



INSTITUTE REPORT

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

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'Leave a Mark on Your Alma Mater' Alumni Construction Professionals See a New Side of VMI

By Mary Price

This academic year, construction equipment and noise seem to be everywhere on post, as renovations continue to both Preston Library and Scott Shipp Hall. Many of those working on the projects, of course, were unacquainted with VMI before their work brought them here.

Some, though, already knew their way around post, as they once wore cadet uniforms, lived in barracks, and ate their meals in Crozet Hall.

A number of alumni are working on the renovations to both Scott Shipp and the library, while a few others just completed their work at the Institute. Bill Madison '90 was involved with the post infrastructure project, while Mike Jeffries '91 assisted with the recent renovation of the press box at Foster Stadium. When asked about their



Crews install a 135-foot-tall crane during Thanksgiving Furlough for the Scott Shipp Hall renovation project.—VMI File Photo by Kelly Nye.

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Fulbright Offers Firsthand Glimpse at Struggle for Democracy

By Mary Price

When he received word in the spring that he'd been selected for a Fulbright award allowing him to teach in Hong Kong for the fall 2019 semester, Col. Howard Sanborn knew that rumblings of civil unrest were beginning in the former British crown colony, now officially a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China.

However, there was no way that Sanborn, professor of international studies, could have known that not only would the pro-democracy protests come to his host campus, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, but that they would rise to such a level that the rest of the semester would be canceled in mid-November. Nor could he have known that he'd wind up

fleeing the campus on foot, carrying a week's worth of clothes in a rucksack.

Originally, Sanborn, an East Asia and comparative politics specialist, had hoped to use his time in Hong Kong to study the city's legislature, the Legislative Council, a 70-member body that's made up of a mix

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Saudi Arabia's Modern and Ancient Ways

By Mary Price

In late November, three cadets and a faculty member took advantage of an unusual opportunity: an all-expenses-paid trip to Saudi Arabia.

Making the trip were Aiden Atchison '20, Morgan Davis '20, Sam Knapp '20, and Maj. Jason Schroeffer, assistant professor of modern languages and cultures, plus three cadets and a faculty member from both the United States Military Academy and the Citadel.

The group's travel was sponsored by the National Council of U.S.-Arab Relations (NCUSAR), a non-governmental organization whose mission is to improve American knowledge and understanding of the Arab world. The organization also happens to have close ties to VMI, as its founder and CEO is John Duke Anthony '62.

As part of its mission, NCUSAR regularly offers travel opportunities geared toward cadets from the service academies and the six senior military colleges. In the spring, Schroeffer and another group of cadets traveled to Qatar courtesy of NCUSAR.

The trip to Saudi Arabia, Schroeffer explained, was meant to showcase that nation's Vision 2030, which calls for economic diversification, a greater ability for young Saudi Arabians to earn degrees in their home nation, and more job opportunities for women.

The traveling Americans thus visited many places supporting this goal, including the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology, a government-sponsored center for scientific research that has a heavy focus on renewable energy, and the Moderation Center, which analyzes Twitter and other social media sites.

"They're targeting the ideology of terror," Schroeffer explained.

The group also visited the main headquarters of Aramco, officially known as the Saudi Arabian Oil Company, which, with 2018 revenues of over \$111 billion, is one of the most profitable companies in the world.

"We only visited the main buildings," explained Davis, who plans to commission into the Marine Corps. "We didn't get to go out into the oil fields."

Atchison, who will commission into the Army, was most impressed with the security at Aramco, which relies heavily on unmanned technologies such as drones and security cameras.



Cadets visiting Saudi Arabia in late November study a map of Aramco's oil fields during a stop at that company's security headquarters.—Photo courtesy of Maj. Jason Schroeffer.

It's a level of security that's definitely needed, he noted, as in September 2019 there was an attack on an Aramco oil processing facility, possibly originated from either Yemen or Iran.

"It's very fascinating how they've cut corners and dealt with security issues," said Atchison. "It's the most wealthy company in the world. It was something else."

The cadets noted that their trip included visits to a lot of military facilities. Knapp, who will commission into the Army, noted that the command structures of the Saudi military reminded him of the U.S. military. "That's something you don't see very often," he stated.

"When you think about the Middle East, you don't think of it as a very technologically advanced area," said Davis. "Saudi Arabia definitely surprised me with their military bases."

Atchison agreed, saying, "We saw a lot more things than

we probably should have with the war in Yemen. They thought we were more important than we were."

They were important enough to be protected by armed guards everywhere they went, all of whom spoke only Arabic—a situation that gave the cadets studying Arabic a chance to practice their language skills. Everyone else they encountered, the cadets reported, spoke English fluently.

Davis, who is double majoring in international studies and modern languages (Arabic), noted that the split between Arabic speakers and English speakers among their group put her in somewhat of a unique position.

"I don't think [the guards] knew I could understand everything they were saying in the car," she commented.

The guards also offered a kind of back-door access that most tourists don't get, including a stop at an open-air market. "It was very good to see not only what they show up front, but also what's in the dark alleyways," said Atchison.

Atchison didn't have to travel to a dark alleyway, though, to see the strange juxtapositions that life in Saudi Arabia provides.

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VMI Institute Report

INSTITUTE REPORT

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Director Col. Stewart MacInnis

Editor Maj. Michelle Ellwood

Assistant Editor Kelly Nye

Designer Robbin Youngblood

Institute Report Staff

Stephen Hanes

H. Lockwood McLaughlin

Mary Price

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Kelly Nye

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Busiest Winter to Date in the CPTF

By Daniel Whitehead

For the third year in a row, the Corps Physical Training Facility serves as the site for the Southern Conference Indoor Track and Field Championships Feb. 29-Mar. 1 in Lexington.

To prepare for the event, the VMI track and field teams hosted the largest number of events since the CPTF opened, with four separate weekends of competition, topping the previous high of three events held before the SoCon Championships. Director of the CPTF Capt. Isaac Slone says, "We have a ton of expo-

sure, which we are excited about."

This winter the Keydets hosted the Keydet Invitational, Jan. 17-18; the VMI Team Challenge, Jan. 25; the VMI Winter Relays, Feb. 7-8; and the VMI Indoor Classic, Feb. 14-15.

"We have hosted meets in the CPTF for a couple years now," said VMI head coach Darrin Webb. "However, this will be the largest number of meets that we have hosted during an indoor season. We have and are



James Granderson '20 competes during the Keydet Invitational Jan. 17 in the Corps Physical Training Facility. —VMI Photo by Maj. Michelle Ellwood.

getting great responses from teams that have attended the meets in the CPTF previously, and we are excited to welcome them back, along with the new teams that will attend meets in the CPTF for the first time."

The Keydet Invitational featured more than 25 schools from the Mid-Atlantic region, while

the VMI Team Challenge was a one-day event that had eight schools competing for team points.

"In addition, we are also very thrilled that the Southern Conference has selected VMI to host the 2020 indoor championships here in Lexington," Webb said. "So, all in all we will host five separate collegiate events in the CPTF this winter, and my staff and teams could not be more excited about the opportunity and to compete in one of the

best facilities in the country."

Slone couldn't agree more. "With all the hard work between the commandant's staff, physical plant, and VMI athletics, the feedback we have gotten has been extremely positive, and people are starting to understand that the CPTF is unlike any other facility in the United States." ❄️



More than 25 schools from the Mid-Atlantic region compete in the Corps Physical Training Facility during the Keydet Invitational Jan. 18. —VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

'A 40-Year Marathon'

Career Services Director Emphasizes a Life Plan

By Mary Price

Walk into any large bookstore or shop online, and you'll find resources galore for career advice, some of it helpful, much of it not. Most of the time, such information is meant to help the reader to just get a job.

But Lt. Col. Ammad Sheikh, who's now in his second year as director of career services, has a different goal: helping all cadets develop a life plan that will sustain them not only economically but mentally and emotionally throughout their working life.

"We're not just focused on their first destination after college," said Sheikh. "I want them to look at it as a 40-year marathon of a career."

With that goal in mind, Sheikh and Maj. Sara Blake, newly hired this year as assistant director of career services, have been hard at



Lt. Col. Ammad Sheikh, director of Career Services, speaks with attendees at the October 2019 career fair held in Marshall Hall.—VMI File Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

work developing a wide variety of programming designed to reach the entire Corps: commissioning, non-commissioning, STEM majors, and non-STEM majors.

According to Sheikh, the first step of career success is for individuals to know themselves, not only in terms of their own strengths and weaknesses, but also in the kind of lifestyle they'd like and what kind of organizational culture appeals to them.

"It is my professional opinion that for a 22-year-old with a college degree, getting a job

is not the most difficult part," Sheikh commented. "As Americans, we can find jobs, but there's a lot of dissatisfaction in employment."

To help cadets avoid that dissatisfaction, Sheikh and Blake have been working to revamp the career services website, with the goal of making cadets more aware of the possibilities that await them after VMI. In addition, Blake has been overseeing a LinkedIn group designed to help cadets connect with alumni working in fields that interest them, and the career services office has begun encouraging cadets to use Handshake, a job board and networking service specifically for college students.

But of course, the old ways of getting a job still work just as well as the new ones, and rather than dying off in a digital world, the career fair has been reinvigorated at VMI. Once primarily the province of STEM employers and engineering firms in particular, VMI's twice-a-year Career & Internship Fair now offers a broad mix of employers appealing to cadets of all majors.

During this fall's event, just under 50 employers came to post, representing industries as disparate as food service, lumber wholesale, and the federal government. "Our goal is to invite employers our cadets wouldn't have access to otherwise," said Sheikh. The spring career fair, planned for March, will likewise bring a wide mix of employers to post.

In addition to all of these efforts, Sheikh and Blake have been working to develop programming for specific groups of cadets. NCAA athletes, for example, may not realize that the skills they've developed on the playing field will serve them well at work, and members of the Rat Disciplinary Committee and other cadet leadership organizations also have skills that could be listed on a resume. Likewise, cadets planning to commission into the National Guard or



20-Mile March

Rats and their dykes—1st class mentors—march 20 miles up Robinson Gap Road into the George Washington National Forest Jan. 19. The annual event is a bonding exercise between the dykes and rats prior to Breakout.—VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

Army Reserves could use some guidance in balancing their civilian careers with their military obligations.

Developing a partnership with faculty is also high on Sheikh and Blake's to-do list. Already, they've let faculty know that if they go out

of town to a conference, there's no need to cancel class; rather, the career services staff can use that time to give a presentation.

"We want to make sure that every single cadet that graduates from here has a strong sense of their life design," Sheikh stated. ❀

Career Services Staff Supply the Final Touches

While many of his brother rats send resumes and anxiously try to plan their post-VMI futures, Jacob Parrish '20 can focus on his academics as he makes it to the May 16 finish line in his 1st Class year. As for a job afterward—well, he's already got one, thanks in part to Lt. Col. Ammad Sheikh in the Office of Career Services.

Parrish, a civil engineering major, will go to work after graduation as an assistant superintendent for KBS, a general contractor, and work under the supervision of Sam Stocks '90. Prior to being interviewed by KBS, he had had only one job interview in his life, and that was for a job in the dining hall of a senior living facility when he was in high school.

But he knew that to interview for a professional job, "You can't just wing it like I did in high school," Parrish explained. That's where the skills he'd learned in a leadership class taught by Sheikh came in.

Had he not had that leadership class, Parrish noted, he might not have known some of the unwritten rules of a job interview—namely,



Jacob Parrish '20

to show up early, have extra copies of your resume available, and bring a notebook in which you've already written questions to ask about the firm that's hiring.

"[Career services] were great in helping me come up with questions to ask," said Parrish.

Parrish also sought guidance from Sheikh and Col. Dean Kershaw '68, an adjunct member of the faculty in the civil engineering department, when he received two job offers at once and needed a few days to wait to hear about salaries and benefits at both.

"Playing that game and how to communicate with a possible future employer—that was probably the biggest help that they gave," Parrish commented.

In the end, he chose Richmond-based KBS over an opportunity in Roanoke. He even got a signing bonus.

Now, all Parrish has to do is graduate. "It's definitely a stress relief," he noted. "I think my parents really like that, too."

— Mary Price

Annual Giving Sets Strong Pace for FY 2020

By Scott Belliveau '83

VMI annual giving has been well supported by alumni and friends of the Institute thus far in fiscal year 2020.

As of Dec. 31, more than 3,100 donors had made gifts to the three components of VMI annual giving—the Foundation Fund, the Keydet Club Scholarship Fund, and the Athletic Operations Fund—as well as scholarship funds totaling more than \$2.73 million providing aid to cadet-athletes on specific teams.

In the first six months of the current fiscal year, alumni and friends provided more than \$13 million to the Keydet Club Scholarship Fund and the Athletic Operations Fund, which provides money in support of VMI's NCAA sports program. Donors also earmarked almost \$304,000 to team-specific scholarship funds that allow donors to direct their gifts to a certain team or teams.

In the same period, the Foundation Fund received generous support, with donors giving more than \$13 million.

"Annual giving also has a financial power that some people might not immediately realize," said Meade King '85, chief operating officer of the VMI Foundation and the VMI Keydet Club. "The money raised so far this fiscal year—\$2.7

million—is equal to the amount that an endowment valued at about \$65 million would generate. Some have called annual giving, therefore, a 'living endowment,' and they're entirely correct." ❀



Cadets march in a parade earlier this academic year.—Photo courtesy of Micalyn Miller, VMI Alumni Agencies.

of individuals elected from the citizenry by a popular vote and people elected to represent certain sectors of society such as finance, insurance, and education.

“[The Legislative Council] offers an interesting natural experiment to see how people from traditionally democratic constituencies ... pursue their careers versus the people from these sector-specific [groups],” Sanborn noted. “That was the germ of the research.”

However, the Legislative Council was closed for much of the time Sanborn was in Hong Kong because protesters had vandalized its building over the summer. Instead, Sanborn used the four months he was there to teach a class on democracies in the west, and also to network with others and pursue another line of research—this one having to do with higher education and its effect on citizenship in Hong Kong.

It was a challenging time to be a university professor. When Sanborn first saw a student roster for his class, there were approximately 50 names. However, many students wound up dropping the class, and others often didn’t show up because they were taking part in class boycotts encouraged by protestors. At one point in October, there were fewer than 10 students in Sanborn’s class.

“It was difficult to build a rapport with the students because of all of the stuff going on,” Sanborn reported.

Then, in mid-November, the protests struck close to home. As conflicts between student protesters and police escalated, Sanborn began to realize that although he was safe in his high-rise apartment, and he had plenty of food, there was the possibility that he’d be barricaded in his building by the ongoing conflict and unable to get out for more supplies. When friends called to ask



Col. Howard Sanborn’s wife, Jenny, walks through the campus of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where leaflets and other protest art line the ground.—*Photo courtesy of Col. Howard Sanborn.*

if he’d like a ride to a safer part of the city, Sanborn accepted.

Before leaving, he let a friend know where a spare key to his apartment was located, just in case she ran out of food and needed more. Then he set out on foot.

“I took a week’s worth of clothes, not knowing when I’d come back,” he recalled. “The protesters were fine. They didn’t give me any problems.”

After climbing over several barricades, and helping others to do the same, Sanborn met up with his friends and took a ride to a hotel, where he stayed for approximately a week.

“I never felt physically in danger,” Sanborn stated. He was worried, though, about what might happen if the electricity or water were to be cut off.

Others, though, were quite concerned for Sanborn’s safety. No sooner had he checked in to the hotel than he was on the phone with Col. Dennis Foster, chair of the international studies department, and Brig. Gen. Robert “Bob” Moreschi, deputy superintendent for academics and dean of the faculty.

“The dean and [Foster] were concerned for the right reasons,” said Sanborn. “They were very, very supportive.”

Sanborn also reported receiving good support from U.S. officials in Hong Kong. “I was in constant communication with

the U.S. consulate,” he said. “They were incredible, keeping an eye out, asking if I was okay, asking if I needed anything.”

After a week in the hotel, Sanborn flew to Tokyo to celebrate Thanksgiving with his wife and three teenagers, who’d flown over to join him there. Originally, the family had planned to spend the holiday in Hong Kong, but with safety in mind, Sanborn and his wife decided to have another kind of Asian holiday instead.

In late November, Sanborn flew back to Hong Kong for another two weeks there before returning to the United States.

Now, he’s busy not only teaching his own classes, but also serving as acting department head while Foster is on leave this semester.

He’s also been fielding a plethora of questions from cadets and fellow faculty members. In mid-January, Sanborn related, he went over the syllabus for an applied statistics class he’s teaching and then asked if there were any questions, thinking cadets might seek clarification about the syllabus. Immediately, a cadet’s hand popped up: “Tell us what you did in Hong Kong!”

Sanborn also noted that his experience abroad was not quite the adventure that cadets imagine it was.

“They expect a mixture of Indiana Jones and Jason Bourne,” he commented. “They’re a little deflated when I tell them, ‘No, I was just there to study legislative politics.’”

On a more serious note, Sanborn has returned from Hong Kong with a message not only for the VMI community but also his fellow Americans as a whole: don’t take American democracy for granted. It’s a lesson he learned from watching young Hong Kong residents wave American flags and carry posters depicting President Donald Trump as they protested Chinese rule.

“Americans have democracy, freedom, liberty, fairness, and equality,” said Sanborn. “It’s the values that support the waving of the flag that matter to those people. ... Now more than ever, we have a responsibility to stay engaged and participate and lead as democratic citizens.” ❁

Sanborn's Hopes Remain High

For several years now, Col. Howard Sanborn, professor of international studies, has made regular trips to Asia, often doing research on democracy there. This past fall, though, he got a front-row seat on the struggle for self-rule when he traveled to Hong Kong for a semester thanks to a Fulbright grant from the U.S. State Department.

"Generally, the protests, to my eye, were very peaceful," said Sanborn. "I would come across a few hundred or a few thousand people walking out, let's say, during lunch."



Col. Howard Sanborn

And as much as he might have liked to immerse himself in the moment—and come back with an even deeper firsthand perspective of what it was like to be there—Sanborn purposely kept away from the big protest movements.

"I didn't want to contribute to this false narrative that there was a western, secret project to instigate protests," Sanborn explained. He added that Chinese media were

reporting that British and American operatives were behind the protests—and in Asia, Westerners stand out in photos.

Instead, Sanborn learned from watching as he traveled back and forth from his apartment to the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where he taught a class on democracies in the west. On campus, evidence of the protest movement was everywhere.

"There, I saw a lot of protest art, a lot of graffiti in support of the protests," he commented. He recalled seeing the words "liberate Hong Kong" written in Cantonese, and also much pro-American protest art depicting President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence. Sanborn interpreted the American imagery as "a way of desperately asking for help to support the protests."

Sometimes Sanborn's travels to and from the campus would be impacted by the ongoing unrest. Millions of Hong Kong residents and visitors use the subway system, known as MTR, every day, and Sanborn was among them until the station nearest the campus was vandalized and then closed for weeks afterward. After that, he took buses or used Uber to get to campus, although the latter was an expensive choice. Soon, frustrated Hong Kongers began to call the train system the "empty R" because so many stations were closed.

But despite the challenges he and others encountered in Hong Kong last year, Sanborn hasn't given up on his longtime dream of someday creating a program that would take cadets to Asia on a regular basis.

"I'm hoping that down the road, things will die down in the city, because Hong Kong is a perfect gateway into Asia," he commented. "It's just a great place. It's beautiful. It's scenic. It has everything you could want in a big city."

— Mary Price

Saudi Arabia *continued from page 2*

"At the airport, someone was telling us how technologically advanced the country was," he said. "Then, at the same time, someone drove by in this truck with a bunch of goats in the back of it."

Throughout their trip, the cadets enjoyed the chance to get to know their counterparts from West Point and the Citadel. Atchison, who is earning a minor in modern languages (Arabic), noted that one of the West Point cadets knew a good bit of Arabic.

"It was very good to sit down and talk with him about his experiences," said Atchison. "We're all ending up in the same place pretty much."

Davis, meanwhile, had an even closer connection to report. One of her best friends goes to West Point, and one of the West Point cadets on the trip knew that friend quite well.

"It's a very small world," said Davis. "We're all pretty connected, whether we know it or not." ❄️



Visiting the Sky Bridge in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, are Maj. Jason Schroepfer, Morgan Davis '20, Aiden Atchison '20, Dr. John Duke Anthony '62, and Sam Knapp '20.—Photo courtesy of Maj. Jason Schroepfer.

Employee Luncheon

VMI faculty and staff were treated to a meal provided by Parkhurst Dining just before winter furlough Dec. 20 in Crozet Hall. During the luncheon Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62 spoke to the group and expressed his appreciation for the work that had gone into the previous semester and optimism for the rest of the academic year.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

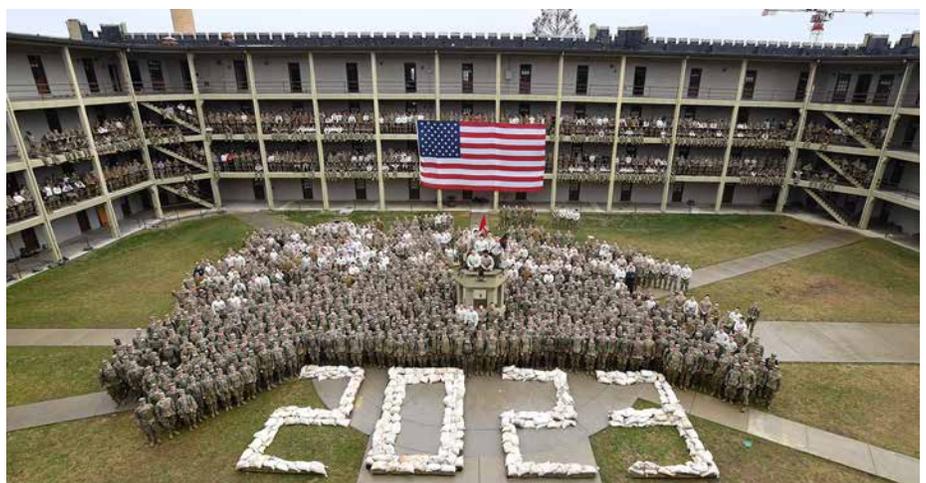
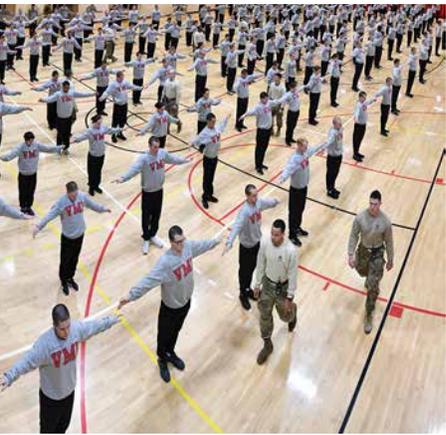




Class of 2023 Breaks Out

The Class of 2023 finishes the Rat Line on Saturday, Feb. 1. Breakout began at 5 a.m. with a sweat party in Cocke Hall followed by workout stations on North Post. After lunch, the physical activity continued with a march to McKethan Park and more workout stations. Once back on post, the rats crawled across the Parade Ground and charged over barriers for the culminating event.—VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin, Maj. Michelle Ellwood, and Kelly Nye.





Economics Professors Study Blood Donation

By Mary Price

Since its inception in 1839, VMI has striven to inculcate the value of service in its cadets. But how deep does that really go, and how much does VMI's emphasis on service above self make a difference in cadets' day-to-day behavior?

When it comes to blood donations, it makes quite a bit of difference, according to research recently published by Col. Sam Allen and Dr. Bing Jiang, two faculty members in the economics and business department. Their paper, "To Be a Blood Donor or Not to Be? Investigating Institutional and Student Characteristics at a Military College," was published in October in the *B. E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy*.

The letters "B.E." in the journal title refer to behavioral economics, an area of study that focuses on how and why people behave in an altruistic manner. Allen and Jiang, both behavioral economists, had long wanted to study how social norms at VMI affect cadet behavior, and the Institute's four blood drives per year provided a way to do just that.

"We decided to ask if we could get information on which students were donating blood, and it's pretty dramatic if you



A nurse prepares Lauren Kattmann '23 for donating blood during the December blood drive in Cocke Hall.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye



Cadets give blood in Cocke Hall during a December blood drive.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

compare VMI ... to other schools," said Allen. "Participation rates are really high at VMI."

Studying donation rates for 21 blood drives conducted between 2013 and 2018, the economists found that 15.7 percent of the Corps donates at least once per year—a figure that's almost double the national average for 18- to 24-year-olds.

And while blood donation is an activity done with others in mind, VMI does sweeten the pot for cadets who donate by offering incentives. Not surprisingly, these incentives seem to play a role in who donates and when they do so.

Allen explained that cadets who donate once per academic year are offered an extension to a weekend off post. Those who donate a second time are offered a weekend away, and three-time donors get an extension on a weekend. Cadets can donate four times per year, but there is no reward for a fourth donation.

"Students tend to donate pretty heavily in September," noted Allen, explaining that the rewards don't carry over from one academic year to the next and in the fall, with a long academic year ahead, time away from post is highly valued.

The economists also found that younger cadets donate more often than older ones. This finding can likely be explained by the VMI system of class privileges, they noted. As cadets advance into the 2nd and 1st Class years,

they have more ways of earning privileges such as time off post, whereas younger cadets are more limited in their options.

But Jiang was quick to add that older cadets may be participating in more activities—and that extra participation may not leave them enough time to donate blood. "We don't have a way to capture that," she stated.

In addition, in-state cadets donate more than their out-of-state counterparts—again,

likely because an in-state cadet can get home for a weekend more easily. Cadets with high GPAs are less likely to donate, possibly because they spend more time studying, and cadets with high fitness levels are more likely to do so, although NCAA athletes donate at a rate that is slightly less than the rest of the Corps.

But despite all of these findings, Allen and Jiang still conclude that many cadets will donate when they receive no payback at all. “We have lots of students who donate four times per year,” said Allen.

In their blood donation study, Allen and Jiang were drawing from the work of George Akerlof, a Nobel Prize-winning economist who is credited with helping to create the field of identity economics,

which has to do with how individuals’ sense of themselves in society affects the choices they make.

At VMI, this means studying how the ideal of the citizen-soldier sways cadets’ choices toward pro-social behavior.

“When people give money, give to charity, give blood, there’s no direct benefit,” explained Jiang. “We want to understand why people give.”

And while Allen and Jiang are no doubt pleased to see their work appear in print, they’re far from done with their research into cadets’ pro-social behavior. Next, they tentatively plan to study blood donation as a predictor of future military service. ❁



December Graduation and Commissioning

Twenty-six cadets walked across the stage Dec. 18 during the commencement ceremony in Jackson Memorial Hall. VMI Board of Visitors president Bill Boland '73 addressed the audience. On the same stage the previous evening, four cadets commissioned into the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps.—VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.





Preston Duff '19

work, all mentioned the pride they feel as they upgrade buildings at what was once their home away from home.

Preston Duff is a member of the Class of 2019, but thanks to coming into VMI with a number of academic credits, he graduated in December 2017 with a degree in civil engineering. Right after he graduated, he went to work for Whiting-Turner, a general contractor based in Baltimore, Maryland.

As assistant project manager on the Scott Shipp Hall project, he's responsible for a great deal of coordination among subcontractors and tradespeople—including the use of the 135-foot-tall crane that now towers over the Institute skyline.

"It is a lot of coordination," said Duff of his job. "We actually don't self-perform any of the work ourselves. We subcontract out all of the work. It's a liaison position between the owner and the day-to-day workers."

Duff explained that while many contractors have their management team stay in a central office, he's on the job site each day. It's an arrangement he prefers.

"Rather than sitting and looking at drawings in a centrally located office, you can go and understand why you're doing what you're doing, why you're making certain decisions," Duff stated.

As a cadet, Duff only had a few classes in Scott Shipp, but he's now taking advantage of a chance to see the building in a new way.

"One of the most enjoyable parts is being able to see how the

building was originally [constructed] and the decisions they made early on, but at the same time getting to leave a mark on your alma mater," he stated.

Duff also enjoys visiting with faculty members he knew as a cadet, including Maj. Matt Jarman, assistant professor of psychology, and Col. Turk McCleskey, professor of history. He also sees cadets he knows, as there are a few members of the Class of 2019 taking a fifth year to complete their studies.

"A lot of them will like to ask me what it's like to be on the other side," he commented.

Nearby on Letcher Avenue, David Souliotis '15, Owen Duggar '15, and Mark Reilly '88 are all involved in the renovation of Preston Library. Unlike Duff, who works out of an office trailer on the job site, the three W.M. Jordan employees work in the company's Richmond office but make regular trips to post to get updates on progress and offer guidance.

While Souliotis was a cadet, it's likely that no one would have predicted that he'd go into construction. He was a history major who commissioned into the Army upon graduation, and while serving as an infantry officer, discovered an affinity for project management.

"Being in the military, I was able to take part in several different types of projects—being able to see a project go from the ground up, and being involved with a team, and learning a new set of skills—that's what attracted me to the construction industry," he stated.

Souliotis just completed his first year working for Jordan as a project engineer, after learning about opportunities with the company through Brittney Matthews '15, who suggested he reach out to Duggar.

"It's fun to come back [to post] and see incremental progress each week," said Souliotis. "It's really encouraging to see the changes the Institute is making to the library to make it more modern and make

it more accessible and allow more research to be done by cadets."

Reilly, a 16-year veteran of Jordan, graduated with a degree in civil engineering and worked in highway construction for years before making the shift to building construction. At Jordan, he's found himself among friends, as many VMI alumni are employed there. He credits Glenn Thompson '90 with



David Souliotis '15

helping him get a job with the company, as the two had first met while playing soccer at the Institute.

As vice president and project executive, Reilly's days are busy, as he manages six project teams and is also in charge of customer relations for the projects he's overseeing.

"No two projects are the same—that's the great thing about construction," he stated. "It's always changing, always evolving."



Mark Reilly '88

As an alumnus who's been away from post for a number of years, Reilly marvels at the recent additions such as Third Barracks and the Corps Physical Training Facility. Because of his job, he's seen construction on many college campuses, most recently in the form of a library expansion at Virginia Commonwealth University, and he's quite glad to see VMI keeping up with the times.

"To see that VMI is looking in that direction is really great," he stated. "It's great for the Corps and the community around Lexington."

Mostly, Reilly is proud of the work Jordan is doing—and keenly aware that the true client on this job is the cadet.

"It's quite an honor," he said of working on post. "It gives you a sense of pride, giving something back. When you walk outside and you see the cadets going by, it gives you a sense of a higher purpose." ❁

Thank you

The VMI Communications and Marketing team would like to extend sincerest gratitude to Col. Stewart MacInnis. His many lessons, organization, dedication, sense of humor, vast knowledge of just about everything, and especially his kindness toward the team allow all of us to thrive each day in our roles. We wish him the best in his retirement. Stewart, we will miss you.

Institute Brass Cadets travel to Portugal

Seven members of the Institute Brass, accompanied by Col. John Brodie, music director, traveled to Lisbon, Portugal, during the last week of Christmas furlough. While there, they gave several performances, including a concert with the Portuguese Naval Band. The cadets were able to meet Joint Chief of Staff Admiral Antonio Silva Ribeiro, as well as perform with members of the Lisbon opera. Near the end of their trip, the unit performed a noontime concert at the United States Embassy in Lisbon, where they met Ambassador George Glass.—Photos courtesy of Col. John Brodie.



Women's Soccer Player Earned Three-Legged Stool

By Andrew Deal '12

More than 400 scholarship benefactors, cadets, and members of the Keydet Club Board of Governors gathered in the Hall of Valor in Marshall Hall for the annual Keydet Club Scholarship Banquet Jan. 18. The highlight of the event was the presentation of the Three-Legged Stool award, which is given each year to an outstanding cadet-athlete.

This year's recipient was Samantha Franklin '20. She was joined onstage by Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62, superintendent; Brig. Gen. Robert "Bob" Moreschi, dean of the faculty; Dr. Dave Diles, director of intercollegiate athletics; Col. William Wanovich '87, commandant; and Meade King '85, Keydet Club chief operating officer. Franklin's remarks reflected her appreciation to the countless people who helped her along her way. She stated that if she could break the award into pieces, there are others who are just as deserving.

A term originally coined by the late Giles Miller, Class of 1924, one of the Institute's most beloved sons and ardent athletic fans, the

Three-Legged Stool represents the fullness of VMI's educational philosophy—that each cadet might thrive academically, athletically, and militarily. Since its founding, VMI has endeavored to ensure

that cadets receive the training and encouragement necessary to successfully balance each leg of this stool.

The VMI Keydet Club sponsors the award, recognizing a 1st Class cadet-athlete who has excelled throughout his or her cadetship. Franklin is a four-year starter and team captain of the women's soccer team and was named to the 2019 SoCon All-Tournament Team. She is double-majoring in modern languages and cultures and international studies. Franklin currently serves as the Student-Athlete

Advisory Committee president and has been active in the community, working with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, the Salvation Army, Read Across America, and Rockbridge Area Recreation Organization soccer. Upon graduation, Franklin will commission in the U.S. Air Force. She currently serves as the regimental S-7 captain. ❄



At the presentation of the Three-Legged Stool award were, from left, Meade King '85, Keydet Club chief operating officer; Col. William Wanovich '87, commandant; Dr. Dave Diles, director of intercollegiate athletics; Samantha Franklin '20, Three-Legged Stool award recipient; Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62, superintendent; and Brig. Gen. Robert "Bob" Moreschi, dean of the faculty.—Photo courtesy of Micalyn Miller, VMI Alumni Agencies.



Rat Unity for RARA

Rats marched 834.5 pounds of food to the Rockbridge Area Relief Association (RARA) facility Jan. 26 as part of a unifying service project for the class. They also raised more than \$12,000 to support the organization, which provides aid to Rockbridge area residents in need. This combination of food and monetary donations provides the equivalent of more than 60,000 meals, helping RARA reach its goal of half a million meals in 2020.—VMI Photos by Kelly Nye.

POST BRIEFS

Johnson, Jones Honored by Southern Conference

Col. Jack "Jay" Johnson Jr., professor of physical education, and Col. Sarah Jones, director of the Center for Cadet Counseling, have been named to the All-Southern Conference Faculty and Staff Team for the 2019-20 academic year. Johnson, whose research interests are in the areas of human performance and strength and conditioning, is director of the VMI summer sessions in addition to his responsibilities in the physical education department. He is certified as a strength and conditioning specialist by the National Strength and Conditioning Association. Like

Johnson, Jones has more than one area of responsibility, as she is director of the Office of Disabilities Services and also an adjunct faculty member in the psychology department. She is involved with VMI's NCAA athletes in a variety of ways. With two representatives from each of the Southern Conference's 10 member schools, the All-Southern Conference Faculty and Staff Team recognizes individuals who have demonstrated service to the institution and made contributions to campus life and the local community. Johnson and Jones were honored at a February basketball game.

International Studies Professor Publishes Book

Lt. Col. Patrick Rhamey, associate professor of international studies, is co-author of a recently published book, *Power, Space, and Time: An Empirical Introduction to International Relations*. Inspired by Rhamey's Regional Politics and Powers course, the book includes contemporary and forward-looking lessons on American grand strategy and the rise of

potential challengers like China and India. It is meant to bridge the gap between the kinds of texts that undergraduates are exposed to in their preliminary coursework and the work that is created by scholars. Rhamey's co-author, Tadeusz Kugler, is associate professor of politics and international relations at Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island.

Art History and Visual Culture Minors Tour Alumnus's Art Collection

Accompanied by a representative of Sotheby's auction house, three cadets received a private tour of the art collection of Thomas Saunders '58 at his home in Manhattan in early December. Saunders' collection, which features several 17th century Dutch paintings, will be displayed in a special exhibition at the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, Florida, later in 2020.

Taking the tour were Nick Domahoski '20, Taylor McGregor '20, and Mike Morrison '20, all art history and visual culture minors, as well as Maj. Catharine Ingersoll, assistant professor of English, rhetoric, and humanistic studies. During their three-day stay in New York City, the cadets and Ingersoll also visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Guggenheim.

Fujiwara Inducted into Athletic Hall of Fame

Longtime associate athletic director for sports medicine Lance Fujiwara was inducted last month into the Virginia Athletic Trainers Sports Hall of Fame, which is under the auspices of the Virginia Athletic Trainers Association. This award recognizes individuals for their service, contribution, and grassroots efforts to the profession of athletic training. Fujiwara is

in his 33rd year at VMI, having arrived in 1987 as an assistant athletic trainer. His previous honors include the 2014 Virginia Athletic Trainers Association College/University Athletic Trainer of the Year, the 2014 VMI Achievement Award, the 2015 Mid-Atlantic Athletic Trainers Association Service Award, and 2016-17 Southern Conference All-Conference Staff Award.

Cadets Attend International Cybersecurity Conference

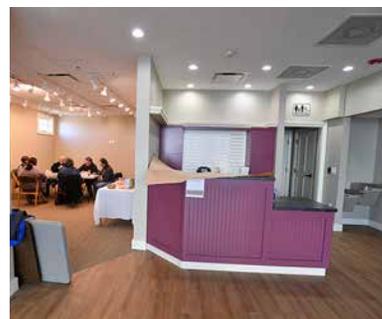
Eight cadets attended the 2019 International Conference on Cyber Conflict U.S., held Nov. 18-20 in Arlington, Virginia. While there, cadets had the chance to hear innovative ideas on technology and cyber defense strategies, and also had the opportunity to network with several influential people in the cyber community, among them leaders of the National Security Agency, U.S. Army Cyber Command, and the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence. Those attending were Cullen Turney '20, Michael McNamara '20, Kat Yates '20, Nathaniel Coley '22, Emily Hattman '22, Zachary Farr '22, Noah Goldsmith '22, and Jonathan Williams '21. Funding was provided by the dean's office and the computer and information sciences department.

Alumnus New Deputy Director of Physical Plant

Eric Schwartz '95 was recently hired as deputy director of physical plant, where he will work under Lt. Col. Michelle Caruthers, director. He relocated to Lexington from Michigan, where he managed the physical plant at the state-owned Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital. Prior to his position at the hospital facility, he led the engineering and facilities team for Target Corp. Eric served in the U.S. Army and Michigan National Guard from 1995-2010. He earned a bachelor of science degree in computer science at VMI. 🍷

Jackson House Training

Denise Neas leads an information session for potential Stonewall Jackson House volunteers in the newly renovated Davidson-Tucker House. Volunteers will lead tours, work in the gift shop, and structure programs for visitors. The new display in the Davidson-Tucker House will feature artifacts that have been in storage, including a support beam from the house where Jackson was born. The entrance, display area, and gift shop will open later this spring.—VMI
Photos by Kelly Nye.





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Causey Represents VMI at iiWAS2019

By Mary Price

In early December, Aaron Causey '20 quietly racked up a remarkable achievement: becoming the first cadet majoring in computer science at VMI to present his research at an international conference.

Not only that, but Causey was the only undergraduate to present at iiWAS2019, held Dec. 2-4 in Munich, Germany.

The conference, officially named the 21st International Conference on Information Integration and Web-based Applications & Services, served as a venue for Causey and Dr. Youna Jung, assistant professor of computer science, to share their work on “Hybrid Disaster Response System Using Web of Things.”

Causey and Jung began their work last summer, seeking a non-centralized way for a communications network to be created and sustained in the aftermath of a natural disaster such as a major hurricane or earthquake. The “web of things” is a variation of “Internet of things,” which refers to the ability of appliances, thermostats, and other common devices to be controlled via a smartphone app.

Under the plan that Causey and Jung developed, survivors of a natural disaster would link their phones and other smart devices together into a mobile network for crisis communications.

“There have been disaster response systems, but they’re all very centralized, like government-owned,” explained Causey.

By using cell phones and other internet-enabled devices, he noted, he and Jung were attempting a paradigm shift. “How can we incorporate other devices and extend the resources from just humans?” Causey recalled asking himself.



Aaron Causey asks a question during an international cybersecurity conference in Munich, Germany, in December.—*Photo Courtesy of Dr. Youna Jung.*

When he and Jung traveled to Germany, Causey was making his first trip to Europe. Thankfully, all went well, and the conference itself was a resounding success.

“It was very relaxed and low-key,” said Causey. “Everyone was super friendly.”

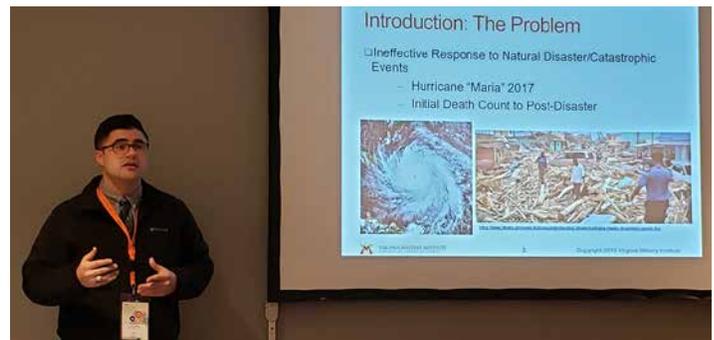
Causey estimated total attendance at the conference at about 70 to 100 people, with approximately 20 attending his presentation. The questions that came his way afterward were challenging, but not overwhelming.

“People really wanted to know the specifics,” he commented, adding that he and Jung had met many people interested in collaborating with them on the development of the idea. Security, he noted, would

need to be improved in order for their idea to be implemented.

With graduation now just a few months away, Causey is looking forward to life after VMI and a move to Richmond, Virginia, where he’ll work as a software engineer for the Timmons Group.

He’s also thankful to have a noteworthy achievement on his resume—and one that few individuals his age could claim. “I’m very, very blessed that VMI allowed me to go and have this experience,” he commented. 🌟



Aaron Causey '20 presents his research on “Hybrid Disaster Response System Using Web of Things” at an international cybersecurity conference in Munich, Germany.—*Photo courtesy of Dr. Youna Jung.*