endowment as a door-opener for students seeking a higher education. We want this scholarship to benefit VFIC students in perpetuity and we know that by assisting students through scholarships, we are making a difference in their life by engaging their mind and setting the stage for their future.”



Donald G. Smith
VFIC Trustee 1990 - 2007,
elected Honorary-Life Trustee
in 2007

For more information on establishing an endowed scholarship, contact Ned Moore, moore@vfic.org.

2008 ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Sandy Fitz-Hugh, Senior Advisor of Kaufman & Canoles Consulting, was elected as Chairman of the VFIC Board. Mr. Fitz-Hugh, who will serve a two-year term as Chair, had been serving on the VFIC’s Annual Campaign Committee.
- The Board honored the outstanding leadership of the outgoing Board Chair, Mr. C.T. Hill, Chairman, President and CEO of SunTrust Bank – Mid-Atlantic.
- The success of the recently-completed Annual Campaign was celebrated, with over \$3.4 million raised to support the education work of the 15 Member Colleges.
- The UPS/FIHE Team was honored as the newest “Million Dollar Donor” – joining the honor roll of those who have given more than \$1 million to the VFIC in cumulative support.
- Eight new business trustees were elected (see photos below).



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Resource Bank
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The Nunnally Family
John D. Munford
E. Claiborne Robins
Donald G. and Barbara Smith
VFIC 50th Anniversary

*new for 2009

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and click on
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VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR
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8010 Ridge Road, Suite B
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Visit our web site:
www.vfic.org

MAKING YOUR GIFT COUNT

The 2009 VFIC Annual Campaign for Academic Excellence is well underway and each day is recognizing important gifts in support for private higher education in Virginia. Whether it is through general support for college educational programs, scholarships, the Ethics Bowl, or special programs like the Undergraduate Science Research Fellowships, all gifts make a difference. While one gift can help all 15 member colleges, a single gift can also help one student in a significant way.

One example of how a donor can provide the gift that keeps on giving is through Molly Hyer, a Junior from Randolph-Macon College. Ms. Hyer said after completing her fellowship, *"It was one of the most amazing experiences I have had at college. I enjoyed it so much that I am now planning on going to graduate school to get my Ph.D. in neuroscience research. Without this summer program, I would still be wondering what I was going to do with my life."*

MEET A VFIC SCHOLAR



Molly M. Hyer
Class of '09
Randolph-Macon College

When you receive your request for support, we hope you will think of students like Molly and respond favorably, making your gift count toward a lifetime of learning.

Gifts may be mailed to the VFIC or may be made online through *Network for Good* via a link from www.vfic.org.