



2015 VCHC Spring Conference

# *All Around the World*

April 10-11, 2015

Virginia Commonwealth University

Richmond, VA



# VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY





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## CONFERENCE PROGRAM SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

### Friday, April 10, 2015:

- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. Registration
- 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Opening Session
- 2:00 – 4:30 p.m. Presentation Sessions
- 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Keynote Speaker & Dinner
- 8:00 – 9:30 p.m. Evening Social

### Saturday, April 11, 2015:

- 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Morning Social
- 9:00 – 11:30 p.m. Presentation Sessions
- 11:30 – 12:30 p.m. Professional Development Workshop
- 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Lunch & Faculty / Student Meetings
- 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Presentation Sessions
- 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Faculty Meeting & Student Forum
- 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Closing Session and Award Ceremony

## CONFERENCE TIPS

Attendance at the conference is part of your overall honors education! As professionals in your chosen field, you will likely have future opportunities to share your expertise with colleagues at professional meetings. Learning and following the “unwritten rules” of conference etiquette is an important part of your professional development. Whether you are a first time attendee, or a veteran of many meetings, **please** review and adhere to the following guidelines. Your cooperation will help create a professional and enjoyable atmosphere for all attendees

1. Arrive on time and stay for the entire session.
2. If you must enter or leave during a session, please refrain from doing so while a speaker is presenting.
3. Silence all cell phones during sessions.
4. Give the speaker your full attention during each presentation.
5. Asking questions at the end of an oral presentation or during a poster presentation is expected and encouraged.
6. Attend as many sessions and activities as possible!

Thank you in advance for being polite and respectful during the VCHC conference.



Dear Honors Students, Faculty, and Administrators,

Welcome to the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Virginias Collegiate Honors Council (VCHC) Undergraduate Research Conference. For the next two days, we will explore topics that take us “All Around the World” of academic discovery. The theme for this year’s conference, chosen by our honors students, truly represents the diverse backgrounds and interests of our conference participants.

This year, Virginia and West Virginia honors students will present issues from such wide-ranging regions in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, and the United States of America. Their research will introduce us to perspectives in the humanities, politics, economics, psychology, history, and the physical sciences. They will share their insights through oral presentations, posters, and the arts. The only problem is there are too many great choices in too little time!

There is more to the conference than the research, though. This year, thanks to a student initiative, we will also have the chance to hear about individual and group service projects from around our honors communities. We will also have the opportunity to be enlightened by several professional speakers, take part in a professional development workshop, share our program successes, and seek solutions to our program challenges. Throughout it all, we will also be able to catch up with old friends, and hopefully, make some new ones. Putting it all together, there will surely be something for everyone to enjoy!

In keeping with the global conference theme, the student service project this year was inspired by the Stop Hunger Now project, a world-wide initiative to end world hunger. While the theme is global, the approach was primarily local. During the past academic year, VCHC students organized projects on their campuses aimed at alleviating hunger in their communities. Now, they will have a chance to share their service experiences here in Richmond. Additionally, they are collecting donations for the global organization through a link at: [www.vchc.net](http://www.vchc.net)

Finally, thanks to all those involved in making this conference a reality. Since the end of last year’s conference, many individuals have been working behind the scenes to prepare for this year’s event. A special thank you goes out to our hosts at Virginia Commonwealth University. It is a pleasure to gather at such a beautiful, convenient, and friendly venue. Thanks, too, to the entire VCHC Executive Board and Planning Committee. Their dedication, hard work, and cooperation made the many tasks involved with the conference manageable and fun! And, of course, thank you to the students. Without your research, we would have no reason to gather.

Once again, on behalf of the VCHC Executive Board, welcome! We are glad you chose to join us. Please take part in all this event has to offer.

Sincerely,  
Mary Ann Schmitt  
VCHC President

## VCHC Executive Committee 2014-2015

### **President**

Dr. Mary Ann Schmitt  
Northern Virginia Community College - Manassas  
E-Mail: mschmitt@nvcc.edu

### **Faculty Vice President**

Dr. Margaret Emblom-Callahan  
Northern Virginia Community College - Alexandria  
E-Mail: memblomcallahan@nvcc.edu

### **Secretary-Treasurer**

Dr. Joyce B. Easter  
Virginia Wesleyan College  
E-Mail: jeaster@vwc.edu

### **Faculty, 4-yr. Private**

Dr. Kate Gray  
Lynchburg College  
E-Mail: gray@lynchburg.edu

### **Faculty, 4-yr. Public**

Dr. Phil Frana  
James Madison University  
E-Mail: franapl@jmu.edu

### **Faculty, 2-yr**

Dr. Shashuna Gray  
Germanna Community College  
E-Mail: sgray@germanna.edu

### **Immediate Past President**

Dr. Paul Fitzgerald  
Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale  
E-Mail: pfitzgerald@nvcc.edu

### **Student Vice President**

Ms. Annaleigh Marshall  
George Mason University  
E-Mail: amarsh12@masonlive.gmu.edu

### **Student Conference Liaison**

Mr. Jacob Jaminet  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
E-Mail: jaminetjb@vcu.edu

### **Student, 4-yr. Private**

Ms. Ember Jenison  
Virginia Wesleyan College  
E-Mail: eljenison@vwc.edu

### **Student, 4-yr. Public**

Ms. Kayla Harris-Fontaine  
Virginia State University  
E-Mail: khar7938@students.vsu.edu

### **Student, 2-yr.**

Ms. Dottie Long  
Southside Virginia Community College  
E-Mail: dl20019@email.vccs.edu



## **VIRGINIAS COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL HISTORY**

The Virginias Collegiate Honors Council (VCHC), now over twenty years old, joins Virginia universities, colleges, and community colleges throughout the commonwealth to support and enhance programs and activities to meet the needs of exceptionally talented and motivated students. Recently, schools from West Virginia have also been included.

## **VIRGINIAS COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL MISSION**

The mission of VCHC is to:

- provide a forum for sharing information about honor programs,
- provide students with greater opportunities for intercollegiate honor programs activities,
- collaborate with regional and national organizations which have similar goals,
- encourage articulation between two-and four-year honor programs, and
- increase public and private awareness of and fiscal commitment to honor programs and projects.

## **VCHC MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

Membership in VCHC is available to institutions or individuals upon payment of annual dues. Annual dues for institutions are \$ 35.00 per calendar year, due in January. Annual dues for individual members are \$ 10.00 per calendar year. Individual membership dues must be paid before the Spring Conference each year. Both institutional and individual membership dues must be paid in order to vote on the business of VCHC.



## VCHC PAST PRESIDENTS

2013-2014	Dr. Paul Fitzgerald, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale
2012-2013	Dr. Jack Trammell, Randolph-Macon College
2011-2012	Mr. David Anderson, George Mason University
2010-2011	Ms. Isabel Killough, Norfolk State University
2009-2010	Ms. Liona T. Burnham, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale
2008-2009	Dr. Jarris L. Taylor, Hampton University
2007-2008	Ms. Stephanie G. Walker, Norfolk State University
2006-2007	Dr. Joyce Brotton, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale
2005-2006	Dr. Mary Louise Schultz, West Virginia University
2004-2005	Dr. Lisa Grimes, College of William and Mary
2003-2004	Dr. Lisa Grimes, College of William and Mary
2002-2003	Dr. Orion Rogers, Radford University
2001-2002	Mr. Robert Watson, Hampton University
2000-2001	Dr. Page Laws, Norfolk State University
1999-2000	Dr. John Lambeth, Washington and Lee University
1998-1999	Dr. Joyce Wszalek, James Madison University
1997-1998	Dr. Richard Wilan, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale
1996-1997	Dr. Freddy Davy, Hampton University
1995-1996	Dr. John Berglund, Virginia Commonwealth University
1994-1995	Dr. Louis Henry, Old Dominion University
1993-1994	Mr. Norman Caine, Southside Virginia Community College
1992-1993	Ms. Pegeen Albig
1991-1992	Ms. Pauline Donaldson

## VCHC CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: <http://www.vchc.net/>

2014-2015 VCHC President: Dr. Mary Ann Schmitt  
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# CONSTITUTION OF THE VIRGINIAS COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL

(As amended March 17, 1990, March 30, 2002, and March 29, 2003)

Article I: This organization shall be known as the Virginias Collegiate Honors Council, afterwards referred to as VCHC.

Article II: Mission

The mission of VCHC shall be:

1. To provide a forum for sharing information about Honors programs;
2. To provide students with greater opportunities for intercollegiate Honors programs activities, including the opportunity for students to present their own research publicly in an academic setting;
3. To collaborate with regional and national organizations which have similar goals;
4. To encourage articulation between two- and four-year Honors programs;
5. To increase public and private awareness of and fiscal commitment to Honors programs and projects.
6. To work closely with SCHEV to encourage excellence in undergraduate education and to encourage the development of honors programs/colleges in all state institutions of higher learning;
7. To work closely with the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities to encourage excellence in undergraduate education.

Article III: Membership

Membership in VCHC shall consist of institutional and individual members who have paid dues.

Section 1: Institutional members: Any post-secondary institution with accreditation or recognized candidacy may hold membership and be eligible to send one voting representative to annual meetings. Foundations and state and federal agencies are eligible for institutional membership.

Institutional memberships from multi-campus institutions shall be assigned in a manner determined by each institution. If each campus has a separate Honors

Program, each program may pay dues and have an institutional representative. It will be the responsibility of the institution to certify to the VCHC secretary-treasurer if it desires to be treated as a multi-campus institution.

Section 2: Individual members: Faculty, students, administrators and other interested persons are eligible for membership.

Article IV: Voting

Each individual member and each voting representative of a member institution shall be entitled to one vote in all transactions of VCHC, but no individual shall have more than one vote.

Section 1: Only those institutions whose dues are paid before the annual meeting are entitled to a vote in the business of VCHC.

Section 2: Only those individual members whose dues are paid before the annual meeting are entitled to vote in the business of VCHC. Failure to pay dues on time does not restrict individuals from participating in the other activities of the annual meeting.

Article V. Quorum

Twenty percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting announced 30 days in advance.

Article VI: Officers

The officers of VCHC shall be a President, a Faculty Vice-President, a Student Vice-President, a Secretary-Treasurer, and members at-large. At the first Executive Committee meeting after the election, officers will be informed of their duties.

Section 1: The President shall be elected at the annual meeting from all eligible faculty members. The term of office shall run from the conclusion of that annual meeting through the conclusion of the next annual meeting. The President shall call for and preside over the meetings of VCHC and the Executive Committee, shall appoint members to committees, and shall appoint the following individuals to serve as ex officio (non-voting) members of the VCHC Executive Committee: a liaison to NCHC, SRHC, and other honors organizations; and a webmaven. Other individuals will be appointed as deemed necessary.

Section 2: The Vice-Presidents shall be elected at the annual meeting. The term of office shall coincide with the term of the President. The Faculty Vice-President shall preside over VCHC in the absence of the President. The Faculty Vice-President shall co-chair the fall meeting of VCHC. The Student Vice-President shall co-chair the spring meeting of VCHC.

Section 3: The Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting from all eligible faculty members. The term of office shall be three (3) years. The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep the minutes of the meeting of the VCHC, collect dues, maintain financial and membership records, and perform such other duties as may be incidental to the office.

Section 4: The Executive Committee members at-large shall be elected at the annual meeting. The term of office shall be as described in Article VII, Section 2.

Article VII: The Executive Committee

At the first Executive Committee meeting after the election, the Executive Committee members will be informed of their duties.

Section 1: The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of VCHC and six at-large members. There shall be one faculty member and one student from two-year colleges, four-year private institutions, and four-year public institutions. The past president shall be an ex-officio (voting) member of the Executive Committee for one year.

Section 2: Student members at large will serve one-year terms; faculty members at large will serve rotating two-year terms.

- Section 3: No single institution shall hold more than one faculty and one student elected position on the Executive Committee.
- Section 4: All persons on the Executive Committee must be individual members of VCHC.
- Section 5: The duties of the Executive Committee shall be:
1. to advise the President of VCHC;
  2. to make policy decisions for VCHC except in those cases where that right has been given to the whole membership (constitution, by-laws, dues, and election);
  3. to create and supervise the work of all other committees;
  4. to conduct such business as is necessary between sessions of VCHC;
  5. to conduct any other activities which facilitate the mission of VCHC;
  6. to provide for a nominating process for election of officers;
  7. to fill vacancies in office until the next annual meeting.

Article VIII: Meetings

- Section 1: VCHC shall hold an annual conference in the spring at a time and place determined by the Executive Committee. Other meetings may be called by the President by majority agreement of the Executive Committee or if requested in writing by ten percent of the membership.
- Section 2: There shall be a fall meeting at a time and place determined by the Executive Committee for faculty involved in Honors programs in Virginia.

Article IX: Amendments

Any amendment to the Constitution shall be presented in writing to the membership at the beginning of the annual meeting and shall be voted on at that meeting. Two-thirds of those present and voting must approve any amendment to the Constitution. An amendment shall be effective immediately upon enactment.

Article X: Ratification

Ratification of the Constitution shall be by simple majority of those present and voting at the first annual business meeting of VCHC.

Article XI: Bylaws

- Section 1: Bylaws shall be established as necessary for the transaction of the business of VCHC.
- Section 2: Changes in the bylaws shall be approved at the annual meeting of VCHC. A majority of those present and voting is necessary to adopt a change. A change shall be effective immediately upon enactment.

# **BYLAWS OF VIRGINIAS COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL**

(As changed March 17, 1990, March 30, 2002, and April 11, 2008)

- Article 1: The annual dues for the institutional members are \$35.00.
- Article 2: The annual dues for individual members are \$10.00.
- Article 3: All committees and elected officers shall represent to the greatest extent possible the diverse constituencies of VCHC, including students and faculty.
- Article 4: The standing committees of VCHC shall be (A) the Program Committee and (B) the Bylaws Committee. Other committees may be created by the Executive Committee.
- Article 5: Ad hoc committees may be created by the President. An ad hoc committee shall last twelve months from the date of its creation or until discharged from its duty by the President. The President will provide the appointed committee chair a specific charge for the committee.
- Article 6: The Program Committee shall work with the co-chairs to develop a series of activities for the meetings of VCHC that recognize the diverse nature and interests of its members.
- Article 7: The Bylaws Committee shall review the VCHC Constitution and Bylaws, and recommend changes to the Executive Committee for possible recommendation to the annual meeting.
- Article 8: The ad hoc Nominations Committee shall nominate at least one candidate for each office to be elected at the annual meeting. This committee shall be appointed annually by the President. The floor will be open for additional nominations.
- Article 9: The ad hoc Scholarship Committee shall be appointed annually by the President to judge the student presentations at the Spring Conference. The number, categories, and amounts of awards shall be determined by the Executive Committee upon recommendation from the Scholarship Committee.

# 2015 CONFERENCE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

**Friday, April 10**

**Student Commons & Harris Hall**

**12:00 pm – 1:00 pm**

**REGISTRATION**

**Student Commons – Lobby**

Each registrant will receive their badge, conference materials, and gift.

**1:00 pm – 1:50 pm**

**OPENING SESSION**

**Student Commons – Theater**

The conference will open with a welcome from VCHC officers and Dr. Barry Falk, Dean of VCU Honors College. The opening session will feature *2015 UCI World Championship – The World Rides in Richmond* presented by Community Engagement Director Monica Callahan from Richmond, 2015, Inc.

**2:10 pm – 3:10 pm**

**PRESENTATION SESSION 1**

**Harris Hall – Rooms 2115, 2117, 2128, 2129, 2136**

Concurrent oral presentations

**3:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

**PRESENTATION SESSION 2**

**Harris Hall – Rooms 2115, 2117, 2128, 2129, 2136**

Concurrent oral presentations

**6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**

**KEYNOTE & DINNER**

**Virginia War Memorial – Freedom Hall**

The keynote address and dinner is being held at the Virginia War Memorial. Dinner is being catered by White House Catering.

**8:00 pm – 9:30 pm**

**EVENING ACTIVITY**

**Virginia War Memorial – Freedom Hall**

Student social, including music.

**Saturday, April 11**

**Academic Learning Commons**

**8:00 am – 8:50 am**

**MORNING SOCIAL & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

**Rodney's - Shafer Court**

Drinks (coffee, tea, juice), sliced fruit, and baked goods (croissants, muffins, and danish) will be available before our opening session at Rodney's on the first floor of Shafer Dining Center, 810 Cathedral Place.

**9:00 am – 10:10 am**

**PRESENTATION SESSION 3**

**Room 2201**

VCHC Honors Scholar of the Year award presentation and address.

Artistic presentations

**10:15 am – 10:30 am**  
**STUDENT MEETING** **Room 2201**  
**FACULTY MEETING** **Room 2107**  
 Business meeting and election preparation

**10:40 am – 11:20 am**  
**PRESENTATION SESSION 4** **Lobby**  
 Poster presentations

**11:30 am – 12:20 pm**  
**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP** **Room 2100**  
*How to highlight your Honors education: Creating professional resumes and academic CVs*  
 presented by Assistant Professor of Writing in the VCU Honors College, M.C. Boyes. Boyes has worked as an editor and writer for IBM, Marcel Dekker Inc., and Geo Resource Consultants; is the assistant publisher and managing editor for Metaphysical Circus Press; and holds an MFA in creative writing and a BA in English.

**12:30 pm – 1:30 pm**  
**LUNCH** **Lobby & Courtyard**

**1:00 pm – 1:45 pm**  
**FACULTY FORUM** **Room 2107**  
 A faculty panel will lead a discussion on best practices in honors programs.

**1:30 pm – 1:45 pm**  
**STUDENT MEETING** **Room 2100**  
 Students will hold elections.

**2:00 pm – 3:20 pm**  
**PRESENTATION SESSION 5** **Room 1100, 1102, 1104, 1105, 2107**  
 Concurrent oral presentations

**3:30 pm – 4:15 pm**  
**FACULTY MEETING** **Room 2107**  
 Faculty judges will meet to finalize student awards

**STUDENT FORUM** **Room 2100**  
 Student officers will facilitate an open forum to discuss issues of concern.

**4:30 pm – 5:30 pm**  
**CLOSING SESSION** **Room 2100**  
 During this time, announcements will be made, prizes will be awarded to top presenters in each presentation category, and new officers will be announced.

# 2015 VCHC CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Presentation Session 1

2:10 – 3:10 PM

Room 2115

**2:10 PM**

## **The value of websites in today's society**

Jose Canahui, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale

Today, nearly every American owns a smartphone or computer of some kind. Most of these devices are able to connect to the internet with ease. This makes the internet an ideal medium of communication for organizations and individuals. This is not news, what is relatively new is the amount of people that have access and are able to navigate through the internet. In this talk I will describe how the internet can be used not only to promote products for big companies, but also how it can help two other aspects of society. Firstly, I will present my experience with how it can be used to organize a group of people, in this case union workers. Secondly, this technology can be used to allow suppressed people to express their opinions anonymously about their society without persecution. This will give the audience a different aspect on the value of the internet.

**2:30 PM**

## **Media Takeout**

Alyssa Barber, Hampton University

The advertising industry is the controlling force of today's American society. Advertisers control the flow of the economy, the moods and feelings of consumers, and what people buy and wear. Advertising has become an unhealthy part of the American society due to the affect that it has on younger consumers. We should be concerned with the idea that advertising is creating long lasting negative effects amongst the youth of young generations. These negative effects will deleteriously impact the future of the workplace and American society as a whole because the principles of good advertisement go against moral values and ideals taught within the home. Children and even teens are more susceptible to subliminal and hidden messages, and they cannot decipher between what is good and bad for them. Better regulatory practices need to be put in place to revolutionize advertising in America that is beneficial to both, companies and consumers.

**2:50 PM**

## **Optimal Experiences: Peak Experience, Peak Performance, and Flow State**

Donald Downs, Averett University

This presentation will be centered around different types of Optimal Experience. Optimal Experiences are described as but not limited to times that we feel in control of our actions, masters of our own fate, with a sense of exhilaration and deep enjoyment. The three experiences which will be the main focus of the presentation are Peak Experience, Peak Performance, and Flow. These experiences will be discussed and analyzed in terms of every day life as well as athletics.

**2:10 PM****Disabled-2 modulates heterotypic cell interactions by competing integrin and sulfatide-mediated binding**

Mi Song Kim, Virginia Tech

Platelets play a role in cancer progression and metastasis, and correlations exist between the ability of tumor cells to aggregate platelets and their metastatic potential. We have identified a protein (Dab-2) found to modulate the extent of blood clotting. Dab-2 binds to both integrin receptor and sulfatides, thus transiently inhibiting platelet aggregation by blocking P-selectin amplification. This project explores the efficacy of Dab-2 derived peptides in modulating platelet-cancer cell interactions. We reconstitute the platelet cell membrane in vitro and use liposomes to monitor their interactions with cancerous monocytes (U937) that are rich in integrins. Our data show that Dab-2/sulfatide recognition influences the stability of platelet-like structures bound to cancer cells. Results from these studies will lead to creating target metastatic treatments from Dab-2 derived peptides.

**2:30 PM****The Untold Mystery Behind Prion Diseases**

Kelly McLean, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale

Prion diseases or transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) is a fascinating medical mystery that is unlike any other viral and bacterial diseases in the way they mutate, infect, and potentially kill their host. For some this discovery is an advancement in the field of science, while others believe it is just a heresy. We will discuss in detail about the most prominent and complex prion disease Fatal Familial Insomnia, and its effects on the lives of only a handful of individuals worldwide.

**2:50 PM****Diabetes and Pancreatic Cancer: Is there a Correlation between the Two?**

Tia Christian, Hampton University

Pancreatic cancer occurs when cells in the pancreas metastasize and form a growth or tumor. Pancreatic cancer accounts for about 3% of all cancers in the US, and accounts for about 7% of cancer deaths. Diabetes is the fourth leading cause of death around the world. Diabetes happens when the pancreas does not producing enough insulin, or the cells of the body does not respond properly to the insulin produced. There are evidences that type 2 diabetes increase the risk of pancreatic cancer. Studies have proven that pancreatic cancer and diabetes have a bidirectional and complex relationship. However, the correlation between the two is not clear. Hyperinsulinemia may play a role in pancreatic cancer development. There are studies that show after surgical resection of the pancreas can lead to the development of diabetes. The purpose of my research investigation was to examine the correlation between diabetes and pancreatic cancer.



**2:10 PM****A Guide to the Queer Spectrum**

Rebecca Goforth, Northern Virginia Community College - Manassas

The LGBT community is often discussed by people who are not a part of it. As such, misinformation and prejudice about various communities is spread. Accurate information about the queer spectrum and the LGBT community is also not taught in schools. Because of this, research shows that LGBT youth are at high risk for STDs, bullying, and sexual assault. With this presentation, I will inform the audience about many aspects of the queer spectrum, like different sexualities, romantic orientations, and gender identities. I will also talk about the use of alternate pronouns. To end the presentation, I will address the lack of accurate representation in the media and the need for LGBT-inclusive curricula in schools.

**2:30 PM****F-Bombs for Feminism: A Rhetorical Criticism of FCKH8's Controversial T-Shirt Ad**

Ray Celeste Tanner, University of Mary Washington

On October 21, 2014, FCKH8.com released a video titled "F-Bombs for Feminism: Potty-Mouthed Princesses Use Bad Word for Good Cause." This video uses the shock value of children cursing to demonstrate how shocking it is that women still do not have equal rights in today's world. While there are many videos on the Internet supporting feminism, this video is unique because of the shock tactics used and because it was produced by a for-profit T-shirt company. This paper uses Foss' schema of evaluating an image rhetorically by focusing on the functions, implications, and legitimacy of the video.

**2:50 PM****The Importance of Feminism**

Abigail Allen, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale

Feminism has become associated with negativity and radicalism, and the first thing that comes to mind for many after hearing the term is the outspoken vocal minority. This movement is not about women seeking to gain power over men, nor is it about looking for hand-outs or privileges. Feminism in its pure and true form is striving to gain equal rights for both women and men. When examining global trends and cultures, it is apparent that feminism is not an outdated movement, and it is in fact vital- such as in the 29 countries where female genital mutation is still practiced, or in the Middle East, where education for women is frowned upon. This is not a movement seeking petty reforms, instead it works to empower women while establishing fundamental human rights for all, regardless of gender.

**2:10 PM****Why has Honduras' Murder Rate Increased?**

Marina Castro-Meirelles, University of Mary Washington

Despite law enforcement and criminal justice efforts, Honduras has repeatedly ranked as the country with the world's highest murder rate. However, Honduras has not always held this title. Starting in 2007, its murder rate began to climb at a consistently higher rate. Why has such a change taken place? The 2009 Honduran coup was a defining political moment in the midst of the increasing murder rates and will serve the same role in this study. In order to better understand the growing pattern present in the murder rates, two time periods will be established as case studies: the first from 2007 to the June 2009 coup and the second from the coup until 2011. In technical terms, the independent variables to be tested are state capacity, attention to security and signaling with a dependent variable of murder rates.

**2:30 PM****Aggression in the United States and how we can combat it**

Taylor McIntosh, Northern Virginia Community College- Loudoun

In most countries outward aggression is considered to be negative, yet in the United States it is considered appropriate and even encouraged at times to vent anger. I decided to test levels of aggression while driving. I read over research studies on aggression but to test this I decided to wait at a red light after the light turned green. My independent variable was the type of car(upscale vs downscale), my dependent variables were the amount of aggression I encountered and the time it took for me to experience aggression based on the amount of time I spent at the light. My hypothesis was that the nicer the car behind me, the shorter amount of time it would take for the driver to show aggression towards me. I will be talking about my research study, how venting anger takes a toll on our body, and ways that we can combat this in our daily lives.

**2:50 PM****Does Saying “No Sex” Make States Less Safe? An Empirical Study on Sex Education Utilizing the Donohue and Levitt Mechanism**

Kevin Wolfe and Alexander McComb, Virginia Wesleyan College

The empirical relationship between state sex education mandates, teenage pregnancy rates, and violent and property crime rates were analyzed. Research on the influence played by abortion legalization on crime rates performed by Donohue and Levitt was utilized to establish a model for how antecedent factors can affect crime rate in a significant manner through the influence of the cohort size and makeup up of individuals within a state. State sex education mandates were identified as a factor which could influence cohort size and consistency within states. There was no identified significant relationship between state mandated sex education curriculum and pregnancy rates or crime rates. The absence of a relationship between sex education and teen pregnancy has implications for the legitimacy of pursuing legislation on statewide sex education curriculum mandates.

**2:10 PM****Historical Analysis of the Longevity of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study**

Morgan Williams, Averett University

The Tuskegee Syphilis Study has become known as the longest, most unethical research study ever conducted in the United States of America. The study lasted a total of forty years, from 1932 to 1972, and followed the course of untreated syphilis in African American males. Participants were chosen from rural Macon County, Alabama and were not informed that they were infected with syphilis nor treated for the disease, even after penicillin was found to be an effective cure. This research attempts to comprehensively answer the question of why the study lasted so long. The different factors that played a role in the ability of the study to last for forty years include racism, the historical context of the study, the element of racial trust, the study's design, familiarity, and lack of regulations to prevent unethical research procedures.

**2:30 PM****Communicating Climate Change in Coastal Virginia**

Madeline Brenner and Padideh Ghadiri, Old Dominion University

Presenters will share findings from primary human subjects survey research conducted by students enrolled in the Fall 2014 Honors Crisis Communication and Climate Change course, an undergraduate research learning community. With the help of the Social Science Research Center at Old Dominion University, students surveyed Hampton Roads residents on their perceptions of climate change, sea level rise, mitigation, adaptation, and the messages employed to address these ongoing issues. Students analyzed and utilized survey data to develop compositions that effectively communicate environmental risk to the local populace.

**2:50 PM****Blast Fishing: A Threat to South Sulawesi**

Ana Carolina Dib Dias, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale

Blast fishing, a highly destructive fishing method, consists of using explosives to catch fish. For example, in the South Sulawesi province in Indonesia, great amounts of coral reef have been destroyed. Coral reefs are highly diverse ecosystems necessary to the survival of many species, and their destruction poses a threat not only to the species that depend on them but also to the survival of the local human population. Even though blast fishing is illegal, government oversight and corruption allows it to happen. In this presentation, I will investigate how blast fishing affects coral in South Sulawesi and also in other parts of the world. Besides discussing the outcomes of blast fishing, I explore possible solutions to this problem, such as better regulations, a more effective law enforcement (which can be achieved through international pressure), and transforming sustainable fishing into a more profitable fishing method.

**3:30 PM****The Relationship Between Managerial Orientation and Productivity: An Examination of Captains from Discovery Channel's Deadliest Catch.**

Sydney Covey, Virginia Wesleyan College

The Blake & Mouton Managerial Grid identifies leadership styles based on a manager's concern for people and concern for task, and supports the notion that there is one best way to manage: managers should have both a high task and high relationship orientation. Hersey & Blanchard, among others, have refuted Blake and Mouton's position, and support the notion that the most appropriate management style is one that is tailored to the environment in which the manager is operating. This research effort explored whether or not a particular managerial orientation, task or relationship, as displayed by captains of crab boats working in the Bering Sea, is correlated with the productivity of their boats. Data was collected by observing seasons of Discovery Channel's show, *Deadliest Catch*. Managerial profiles were calculated (based on these observations) for each captain and these results were then compared to the per unit productivity for each boat.

**3:50 PM****The Importance of Case Competitions**

Alesia Pickney, Hampton University

Companies give college students the opportunity to apply their conceptual knowledge to real business situation, case competitions. Students create a cross functioning team and assess situations and problems the company may be facing, analyze information that is available, develop a solution, and defending the solution that has been selected. Case competitions often result in monetary rewards for the winning team with the best and most applicable solution. Case competitions have become increasingly important as students develop professionally as well as academically. I have created my own independent research at Hampton University in the School of Business on student's perspective of the importance of Case Competitions as a part of their professional development.

**4:10 PM****Tax Reform Is Long Overdue: Simplify the Complexity, Eliminate the Loopholes and Create a Rational Tax System for All**

Chun-Ming Chen, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale

"It's tax time. I know this because I'm staring at documents that make no sense, no matter how many [cups of coffee] I drink" quipped columnist Dave Barry. Many Americans find the forms, codes, regulations and everything else all too confusing. "It is unintelligible, which is why 90% of taxpayers use an accountant or commercial software to file their returns. It is a labyrinth of loopholes, which is lovely for tax lawyers but bad for America" (Economist). Remember Herman Cain's "999" slogan? Well, the last major tax reform came in 1986 when President Regan signed the Tax Reform Act. Since then, Congress has been debating (or doing nothing, depending on whom you ask) about tax reform. But we need change now.

**3:30 PM****Groundwater Influences on Phytoplankton Growth in Oso Bay, Corpus Christi, Tx**

Caitlin Mitchell, Virginia Tech

Interest in groundwater and its effects on coastal ecosystems has been increasing over the past few years. In this study, we examined the influence of groundwater nutrients on phytoplankton growth in a shallow, estuarine system exhibiting symptoms of eutrophication. A bioassay using different ratios (5% and 25%) of groundwater to surface estuarine water was conducted in Oso Bay. The water mixtures and control were incubated in situ for 72-hours to quantify effects on phytoplankton abundance, chlorophyll-a and nutrient concentrations. Groundwater add-mixtures showed higher concentrations of nutrients and stimulated greater phytoplankton growth relative to the control. The 25% groundwater treatment exhibited lower amounts of plankton biomass initially but surpassed the 5% treatment within the second 24-hours of incubation most likely due to the larger pool of available nutrients. The results of this experiment indicated that groundwater makes a significant difference to the amount of available nutrients in a body of water.

**3:50 PM****Tarahumara's Running Abilities and Injury Prevention Compared to Conventional Runners**

Merin Duke, Virginia Commonwealth University

Despite modern advancements in athletics, runners suffer from an increasing number of injuries. The Tarahumara, an indigenous tribe from the Copper Valley in Mexico, are primitive compared to conventional runners, but can run hundreds of miles at a time on a regular basis with fewer injuries than their conventional counterparts. The diet, footwear, and running form of the Tarahumara were researched and compared to conventional runners to understand why the Tarahumara can run farther and longer, but experience fewer injuries. Conventional runners can observe these differences and adjust their current habits to improve their running performance and safety. The Tarahumara's athletic abilities are not due to any specific trait, but rather a combination of them and life-long conditioning. This implies that over time it is possible for conventional runners to adopt Tarahumara practices and improve both their performance and safety.

**4:10 PM****The Analysis of Globular Cluster Systems in the Coma Cluster Using HST/ACS Data**

Alexander Gagliano, Virginia Tech

A globular cluster is a dense grouping of thousands to millions of stars, typically found orbiting a host galaxy. They have been studied due to the extreme age of the stars found with each cluster, in an attempt to gain further insight into star formation. Recently, however, some globular clusters have been found to contain stars of varying metallicities, suggesting the existence of multiple generations of stars within them. In this research, globular cluster candidates in the Coma cluster were identified using HST/ACS survey data. Color Magnitude Diagrams and density plots were then created to characterize these low globular cluster populations. This research will aid in determining a relationship between characteristics of a host galaxy and its associated globular cluster system.

**3:30 PM****Degrading Human Acts Due to Sexual Orientation**

Shaneque Williams, Virginia State University

This presentation acknowledges the controversial topic of homosexuality. It primarily focuses on the mistreatment of people due to their sexual orientation. This scholarly essay is addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations; bringing to his attention the ill-treatment of homosexuals in the Caribbean, specifically in the country Jamaica. My objective is to analyze the homophobic culture of Jamaica while illustrating to my audience the immoral and degrading treatment gays are faced with in this society.

**3:50 PM****Religion and Female Gender Role Reversals in Sri Lankan Civil War Media**

Jennifer Panton, Virginia Wesleyan College

The LTTE is a guerilla movement founded in the 1970s that waged war against the corrupt Sri Lankan government. Through this movement, the suicide bomb was perfected by an elite women's sect known as the Black Tigers. In my project, I explore the representation of women within LTTE protest media by using the documentary *My Daughter the Terrorist* and the lyrics of rap artist M.I.A. The documentary follows the women of the Black Tigers and their families as they prepare for missions while M.I.A.'s lyrics explore the political implications and human rights issues of the war. Through these two works, the audience is presented a story with a female-based perspective that goes against some form of the Sri Lankan Civil War. Both media forms portray gender role reversals and challenges to common associations made with Buddhism and Hinduism.

**4:10 PM****Hover Boards & Equality**

Gretchen Krause, Northern Virginia Community College - Loudoun

In today's world, there are things that were once just the musings of inventors. For example, the visa-a-phone and robot from *The Jetsons*, the hover board from *Back to the Future*, and even the ray gun or "phaser" from *Star Trek*. But it doesn't stop there, according to an October 21, 2014 post from the guardian.com, doctors have successfully healed a severed spine, which allowed the patient to walk again. Yet, with all this progress, we are unable to provide equality to women. From the glass ceiling to the proliferation of a double standard, women are consistently overlooked when it comes to basic rights and even common courtesy. This begs the question, how can such a forward thinking society be so backwards in their ability to provide equality to all?

**3:30 PM****Concept of Dharma in Bhagavad Gita:  
Understanding Dharma Only as a Means for Moksha**

Shripadh Chitta, Virginia Commonwealth University

The way of dharma as a singular means for only living a right life is an inadequate appropriation of the teaching of dharma in the Gita, and applied to Hinduism as a whole. A more complete philosophy for a person practicing the Gita's teachings would be relating the ever-changing way of dharma (duty) to the final goal of liberation (moksha). To discuss this issue, the different aspects of dharma, like even-mindedness, which Krishna requires one to have for moksha, will be analyzed, along with the several aspects of the path to dharma and finally, moksha. An example of the daily life progression of one practicing dharma will be explored using Arjuna, Krishna's disciple. Krishna's words will be used to better help a reader of the Bhagavad Gita understand how a life more in accord with the Gita would be using dharma for attaining liberation from reincarnation or simply put, moksha.

**3:50 PM****Exploring the Relationship between Anxiety Disorders  
and Learning Disabilities in Children**

Dawn Boyd, Northern Virginia Community College - Manassas

Exploring the relationship between anxiety disorders and learning disabilities is a complicated matter. Determining which came first, or if there is a causative relationship between the two, can be instrumental in the successful diagnosis and treatment of a child. It is difficult to determine how much the failure of a child to talk, read, and / or write is due to a disability, or just a normal delay in their development. Adding the issue of comorbidity to the equation can compound the problem of accurately diagnosing and evaluating a learning disability. This paper explores issues associated with the comorbidity of learning disabilities and anxiety. Does an underlying anxiety disorder exacerbate the learning disability, or does the learning disability create an anxious child? The finding suggests a statistically significant relationship between children suffering from learning disabilities being comorbid for anxiety disorders and identifies some of the consequences of such a situation.

**3:30 PM****Shaping the Future of Biotechnology with Pens and Ink?**

Jonathan Baker, Northern Virginia Community College - Loudoun

Discussing new advances in biotechnology, and how they may be able to make a change around the world. Showing examples of 3D bio-printing and regenerative cell manipulation that now hold a promising future in the healthcare industry.

**3:50 PM****Ebola's Impact on the Nursing Profession**

Nikole Reap, Norfolk State University

The recent Ebola crisis (June 2014 to present) has affected nurses and perceptions of nursing in both Africa and the US. It proved that America isn't as invincible as we are often projected to be and that, once again, Africa is reduced to being a place of raging sexuality, savagery and disease. The people who became infected went to seek care in the hospitals and unfortunately protocols and policies were not in place at the time to provide protection to those who spend the most time with patients: nurses. They were insufficiently trained concerning what protective equipment to wear, how to approach a patient, etc. The crisis inspired fear in the minds of the general public when it was exploited by social and other media. Transportation into and out of West Africa was halted, people traveling to the U.S from foreign countries were questioned and screened, but there were inadequate preventative measures taken because everything was in such chaos. The crisis not only provoked fear but woke up nurses and hospital administrators. The crisis may be over for now, but there is no telling when it will occur again.

**4:10 PM****The Legality of Physician-Assisted Suicide in America: An Ethical Debate**

Evadne Eddins, Hampton University

The research presented provides a clear and concise definition of euthanasia, or, medically-assisted suicide. The research also addresses the difference between physician-assisted suicide and terminal sedation, as well as the legality and moral arguments surrounding both medical practices.



**9:00 AM****VCHC Honors Scholar of the Year**

The Honors Scholar of the Year will be awarded to a student nominated by a member institution that successfully embodies the scholarship, character, and ambition associated historically with honors students and the VCHC. The nominees for 2015 are:

**Katherine Bordwine**, Emory and Henry College    Majors: Political Science, Sociology, History  
“Amid all her protestations that she was unworthy, Katie Beth has distinguished herself by taking intellectual chances.”

**Elizabeth O’Hara**, Lynchburg College                      Majors: Economics and International Relations  
“Her leadership has stimulated interest and enthusiasm within the Westover Honors Program and brought it better visibility through her many campus connections. She leaves the organization clearly stronger and more active than she found it.”

**Renee Ordoobadi**, Northern Virginia Community College – Manassas    Major: Social Sciences  
“I think what stands out most with Renee is how "balanced" she is, for she excels both academically and as a campus and community leader. Renee values all of those responsibilities and experiences as important during her tenure at NOVA and in the Honors Program.”

**Morgan Stroyeck**, Virginia Wesleyan College                      Majors: English and Religious Studies  
"Morgan is well respected by her professors and she serves as a stellar example of a model student with her inquisitive nature, remarkable preparedness, and quality of her work. Her research for each class shows thorough competence, not only in mastering required materials but in supplementing her reading with insightful observations."

**9:30 AM****Live Through It**

Whitney Johnson and Britney Johnson, Hampton University

Performance of an inspiration mime dance. The twin duo utilizes facial expressions, distinct movements, and heart felt testimonies to inspire their audience. Their presentation, "Live Through It" encourages others to push through their hardships and work toward achieving their purpose in life.

**9:50 AM****Singing in Italy**

Diaz Mussalimov, Norfolk State University

International study is transformative as it involves faculty and students in academic and creative excellence. NSU students participated in the AAMS International Summer Music Institute summer program where we were exposed to the Italian language and culture and worked with renowned experts in the fields of Italian opera and song. The experience provided access to opportunities for enrichment otherwise unavailable in the academic setting. The presentation will demonstrate best practices in singing and performing in the Italian singing tradition upon which most vocal music training is based.

**10:40 AM****Looking Through the Eyes of Boko Haram: Women as Chattel**

Brianna Boyd, Norfolk State University

This paper and poster explore the ideology of men in the Boko Haram in relation to their Muslim beliefs guiding the treatment of women. It will trace back to the root of women's oppression within the Boko Haram Terrorist group to stipulate the historical context. It will explore texts in the Qur'an supportive of some people's belief in women's oppression. It will also inspect common unfair practices of sexism and contradictions in the practice of religion within this infamous terrorist group. Recent media accounts will be explored to pinpoint key events that have taken place within Nigeria and the region, especially ones which have brought international attention to the issue. This paper will also compare Boko Haram's Muslim practices with those of other groups in the world that practice Islam but do not practice women's oppression.

**Complementary Therapy for Mental Disorders**

Jaquise Cofield and Ashley Bozeman, Hampton University

The topic of our poster/artistic session presentation is the use of complementary therapy for patients with mental diseases such as anxiety, depression, and autism.

The two complementary therapies we have decided to focus on are yoga and art therapy. Yoga is a mental and physical practice with historical origins in ancient Indian philosophy. Along with yoga, art therapy has been used for centuries to treat mental illnesses. Similar to other meditative movement practices for health purposes, yoga combines physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation or relaxation. Art therapy focuses on the art-making process as therapeutic or it can be applied in the psychoanalytic approach. The tenants of art therapy involves humanism, creativity, reconciling emotional conflicts, fostering self awareness, and personal growth. By focusing on both of these different approaches, we have singled out the similarities and differences between the two complementary therapies and concluded both were beneficial to mental illnesses.

**Computational Analysis of Cyclic Tri-Peptide Ala-Ala-Lys**

Amy Key, Evangelos Katsanos, and Brian Collister, Old Dominion University

Sequencing poly-peptides is important in determining the structure, and ultimately the function of proteins. Tandem mass spectrometry is one of the leading methods used to sequence polypeptide chains. Polypeptides enter the mass spectrometer in the gas phase, and are fragmented and separated by mass. More recently, small peptide fragments have been shown to rearrange in the pre-fragmentation phase by going through a proposed cyclic intermediate. One example of a small peptide that has observed a cyclic rearrangement is the tri-peptide Ala-Ala-Lys. We will be presenting our computational analysis on the cyclic tri-peptide Ala-Ala-Lys in an attempt to understand the mechanism by which it rearranges. This will allow us to further understand this rearrangement, and to predict where it may happen in other small peptide fragments.

## **Expression and Purification of the RV0894 Protein Product of Mycobacterium Tuberculosis**

Myiah Davis, Hampton University

*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, like many bacteria, have many gene products of unknown function. These gene products, or proteins, assist the bacteria in carrying out specific functions. In this study, the rv0894 gene of *M. tuberculosis* was selected in order to determine its physical structure and specific function within the bacterium. In this project, the rv0894 gene was cloned into an expression vector, transformed into *E. coli* competent cells, and induced to express the gene product (RV0894) as a recombinant protein. Those cells containing the recombinant RV0894 protein were used in purifying the product of homogeny. Purification was carried out using Ni<sup>2+</sup> affinity chromatography. Once the RV0894 gene product has been successfully purified, further analysis will be performed to identify its structure and function within the *M. tuberculosis* bacterium.

## **Playroom of a Child: How Gender Affects Design**

Brianna Dazio, Virginia Tech

For years, I have aspired to be an Interior Designer for children's spaces. When I was young, I mapped out bedrooms in my mind. As I grew older, however, I recognized the need to understand a child's mind and how a room should suit the child's needs. After reading Dr. Leonard Sax's book, *Why Gender Matters: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know About the Emerging Science of Sex Differences*, I wanted to explore the concept of single-sex playrooms. According to Sax, boys and girls learn and play differently, and I wanted to create rooms to reflect these differences. From research about the psychology of color to gender-neutral toys, I learned how boys and girls develop in the environment. Guided by my findings, I designed two playrooms with Computer-Aided Design (CAD) software. In these separate environments, the two genders interact and thrive in their own ways.

## **Translational Regulation of the Anti-Apoptotic Protein, XIAP, in Inflammatory Breast Cancer**

Courtney Edwards, Hampton University

Inflammatory breast cancer (IBC) is a highly aggressive subtype of breast cancer that often acquires chemotherapeutic resistance. IBC is characterized by the formation of hyperproliferative cell clusters termed tumor emboli. This unique pathology is partly due to the overexpression of the translation initiation factor, eIF4G1. Overexpression of eIF4G1 enhances translation of mRNAs with internal ribosome entry sites (IRES). Enhanced translation may not only increase tumor emboli formation, but may also increase cancer cell survival during cellular stress, when translation is normally suppressed. Overexpression of X-linked inhibitor of apoptosis protein (XIAP) also promotes cancer cell survival and may be due to enhanced translation as the 5'UTR of XIAP contains an IRES. In this study, SUM149 cells derived from primary IBC tumors were used to determine if eIF4G1 regulates XIAP expression through IRES-mediated translation. Targeted knockdown of eIF4G1 resulted in decreased XIAP expression, tumor emboli formation and resistance to therapy induced apoptosis.

### **Rastafarianism: The Global Reach**

Aaron Ellis, Norfolk State University

This article will consist of the gradual spread of Rastafarian beliefs globally, and the practices of the belief in each location that it had spread. Topics discussed will include a specific focus on how the religion spread and what initiated the spread. The religion, its beliefs, and its fascination amongst the followers will also be discussed. The article will include a comparison between the beliefs from its origin in Jamaica to the other locations such as Ghana. The article will delve into the true definition of repatriation and how Rastafarians personally feel about the movement back to Africa. Articles cited will comprise of works such as “Rastafari in the Promised Land” by Neil J. Savishinsky, which essentially speaks on the success of repatriation, and “Reggae in Cuba and The Hispanic Caribbean” by Samuel Davis, which reflects the presence of Rastafarianism in the Hispanic Caribbean.

### **The Effective Use of *C. cassia* as an Economical and Safe Treatment for Type 2 Diabetes**

Pascaline Ezouah, Virginia Commonwealth University

In 2012, type 2 diabetics accounted for 90-95 percent of the 29.1 million Americans that were diagnosed with diabetes. Although there are various treatments for diabetes, these cures can be costly and are also known to have adverse side effects. With an annual cost of \$245 billion, it is important to analyze the use of *C. cassia*, commonly known as cinnamon, as a cost saving alternative for type 2 diabetes treatment. According to literature on the research that has been conducted, it appears that cinnamon may be a useful treatment and safe, economical treatment for diabetes. However, in order for *C. cassia* to be implemented into patient care, more research should be conducted to determine the possible side effects of this treatment, the optimal species, the optimal dosage, patient tolerance over time and possible drug interactions.

### **Estimating Liquidity Risk Using Exchange Traded Funds**

Claire Kelling, Virginia Tech

The financial crisis of 2008 starkly illustrated the perils of ignoring liquidity risk. This risk is particularly crucial to index and Exchange-Traded Fund (ETF) providers that explicitly guarantee the provision of underlying shares through time and implicitly agree to absorb the associated liquidity risks and costs. In this paper we propose a new model that isolates liquidity risk from other factors by forming a portfolio of buying the ETF and shorting the underlying basket of securities. This work is closely related to a similar measure proposed by Chacko et al which we find while useful provides counter-intuitive results during times of fast changing liquidity conditions. Since liquidity crises typically evolve rapidly, the time sensitive nature of our measure is particularly important. We find that our measure captures the shifts in liquidity in a conservative and timely fashion making it particularly applicable to risk management purposes for ETF investors and providers.

## **The Relationship Between Stressful Life Events and Risky Sexual Behavior**

Hassan Khuram, Virginia Commonwealth University

This study seeks to examine the relationship between stressful life events and risky sexual behavior in Spirt for Science: the VCU Student Survey. Subjects were VCU juniors who entered VCU in the fall of 2011 (n=970). Participants were asked about exposure to different types of traumatic life events and a sum score was created. Risky sexual behavior was measured with a sum score of up to 5 possible different types of risky sexual behavior a person could engage in. Linear regressions were used to test the effect of stressful life events on risky sexual behavior. Results showed that the average risky sexual behavior sum score was higher in those participants who had experienced stressful life event. The possibility of a dose-response relationship also exists wherein more stressful life events could result in more risky sexual behavior. These results suggest that those who have faced significant stressful life events may benefit from sex education training.

## **Developing a Measure of Psychological Aggression: First Steps**

John De Los Reyes, Arushi Deshpande, Shelia Manning, and Shanon Sabo, Old Dominion University

Psychological aggression is considered to be behaviors that do no cause bodily harm. Understanding this type of aggression is pertinent because current research suggests that psychological aggression can lead to physical aggression. Therefore, a sound measure of psychological aggression can be used to identify psychological aggression and help quell future acts of physical aggression. In addition, a sound measure of psychological aggression can be used to advance research where psychological aggression is a variable of interest. However, psychological aggression measures are lacking because of two reasons: unsound psychometric properties (e.g., reliability and validity) and a lack of agreement in the literature as to what behaviors constitutes psychological aggression. The purpose of this study is to establish what behaviors operationally define psychological aggression. To achieve this goal a comprehensive literature review and focus groups were conducted. The focus groups were conducted from various populations to provide information as to what behaviors participants think constitutes psychological aggression. The information from the literature review and focus groups will be coded and content analyzed to determine common themes and patterns. From these common themes and patterns, preliminary items will be written. This serves as an important first step in developing a reliable and valid measurement instrument for psychological aggression that overcomes the deficiencies of current measures.

## **Perceived Classroom Structures and the Effects on Students' Mental, Physical, and Social Behavior**

Micheale Marcus, Virginia State University

The purpose of this study was to examine the relational correlations between classroom structures and different aspects of classroom behavior in African American high school students. There were three types of classroom structures; Mastery, Performance - Approach, and Performance - Avoidance (Shim, Cho and Cassady, 2013). Perceived classroom structures have a higher influence on classroom behavior than the actual classroom policies or the teacher's academic intentions (Ames, 1992).

Previous studies have shown that classrooms that are perceived to have a Mastery focused structure are usually associated with higher levels of academic success and positive classroom behaviors (Gutman, 2006). A Pearson r correlation was ran to analyze the relationships between the different classroom structures, classroom behaviors, and academic success. None of the classroom structures directly correlated significantly with Academic Success. Plans for future research and intervention are discussed.

## **Military, Police, or Military Police?**

Cody Mitchell, Virginia State University

The police across the United States have received considerable criticism because of national events in the last year. Riots and many tactical responses from the police, especially in Ferguson, Missouri could be observed. These responses did not look like they were coming from police officers, but from military personnel. This raises the question: does the United States of America have police force in cities and communities to protect and serve or a police force in costume as a small military that will always responds with maximum lethal force? The two have many similarities when it comes to appearance, rankings, weapon systems, vehicles in some instances, as well hand to hand combat. Must this dual arrangement be the case in America? If the police are structured like a military unit, does this also make them more violent? Based upon multiple sources of information this question will be addressed in my presentation.

## **Katniss Everdeen- Feminist Icon or More?**

Damaris Paris, Northern Virginia Community College - Loudoun

Katniss Everdeen, the main character in the popular trilogy, The Hunger Games is said to be a representation of modern day feminism. She posses the characteristics of a strong woman-courage, wit and intelligence. But what if the famous heroine symbolizes more than modern day feminism? Katniss represents the important role women play in ensuring sustainable development and food security. This presentation will pull examples, globally of how women in the past and present day contribute to the community. Examples will be mostly concentrated in the Latin American region and will be related back to the role Katniss played in catalyzing a revolution.

## **The Role of Patient and Physician in Establishing Patient-Physician Communication in the In-Patient Environment**

Tamanna Sahni, Virginia Commonwealth University

Patient-physician communication can enhance patient health, but patients need to feel comfortable with physicians to speak up. This communication has decreased over time and patients are often unable to obtain medical information from healthcare providers. Is there a relationship between psychological factors, such as self-esteem, and quality of patient-physician communication? Additionally, can physicians ensure increased patient comfort?

I explored articles analyzing the effect of language barriers, familial support, and increased time spent online on communication. These lead to a disparity between the patient and physician, as the former is unable to communicate because of increased uncertainty. Physicians must take a more active role in patients' lives and provide more resources to communicate concerns effectively so the patient feels at ease in the medical environment. This change will thus enable patients to work alongside physicians in managing health to allow improvement of communication as well as patient health.

## **The Tekkotsu State Machine Composer**

Roger Smith, Hampton University

The Tekkotsu State Machine Composer is a graphical editing tool for composing state machines in the Tekkotsu robot programming framework. Tekkotsu is widely used in undergraduate schools for teaching robotics. It provides a hierarchical, event based state machine language built on top of C++. The State Machine Composer consists of graphical components, textual components, and wizards. A graphical component lets users create state machines by dragging and dropping shapes representing nodes and transitions. Users are also allowed to edit the code directly to manipulate advanced parts of the Tekkotsu code such as custom method bodies. Wizards facilitate the creation of specialized state nodes, such as MapBuilder nodes used for robot vision. We have built Java classes that represent the components of a Tekkotsu program, and methods to translate these components into Tekkotsu code that can successfully run on robots. Currently users can create simple state machines using the graphical tool and then generate compilable Tekkotsu code. The graphical interface is built on top of the Eclipse Rich Client Platform and Graphical Editing Framework. The program will have a novice mode in which the more advanced features are suppressed, and an expert mode that makes the full power of the framework available. We expect the tool to be adopted in robotics classes and competitions where Tekkotsu is used. Member institutions of the ARTSI Alliance will be the first schools to use the tool in their educational activities

## **Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria in Soil Samples:**

### **Quantities of Antibiotic Resistance Genes in Soils Impacted by Dairy Manure Inputs**

Crystal Smitherman, Hampton University

Antibiotic usage by the dairy industry is known to result in high levels of antibiotic resistance in the animal. However, little is known about how this resistance is transferred to agricultural soils via manure inputs or how the function of soil microbial communities might be affected. The goal of this research was to determine if increased exposure to dairy manure inputs results in increased prevalence of ARGs in soil microbial communities.

**Organophosphates in the Chlorpyrifos Insecticide:  
Neurobehavioral Development of Children Living in Agricultural Communities**

Sravya Uppalapati, Virginia Commonwealth University

The chemicals found in pesticides are known to adversely affect the human nervous system even at low levels of exposure. To understand the health risks associated with pesticide exposure, I studied the influence of organophosphates in the insecticide chlorpyrifos on children living in agricultural communities, primarily in Salinas Valley, California. I analyzed a variety of academic sources that focused on organophosphate exposure and child neurobehavioral functioning. The findings indicate that organophosphates found in the insecticide chlorpyrifos block acetylcholinesterase, leading to impairments in attention and cognition. Farm children exposed to the chemicals via the mother during gestation period or who are exposed through inhalation or physical contact may be at high risk for ADHD and autism. It is only through understanding the damaging effects of chemicals in pesticides that policies can be constructed to effectively reduce pesticide application and encourage alternatives of crop rotation, inter-cropping and crop diversity.

**The Dehumanization of Africans in Ethnological Expositions (Human Zoos)**

Mahogany Waldon, Norfolk State University

The plight of Africans who were placed in human ethnological and anthropological expositions is very sad and disheartening. Ethnological expositions were late 19th and 20th century displays of humans in zoo-like settings. This crime against humanity was humiliating, and, for decades, these exhibits provided a misconstrued perception of people of African ethnicities. These exhibits were popular in Paris, London and New York. This research will explore the treatment of such peoples, the effect that human zoos had on the image of Africa and the overall impact these exhibits had on the world. The project will focus on the lives of Sarah Baartman, Otta Benga, the infamous Belle Vue Zoo exhibit and its display of “Negro Villages,” plus other human zoos. Treating indigenous people as if they were an attraction at a carnival or zoo was a cruel act that also tainted the way people viewed and view Africans, even today.

**Differences in Visuospatial Memory Amongst Gender**

Imaan Watts, Hampton University

The purpose of the proposed study will compare visuospatial working memory among genders. Results from Lenroot, Gogtay, Greenstein, Wells, Wallace, Clasen, and Giedd (2007) argued that there are physical differences in the brain related to gender. Studies such as these have suggested that more research must be done to examine neurological differences among genders. The proposed study will be conducted similarly to one completed by Washburn and Gullledge (2002), which involved comparing the performance of human participants with that of the Rhesus monkey. In the proposed study a comparison of human males and females will be made. Forty Hampton University students, twenty men and twenty women within the age range of 18-22 participated in a parallel design study. The findings supports that there is no difference in gender regarding the performance of this visuospatial task.



**2:00 PM****The Spiral**

Kaitlyn Hudenburg, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale

I have long been fascinated with spirals due to their history and unique nature. Spirals can be found in ancient and modern artwork, in the nature around us, and can be seen as a model for life itself as seen in the life cycle. The Fibonacci sequence is a numerical explanation for the spirals found in all different kinds of nature including seashells to hurricanes, and even in the cosmos. Spirals can be found all around us and I want to inspire my audience to see the patterns within nature and to see the connectivity between things found on Earth and in the universe.

**2:20 PM****An Exploration of a 3-1 Knight's Tour**

Andrea Schaack, Lynchburg College

A Knight's Tour is the path a chess Knight takes in order to land on every square of a chessboard once. A magic Knight's tour occurs when, if the path of the Knight is numbered, the numbers in every row, column, and diagonal add up to the same number. If the numbers in the rows and columns add up to the same number, but the diagonals do not, then the tour is called semi-magic. We are exploring a variation of the Knight's Tour problem in which the typical Knight's move is changed. Instead of moving two squares in one direction and one square in a perpendicular direction, the Knight moves three squares in one direction and one in a perpendicular direction. We show what conditions must be met for Knight's tours to exist on a board. Additionally, we determine what requirements there are for the existence of semi-magic tours.

**2:40 PM****Ace of Diamonds**

Emily Rothstein, University of Mary Washington

Ace of Diamonds is an educational card game that I created in order to spread awareness of the lack of educational opportunities around the world

**3:30 PM****A grounded theory study on caregiver burden in placing parents in hospice care**

Wil Johns, Lynchburg College

The objective of the hospice program is not curative care but care for palliation to make the patient comfortable in preparation for death. Typically the decision to place a loved one in hospice care is a difficult choice to make, especially when the loved one is a parent. Therefore, this study looked at the barriers that make placing a parent in hospice care a difficult decision. This study was not looking at the hospice care itself, but rather at the decision to place the parents in hospice care and the barriers that influence the decision making. There were also interviews conducted with the adult children who have had parents placed in hospice care. The goal of the study was to determine barriers that influence the decision making, so that healthcare staff can have insight into what the families are going through, and can help the families with their decision.

**2:00 PM****Development of Antibiotic Resistance Trends in Trans-tracheal Aspirate Samples in Horses from the 1980s-2014 at the Marion DuPont Scott Equine Medical Center**

Kelley Duerbeck, Lynchburg College

The overuse of antibiotics as a therapeutic method for treating bacterial infections in trans-tracheal aspirate washes has resulted in the development of antibiotic resistance in equine populations. Bacterial diseases associated with cough, shortness of breath, loud breathing sounds, or difficulty breathing can be caused by infectious, inflammatory, or neoplastic diseases of the airways. The amount of trans-tracheal wash fluid obtained differs among patients; however approximate 5-10mL is cultured in either Tryptic Soy Broth or Thioglycollate for 24 hours at 37C. The cultures are initially plated on Remel Blood Agar and MacConkey Agar plates to determine whether the bacteria are gram positive or gram negative. The identification of the bacteria cultured follows the Equine Medical Center Clinical Laboratory Microbiology protocol. Antibiotic sensi discs are plated with the bacteria and allowed to incubate for 24 hours at 37C which allows for zone diameters of the antibiotics to be measured. From a clinical perspective, seven antibiotics; Ampicillin, Ceftiofur, Chloramphenicol, Enrofloxacin, Gentamicin, Penicillin and Trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole will be analyzed from bacterial pathogens cultured from the 1980s to 2014 from the Marion DuPont Scott Equine Medical Center to establish any developments of antibiotic resistance.

**2:20 PM****The functional evolution of mammalian tusks**

Vanessa Parks, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale

A tusk is a structure commonly derived from a dental element and tusks can take a variety of forms. In this talk, I will introduce many of the mammals that have a tusk or tusks, and will describe how they are used. Furthermore, I will investigate the evolution of the tusk by constructing an evolutionary tree using the amino acid sequence of the Cytochrome B protein. I will discuss the number of times that tusks evolved and the context in which they appear.

**2:40 PM**

**Agonistic Display in the "Non-Displaying" Slevin's Bunchgrass Lizard**

Lynn Holloway, Virginia State University

Slevin's bunchgrass lizard, *Sceloporus slevini*, is a small secretive lizard. Agonistic behaviors exhibited by other *Sceloporus* species have not been observed in this species. To test the hypothesis that this species lacks agonistic displays we staged and filmed encounters between pairs of "resident" and "non-resident" males. Residents were males that had been acclimated for six hours within a 1 ¾ m diameter enclosure with a dirt substrate. A clump of bunchgrass and overhead light were placed in the center of the enclosure. Non-residents were lizards introduced into the resident's enclosure after the acclimation period. Here we report a suite of agonistic behaviors in the interactions between residents and non-residents. Our observations demonstrate that Slevin's bunchgrass lizard displays agonistic behaviors similar to that of territorial species of *Sceloporus*. In addition, although testes size is at its nadir in July, this does not appear to inhibit the wide range of displays exhibited.

**3:30 PM**

**Male Betta splendens Discriminate between Neighbors and Strangers**

Ashley Mock, Lynchburg College

Male *Betta splendens* are known for their aggressive behavior toward one another. This study investigated whether male bettas act more aggressively when exposed to neighbors than when exposed to strangers. Pairs of males were placed in tanks separated by a partition. One trial was done after the fish acclimated for two weeks; a second trial was done after four weeks. Subjects were exposed to a familiar conspecific male (neighbor) and a novel conspecific male (stranger). Behaviors were recorded with and without the barrier in place using Jwatcher. A significant difference was found in several of the aggressive behaviors, including fin flaring and following while a barrier was in place. Residents flared their fins more toward strangers while they followed their neighbors more often. These results support the hypothesis that male bettas are able to recognize their neighbors.

**2:00 PM**

**The Odyssey's Re-Vision: Female Agency  
in Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* and "Helen of Troy Does Countertop Dancing"**

Deirdre Scanlon, Lynchburg College

Homer's *Odyssey* details not only the trials of the legendary man Odysseus, but also the customs and culture of ancient Greece. The *Odyssey*'s story began in oral form, passed down from generation to generation, constantly reinterpreted and revised. However, these interpretations and revisions were always performed by man: the women's voices in the *Odyssey* have never been heard. Margaret Atwood, in her contemporary writings, has attempted to change this lack of representation by giving voice to Penelope in her novella *The Penelopiad* and to Helen in her poem "Helen of Troy Does Countertop Dancing." By writing Penelope and Helen's perspectives, Atwood sets these historical women up to gain agency and power, to transcend the ideology of the patriarchy, through two main forms of agency retrieval: giving Penelope and Helen the voices to speak their perspectives and having Penelope and Helen reclaim their bodies after men have tried to appropriate them.

**2:20 PM**

**"It Isn't a Love Story, It's a Hate Story":  
Intertextuality and Feminine Sacrifice in *Wuthering Heights* and the *Twilight* Saga**

Morgan Stroyeck, Virginia Wesleyan College

Feminine sacrifice, love, and borrowed myths are tied up together in studying Charlotte Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight*. The focus of this research examines the way myths of true love have been appropriated by Meyer from Brontë's text. Yet the disturbing nature of this type of true love is perpetuated by Meyer in a way that makes sacrifice and death companions to true love. Writing makes memory and defines our understanding of the world, thus this paper focuses on the intertextuality in order to make sense of how these myths continue to make meaning in our consciousness and culture. The popularity of Meyer's series, with its dangerous romance, speaks to the large impact that these novels have on our lives. Understanding myths of love, Gothic themes of romance, and intertextual borrowing allow for an investigation into the heart of Meyer's damaging representations of sacrificial love.

**2:40 PM**

**Stopping at Stoppard: Decompositional Linguistic Models  
and Deconstruction in Stoppard's "The Real Inspector Hound"**

Erin Gough, Lynchburg College

This presentation will develop connections between the decomposition of binaries in the cognitive linguistic model of prototype theory and the deconstruction of binaries in the literary critical theory of deconstruction, particularly focusing on Tom Stoppard's play *The Real Inspector Hound* in order to develop support. These theories are comparable in their tendency to break down binary understandings. Prototype theory is a linguistically and psychologically-based theory of categorization which rejects the theory of binary categorization found in classical theory. Deconstruction is a reaction to and a partial rejection of structuralism, and teaches that language deconstructs itself through the breakdown of binaries and through a focus on the assumption made within a text. I will use *The Real Inspector Hound* in order to argue for the connections between deconstruction and Prototype Theory, through an analysis of its focus on binaries and their breakdown.

**2:00 PM****Russian Colonialism: The Economic Development of Estonia**

Juna Luzi, Marymount University

Estonia's economic growth has attracted the interest of other European nations. After the fall of the USSR, Estonia's GDP per capita increased significantly as did its Index of Economic Freedom score. Estonia's astonishing economic development has been one of a kind in the region. This research attempts to determine why Estonia's economic performance has been high in comparison with other nations in the Eastern Block and satellite states. It builds on the model of colonialism developed in Stanley L. Engerman and Kenneth L. Sokoloff's paper on Colonialism, Inequality, and Long-Run Paths of Development. It contrasts the economic development of Albania and Estonia and other countries with similar colonial history by investigating empirical evidence that indicate economic development. This research argues that countries occupied by the USSR have achieved higher economic performance than satellite nations after the collapse of the Communist regime, focusing specifically on the economic development of Estonia.

**2:20 PM****The Why and Wherefore of Declining Oil Prices**

Albarou Sabi, Norfolk State University

Petroleum prices can be influenced by many factors, and the drastic fall in prices during the year 2014 is no exception to the rule. In fact, the average retail price of gas in the United States went from \$3.68 per gallon to \$2.47 per gallon, and the price per barrel of crude between July and December went from \$111 to \$59 over the period. This is the result of an exceptional conjunction of three situations that do not often occur. The first one is the fight for oil's market share between conventional oil producers and the booming shale oil producers in North America. The second is the appreciation of the U.S. dollar by 9 percent, mechanically increasing U.S. purchasing power on the foreign oil market. Finally, low oil prices are being used (as often before) by some oil producers as a geostrategic weapon to weaken their foreign enemies.

**2:40 PM**

**Democratization in Eastern Europe:  
Exploring the Prerequisites for Success in the Post-Communist Era**

Elizabeth O'Hara, Lynchburg College

The fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in December 1991 left scholars wondering what political regime its former republics would adopt. Widespread expectations that authoritarian regimes are likely to transition to democracy followed earlier studies that tried to determine whether certain prerequisites must be present for a state's successful democratic transition. This study analyzes two Post-Communist, Eastern European states, Latvia and Belarus, to explain why Latvia has become a functioning democracy and Belarus has not. The hypothesis, based on scholarly literature, was that in order for a state to successfully transition from communism to democracy three prerequisites must be present: civil society, strong economic growth, and the influence of external forces. Data from the World Bank and Freedom House, as well as an analysis of the internal political and economic dynamics within each country, support the hypothesis. The data are further interpreted within the context of path-dependency theories of democratization. Having a clearer understanding of what factors serve as prerequisites for democratization will help states have more successful transitions, therefore ultimately avoiding the negative aspects commonly associated with non-democratic political regimes.

**3:30 PM**

**"Written in the Sand; the Birth of the Middle East Post-WWI"**

Amanda Touma, Northern Virginia Community College - Manassas

Instability, conflict, anger and war are merely just a few of the words that come to mind when people think of the Middle East. Colonization of these people would change their lives forever. The way of life in the East was relatively peaceful before the Europeans came in and decided to "civilize" the people. Little did they know that an everlasting scar would be left and never fully heal. Nations were carved out and nomadic people became residents to the land. This caused conflict with the clash of rival tribes most commonly seen with Sunni and Shi'ite. An example being Iraq when the Shi'ite people were being ruled by a Sunni leader. After being granted independence from the mother countries all of the countries, excluding Lebanon and Israel, fell back into a religious tyranny or monarchy. This presentation will discuss the division and current reason for instability in the East, caused by the greed of the European superpowers: Britain and France.

**2:00 PM****We are Homeless; Breaking the Glass Ceiling**

Graciela Billingsley and Leonardo O'Gilvie, Northern Virginia Community College - Manassas  
As active service students we will be presenting on the effects of homelessness in today's society. To do this we will address the ostracism of the homeless through analyzing the differences, the mentality, and the treatment of those who are derelict. We will also provide ways to better help the homeless and make a difference in fun and creative ways. We believe that addressing these obstacles will make an impact on the perception of homelessness and will be provisional and incumbent to the effective change that is needed within people, the community, and the nation. When it comes down to it, we in some way are all homeless. All that is left is breaking the glass ceiling!

**2:20 PM****Take Back the Night: The Planning of a Rally and March to Build Community Support**

Claire Kelling, Virginia Tech

Take Back the Night is an annual rally and march to fight gender-based violence. Virginia Tech has been hosting its own Take Back the Night for the past 25 years through Womanspace. Throughout the years, Womanspace has mastered an event planning strategy that has allowed for the planning process to happen over three months. Through our methodology, we have found that having a focus team of 3 coordinators and a supporting committee is an effective event planning method to plan a rally and march. This planning is important to help spread awareness of the resources available in the community and the prominence of gender-based violence in the New River Valley by executing a large-scale and empowering event. In our presentation, we would like to communicate knowledge about rally planning, share the importance of raising awareness about the issue of gender-based violence, and show support for survivors of gender-based violence.

**2:40 PM****Right to Write**

Renee Ordoobadi, Northern Virginia Community College - Manassas

In hopes to inspire adolescents to express themselves through writing, I started Right to Write—a free 4-week creative writing program for middle school students—in the fall of 2014. On the first day I asked students to use the quote, “An asteroid was hurtling straight for Earth” in a story or poem. After twenty minutes they broke into three groups with one volunteer at each table to guide them. Most students were apprehensive about sharing, but agreed that it was “not like the school prompts.” One student said, “We get to be creative without the stress of deadlines and restrictions.” By the fourth and final workshop, eighteen out of the twenty students chose to read something they had written in front of their family, friends, and classmates. I am extremely proud of the transformation these students made. I hope my experience inspires others to pursue their dreams, too.



**3:30 PM**

**This just in: Journalism is a public service!**

Janeal Downs, Virginia Commonwealth University

Democracy depends on having an informed electorate. But as newspapers and other news providers shrink in today's digital landscape, who will provide the news? Students. In VCU's Capital News Service, and in similar programs across the U.S., student journalists are covering government and politics and distributing their stories to newspapers, broadcast stations and online news sites. It's the ultimate win-win-win:

- News organizations, especially small publications that can't afford to have a presence in the state capital, get exclusive content;
- readers get information they need about important issues and whom to vote for in the next election;
- and students get bylines that will help them land jobs and internships

This is what we do in CNS. In our presentation, we will explain why journalism is a public service – and how university programs can help fulfill the need of citizens for information about government and public affairs.



## VCHC CONFERENCE: NOTES






## VCHC CONFERENCE: NOTES








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Emory & Henry College	Northern Virginia Community College – Loudoun
George Mason University	Northern Virginia Community College – Manassas
Hampton University	Northern Virginia Community College – Woodbridge
James Madison University	Old Dominion University
Liberty University	Richard Bland College
Longwood University	University of Mary Washington
Lynchburg College	Virginia Commonwealth University
Marymount University	Virginia State University
Norfolk State University	Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University
Northern Virginia Community College – Alexandria	Virginia Wesleyan College

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The conference planning committee thanks the following for the success of the 2015 Spring Conference:

Virginia Commonwealth University  
VCU Honors Students and Faculty Volunteers  
VCU Campus Security  
VCU Catering  
Richmond 2015, Inc.  
White House Catering & Virginia War Memorial  
Student Moderators & Faculty Judges  
Harbour Graphics, Cindy Lewis, Jay McCracken, and Mjylis Gibson  
Virginia Wesleyan College Mail & Copy Center, Tia Caffee and Cecile Brown  
All Student Presenters and Participants