



INSTITUTE REPORT

Volume 51, Number 2, October 2022

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Peay to be Recognized with VMI's Highest Honor

By Maj. Michelle Ellwood

The Board of Visitors voted unanimously to honor Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62, superintendent emeritus, with the Institute's highest honor, the New Market Medal. The board believes his commitment and leadership to the Institute exhibited through his cadetship, his exemplary military service, and time as superintendent made him a clear choice and deserving of this recognition.

"A lifetime of service, highlighted by a compassionate leadership style and a vision for growth and improvement, General Peay has impacted generations of individuals and thousands of cadets," said Tom Watjen '76, Board of Visitors president. "His life serves as a powerful reminder to our cadets and the community of the impact of the VMI experience. It's an honor to present him with the New Market Medal. His legacy will live on at the Institute."

Peay received a degree in civil engineering and the prestigious Society of Cincinnati Medal at his graduation in 1962. He was a quarterback of the Keydet football team, member of the Honor Court, and a battalion commander. After commissioning, he served in the U.S. Army for 35 years and retired at the rank of four-star general. He holds a master's degree from George Washington University and is also a graduate of the United States Army Command and General Staff College and the United States Army War College. He was the Institute's

14th superintendent, the third-longest serving in this role.

During Peay's 17 years as superintendent from 2003–20, he focused on improving the academic and co-curricular programs, as well as the NCAA athletic programs,



Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62

and he oversaw major renovations to the physical plant, as well as the construction of Third Barracks, Marshall Hall, and the Corps Physical Training Facility, among other facilities for athletics and training. The upcoming leadership development building on post will be named for him. He led the development and implementation

of Vision 2039, a strategic plan that focuses on improving the academic, military, and athletic programs, as well as the infrastructure, to enhance leadership development of the cadets.

Military awards and decorations Peay has received include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Army Distinguished Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Silver Star and Purple Heart. He wears U.S. campaign ribbons for combat duty in Vietnam, (seven campaigns) and Saudi Arabia (three campaigns) and has received foreign awards from Vietnam, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar.

Peay's father was J.H.B. Peay Jr., VMI Class of 1929. He and his wife, Pamela, have two sons: Jim Peay '98 and Ryan Peay '02.

The New Market Medal was established to recognize exceptional individuals who have demonstrated in their lives the qualities of duty, honor, devotion, and leadership, the same virtues shown by the Corps of Cadets at the Battle of New Market. Coincidentally, the first New Market Medal was presented the year Peay graduated to another former superintendent, Lt. Gen. Charles Kilbourne, VMI Class of 1894 and Medal of Honor recipient. Other recipients include Gen. George C. Marshall, VMI Class of 1901; John O. Marsh Jr., former secretary of the Army; and most recently, Gen. John Jumper '66, retired Air Force chief of staff.

The presentation of the New Market Medal will take place on Founders Day, Nov. 11. 🌸

VMI Again Ranked Highly by U.S. News and World Report

By Maj. Michelle Ellwood

VMI retained its high placing among the nation's best colleges, according to college rankings released on Sept. 12 by U.S. News and World Report.

Among public liberal arts colleges, the Institute ranked fourth only behind the United States Naval Academy, the United States Military Academy, and the United States Air Force Academy. VMI was ranked No. 70 among more than 200 national liberal arts colleges.

Unlike many other publications that issue college rankings, U.S. News also ranks certain programs found at many colleges

and universities. This year, VMI ranked 21st out of 230 institutions nationwide that have an accredited engineering program but do not grant a doctoral degree. The Institute's undergraduate computer science program was also recognized in this year's rankings.

VMI is also included on Washington Monthly's "Best Bang for the Buck" list, which is meant to guide students from low- and middle-income families toward schools that will help them earn marketable degrees at affordable prices.

The application for the Corps of Cadets is open for the next academic year and the admissions staff is available for any questions. 🌸

INSTITUTE REPORT

Volume 51, Number 2, October 2022

The Institute Report, VMI's monthly newsletter, publishes eight issues during each academic year. Inquiries, suggestions, news items, and address changes should be directed to Editor, Institute Report, VMI Communications and Marketing, Lexington, VA 24450-0304; 540-464-7207; or VMIReport@vmi.edu.

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Career opportunities are available across post. Learn more about faculty, staff, and hourly career opportunities at www.vmi.edu/jobs.




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On the cover: Alumnae participate in a panel discussion during the celebration of 25 Years of Women on Sept. 9 in Gillis Theater.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

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For the most accurate information and event updates, please visit www.vmi.edu.

Academic Convocation Focuses on Constitution

By Marianne Hause

The Academic Convocation ceremony was held on Wednesday, Sept. 7 in Cameron Hall, opening the 183rd academic year.

Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins '85, superintendent, welcomed back the cadets and faculty, and congratulated the class of 2023 on their leadership of the Corps of Cadets. He noted that there have been many changes, modernizations, and improvements at the Institute since its founding, but the fundamental values of VMI have not changed: the Honor Code, the physical demands, the regimental structure, and the unique method of education, part of which is bringing on post diverse speakers with unique perspectives.

Brig. Gen. Robert Moreschi, dean of the faculty, introduced the American Constitutional History Initiative, and in view of the new initiative, retired federal judge J. Michael Luttig was invited to address the audience on the U.S. Constitution and the rule of law. Lt. Col. Mark Boonshoft who chairs the American Constitutional History Initiative introduced Luttig.

Luttig, who was appointed to the federal bench by President George H.W. Bush in 1991 and served on the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for 15 years, said he was honored beyond words to have the opportunity to address the Corps of Cadets, faculty, and staff on the subject of the Constitution, noting the importance of the upcoming Constitution Day, which honors the day in 1787 that delegates to the Constitutional Convention signed the document in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Constitution Day is observed Sept. 17.

Luttig lamented that the United States and its institutions are under vicious attack, not from enemies outside its borders, but from within the country, for the purpose of causing citizens to question laws and democracy. He said there are perils facing the nation,



Retired federal judge J. Michael Luttig addresses cadets during the Academic Convocation ceremony held in Cameron Hall.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

and that many Americans believe the democracy is on the verge of collapse. He called for a Constitutional revival and quoted from a speech given by Abraham Lincoln in 1838 called *The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions*: “Let reverence for the laws, be breathed by every American mother, to the lisping babe, that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling books, and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation.”

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Cadets attend Academic Convocation in Cameron Hall Sept. 7.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

Luttig stated that America is in desperate need of a reawakening and quickening. “We have strayed and lost perspective. We have become divided. We no longer recognize the virtues of character that we have held dear since our country was founded. Things like honor, integrity, truthfulness, honesty, humility, selflessness, duty, obligation, responsibility, bravery, courage, and country. We can’t agree on what is right or wrong, fact or fiction, truth or falsehood.” He added that no society can long endure polarizing disagreements.

Luttig urged his audience to reject the divisiveness, and avowed, “I refuse to believe this is who we have become. I want to believe that we Americans still believe in these fundamental matters, that we still believe in America.” He continued, “We need to reunite. How can we begin? By talking and listening to each other as human

beings and fellow citizens. We must turn to ourselves, we must look to the first seven words of the Constitution, ‘We the People of the United States.’ We must come to the aid of our struggling America and reformatory our democracy.”

Luttig concluded his address by wishing the Corps “Godspeed” in their future tasks of righting the listing ship that is the country, to correct it, and have it once again become the beacon of freedom for the entire world.

Luttig has served as counselor and special advisor to the CEO and the board of directors of the Coca-Cola Company since January 2021. Prior to joining Coca-Cola, he was counselor and senior advisor to

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Boonshoft Has Ideas for Constitutional Initiative

VMI has kicked off the American Constitutional History Initiative to teach Constitutional history, affirming that civic literacy is an Institute priority in molding cadets into model citizen-soldiers, and ensuring that all graduates are informed and engaged citizens when they leave VMI.

Lt. Col. Mark D. Boonshoft, new associate professor in the history department, has been named Chair in American Constitutional History. Conrad Hall '65, a former member of the Board of Visitors, has provided funds to endow the position.

Originally from New York, Boonshoft attended the University at Buffalo-SUNY where he majored in history. He earned his doctorate degree in United States history, focusing on the era of the American Revolution and Founding, at Ohio State University.

Boonshoft served as a historian at the New York Public Library (NYPL) in Manhattan where he worked on a project that digitized 50,000 pages of original manuscript sources from the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, wrote about history for the NYPL website, advised on exhibitions, and organized various educational workshops.

Boonshoft also taught at Norwich University and Duquesne University and worked for a time as the executive director of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, an interdisciplinary academic organization devoted to studying the history and arts of the eighteenth-century world.

At VMI, Boonshoft will be teaching HI 300: Constitutional History, and working in collaboration with other faculty including Col. Turk McCleskey and Maj. Madeleine Ramsey. In addition, Boonshoft will be

introducing other courses, including one on political violence, one on the history of slavery and antislavery in U.S. history, and another on the origins and legacy of the Civil War Amendments, which ended slavery (13th), protected civil rights (14th), and guaranteed voting rights regardless of race (15th).

Boonshoft will be creating extracurricular programming on the Constitution. “We’re aiming to bring speakers, both academic experts on the Constitution and experienced practitioners in Constitutional law, every semester. VMI is also within striking distance of so many important sites for U.S. Constitutional history. I’d like to create opportunities for cadets to visit some of those, like the homes of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James

Madison, or the National Archives and Library of Congress,” stated Boonshoft.

Boonshoft’s first book, “Aristocratic Education and the Making of the American Republic” was published in 2020 by the University of North Carolina Press and was a finalist for the 2021 George Washington Book Prize. He is currently working on a book about violence, race, and the origins of constitutional democracy in revolutionary America, using New York state as a case study.

— Marianne Hause



Conrad Hall '65, Lt. Col. Mark D. Boonshoft, and J. Michael Luttig convene on stage in Cameron Hall just after the Academic Convocation ceremony.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

A Look Back: 25 Years of Women

By Maj. Michelle Ellwood and Marianne Hause

The first females to sign their names in the matriculation book on August 19, 1997, had dreams of becoming cadets at VMI. It was on that day that 158 years of producing citizen-soldiers and offering an extraordinary education expanded from only men to now an opportunity for women as well. Since 1997, more than 1,000 women have signed the matriculation book.

The women of VMI were celebrated on post Sept. 8–10 at special events organized by the Alumni Agencies, with more than 200 alumnae and their families returning to Lexington. Alumnae panels offered insight on the paths of entrepreneurship, women in STEM, women in the military or first responders, and other topics highlighting how the VMI experience helped them get to where they are today. At the football game on Sept. 10 against Bucknell University, women of VMI were introduced on the field between each quarter, including Mildred Cooper '05, the only female inducted (so far) into the VMI Sports Hall of Fame.

The transition in the mid-90's though, took a lot of time, planning, hard work, and insight, which Maj. Gen. Marti Bissell, Deputy Commanding General National Guard of TRADOC, spoke about at a dinner during the celebratory weekend. While Bissell did not attend VMI, she has worked at the Institute in several roles and has a multitude of family ties to the school. Her father-in-law, then-Col. Mike Bissell '61, was commandant and became special assistant to the superintendent, responsible for the assimilation of women into VMI in every aspect. During that time, VMI would learn from others, create a committee system to bring together experts, build a feeling of ownership among the Corps, and communicate to all involved. In all the conversations with her father-in-law, she says, "There was never any comments about how women didn't belong, or that they wouldn't be successful, only the desire to ensure that VMI would integrate women better than anyone else."

Bissell also gives a lot of credit to Kevin Trujillo '98 in her remarks. Trujillo was the 1st Class president during the 1997–98



Male and female rats take a water break on Matriculation Day in August 1997.—Photo courtesy of VMI Archives.

academic year. She says to him, "I can tell you my father-in-law regularly spoke about what an influential role you played 25 years ago. While you could have done a lot to undermine the process, instead, you embraced the change and worked hard to make VMI's co-educational process successful."

Trujillo was quoted in 1997 saying, "All eyes are on VMI. Some are just salivating at the thought of our failure.

The Corps of Cadets won't give them the pleasure. Together, we're making history."

Bissell continued her remarks about the vast areas of cadet life that needed to be taken into consideration. "You name the topic that two people were discussing and there would be at least three opinions on what the right solution was."

Some areas changed drastically, and some areas didn't need to be changed much at all. Individuals who have been on post through the years have shared their experiences and what they learned through the process.

Barracks

No new cadet rooms were built in the barracks at that time, however privacy shades were added to each window as well as the windows on the doors of the cadet rooms. Several existing rooms were converted into ladies bathrooms, one on each floor.

Additional lighting was installed across post, including around the parade ground. "The parade ground was extremely dark at night," said Larry Camper, chief of maintenance and operations, "we doubled the light poles at that time. We also had the emergency pull phones installed around post."

Upper-Class Cadets and Exchange Program

Since upper-class cadets were all male in 1997, VMI invited male and female cadets from Virginia Tech, Norwich University, and Texas A&M University in an exchange program to assist in training

Continued on next page

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the female rats and mentoring the entire Corps during the transition. The visiting students took a full load of courses at VMI and returned to their home schools at the end of the semester or end of the academic year.

Hair

The first women to matriculate got the same service at the barber shop as the men: a close buzz cut. This has changed over the years. Glenda Dudley, manager of the VMI barber shop since 2012, has seen alterations in the styles allowed for female cadets. "My team and I have searched throughout the years for the right fit. There is no 'one-size fits all' when it comes to hair, so it truly has been an ongoing, evolving process in discovering what works," said Dudley. She credits Army Regulation 670-1 regarding grooming standards, as a good policy to follow.

Occasionally, for Ring Figure and other special events, the barbers are asked to help with different styles for the female cadets. "We are hair stylists and enjoy working with female hair, so it is a treat for us to give the female cadets help with their hair. We will not do anything faddish though. Their hair should always look professional," stated Dudley.

Uniforms

One can tell the difference between a shirt designed for a woman and one designed for a man based on which side the buttons are sewn. The same principle applies to pants, the zipper flap folds over the zipper one direction for men's pants and the opposite direction for women's pants. While traditional uniform items may be tailored differently for men and women, the uniforms were never designed specifically for women.

There were extensive conversations about skirts and other uniform pieces, along with the storage and distribution of the newly-added items. According to Blaine Noel, quartermaster of the military store, "There are gender-segregated fitting areas, and female employees fit female cadets, while male employees fit male cadets," said Noel.

When fitting is complete, the uniforms are sent to the tailor shop for alterations. Cindy Hartbarger, manager of the tailor shop, said they now keep smaller sized chevrons in their inventory to accommodate the women's smaller sized sleeves. "We also keep smaller collars to accommodate smaller neck sizes. We have the capability of switching out collars on the white blouses. It takes several weeks for

us to alter the uniforms and get them to laundry where the cadets pick them up. By then though, the cadet may have lost weight, or bulked up, so they may have to have their uniforms altered again so it fits properly," explained Hartbarger.



Brooke Green '01 receives a buzz cut from Connie Hostetter in the VMI Barber Shop Aug. 19, 1997.—Photo courtesy of VMI Archives.

Chaplain's Office

Retired U.S. Army Col. Jim Park, who was chaplain from 1994 to 2016, called those early years for female cadets, "a challenging and dynamic time." He recalled Lt. Gen. Josiah Bunting III '63, superintendent at the time, addressing the 1st Class cadets. "He told them that when called upon, VMI had always done its duty and that they will continue to do it in welcoming the female cadets. I believe it was a good demonstration of duty and honor for the cadets," said Park.

Lt. Col. John P. Casper '04, the current associate chaplain, was a rat when the first female cadets graduated. "I know the impact of the 1st Class female cadets that year was enormous on the females in my class. It was such a unique and precarious time to be a cadet and witness the transition of VMI. And such a special honor to watch them cross the graduation stage," said Casper.

Theater

Joellen Bland, longtime director of VMI Theatre productions has fond memories of the arrival of female cadets. Prior to 1997, whenever there was a need for a female actress, Bland would cast the role with a female member of the faculty, staff, community member, or female students from other nearby colleges such as Mary Baldwin, Sweet Briar, Hollins, and the former Southern Seminary, which is now Southern Virginia University. "Some of the first female cadets were in our 1998 production of the Cole Porter musical, 'Kiss Me, Kate,' and have been in our shows since then. Having female cadets has been an adjustment for all of us over the past few years, but the VMI Theatre has certainly benefited from their talents and energies. I can also safely say that 'doing theater' helped some of them to 'stay the course' and graduate," said Bland.

Goen Named New Global Education Director

By Marianne Hause

Todd Lee Goen has been named new director and senior international officer in the office of global education (formerly known as international programs). He replaces Col. Dave Hall who retired recently, overseeing education abroad, international student and scholar support services, grant management, and strategic planning and initiatives for campus internationalization. Goen also teaches fundamentals of public speaking for the Department of English, Rhetoric, and Humanistic Studies. He arrived at VMI in May 2022.

Goen was recently awarded the coveted Lily von Klemperer Award bestowed by NAFSA: Association of International Educators, the world's largest and most comprehensive nonprofit association dedicated to international education and exchange. It serves the needs of more than 10,000 members and international educators worldwide at more than 3,500 institutions, in over 150 countries.

The award, named for the first recipient Lily von Klemperer, was presented at the NAFSA annual conference in May, held in Denver, Colorado. It is bestowed annually to a worthy education abroad professional who is seen to have years left to devote to the profession. The award seeks to recognize people who have "brought other [education abroad professionals] along" in the field and who maintain the highest standards of professional ethics while sharing their skills, knowledge, and expertise with all colleagues.

"It is quite an honor to win this award, as it is only bestowed to one person each year. I was nominated by a colleague, and it is very rewarding to know that others appreciate my work," said Goen.

Goen has been heavily involved with NAFSA for years as a member of the Trainer Corps, a group of over 400 international education practitioners who are recognized as valuable teachers and leaders within their regions, as well as a coach at the NAFSA Academy for International Education for two years. The academy is an intensive yearlong training program with extensive networking opportunities designed to expand and deepen understanding of international education. He is currently the chair-designate of the academy.

Prior to coming to VMI, Goen held full-time faculty positions at Christopher Newport University, Purdue University Fort Wayne, and Clemson University, teaching courses in human communication

and quantitative research. His previous university administrative leadership includes: faculty director for cultural communication competence in Benelux, internship director, public speaking coordinator, chair of international studies advisory committee (the oversight committee for campus internationalization), and vice-chair of the institutional animal care and use committee.

Goen's research interests focus on interpersonal and family relationships and their intersections with nonverbal behavior and intercultural contexts. His published works appear in *Communication Research Reports*, *Family Science Review*, and the *Journal of Global Initiatives: Policy, Pedagogy, and Perspective*.

Goen is an honors college graduate with a bachelor's degree in computer science, French, and vocational ministry from Harding University. He holds a master's degree in communication from the University of Arkansas and has completed all coursework toward a doctorate in communication from the University of Georgia. He is the 2020 recipient of the John I.

Sisco Excellence in Teaching Award through the Southern States Communication Association.

VMI emphasizes global outreach in many ways: study tours, cultural exchanges with foreign military academies and civilian universities, international internships, and study abroad programs.

Over 10% of the Corps of Cadets take advantage of global education every year. VMI offers semester study abroad programs, exchange programs at military academies, and direct enrollments at universities abroad, as well as summer study abroad opportunities both through VMI faculty-led summer programs and through approved third-party providers.

Cadets are permitted to study abroad after their first year at VMI, and may study abroad one regular semester (spring or fall) and as many summers as they like.

The Institute has several scholarship funds to aid cadets who want to go abroad. The office of global education assists cadets with applications for national scholarships, including the Fulbright, Olmsted, and Boren Scholarships and all aspects of planning study abroad programs. ✨



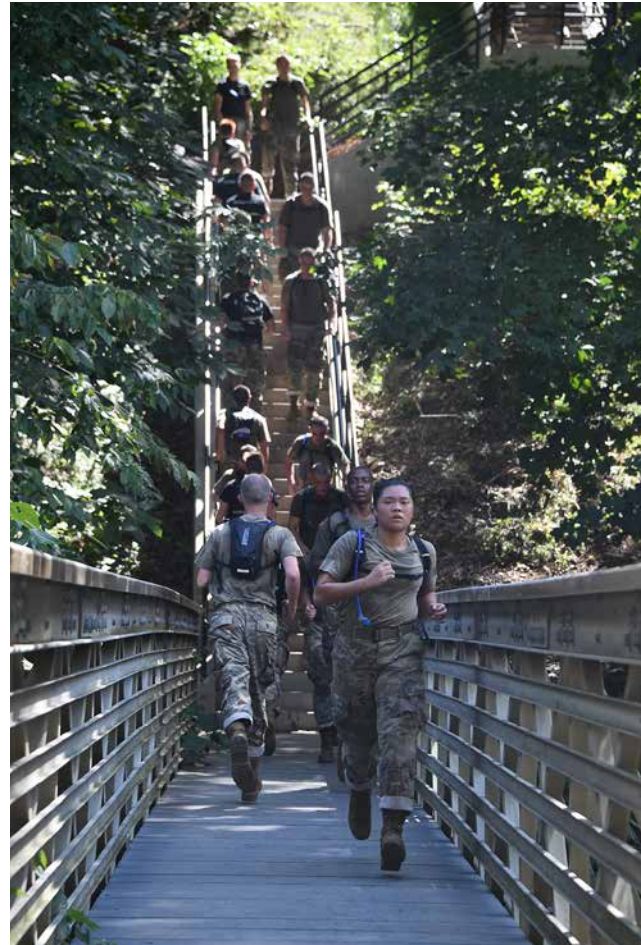
Todd Lee Goen



First Parade and Home Football Game

Dreary weather didn't keep the crowds away as the Corps of Cadets marched in their first parade of the academic year on the morning of Saturday, Sept. 10. Later in the day, the Keydet football team competed against the Bucknell Bison in their home opener. The rain got heavier throughout the game, but many fans stayed to see VMI hold on for a 24-14 win. —VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.





Rat Crucible

Matriculation Week culminated with Rat Crucible on Sunday, Aug. 28, which included training on the North Post obstacles and swimming in the Maury River to Jordan's Point. The event concluded with a march up Letcher Avenue and the rats' first Old Yell.—VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

2022–23 New and Promoted Faculty

VMI announced the promotion and granting of tenure to several faculty members, and introduced new members of the faculty for this academic year.

Promoted, with tenure: _____

- » **Chemistry**—Lt. Col. Kevin Braun, promoted from assistant professor to associate professor, with tenure.
- » **History**—Lt. Col. Jochen Arndt, promoted from assistant professor to associate professor, with tenure.
- » **Modern Languages**—Dr. Laura Xie, promoted from assistant professor to associate professor, with tenure.

Promoted: _____

- » **International Studies**—Col. Patrick Rhamey Jr., promoted from associate professor to professor.

New Full-Time Faculty: _____

- » **Civil and Environmental Engineering**—Maj. Steven Sanders, assistant professor
- » **Computer and Information Sciences**—Col. David Smith, professor and department head
- » **Electrical and Computer Engineering**—Mohammad Maktoomi, assistant professor
- » **History**—Lt. Col. Mark Boonshoft, associate professor and chair in American Constitution History, and Dr. Qiong Liu, assistant professor

- » **Human Performance and Wellness**—Capt. Shannon Dryden, instructor
- » **Physics and Astronomy**—Dr. Manula Pathirana, assistant professor, and Dr. Bishnu Pandey, assistant professor
- » **Psychology**—Lt. Col. Anthony Arciero, assistant professor
- » **Army ROTC**—Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Gonnion, Capt. Alessandra Gonzalez-Rivera, Sgt. 1st Class Shane Grinder, Master Sgt. Zachery Hagensen, Capt. Joshua Hetzel, Capt. Cameron MacDonald, retired Marine Cpl. Jacob Rogers, and Staff Sgt. Charrelle Simmons
- » **Air Force ROTC**—Maj. Erik Blum, Staff Sgt. Sara Hubbard, Staff Sgt. Michael Robinson, Col. Nichole Scott, Dr. Robin Thompson, Lt. Col. Joseph Thompson II
- » **Naval ROTC**—Lt. Michael Adams, Lt. Allan Brudwick, Lt. Christopher Hughes, Capt. Mark Reaser, Cmdr. James Sullen, and Command Senior Chief Shawn Wingle
- » **Cyber Defense Laboratory**—Jacob Klein, junior software engineer
- » **Miller Academic Center**—Heather Williams, academic advising program coordinator
- » **Office of Global Education**—Todd Goen, director and senior international officer
- » **Preston Library**—Pongracz Sennyey, director

New Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty: _____

- » **Economics and Business**—David Beauregard and Austin Bradley
- » **History**—Dr. Sandra Hayslette
- » **Modern Languages and Cultures**—Camille Bouillon
- » **Psychology**—Lucas Whitman ✪

Cases to Highlight Moral Challenges at Leadership Conference

By Maj. Catherine Roy, Center for Leadership and Ethics

Registration is open through Oct. 27 for VMI's Annual Leadership and Ethics' Conference titled "Principled Dissent: Navigating Moral Challenges," to be held Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 31–Nov. 1, in Marshall Hall.

The event, organized and hosted by the Center for Leadership and Ethics, attracts college students from around the country as well as the public. The conference continues to build its reputation for tackling top issues of national importance for its programming, with topics including leadership through disruption, civil discourse, strategic leadership, and ethics in the digital age. "Principled Dissent: Navigating Moral Challenges" will explore a progression of topics highlighting leadership skills and

competencies through the lens of "The Courage of Convictions," the leadership theme for 2022–23.

Ira Chaleff will be the keynote speaker and help frame the program for the entire conference. Chaleff is an author and executive coach in the greater Washington, D.C. area. His award-winning book, "The Courageous Follower: Standing Up to and for Our Leaders," is used widely in leadership studies and development programs, including at VMI. Chaleff's works inspire individuals to consider ethical values and rights in deciding how and when to intelligently disobey authority without devolving into disruptive behaviors.

Erika Cheung, a medical researcher in the biotechnology industry, will speak

about her experiences as a whistle-blower reporting the medical-diagnostic company Theranos to health regulators. Currently, she is the executive director of Ethics in Entrepreneurship, a nonprofit organization with the mission to embed ethical questioning, culture, and systems in start-up ecosystems worldwide.

Peter Bonilla, vice president of programs at the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) will discuss the importance of free speech on college campuses. For several years, Bonilla directed FIRE's Individual Rights Defense Program, advocating directly on behalf of wrongly

Continued on next page

censored students and faculty members nationwide.

Guests will also hear from retired Gen. Robert Neller, 37th United States Marine Corps commandant, this year's H.B. Johnson, Jr. '26 Distinguished Lecturer. His talk will take place in Cameron Hall on Tuesday, Nov. 1, at 10:50 a.m. His address is free and open to the public. Registration is required to attend all other sessions.

The closing presenter will be Rachael Denhollander, the 2022 Caroline Dawn Wortham, '12 Leadership Speaker. In 2016, Denhollander became internationally

known as the first woman to speak publicly against USA Gymnastics' team doctor Larry Nassar, one of the most prolific sexual abusers in recorded history. Her courage to come forward publicly gave voice to hundreds of women, and her story is an inspirational real-world example of principled dissent.

Speaker books will be on sale in the lobby of Marshall Hall during the conference, with opportunities to have them signed by the authors. Interactive learning sessions and discussion exercises will reinforce the speakers' presentations. Participants will learn through role-playing scenarios,

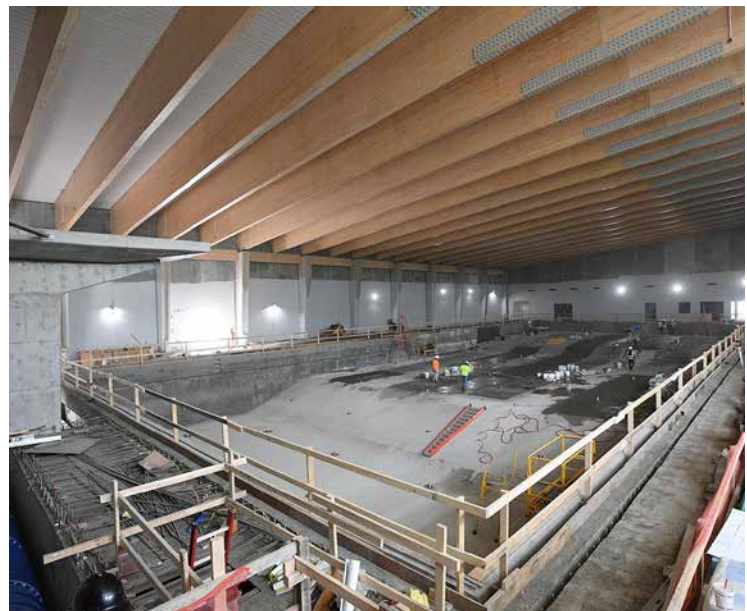
participate in live polls, make reasoned moral-ethical decisions, and network with individuals from academia, business, government, military, nonprofit organizations, and colleges.

Registration for the conference is \$105 for adults or \$35 for full-time students, with all meals included. VMI alumni may attend for a discounted rate of \$95. Cadets, along with VMI faculty and staff, may attend for free, but need to complete the online registration form. For more information, to learn about the poster competition, and to register, visit VMILeadConf.cventevents.com. ❄



Aquatic Center Completion in Sight

Construction is advancing at the VMI Aquatic Center along Main Street. A successful three-day leak test on the 50-meter pool was a giant step forward. The layout and finishes for locker rooms, classrooms, and spectator seating are nearing final stages. The fall months will include tile work in the pool, furniture and audiovisual equipment deliveries, and elevator installation and testing. With final inspections and staff move-in planned for mid-December, the goal is for cadets to have access to the Aquatic Center in the spring semester for training, exercise, and NCAA competition in water polo, and swimming and diving.—VMI Photos by Kelly Nye.





9/11 Stair Climbs and Shoulder Board Presentation

The Rat Mass completed a 110-story stair climb on the evening of Sept. 11 in memory of those who lost their lives during the 2001 attacks. Members of the Class of 2023 marched for 23 hours around the Parade Ground during the weekend, carrying the shoulder boards that were later given to the Rat Mass upon completion of their stair climb.

Later Sunday evening, nearly 450 cadets joined the Firefighting Club for a memorial stair climb. This event was organized by Cody Wickham '23, cadet-in-charge of the club. Throughout the events, many wore the name of a fallen first responder or other volunteers, even including the K-9s.—VMI
Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.



the Boeing Company CEO and board of directors. He was executive vice president and general counsel for Boeing from 2006 to 2020.

Luttig served as assistant attorney general at the U.S. Department of Justice, and counselor to the Attorney General of the United States. He was deputy assistant attorney general at the U.S. Department of Justice from 1990–1991.

Luttig was assistant counsel to President Ronald Reagan from 1981 to 1982. From 1982 to 1983, he was a law clerk to Judge Antonin Scalia at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. From 1983 to 1985, he served as a law clerk and then special assistant to the Chief Justice of the United States, Warren E. Burger.

Luttig earned his bachelor's degree from Washington and Lee University and his law degree from the University of Virginia. ❁



J. Michael Luttig urged the audience to reject divisiveness during his speech Sept. 7.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

Ward Receives Coveted Peay Scholarship

By Marianne Hause

Julia T. Ward '26 has been awarded the coveted Peay Merit Scholarship to attend VMI, covering the full cost of tuition, room, board, and fees.

First presented in 2021, the Peay Merit Scholarship is awarded to cadets who possess the qualities of character associated with the Institute's 14th superintendent, Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62: exceptional leadership, academic achievement, athletic commitment, and demonstrated interest in national service.

Candidates for the scholarship are evaluated in four criteria. The first is Academic Achievement. For matriculants, this means a minimum 3.75 high school GPA. Ward took honors and advanced placement classes throughout high school. Her weighted GPA was 4.5, her unweighted GPA was 3.9.

Athletic commitment for matriculants means evidence of consistent and meritorious participation in athletics at the preparatory level. Ward swam for her high school's varsity swim team all four years. She also played water polo, and was team captain her senior year. She was a state qualifier twice for both swimming and water polo, and she is her high school's record holder for the 400 free relay. She will play on VMI's water polo team.

The third area of evaluation is exceptional leadership. For matriculants, this is evidence of leadership experiences (in scholastic, athletic, service, and/or other endeavors) that clearly are noteworthy and distinguishing, such as documented instances of successful leadership in the face of significant adversity or testament of truly outstanding mentorship and guidance in leadership roles. Ward was part of Air Force Junior ROTC all four years of high

school and was captain of the Awareness Presentation team, which visited junior high schools and spoke to students about assault awareness, drug awareness, as well as AFJROTC recruitment. She attended weeklong summer camps for AFJROTC that are similar in nature to the Summer Transition Program.

The final area is commitment to national service, an unambiguous commitment to commission as an officer in the U.S. Armed Forces upon college graduation. Other demonstrated commitment to national service (such as service in Teach For America or in official support of local, state, or national government) also may be considered. Ward plans to commission into the Navy after graduation in 2026. Ward never planned to attend any college other than VMI. "To me, education and learning is paramount. VMI has excellent academics, it offers the major I am interested in, I can play in NCAA Division I sports, and there is ROTC. VMI checked all the boxes for me," said Ward.

She applied for both the Peay and Navy scholarships at the end of 2021. By January, she heard that she received the Navy scholarship and in March she heard she won the Peay scholarship. "I was ecstatic when I heard the news. My parents were elated as well. There were plenty of tears of joy and hugs all around when I received that call," recalled Ward.

Ward is a member of Band Company. She played the saxophone in high school, and hopes to join VMI's jazz band. She plans to join the Pipe Band as well.

Ward is from Frankford, Illinois, where she attended Lincoln-Way East High School. She is the daughter of Richard and Susan Ward. She is an electrical and computer engineering major. ❁



Julia T. Ward '26

Music

When music director Col. John Brodie learned that women would be admitted to VMI, he looked at both the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York and the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, to see how their music programs incorporated male and female members. Brodie, who directs both the Glee Club and the

provided equitable opportunities to participate. The law does not require any institution to offer identical sports, but an equal opportunity to play. The opportunities to play are based on enrollment numbers. At VMI, female enrollment is generally at 13% to 14% of total enrollment, so the Institute must meet or exceed that percentage of the spots for female players. "It's actually closer to 20%," said

Lenny Brown, assistant athletic director. "We offer seven NCAA sponsored sports for women: soccer, swimming and diving, water polo, indoor track and field, outdoor track and field, cross country, and women's rifle."

Because building a women's athletic program took many years, VMI received waivers from the NCAA until 2011, when they became fully compliant with the creation of the water polo team.

According to Lance Fujiwara, associate athletic director for sports medicine, initially volleyball was the first sport planned for women since only six players are required to form a team. "When the women were polled, it was determined that they preferred soccer," said Fujiwara.

Julie Davis Carlson was the original head coach of the women's soccer team. "We did not compete officially the first year of my assignment. I was part of proposing a start-up budget to get the program off the ground and prepare for its first year of Big South Conference competition. We utilized the club team that was in existence, and they helped with recruiting. So our first year we had a small club season, trained and maneuvered through the challenges, which included recruiting women to come and re-recruiting them to stay," said Carlson, who is currently head coach and technical director for the Greenville Liberty, a pre-professional women's soccer team, which competes in the USL W league, and based in Greenville, South Carolina.



The first women's soccer match was held on Patchin Field Aug. 29, 2003. VMI won against Bridgewater College, 4-0.—Photo courtesy of VMI Archives.

band, said that only one female cadet joined the Glee Club that first year, so he had her sing a high tenor part. The following year, 15 female cadets joined the Glee Club, so he was able to add soprano and alto parts. "It's wonderful having a full choir with soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices," he said. Regarding the band, he saw an immediate increase in his woodwind section. "Traditionally, females play clarinets, flutes, and other woodwind instruments, so it was great when they arrived to balance out our band," said Brodie.

Sports

NCAA adheres to Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, which is a federal law. It requires that women and men be

Legacy

Gussie Lord '01, who was one of the first female cadets, and who graduated with a degree in English with distinction, was appointed to the Board of Visitors by Gov. Ralph Northam '81 in July 2021. Also serving on the Board of Visitors is Lara Tyler Chambers '03, who graduated with a degree in civil engineering.

Erin Claunch '01, also in the first class of women, was named the first female battalion commander at VMI in 2000. Her stories of breaking barriers were featured in *The Wall Street Journal*,

Continued on next page

The Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, Orlando Sentinel, among other publications.

The first female regimental executive officer, Elise Reed '15, continues to display the VMI characteristics of hard work and time management, as she is a member of the Army Reserves and a mixed martial artist who recently turned pro.

Kasey Meredith '22 became the first female regimental commander in VMI history when Troy Smith '21 handed over leadership of the Corps of Cadets to her during the 2021 graduation parade.

Hannah Buttner '26 matriculated this year and attended the Summer Transition Program. She is inspired by the female cadets who came before them. "That's really cool that Kasey was the first female RCO. She is just four years older than us, so that's not too far away. Hopefully that will become the norm here," said Buttner.

Maj. Gen. Marti Bissell's speech on post in September matched the sentiment of Buttner and many others. "I've kept an eye on VMI's



Maj. Gen. Marti Bissell poses with alumnae after her speech in Marshall Hall Sept. 9.—Photo courtesy of Micalyn Miller, VMI Alumni Agencies.

efforts to integrate women into the Corps and continued to advocate. ...I look forward to the time when it's not such a big deal when a female is chosen for a particular position." Through her roles at VMI and the many alumni she has gotten to know, she knows this:

"Change makes VMI better and the integration of women at VMI certainly did. But, for all of those changes there are also some things that do not change. Cadets that attend VMI want to challenge themselves, academically, athletically, militarily and that they will be better leaders, better individuals because of those experiences. Those who desire to come to VMI want to earn a place in the incredible VMI network because someone in the network made an impression, had some quality that they want to emulate. It's not the number of formations you stand in or the number of parades you march in that is important, it is the relationships you make and more importantly how you grow as an individual."

To read Maj. Gen. Marti Bissell's full speech from the evening of Sept. 9, please visit www.vmi.edu/VMI25RemarksBissell. ✨



Mildred Cooper '05, the first female inducted into the VMI Sports Hall of Fame, joins Zack Scott, track and field and cross country director, on the field in Foster Stadium during a special recognition Sept. 10.—VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

See more photos of 25 Years of Women, page 18



The celebration Sept. 8–10 recognized the accomplishments of women at VMI over the last 25 years. From the first women to sign the Matriculation Book, the first women to break out, the athletic successes, to the first female regimental commander, and the many high-achieving alumnae, there was a lot to celebrate. As Maj. Gen. Marti Bissell said during her remarks, “VMI is constantly changing, has always changed, and will continue to change.”—VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin, Kelly Nye, and courtesy of VMI Archives.



Continued on next page



Alumni Check Presentation

The Class of 2012 presented its 10th Reunion gift of \$433,996.12 to the Institute during the football game against Cornell Sept. 17. Pictured are Sgt. Maj. Tom Sowers, Corps of Cadets sergeant major; David Prasnicki, VMI Alumni Agencies chief executive officer; Joe Munno '12, reunion committee member; Bruce Howard '12, class agent; Andrew Deal '12, reunion co-chair and VMI Keydet Club chief operating officer; and Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins '85, superintendent.—VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.





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Walder Begins as Leader in Residence

Tracy Walder toured post and met with cadets during her first visit as the 2022–23 Leader in Residence. The program, hosted by the Center for Leadership and Ethics, brings leaders of character whose distinguished careers within the military and/or private sector exemplify the citizen-soldier model.

Walder worked as a staff operations officer in the CIA's Counterterrorism Center before, during, and after Sept. 11, 2001. During her time at the CIA, Walder lived in and traveled to countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Europe as well as served in war zones. After the CIA, Tracy became a special agent at the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office, Santa Ana Resident Agent, specializing in Chinese counterintelligence operations, specifically the Tai and Chi Mak case, profiled on CNN and in the New Yorker. Walder has created courses on national security and foreign policy for young women and now works as an adjunct professor of criminal justice and domestic terrorism at Texas Christian University and global terrorism at Ursuline Academy.—VMI Photos by Kelly Nye.

