Greetings Panther Family,

Virginia Union University has evolved in ways that, several months ago, we may not have embraced as possible. The onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic forced the University to accelerate plans that have been in place for a while and, today, our Virginia Union University family is stronger, more resilient, and more united because of it. We were able to transition to remote operations due to the “stay at home” orders and move classes to a virtual experience. During this time, we have been able to assess our overall on campus experience which has taught us to work in new ways; more collaborative, more efficient, and safer for our students, staff, and faculty. Once again we have proven that here at Virginia Union University, our passion, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit are limitless.

As we move forward, we are aggressively preparing to welcome our community back to campus what we are calling “VUU Re:UNION. Some aspects of university life are already returning to familiar operations, while others are still in development. I am pleased to share that on July 13th, we launch a new learning platform, VUU Global Campus, which is anchored in a virtual/digital learning experience. Additionally, on August 24th, we will welcome back some in person classes for undergraduate and graduate programs. Our hybrid approach to learning will help ensure the continuity of education for our students as we continue to respond to students needs despite limits presented by COVID-19. We are also preparing to welcome student athletes and band members to campus in July; however, we are awaiting decisions from the NCAA and CIAA regarding how Fall sports will operate.

The health and safety of the VUU community is our top priority. Our plans have been developed to align with guidance provided by public health experts, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Virginia Department of Education for reopening university campuses. A few highlights that you will see in our report:

- Class sizes will be smaller to accommodate social distancing requirements (i.e., 6-feet)
- Temperature checks will be required at all key entry points on-campus and in dorms
- All tuition payments must be made electronically
- Testing for coronavirus will be widely available on campus
- We will enforce requirements to wear face coverings and practice social distancing
- Contact tracing protocols will be in place to help manage any potential for an outbreak of infections on campus
- Single Room options have been made available on the second floor in Newman Hall, LLC North, LLC South, and White Hall

The success of this effort will require all members of our VUU family to do their part. We must be willing to adjust our typical behaviors and “reThink” how we will “reUnite” and live out the on-campus experience. Nonetheless, we are in this together—we are stronger together.

Sincerely,

Hakim J. Lucas, Ph.D.
President & CEO
A CLOSE LOOK AT JASMINE CARTER

Jasmine Carter is a polarizing figure on the basketball court, with a personality as big as her stature, standing at 6 feet 2 inches tall. The 2020 graduate is a testament to what recruiting homegrown talent has done for VUU athletics, as Carter’s fan base showed up week in and week out to cheer for her and the Lady Panthers. As a high school senior, Carter took the city by storm in 2015, alongside her Lady Justice teammates, while competing for the State Championship Semifinals. A win, secured a spot in the State Championship and The Lady Justice felt the odds were in their favor.

In the final second of the game, a scrum for the ball resulted in the whistle blowing with :02 seconds on the clock. After a brief huddle among the officials, “FOUL”, “BLUE”, the ref yelled. The call was against the Lady Justices. As a result, the opposing team’s player was sent to the free throw line for two shots. After making both shots, the Lady Justices got possession with enough time on the clock to inbound the ball and make a last-ditch effort to shoot the length of the court. The Lady Justice lost 51-50.

The significance of that story is not that the team lost on a gut wrenching controversial call, but rather the fact that Carter only had 6 other players to contribute to their championship run. The entire Lady Justice team was 7 members deep. Carter, one of two seniors, took it upon herself to lead by example both on and off the court.

“I knew the first time I met Jasmine as a freshman she would go on to do great things, and basketball hadn’t even crossed my mind,” said Felicia Johnson, Director of Athletics. “I know with most students-athletes, the sports will handle itself. It’s the off field engagement I was impressed by with Jasmine. She’s always the first to volunteer, she’s great with children, shes at every community service projects, and she’s a eager participant in class.”

Carter is known for marching to the beat of her own drum. For most fans, guessing her hair was just as perplexing as guessing how dominant she would be on the floor during any given game. As the Center piece to the Lady Panthers championship team, in two consecutive seasons, Carter has finished Top 5 in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) with rebounds. But to give an idea of the reign Carter had over her opponents, she played in 3 less games than the 3 players in the conference that were ahead of her in the category. Playing Center, she made her presence felt averaging more than 30 minutes and just under 8 points per game. With so much offensive firepower on the Lady Panther roster, Carter wasn’t the main scoring threat, but more so on second chance opportunities coming off the rebound.

However, she’s shown flashes of her ability to find the hole down low when her number was called on. In January, Carter posted a career high scoring 24 on the road at Shaw before going on the road a few weeks later to drop 21 at Livingstone. Carter surpassed double digit scoring in 14 games for the Lady Panthers last season. Earning her a unanimous selection to the 2019-2020 All-CIAA Women’s Basketball Team, announced February 24, 2020.

A model student, she maintained her appointment to the Dean’s list throughout her collegiate career. Carter’s main focus has always been completing her degree. Despite receiving her Bachelor’s degree in May for Religious Studies, the future Youth Pastor began taking classes toward her Master’s degree during her senior season, while simultaneously pledging Beta Epsilon Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated.

After a virtual commencement ceremony for the class of 2020, Carter celebrated with a number of friends, family, and supporters as they looked on in admiration, while she addressed the room to make two major announcements.

“I want to thank all of you for coming out to celebrate my graduation.” Carter said. “Thank you all for supporting and encouraging me throughout my time at Virginia Union. I am excited to share two major announcements with you all. The first, I would to share with you is that, I have signed with BiggShot Sport Agency in order to further my playing career. Secondly, I have been selected to participate in the International Basketball Federation, and will be playing overseas in Portugal for the foreseeable future.
Virginia Union University’s Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and Community Wellness has named Tierra Terry as the ninth head coach in the history of the VUU Women’s Basketball Program, it was announced on Thursday, June 18.

“Coach Terry is the right coach to continue the winning spirit of our Lady Panthers Basketball program,” said Athletic Director Felicia Johnson ’02.

“Our goal is to grow our student athletes to be successful in the classroom and on the court,” said Joe Taylor, Vice President of Intercollegiate Athletics and Community Wellness. “Coach Terry will keep our program competitive and we look forward to celebrating many championships under her direction.”

Tierra Terry comes to Virginia Union after spending the past three seasons as an assistant coach for the women’s basketball program at The College of William and Mary. The 2019-20 season for the Tribe was one for the history books posting the school record with 21 wins: 12 in the Colonial Athletic Association (CAA), 11 wins on the road, and ranking the its highest seed in the CAA Tournament (third). Prior to William & Mary, Terry was a recruiting coordinator at Western Carolina. She began her coaching career at her alma mater, Winston-Salem State University.

“Our Lady Panthers have made history with back-to-back CIAA championships and NCAA DII championship appearances,” said Dr. Hakim J. Lucas, President & CEO of Virginia Union University. “I am excited to see the team’s continued success under Coach Terry.”

Terry is active in her community, including volunteering with Upward Basketball, the YMCA, Latin Flavor Ent, Boys and Girls Club, Women’s Basketball Mentor Program, Joy Prom, and the Annual Cullowhee Valley Festival in North Carolina.

A four-year member of the Winston-Salem State women’s basketball team, Terry earned her bachelor’s degree in psychology, while earning a minor in sociology in 2008. She went on to earn her master’s in psychology with a specialization in counseling from the University of West Florida in 2011. She is a member of Psi Chi, the international honor society in psychology, Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity Incorporated, the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association, and the National Association of Basketball Coaches.
CIAA SUSPENDS COMPETITION FOR FALL 2020

CHARLOTTE – After thorough analysis the Board of Directors for the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA), in conjunction with its Athletic Directors Association (ADA), has voted that NCAA sport competition sponsored by the conference will not occur during the fall of 2020 due to ongoing safety concerns associated with COVID-19.

The decision is informed by the reality that several CIAA member schools are located in states experiencing dramatic increases in new COVID-19 cases. This recent rise in cases has led to a pause in phased reopening plans in many of these states, resulting in uncertainty as to whether students will return to campus this fall at several CIAA member institutions.

“As you can imagine, we are doing everything in our power to ensure the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff,” said Athletic Director Felicia Johnson ’02. “We examined every possible option and not all of them are off the table however at this time, it’s unanimous that our fall sports cannot go on, while adhering to all of the safety concerns that have risen both internally and externally.”

At the recommendation of the CIAA ADA, with approval from the Board of Directors, the conference will explore the possibility of a modified schedule of competition for football and volleyball as well as men’s and women’s cross country during the spring of 2021.

If a move to the spring is adopted, revised game and practice schedules will be established along with the process of determining conference champions for these respective sports. A time frame on this decision has yet to be determined.

Decisions concerning winter and spring sports will be discussed as efforts to flatten the curve progress.

“Like anything else you have to make an adjustment. We have to adjust our adjustment to off season training, we have to make an adjustment to recruiting, but our players and staff have all handled it really well. Our guys are looking forward to a Spring season. These are 18/19 year old guys that are used to consistency and schedules, so with that being said, I’m really pleased with the positive attitude they’ve approached this whole thing with and I look forward to breaking in that new turf on Hovey Field.”

—Coach Alvin Parker, Football

“I have so much confidence in my student-athletes! Of course everybody is getting use to all the new norms, but, I take pride in knowing I have a group that is self motivated and driven by self improvement. There are so many unknowns as far as the season goes for indoor, outdoor, and cross country, however, when its time to compete, I have no doubt that VUU will be ready.”

—Coach Melissa Ferry, Track and Field

“The contrast to having such an experienced team last year verses having such a young team this year, I would have really liked to take the off season to do more team building activities and focus on the bonding aspect of the team overall. Virtually they are able to connect and chat with one another and they get together for personal workouts, so I am encouraged by the initiative they are all taking. My returning players have done a phenomenal job at stepping up and taking on that leadership role, so again, I’m really encouraged and look forward to seeing them as soon as we’re able to get back.”

—Coach Renesha Johnson, Volleyball
RE:UNION
Excellence, Reimagined.

View our 2020 Reopening plan at www.vuu.edu/vuu-opening-plan

RE:UNION
ROLL CALL
THURSDAY, AUGUST 27TH
7PM EST | Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube

HOSTED BY
KELLI LEMON & DJ LONNIE B

L. DOUGLAS WILDER:
CONTINUING 30 YEARS OF HISTORY, THEN & NOW
SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Thirty years ago Virginians elected the first black Governor in the nation. Join us for a day-long virtual event as we explore the significance of Governor Wilder’s historic election. The symposium will feature a keynote address by the 66th Governor of Virginia, L. Douglas Wilder. Invited guests include Governor Deval Patrick, Chief Judge Roger Gregory, and political commentator, Larry Sabato. This event is open to the public.

REGISTER AT WWW.WILDER30.COM

MAYORAL DEBATE 2020
AT VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY

SAVE THE DATE
9.24
September 24th
6:00–8:00 PM

FACILITATORS
L. Douglas Wilder
Former Governor
Juan Conde
WRIC Anchor