Seven-figure gifts fuel honors scholarships

Getting real

The next generation of nuclear submarine officers
Keys to success

Cover photo: Feature subject Emily Blair drafts her poems using a typewriter. Photo by Jim Stroup.

This photo: Feature subject Travis Whaley’s accomplishments include winning a composing contest and traveling to Germany to compete in the International Johann Sebastian Bach Competition. Photo by Jim Stroup.

Online: Visit www.givingto.vt.edu for additional stories about the impact of philanthropy on Virginia Tech.
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This summer, I had the pleasure of attending a celebration of the renovations and expansion of our university’s primary facility in Europe—the recently renamed Steger Center for International Scholarship. Its namesake, our former President Charles W. Steger, was present, as were many of the generous donors who made the renovations and renaming possible.

Exactly one week later, I had the pleasure of attending a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake. At the event our current president, Timothy D. Sands, spoke about the power of philanthropy to expand the impact our university can make. It would be tough to pick a better setting for such remarks, because that particular 4-H center began with a gift of land and has grown to be one of the nation’s best thanks to millions in contributions.

Though there were different Virginia Tech presidents at each occasion, there were common feelings at both—enthusiasm for the programs this university provides the many people whom it serves and eagerness to make it possible to do even more.

During this time of transition, as our 16th president begins to set his vision for our future, I am certain that your generosity will play a major role in our ability to realize it, as was the case under our 15th president.

Within the pages of this issue of Impact, you will see ample evidence of the remarkable tradition of giving that drives many exciting developments at our university.

I hope you enjoy meeting some of the extraordinary students who are able to maximize their accomplishments thanks to scholarships, as well as learning about one of our innovative new undergraduate majors—real estate—that has benefitted from donations. You will meet a named professor who teaches in both our College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences and the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. You will get an update on the new indoor practice facility that gifts are making a reality. And you will learn about a variety of donors whose stories epitomize the spirit of generosity and service called for in our university motto *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve).

With the 2014-2015 school year having just begun and a new president at the helm, this is a dynamic moment at our institution.
Former university President Charles W. Steger, while dean of Virginia Tech’s College of Architecture and Urban studies, spearheaded efforts to purchase an overseas facility to enhance international opportunities for students.

The property, which today serves as Virginia Tech’s primary campus abroad, recently was renamed to honor Steger. The announcement was made at a special event held in Switzerland in June.

“I was surprised, touched, and humbled to learn about this, and am extremely honored,” Steger said.

The Steger Center for International Scholarship, formerly known as the Center for European Studies and Architecture, is located in a historic villa in Riva San Vitale, Switzerland.

In the fall of 2012, an extensive expansion and renovation project was initiated. The project added 6,200 square feet of new space, updated existing interior spaces, and made improvements to the grounds. More than $2.6 million in gifts toward the renovations were made in tribute to Steger by major donors to the university.

During Steger’s first full academic year as president, 2001-2002, 555 students participated in international education. By 2012-2013, that number had grown to 1,236.

To learn more about The Steger Center for International Scholarship, visit http://bit.ly/stegercenter.
Getting real
by RICH POLIKOFF

Consider how complex a process it must be to begin with nothing and end up with a fully functional building.

You have to find an ideal location, arrange proper financing, and purchase the land. You need architects and engineers to draw up plans, which then must be approved by a planning board.

You have to build an efficient structure and make sure it’s functioning properly, and then you’ve either got to sell it or manage it while tenants rent the space.

How do you provide students with the keys to a successful career in a field that demands so wide a range of knowledge? This is the great challenge of the Virginia Tech Program in Real Estate.

“The real estate industry is very broad and interdisciplinary,” said Kevin Boyle, the program’s director. “For example, when you’re dealing with financing or planning boards there are key technical details and unwritten expectations. A successful professional in the industry must be able to walk the walk and talk the talk of a number of important disciplines to address technical dimensions and meet expectations of stakeholders and clients.”

The Virginia Tech Program in Real Estate blends the professional expertise of real estate executives with academic education from faculty members in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, College of Architecture and Urban Studies, Pamplin College of Business, College of Engineering, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, and College of Natural Resources and Environment.

This multidisciplinary approach that makes the program a unique addition to the university is also why organizing and implementing the curriculum presented a creative challenge. With most schools focusing on the finance side of the industry, there were few if any role models for such a comprehensive concept.
The state approved the program in May 2013, and the first class of real estate majors will graduate in May 2015. As of June, 60 students were enrolled. It’s expected that the program will grow to about 150 students.

Although many universities offer master’s degrees in real estate, Virginia Tech is one of a much smaller number to offer a bachelor’s degree in the subject.

“No single discipline is fully capable of tackling many of the

Continued next page

William Park, chairman of the Virginia Tech Program in Real Estate Advisory Committee, points out key components at the Huckleberry Ridge housing construction site.
complex problems of our modern world,” Provost Mark McNamee said in explaining how the Program in Real Estate reflects an overall emphasis on interdisciplinary education at Virginia Tech. “The leaders of tomorrow will often be those who possess a depth of knowledge in several areas. ... We enable and encourage innovative interdisciplinary programs because they will help our students thrive in their careers.”

Following a broad introduction to the industry, students dive deeply into one specific area. Students may double major in real estate and another discipline, major in real estate and minor in a related subject area, or major in real estate and develop a specialized area of focus while working with an academic advisor.

Students venture beyond the classroom to construction sites and other field study locations. For classroom sessions, faculty members bring in a wide range of industry professionals to expose students to the varying facets of real estate.

Program participant Aurelia Amoyaw, a rising senior from Manassas, Virginia, who is double majoring in building construction and real estate, said the program’s comprehensive approach appeals to her.

“You need to push outside of your boundaries,” she said. “You can’t restrict yourself to one section of the real estate industry. You need to be open-minded.”

A program fueled by philanthropy

Real estate professionals make a difference in their communities by overseeing the design, construction, and renovation of the spaces where people live, work, shop, and play. Thanks in part to the generosity of donors, the Program in Real Estate at Virginia Tech is preparing students for success in this fast-paced, ever-changing, and dynamic industry. Gifts and pledges totaling more than $1.2 million have been designated to the new program, including a generous contribution from the Park family.

Brothers, William Park (animal science ’84, M.S. agricultural and applied economics ’86) and Richard Park, a member of the Class of 1988 who earned his bachelor’s in landscape architecture, credit their success in the industry to the strong foundation created through their educations at Virginia Tech. William Park’s wife, Jolene, and Richard Park’s wife, Susan, are also alumni.

“We are very proud as a family to support both Virginia Tech and the real estate industry with this gift to benefit the Program in Real Estate,” said William Park, who along with his brother is a principal of Pinnacle Construction & Development Corp., of Charlottesville, Virginia. “The industry is in need of broadly trained graduates who understand a variety of academic disciplines and work in a team environment to solve issues. These graduates must also have a deep understanding of advanced technology and analytics to properly assess risk and therefore profitability.”

Park added: “Virginia Tech was ideally positioned to leverage its various colleges to create the Program in Real Estate, which will provide graduates with the resources to understand and evaluate the industry’s market complexities while participating in solutions.”
Seven-figure gifts fuel honors scholarships

by ERICA STACY

In the fall of 2014, four Virginia Tech first-year students who have demonstrated exceptional achievements in academics and leadership will enroll as the university’s first undergraduate Stamps Leadership Scholars.

The prestigious new scholarship was launched through a generous match of $1.25 million from the Stamps Family Charitable Foundation Inc. to a $1 million gift from Virginia Tech alumnus Dave Calhoun and $250,000 of Virginia Tech funding. The $2.25 million combined from the foundation and Calhoun represents one of the largest philanthropic infusions to the University Honors program to date.

Up to five Stamps Scholars will be awarded full tuition, fees, and room and board at Virginia Tech each year. In addition, each scholar will receive a generous enrichment fund to support experiential learning opportunities. The merit-based scholarships will be renewable for four or five years, depending on the area of study, provided the recipients maintain strong academic, extracurricular, and civic standing.
The 2014 recipients of the scholarships at Virginia Tech are: engineering major Galina Belolipetski of Rockville, Maryland; communication major Jessica King of Stafford, Virginia; university studies major Wolfe Glick of McLean, Virginia; and physics major Moira Miller of Arlington, Virginia.

“Our undergraduate experiences were keys to our future successes,” said E. Roe Stamps IV, who, along with his wife, Penny, has established Stamps Scholars programs at 41 universities across the nation, including his alma mater, Georgia Tech, and the University of Michigan, where she earned her degree.

“Through these scholarships, Penny and I hope to encourage exceptional students to achieve ambitious goals sooner and to realize the impact that they can have on a changing world,” he said.

“Thanks to the Stamps Foundation, while in university, I will be able to connect with young leaders nationwide to gather a well-rounded education from my interactions with them.”

The three other recipients are communication major Jessica King, of Stafford, Virginia; university studies major Wolfe Glick, of McLean, Virginia; and physics major Moira Miller, of Arlington, Virginia.

Galina Belolipetski, of Rockville, Maryland, is one of the four initial recipients who started at Virginia Tech in August. “I am extremely excited to join the wonderful and diverse Virginia Tech community to pursue my interests and passions, and, of course, find new ones,” the engineering major said.

University Honors is located in Hillcrest Hall.
world," Stamps said. "We are thrilled to include Virginia Tech in our family of schools that are committed to creating outstanding opportunities for America’s very best students and are delivering on that promise inside and outside the classroom."

Stamps, a South Florida financier, is a venture capitalist and co-founder and managing partner of Summit Partners, in Boston. His wife, a former interior designer, is the president of the Stamps Family Charitable Foundation and has served in a leadership capacity on the boards of a variety of educational, community, and arts organizations.

Calhoun, who earned his bachelor’s in accounting and business in 1979 from what is now the Pamplin College of Business, is senior managing director and head of private equity portfolio operations at Blackstone. He has been a generous supporter of the University Honors program for years, as well as of his alma mater’s business college. Calhoun also co-chaired the university’s last fundraising campaign, which ended in 2011 after raising more than $1.11 billion.

“As a proud alumnus of Virginia Tech, I love hearing about the phenomenal accomplishments of its students, including the tremendously talented ones in the University Honors program,” he said. "I’m thrilled to be able to make an impact on this important program and that my support has been leveraged to such powerful effect."

A signature benefit of the Stamps Leadership Scholars program at Virginia Tech is the enrichment fund for each student, which will cover expenses associated with outside-the-classroom educational experiences such as study abroad, research, or unpaid internships.

“This philanthropic partnership complements our honors program by encouraging transformational experiences such as research, service learning, and study abroad as a primary component of the scholarship,” said Rachel Holloway, vice provost for undergraduate academic affairs. “At Virginia Tech, we challenge the students in the honors program to discover those ideas about which they are truly passionate, and to shape their educational experiences in ways that inspire their potential and create innovation. We want our students to forge a successful future that reflects their strengths and fulfills their passion.”

“Through these scholarships, Penny and I hope to encourage exceptional students to achieve ambitious goals sooner and to realize the impact that they can have on a changing world.”

E. Roe Stamps IV

Longstanding support

Dave Calhoun made a matching gift that helped create the Stamps Leadership Scholars program, and has been a longtime supporter of University Honors, which benefits from the Calhoun Liberal Arts Scholarship program he endowed. Two recipients of that scholarship are profiled on the following pages.
A poetic experience  
by ERICA STACY

While growing up in Fort Chiswell, Virginia, Emily Blair was always writing whatever came into her mind, on whatever she had on hand, often scraps of paper or the backs of school worksheets. However, it was in a fourth grade math class that she discovered her real passion. Much to her teacher’s chagrin, it wasn’t long division or multiplying fractions.

“That’s when I started writing poems,” Blair explained. “I was bored with math, so I used the words to escape.”

Today, Blair, who often uses a chalkboard and a typewriter as she writes, focuses her work on poetry and creative nonfiction.

“I like the rhythms in language and finding the ways to fit words together so that you can both understand and feel the meaning,” she said. “The chalkboard and the typewriter are tools that help make every word deliberate and intentional. It helps me concentrate. I can’t make a single change without changing everything.”

A rising senior, Blair is majoring in English and minoring in American studies. Her poetry has been featured in numerous online and undergraduate collegiate literary publications. In 2013 and 2014, she earned third place recognition in the Virginia Tech Steger Poetry Prize competition.

As a recipient of the Calhoun Liberal Arts Scholarship, Blair has been able to focus on developing her writing by taking advantage of a variety of educational opportunities.

“The scholarship has given me the freedom to really experience school,” she explained. “I don’t have to worry about finances as much, and I am not taking on educational debt. I can focus on learning as much as possible and developing my writing skills.”

Blair’s older sister was the first in her immediate family to go to college. Unlike her sister, who chose a small, private school, Blair never considered going anywhere other than the considerably larger state school not far from home.

“I only applied to Virginia Tech, and I applied early decision,” she said. “I had an interest in the honors program, and I thought that a state school would be more financially accessible. I am also a fan of Nikki Giovanni, and the opportunity to study with her was a big part of my decision.”

Though she remained close to home for college, Blair said her experiences

“Now, I understand that Appalachia is my foundation, but I can take it with me and share it with a much bigger world.”

Emily Blair
through Virginia Tech, which include going camping for the first time and being first in her family to travel abroad, have “changed everything.”

“My world, prior to school, was only as big as Southwest Virginia,” she said. “Now, I understand that Appalachia is my foundation, but I can take it with me and share it with a much bigger world.”

Throughout her time at Virginia Tech, Blair has enriched her education by taking advantage of several special programs, including the Presidential Global Scholars program, which allowed her to visit nine countries in four months.

She’s also traveled within the United States through Partners in the Park, an outdoor experiential learning program organized in cooperation with the National Collegiate Honors Council.

“I was carrying everything I needed in a backpack,” Blair said of that experience. “I wasn’t used to being outside all of the time, but it was empowering and really boosted my confidence that I was able to do it.”

Christina McIntyre, an interim director of the honors program, had recommended Blair seek out that experience.

“We encourage our honors students to discover that unique characteristic that makes their eyes shine, and then pursue every avenue to grow and develop it,” McIntyre said. “For Emily, it’s writing, and through her persistence and initiative she has found opportunities for success and built on each of them, one step at a time. Although it forces her out of her comfort zone, she is open to new opportunities to travel and to meet people.”

For the summer of 2014, Blair was selected to participate in a research project studying religion, culture, and Appalachian rhetoric through the Virginia Tech Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program.

“I am very grateful for the opportunities that I have been given,” Blair said. “There were only 130 students in my high school graduating class. My experiences at Tech helped me realize how much I really didn’t know and have pushed me to open my arms and embrace every opportunity and experience. It’s made me a better person and a better writer.”

Emily Blair is pictured with former Virginia Tech President Charles W. Steger and University Distinguished Professor Nikki Giovanni. Blair has twice been recognized through the university poetry competition Steger established, and she said the chance to learn from Giovanni factored into her decision to attend Virginia Tech.
The email arrived on April 14, 2014. Travis Whaley, a rising senior from Cary, North Carolina, read it several times to make certain he hadn’t misread anything. He hadn’t. He was in.

The email, from the selection committee of the International Johann Sebastian Bach Competition in Leipzig, Germany, notified Whaley that he was among only 45 pianists in the world invited to compete in the 64-year-old competition this past summer.

“I still can’t believe it,” Whaley said shortly before wrapping up his junior year. “I’m so excited for this opportunity to perform on an international stage with people from all over the world. I’ve put in a lot of work to get into this competition.”

Held every two years, the competition features some of the world’s most talented young musicians, ranging in age from 16-35. Whaley was the first Virginia Tech student invited to compete and hoped to become the first American to take first prize in the piano category.

That prestigious invitation was just one of many achievements in music for Whaley, who is triple majoring in piano performance, music composition, and German language and literature.

Whaley was about a month into his sophomore year when Tracy Cowden, associate professor of piano and vocal coach in the music department of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, suggested that he enter a young composer Christmas carol competition sponsored by the Fairfax Choral Society.

There was only one problem; the deadline was the next day.

Despite being written in just a few hours, Whaley’s composition, titled “A Christmas Carol,” won. He conducted it himself during its debut performance in December 2012.

While touring Italy as a member of the Virginia Tech Chamber Singers a few months earlier, during the summer of 2012, Whaley was
Whaley was among only 45 pianists in the world invited to compete in the 64-year-old International Johann Sebastian Bach Competition in Leipzig, Germany.

surprised by Dwight Bigler, director of the chamber singers, with an opportunity to play the postlude at a Mass at the Vatican.

“Dr. Bigler turned to me and asked, ‘Do you have anything ready?’” Whaley recalled. “I told him that I wrote a piece on the plane on the way over. So I spent the rest of the Mass sitting there making sure I remembered it because I didn’t have any music with me.”

Whaley originally had not planned on attending Virginia Tech. He had already decided to attend Wheaton College’s Conservatory of Music, where he could have majored in piano and organ. Then he received an invitation from Virginia Tech’s University Honors program to visit campus. By the time he and his family were on their way home from that visit, Whaley had decided to become a Hokie, despite the fact Virginia Tech did not have an organ program.

“It was a really difficult decision having to choose between a conservatory and Virginia Tech because I have a piano and organ background,” Whaley said.

Fortunately, he landed a job as a church organist, and for nearly two years has served at Blacksburg United Methodist Church.

“I love it,” Whaley said. “So it completely worked out. I have an organ I can practice on every week.”

His decision to attend the university was also made easier after receiving offers of scholarship assistance.

“Being an out-of-state student, the scholarships have really helped with the cost of tuition,” said Whaley, who has received the Calhoun Liberal Arts Scholarship through the honors program, as well as other assistance from both that program and his academic department.

Cowden, the associate professor of piano and vocal coach, said that “having those scholarships available are crucial for us to provide the opportunities that students like Travis are looking for.”

Along with opportunities, the scholarships also seem to have provided considerable inspiration to Whaley.

“I feel invested in,” he said. “I feel like the university expects great things from me, which in turn motivates me to do great things.”


While touring Italy as a member of the Virginia Tech Chamber Singers during the summer of 2012, Travis Whaley had an opportunity to play the postlude at a Mass at the Vatican.
Jeremy Jorge’s uniform seemed unusually tight as he entered the room for his third and final interview. Inside sat a senior officer, and the first thing the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and Naval ROTC member noticed were the eight stars pinned to the man’s collar, four on each side.

Jorge knew that his first ever meeting with a four-star admiral in the U.S. Navy would help determine his future as an officer.

When the roughly 10-minute encounter was over, Adm. John M. Richardson, director of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and deputy administrator for the National Nuclear Security Administration, gave his personal approval to allow Jorge to attend the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command’s Nuclear Power School in Goose Creek, South Carolina. At the school Jorge, who in May earned his bachelor’s in chemical engineering, will train to operate and manage a nuclear reactor and become a submarine officer.

“I kind of got tunnel vision during the interview,” the Virginia Beach native said. “I’d never seen four stars, let alone eight, but the Naval ROTC staff at Virginia Tech did a great job of getting me ready for the interviews, so I felt very well-prepared for the process.”

The Naval ROTC unit, which is part of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, not only prepared Jorge for the interview, it also provided a four-year scholarship that paid for his tuition and included a stipend, though combined this did not cover all his college expenses. Fortunately for Jorge, however, a Corps of Cadets program, the Emerging Leader Scholarship, was able to make up the difference.

That also was the case for Christopher von Gunten, who like Jorge went through the Naval ROTC program and qualified for nuclear submarine officer training.

“I’d be lying if I said that being in the Naval ROTC at Virginia Tech wasn’t hard,” said von Gunten, who in May earned his bachelor’s in mechanical engineering. “It was without question challenging, and even frustrating at times, but I have no regrets, and it definitely prepared me very well for my military career.”

Having the Emerging Leader Scholarship to cover the costs of uniforms, books, and other items not paid for by the Navy “was huge for me,” the Westminster, Maryland, native said.

In many cases, the donors who support Emerging Leader Scholarships like those that helped Jorge and von Gunten are alumni of the university and the Corps of Cadets.

Deborah Tillotson, of Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania, is one such alumna. A member of Virginia Tech’s first all-female company, she graduated with a bachelor’s in mechanical engineering in 1978 before going on to successful careers in the U.S. Air Force and civilian sector. She and her husband have established two scholarships at Virginia Tech, including an Emerging Leader Scholarship for the Corps of Cadets.
“Virginia Tech’s motto is *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), and one of the Air Force’s core values is ‘Service Before Self;’ so service is ingrained in me,” Tillotson said. “I was the first one in my family to go to college, and my mom was bringing up three girls on her own, so scholarships were important, and I was fortunate enough to get a small scholarship from my high school.” Whether from the Naval ROTC, the Corps of Cadets, or other sources, scholarships play a vital role in ensuring that tomorrow’s leaders receive the best possible educations while helping to alleviate some of the associated financial stresses they may face.

Having completed their engineering degrees, Jorge and von Gunten each still face stiff competition to become an officer on one of the Navy’s 71 nuclear submarines. Nonetheless, it’s an experience both men say they’re prepared for, thanks to the support they received from the Naval ROTC, the corps, and the generous funders of their scholarships.

“I’d be lying if I said that being in the Naval ROTC at Virginia Tech wasn’t hard. ... but I have no regrets and it definitely prepared me for my military career.”

*Christopher von Gunten*
fundraising in support of a project to build a new indoor practice facility for Virginia Tech athletics has passed the 50-yard line.

While significant fundraising needs remain, the Hokie Club has raised more than $13 million of the estimated $21.3 million needed to finance the facility. Meanwhile, the design of the project and a comprehensive financing plan received approval from the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors in late March. Plans call for the building to be completed by August 2015—in time for the football season.

“Facilities are big in recruiting,” Head Football Coach Frank Beamer said. “What kind of facilities you have states your intentions as to where you want to be in the college football world. So there are really good reasons why we need to get this done.”

The facility will be 210 feet wide and 400 feet long—large enough to allow the football team to hold full-contact scrimmages. That’s challenging to do effectively in the current indoor practice site, Rector Field House, which was built in 1971. Another benefit of the new facility will be stadium lighting on the outside, which will allow the football team to practice on its outdoor fields late into the evening.

Benefits from the new facility will extend beyond the gridiron. It will enhance opportunities for student athletes from a variety of sports. Other teams will train in the new practice facility, including the baseball, softball, lacrosse, and men’s and women’s soccer teams. The arrival of the new facility will also help make it possible to renovate Rector Field House to better serve the track-and-field teams.

The project has been in the works for close to two decades. Former
Director of Athletics Jim Weaver identified a new practice facility as a need not long after being hired in the fall of 1997. In 1998, he received permission to build the facility from Paul Torgersen, Virginia Tech’s president at the time, but other facilities’ needs took precedence, putting the project on hold.

“We feel this is going to be a dynamic facility that will benefit not only our football program, but a number of our other sports programs as well,” Director of Athletics Whit Babcock said. “Jim Weaver and the Hokie Club did a tremendous amount of work on this project and deserve the credit. I am appreciative of all their efforts. It is another big step in keeping our athletic facilities among the best in the nation.”
As a cross country runner and avid hiker, Anna McAuley developed her love of the outdoors.

As a member of environmental clubs in high school, she developed an awareness of the importance of forests to the Earth’s environment.

And as a rising senior majoring in forestry within Virginia Tech’s College of Natural Resources and Environment, she is developing the knowledge, skills, and experiences it will take to succeed in her preferred field: urban forestry.

“I’d love to do anything with creating and maintaining green spaces in parks and cities,” the Fairfax, Virginia, native said, explaining that she views environmental sciences like forestry as “a growing field, and a practical field to be in.”

“Most of us in the world live in urban settings, and I think that’s only going to increase,” McAuley added. “If we want to mitigate carbon flux in the environmental system, we need to look at the cities where people are actually living, and there’s also the mental and social importance of having green spaces throughout urban settings.”

McAuley credits Assistant Professor of Forest Resources and Environmental Resources Susan Day with inspiring her to major in forestry, and with helping her choose useful extracurricular
activities and internship opportunities. But McAuley also credits the generosity of donors to her college for helping make it possible for her to take full advantage of those opportunities.

Assistance from her department made it possible for her to travel to Ireland in March for a joint learning project for students from her school and Ireland’s Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. In addition, as the recipient of the Herman William Gabriel Endowed Scholarship, she was able to reduce the amount of student loans she had to take out.

“It allows me to not feel pressured to work while I’m taking classes, which helps a lot because I’ve been able to get more involved in the [Natural Resources] Recreation Society, as well as in the community all around,” said McAuley, who volunteered at a farm near campus during the fall 2013 semester, and in summer 2014 interned at a company in Rockville, Maryland, called SaveATree.

Day, the assistant professor who both inspired and is advising McAuley, said internships and extracurricular experiences are a critical element of a university education, so students miss out if they must skip them in order to spend numerous hours working to earn money for college.

“There’s a whole world of symposia and volunteer projects and service learning on campus, and if you can participate in that wholeheartedly, it gives you tremendous opportunities,” Day explained. “It’s a really important part of your experience.”

For McAuley, it’s a part of the experience that she is taking full advantage of, whether that is on campus, out-of-state, or abroad.

“We need to look at the cities where people are actually living, and there’s also the mental and social importance of having green spaces throughout urban settings.”

Anna McAuley

Giving back

The Herman William Gabriel Endowed Scholarship that has helped Anna McAuley was created by its namesake, a retired scientist for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, who earned his bachelor’s in 1956 from Virginia Tech. He lives in Montana.
For Amanda Salinas-Jones, of Pulaski, Virginia, exploring new cultures is a matter of taste.

The 2014 food science and technology graduate aspires to become a flavor chemist. Flavor chemists, also known as flavorists, are scientists who develop or improve the flavors in foods, beverages, snacks, and candies. Salinas-Jones credits a high-school experience for inspiring her unique career choice.

“During my junior year in high school, my AP English teacher assigned ‘Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal,’ by Eric Schlosser,” she said. “There is a fascinating chapter that describes the author’s journey through an International Flavors and Fragrances factory. It was then I decided to become a flavor chemist.”

To help achieve her career goal, Salinas-Jones combined her food science and technology major with minors in both Spanish and chemistry. Having earned her bachelor’s degree in May, she aspires to work in the food industry for several years “to gain real-world experience and to identify the area in which to specialize,” before pursuing graduate studies.

Thanks to financial assistance from the Cyrus H. McCormick Scholarship at Virginia Tech, Salinas-Jones fulfilled her dream of studying abroad during the spring of 2013.

“It was my first study abroad experience, and what an amazing experience it was,” she said. “Living in Buenos Aires was a fast-paced whirl of excitement. I encountered new cultures and learned to speak a second language with an adeptness that I never could have imagined. I visited Gualeguaychú for Argentina’s carnaval and explored the Iguazú Falls. I also traveled to Argentina’s wine country, Mendoza, where I learned to identify the different aromas and flavors of wines and to understand why they vary.”

On her return to Blacksburg, Salinas-Jones translated her Spanish language development into an on-campus learning opportunity, leading the Spanish conversation group, Hora Hispanica.

Visit http://bit.ly/1u6r7Ke to learn more about the major philanthropic impact made on Virginia Tech by the descendants of Cyrus McCormick.
I encountered new cultures and learned to speak a second language with an adeptness that I never could have imagined.

Amanda Salinas-Jones

“We met every week for an hour to practice our Spanish speaking skills,” she explained, adding that her international experience also instilled in her a desire to do volunteer work, possibly abroad.

“After working for two or three years, I plan to apply to the Peace Corps,” Salinas-Jones said. “I’d like to serve in El Salvador or the Dominican Republic.”

For many students, scholarships encourage academic and personal growth by easing the financial pressures often associated with pursuing a degree, and this was the case for Salinas-Jones as well.

“The McCormick scholarship enabled me to shift my focus from work to study,” she noted. “I was able to participate in an intensive undergraduate research project for the USDA that required 20-plus hours per week. The research enriched my undergraduate education and provided practical experience in my field of study.”

Salinas-Jones said she was deeply grateful for the opportunity.

“The generosity of donors to Virginia Tech affords students like me opportunities that might not be possible otherwise, providing that special extra something that makes us better prepared for our prospective careers,” she added.

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On the fast track

by ALBERT RABOTEAU

Plenty of university students turn 19 during their first year on campus.

Justeen Olinger was that age when she earned her bachelor’s in electrical engineering this past May. By the time she turns 20 this fall, she will have been working toward her master’s degree for more than a month.

Considering she was just 16 when she transferred to Virginia Tech as a junior, the Roanoke, Virginia, native probably could have completed her bachelor’s degree when she was even younger, but she made a point of taking additional classes and working in several research labs.

“I always hear people say ‘time is money,’ but I on the other hand see that money is time,” said Olinger, who is the second-oldest of six children and has been responsible for covering all her own education costs ever since earning her associate's degree from Virginia Western Community College prior to transferring to Virginia Tech.

“Scholarships that I’ve received have given me more time to spend on my education and focus on things in my major that I couldn’t have done otherwise.”

During her shorter-than-usual time as a Virginia Tech undergraduate, Olinger worked in several research labs, including one focused on energy harvesting technologies, such as cell phone batteries that one day may be charged by the kinetic energy generated by carrying a phone around in one’s pocket.

“What’s amazing about her is that she hadn’t really taken any relevant courses in the core parts of energy harvesting, but largely taught herself about [electrical] converters and made good progress,” said Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering Dong Ha, who heads one of the research groups in which Olinger worked. “She’s highly motivated and works hard.”

Olinger said she became interested in engineering at age 10, inspired by learning about the life of her grandfather, an electrical engineer with a varied career that included designing lighting for theaters in New York and working on the dam at Niagara Falls.

“The more I learned about him, the more it seemed a very exciting field,” Olinger said.

In the fall, she will continue her studies at Virginia Tech, working toward a master’s in electrical engineering. While she knows her main interest is in research related to energy, Olinger said she might seek to weave in aspects of biomedical engineering, biology, or physics, though she was not certain of her exact course of study in that regard.

No matter what path she chooses, Olinger is already far ahead of where a typical student would be at this point. She credits the scholarships she received with allowing her to fully explore what an undergraduate education in engineering had to offer—even if doing so kept her in school a little longer than she might have needed in order to graduate.

Giving back

Justeen Olinger benefitted from three scholarships named for alumni of Virginia Tech:

- The Robert A. Belz Scholarship is named for a member of the Class of 1938 who earned his bachelor’s in industrial engineering.

- The Byron M. Brumback and Helen S. Brumback Scholarship is named for a member of the Class of 1939 who earned his bachelor’s in chemical engineering, as well as for his wife.

- The William B. Webber Scholarship is named for a member of the Class of 1934 who earned his bachelor’s in electrical engineering.
Numerous members of the Ut Prosim Society gathered on campus April 25-27 to mark the addition of new members, celebrate the dedication of the Moss Arts Center or attend the all-society gathering. President's Circle and New and Advancing members were invited to enjoy the annual spring football game in the president’s box at Lane Stadium. The weekend’s theme was “There’s No Place Like Home,” and event decorations referenced “The Wizard of Oz.” The society has four levels and more than 2,300 members, including 205 who were either inducted or advanced to another level within the society this year.

1. Peggy Steinman (center), with Vice President for Development and University Relations Elizabeth “Betsy” Flanagan and former Virginia Tech President Charles W. Steger ’69

2. Richard Bishop ’67

3. Nicholas ’53 and Fay ’77 Street, along with Sandra and William C. “Jack” Davis stand with the plaque acknowledging their naming of the Street and Davis Performance Hall in the Moss Arts Center at Virginia Tech


5. Joseph Turley ’09 and Natalie Roseman ’10

6. Winston ’81 and Marilyn ’82 Samuels (far left and far right), along with Dave and Linda Smith

Background photo: The Ut Prosim’s Society’s new-and-advancing dinner was held April 25.

Photos continue next page
A special weekend (continued from previous)

1. Debbie and Michael ‘70 Quillen, B.K. Fulton ’89, and Jacquelyn Stone
2. Bill ’76 and Anita Fairchild, Connie and John ’68 DeBell
3. Don Caudill and Howard Feiertag
4. Adele McComas White, W.S. “Pete” White ’47, and John Rocovich ’66
5. Attendees of the all-society gathering taking advantage of its photo booth
6. Patricia Buckley Moss
7. Vinod ’68 and Ranjana ’80 Chachra

Background photo: The Ut Prosim’s Society’s all-society gathering was held April 26.

Photos continue next page
A special weekend (continued from previous)

1. Gene ’62 and Anne Fife, Janet ’70 and Charles W. ’69 Steger, Susan and David Goode
2. Joe Collie ’50, Diane and David ’76 Lohr, Barbara Collie, Richard Schmidt ’65
3. Debbie Petrine ’78
4. Sharon Ligon ’83, along with Roger ’70 and Sandy Spence
5. Alexander Boone and Wendy Smith-Boone
6. Maggie Mei-Chang Chiang ’85, Bob Chiang, Henry Chiang ’84
7. Wesley and Janet Worsham, along with John Lawson II ’75
8. Aaron ’97 and Hunter Gresham, Sherry Quillen ’71, and Jean Hahn

Background photo: The President’s Circle and New and Advancing members of the Ut Prosim Society gathered in the president’s box for the spring football game held April 26.
From **Blacksburg** to the **Big Apple** to Beantown

There are more than 700 miles between Blacksburg, New York City, and Boston. Yet, for Kyle Pedrotty (economics '03), the distance doesn’t seem significant. In fact, he believes that anywhere you find a Virginia Tech alumnus, you will also discover a connection to the entire Hokie Nation.

“There is a very strong Hokie presence in New York,” he said. “It was a great help in making New York home. I played softball with the Manhattan Hokies Softball Team and attended VT game watches. If you are in a New York bar with a couple hundred alums wearing orange and maroon, and one person screams, ‘Let’s go!’ and the entire bar yells back ‘Hokies!’ you really don’t feel that far away from Main Street in Blacksburg.”

Pedrotty joined J.P. Morgan in New York in 2010; he relocated to Boston this summer. A vice president in product management, he works in the Global Equities group on the electronic client solutions team.

“Understanding the global economy and how it integrates with technology is important in my role,” Pedrotty said. “Tech provided a great opportunity to learn the fundamentals of global economics and markets. Coupling this with the polytechnic curriculum that was available at the university set the course for my career.”

Not all lessons are learned in a classroom, however. As a student, Pedrotty was involved in a variety of volunteer activities, and he continues to reach out to others and give back.

While living in New York, Pedrotty volunteered with a nonprofit that provides free, one-on-one tutoring in mathematics for middle school students, devoting time each Saturday to helping young people.
A member of the Pylon Society, Pedrotty also prioritizes giving back to his alma mater.

“I believe strongly in the value of the education Virginia Tech provides to students,” he said. “My philanthropic commitment is driven by several beliefs. As an alumnus, you want your alma mater to be recognized as an exceptional institution. You also want each student after you to have at least the same opportunities, and hopefully even more. I want to do anything I can do to help, and as little as it might be, when you look at the big picture, every bit helps.”

Pedrotty, who tries to visit his university at least once a year, also encourages current students to look for opportunities that offer hands-on experience. As he becomes aware of internships, workshops and other training programs available in New York, Pedrotty channels the information to the university, ensuring that Virginia Tech students are aware of regional, national, and global experiences that may influence their futures. Though the process is highly competitive, several Pamplin College of Business students have been selected for J.P. Morgan’s summer internship program in New York.

Pedrotty and his wife, Catherine, recently welcomed a daughter to their family, which has only driven home to them the importance of education and providing opportunities for future generations.

“Becoming a father to an amazing little daughter has been the most extraordinary experience for my wife and me,” Pedrotty said. “We have always placed a high value on the importance of education. Having a child makes it even more important.”

“Tech provided a great opportunity to learn the fundamentals of global economics and markets.”

Kyle Pedrotty
Lessons in leadership

by ALBERT RABOTEAU

“We learned how to plan ahead, how to work with a budget, how to motivate a diverse group of volunteers,” the Toledo, Ohio, resident recalled of his time serving in the Virginia Tech Union. “We had the opportunity to present to a board and also to work with people much older and more experienced than ourselves—advisors and university administrators. And I also think the union taught me something about finding balance in life. The experience of organizing cultural events brought us exposure to them.”

Graham stayed involved in the union throughout his studies at Virginia Tech, including serving as its president during his senior year. And long after graduating, he has continued to remain involved with the organization and the Division of Student Affairs that runs it, by donating generously to the division’s leadership programs.

“I think leadership is like anything else—it requires practice—and my time at Virginia Tech gave me a jumpstart on that,” said Graham, who along with his Virginia Tech degree holds an M.B.A. from the University of Virginia. “I really appreciate all the people I met at Virginia Tech and all the things I learned, and I am a big advocate for the Division of Student Affairs. It provides opportunities to students that they may not even realize will have such an impact on their lives.”

Along with his wife, Julie, John Graham is a member of the Caldwell Society of donors to Virginia Tech. For more information on the society, visit http://bit.ly/caldwell-society.

When John Graham was 11 he visited his parents’ alma mater for the first time.

“My father brought me to campus, and we went to Squires Student Center,” he recalled. “I didn’t really think much about it at the time, but it must have made some impression because I ended up spending so much of my time in there.”

Soon after enrolling at Virginia Tech, Graham (management ’82) became heavily involved in its student union, whose leaders met regularly in Squires to organize cultural events on campus.

Today, Graham credits his involvement in that organization with teaching him leadership skills that he continues to draw upon as vice president of the assisted living division of HCR Manor Care, which operates 60 assisted living properties catering to residents with dementia.
I think leadership is like anything else—it requires practice.

John Graham

An emphasis on leadership experiences

Virginia Tech’s Vice President for Student Affairs Patty Perillo said she was struck by the strong support for leadership programs she has encountered in meetings with alumni and donors.

That response, she said, factored into decisions to expand leadership programs within Student Affairs, including creating a new department, the Leadership Education Collaborative, and working to broaden opportunities for students to live in leadership-themed residential communities.

“The mission of Virginia Tech requires we cultivate our capacity to create global leaders—leaders who will live the spirit of Ut Prosim,” Perillo said, referring to the university’s motto, which translates as “That I May Serve.”
Like many Virginia Tech alumni who appreciate the influence of the university in their lives, Tracy Castle-Newman enjoys returning to campus.

But for the past couple of years, she’s also helped bring numerous Hokie women together where she works, far from Blacksburg, in Midtown Manhattan.

Helping to facilitate Women in Business events run by the Pamplin College of Business is one of several ways that Castle-Newman, who earned her bachelor’s in finance in 1990 and is a managing director at Morgan Stanley, is making a difference for her alma mater and its students.

“I’m an 18-year Morgan Stanley employee and an alumna of Virginia Tech, and I’m really proud of those two things,” said Castle-Newman, of Westfield, New Jersey. “Giving back gives me a tremendous amount of satisfaction. I financed my education, so now that I have the opportunity to give back, I want to help students.”

One way she does this is by donating generously to both athletics and to Pamplin’s Department of Finance, Insurance, and Business Law, where she established the Tracy Castle-Newman Fund for Excellence in Finance to support programs that help students preparing for the chartered financial analyst (CFA) exams.

In addition, Castle-Newman, along with her husband, Andrew Newman, recently established a scholarship for a member of the women’s golf team who is majoring in one of the programs within the Pamplin College of Business. The team is scheduled to begin play in fall 2015.

Castle-Newman shares her time, and her insights from working in finance for decades, in a similarly generous manner. She serves on the Pamplin
Finance Advisory Board, and for the past two years has arranged for Women in Business events to be hosted at Morgan Stanley’s worldwide headquarters.

This past October, nearly two-dozen female students, representing multiple majors within Pamplin and from other Virginia Tech colleges, as well as more than 75 Virginia Tech alumnae from the tri-state area, took part in the program. The program provided networking opportunities and featured panel discussions with alumnae who are working in finance or other industries clustered in the nation’s largest city.

“The purpose is to showcase to young women what are the pathways to success they can expect, and to encourage them to be open-minded about their careers and opportunities,” said Donna Wertalik, a Pamplin instructor and career advisor who helped organize the event, in which numerous alumnae also participated.

Castle-Newman said that to succeed in finance or other industries, the importance of networking and learning from more experienced colleagues cannot be overemphasized, especially for women, who continue to be underrepresented in certain fields. With that in mind, several years ago she organized a group within Morgan Stanley known as the Women’s Business Alliance.

When the opportunity to participate in a program helping Virginia Tech students and alumnae arose, it was natural to get involved, Castle-Newman said.

“Blacksburg is a long way away from New York City, and I think Hokies need to understand what they’re getting themselves into in the finance world if that’s what they want to do,” she said. “It can be cutthroat, and I want them to be prepared for it. I didn’t really have someone do that for me early on, and sometimes I wish I had, even though I ended up at the right place at the end of the day.”

In April, Tracy Castle-Newman and her husband, Andrew Newman, were inducted into the Ut Prosim Society, a select group of the university’s most generous donors. For more information, visit http://bit.ly/ut-prosim-society. Images from April’s Ut Prosim Society annual gathering are on pages 27-32.

Women in Business

Nearly two-dozen students, and more than 75 alumnae, enjoyed panel discussions and a networking event that Tracy Castle-Newman helped make possible in New York City in fall 2013 and will be involved in again this fall. Visit http://bit.ly/1oiKDjg for a short video about last year’s program.
“A dream of enrolling,” which came true

Robert Simmons grew up two hours from Virginia Tech, but his journey to enrolling was indirect and had some significant roadblocks.

“I was not encouraged to prepare myself for college and came out of high school with no college preparatory classes and minimal passing grades,” recalled Simmons, who grew up in Staunton, Virginia, and now lives in Acworth, Georgia. “My intention was just to get out and work. That’s what was expected by my family.”

Simmons started working at age 12, building a large paper route that he maintained until graduating high school, after which he got a job as a clerk in a local service station.

After graduation, he continued to date his high school sweetheart, even though she was college bound. Her father helped him land a job in a machine shop, but also encouraged him to keep college in mind. The girlfriend, whom Simmons later married, was likewise supportive.

“We would drive to Virginia Tech and sit in front of Burruss Hall and talk about ‘what if?’” Judy Simmons recalled.

“I knew I wasn’t scholastically prepared to be accepted into Virginia Tech, but Judy and I would ride down and look over the campus and focus on a dream of attending,” Robert Simmons added. “That’s what it was for us at the time, and what it meant to me.”

On one of those days, rather than simply dreaming of attending, he entered Burruss, talked with an admissions officer, and learned that while he was not qualified at that time, he could attend junior college and later apply as a transfer student. After studying for a year at what was then Ferrum Junior College, where he made the dean’s list, he transferred into Virginia Tech.

Shortly before he transferred, he married his girlfriend, who was attending Longwood College. She graduated in 1964 and worked as a teacher until the couple had their first child in 1966. A scholarship from Texaco helped make it possible for Robert Simmons to complete his bachelor’s in mechanical engineering.

After graduating in 1967, he landed a job as a design engineer with DuPont. Robert Simmons’s first job with the company was at the same plant where his wife’s father had gotten him an entry-operator level position seven years before. His career with the company took Robert Simmons to several states before he retired in 1998. The Simmonses have seen their two children graduate from Virginia Tech. Their son Michael Scott Simmons earned his bachelor’s in history in 1989 and daughter Terri Lynn Fritz earned her bachelor’s in business education in 1991.

Robert Simmons said that even when he was working entry-level jobs with no college degree, he always “had a desire to do better,” and he believes there are many young people who have similar ambitions that should be nurtured.

“Judy and I strongly believe that you should never stop pursuing your dreams,” he said.

To help do that, he and his wife recently established a bequest that eventually will endow the Simmons Family Scholarship for students majoring in mechanical engineering at Virginia Tech.

Robert Simmons said their aim is to “help people get their education and achieve their dreams, like we were able to do. The idea is to make a difference in their lives, and the lives of others when they pay it forward.”

“We would drive to Virginia Tech and sit in front of Burruss Hall and talk about ‘what if?’”

Judy Simmons
Help us honor your generosity

If you have remembered Virginia Tech with a will bequest or other estate gift, please let us know so that we can better understand, confidentially record, and one day follow your wishes.

We’d also like to thank you today and, if you wish, welcome you as a member of the Legacy Society.

To reach our Office of Gift Planning, call 540-231-2813 or 800-533-1144, or email giftplanning@vt.edu.

In fall 2013, Robert and Judy Simmons were inducted into Virginia Tech’s Legacy Society—a recognition for people who make deferred gifts in support of the university.

The intersection of science and the humanities

In a world of heated arguments, many people focus on what’s being said. Bernice Hausman is different. She focuses on how it’s being said.

Hausman is a professor of English in the Virginia Tech College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences and is also on the faculty of the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. In the fall of 2013, she was named the Edward S. Diggs Professor in the Humanities.

The professorship, which recognizes and promotes excellence in research and teaching in the humanities, was created through an estate gift by the late Hattie Wilson Diggs in memory of her husband, who earned his bachelor’s degree in agriculture from Virginia Tech in 1914. Recipients hold the position for a five-year term.

“I'm someone who has tried to promote the humanities both at the university and in my research,” said Hausman, who came to Virginia Tech in 1995 and has been on the medical school’s faculty since the school opened about six years ago. “I worked hard with the medical school to develop a humanities course in its curriculum.”

Her classes in the medical school’s Department of Interprofessionalism explore issues in medicine that have a significant cultural footprint. These issues have included obesity, death, cancer and cancer treatments, and the experience of illness in contemporary life.

“This focus gives the students the opportunity to reflect on their developing education,” Hausman said. “The other purpose is developing writing skills and skills in self-reflection, so they understand their profession and being part of a team.”

In the university’s Department of English, Hausman leads the Virginia Tech Vaccination Research Group. This collaborative, interdisciplinary team is made up of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate researchers, who study vaccination skepticism and its impact on infectious diseases.

This group studies the language that both sides employ in debates over vaccination, exploring why those with medical expertise seem to be ineffective at changing the minds of vaccine skeptics. Hausman hopes the Diggs professorship will allow her to build upon the research group’s work by writing a book about the history of vaccination controversy in the United States. Hausman added that, with additional funds from the professorship, she hopes to attend conferences and bring distinguished speakers to promote the humanities.

She said the book she plans to write, which would be her fourth, would be targeted to a more general audience than her earlier ones.

“My previous books were about the interface between medicine and culture,” she said. “Those books were very much for an academic audience. For me, part of the interest in the Diggs position is getting the humanities out in the public sphere where it’s recognized and valued.”
After finishing calculus at Panther Creek High School in Cary, North Carolina, David Mackanic figured he was done with math and highly technical subjects. He planned to choose a college major with a career as a lawyer in mind.

But a physics teacher at his school disagreed.

“He just has an engineering mind,” said Laura Rush, who urged Mackanic to pursue a career in science and technology. “He’s very analytical, loves a challenge, and sees everything as a puzzle. It’s exciting for him to just dig in deeper and deeper, and the more challenging it is, the more exciting it is for him.”

Her encouragement inspired Mackanic to reconsider his career path. He now views science and technology not only as his course of study, but as his calling.

“I feel that people who have the ability to work in these areas should pursue them, because there are major issues, like renewable energy, that are so crucial to address,” said Mackanic, a rising senior double majoring in chemistry and mechanical engineering at Virginia Tech.

In April, Mackanic was announced as a recipient of a prestigious Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship for 2014-2015. But it’s likely he would never have come to Virginia Tech if not for a Pratt Scholarship he received earlier, which was funded through an endowment set up by the estate of John Lee Pratt, a native Virginian and former vice president of General Motors.

“Scholarships are huge in my ability to come to Tech and get the most out of my education,” said Mackanic.

During the summer of 2012, he traveled to Beijing to participate in a research program operating out of Tsinghua University, and in summer 2013 he worked with nanostructured materials at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In Blacksburg, he has worked on research projects with several faculty members, including Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering Michael Ellis, who has described Mackanic as “inquisitive, creative, and an extremely fast learner.”

Much of Mackanic’s research has been in the area of energy efficiency, including battery technologies.

“People need to research this, and I feel that I can,” he said. “If I can contribute at all to solving problems in the energy area, then I will have had a meaningful life, and that’s something that’s really important to me.”

Rush, his former high school physics teacher, said she has no doubt that Mackanic will make an impact in his field of research.

“David’s going to make something great someday,” she said, “something that we’re all going to benefit from.”

In the meantime, she’s already citing his considerable accomplishments as a student to help persuade other Panther Creek pupils to pursue scientific and technical fields.

“It’s a hard road for kids who want to take on a challenge like engineering or physics,” Rush said. “So it’s important for them to hear about some of the things that former students have going on in college—especially at schools like Virginia Tech.”
Investing in *education* by GARY COPE ’97

Generous individuals are not the only ones making a philanthropic impact at Virginia Tech. Numerous corporations and foundations provide significant support each year, several examples of which appear below.

**A generous gift in kind**

Lumber Liquidators recently provided labor and materials to install flooring (pictured above) in the downstairs portion of the welcome center at the W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake.

“Lumber Liquidators and Virginia Tech both take great pride in enriching Virginia communities, and the 4-H educational center is a great way to touch the lives of our future leaders,” said Daniel Terrell (accounting ’86), the company’s chief financial officer. “As a Hokie myself, I am excited to see our growing, Virginia-based company partner with a premier Virginia university to provide a long lasting benefit to the community.”

**Expanding access to education**

Thanks to a gift from Altria Group Inc., the number of Virginia Tech Presidential Scholarship Initiative awards able to be offered has increased by nine—to 59—for the 2014-2015 academic year. Skylar Green (pictured above), a sophomore majoring in business management, said the program makes a tremendous impact on the lives of the students it helps, as well as their families.

“My family and I are so grateful and blessed to have been presented with such a wonderful award that has led, and will continue to lead, to so many great opportunities,” she said.

**A new scholarship package**

Plastics manufacturer Grupo Phoenix recently established a scholarship program in the College of Natural Resources and Environment, where a new bachelor’s degree in packaging systems and design was introduced during the fall 2014 semester. Students in the program are pictured above. To read a Virginia Tech Spotlight on Innovation article about the packaging program, visit http://bit.ly/1hZgU75.

For additional information on corporate and foundation giving, and additional examples of such gifts, visit www.cfr.givingto.vt.edu.
Kylie Gilbert arrived at Virginia Tech with a plan for her education and her future. But when a leadership opportunity took her down an unexpected path, she discovered a passion for building community and mentorship.

A recipient of the Clifford A. Cutchins Scholarship and an R.B. Pamplin Scholarship, the University Honors student and former president of Virginia Tech’s Residence Hall Federation was able to further her leadership experiences through an internship in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer at the White House.

Many students, like Kylie, have been able to explore new, inspiring opportunities with help from scholarships. To learn more about Kylie, visit [http://bit.ly/kyliegilbert](http://bit.ly/kyliegilbert). To learn more about the impact of philanthropy at Virginia Tech, or to make a gift, go to [www.givingto.vt.edu](http://www.givingto.vt.edu).
In June, the W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake celebrated its 50th anniversary. Philanthropy has fueled the center since its beginning, when Appalachian Power Company donated the land on which the center was built. That company has continued to support the center over the years, and its generosity was honored by the installation of a clock tower unveiled at the anniversary celebration. See page 42 for more stories about corporate support of Virginia Tech programs.