Celebrating the Class of 2019
Our graduates are ready to make their mark:

- 59% Carrying a 3.0 GPA or higher
- 41% Accepting a Job Offer
- 20% Entering Graduate School

In This Issue
Commencement Speaker: Danny Glover
Actor • Producer • Humanitarian

Baccalaureate Service: Dr. Derik Elton Jones
Pastor of First Baptist Church of South Richmond

Senior Class Profiles
Life After May 11th, 2019
Commencement Speaker: Danny Glover

Award-winning actor, producer, humanitarian Danny Glover, whose film credits include the blockbuster Lethal Weapon franchise, and Oscar-nominated films The Color Purple and Dreamgirls, will deliver the 120th commencement address at Virginia Union University on May 11, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. on the historic Hovey Field. Glover will receive an honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, for his stellar work in the performing arts as well as being an outspoken advocate for human rights. Glover is largely respected and renowned for his wide-reaching community activism and philanthropic efforts. He places a particular emphasis on advocacy for economic justice and access to health care and education programs in the U.S. and Africa. Internationally, Glover served as a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Development Program from 1998-2004, focusing on issues of poverty, disease, and economic development in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Currently, Glover serves as UNICEF Ambassador. A native of San Francisco, and graduate of San Francisco State University, Glover trained at the Black Actors Workshop of the American Conservatory Theatre.

Baccalaureate Service: Dr. Derik Elton Jones

The speaker for Baccalaureate Service will be Dr. Derik E. Jones, Pastor of the historic First Baptist Church of South Richmond. The service will be held Friday, May 10, at 6:00 p.m. in Coburn Hall. First Baptist Church of South Richmond has a membership of more than 3,000 and host services at two locations, Richmond and Chesterfield. It also operates a Family Life Center and the Imani Village which provides affordable housing and employment opportunities.

Dr. Jones currently sits on the Richmond School Board where he represents the 8th district. Jones is a graduate with honors from Virginia Union University where he double majored in history and political science. He earned a graduate degree from The Divinity School at Yale University, where his studies concentrated on biblical studies, and a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Boston, Massachusetts.

This academic year has been a phenomenal time for Virginia Union University and it is all because of donors, friends, and alumni like you. Thank you for your generosity and past support to VUU. If you have not had an opportunity to make a gift this year, it is not too late to donate.

Our 2019 Commencement weekend is fast approaching. The clock starts for the Day of Giving on May 10, and ends after Graduation on May 11. Show the class of 2019 that VUU CARES! You continue to be instrumental providing scholarships for the students who matriculate here. Visit www.vuu.edu/givenow and join the movement. Please feel free to contact us at (804)342-3938 for more information. Make checks payable to Virginia Union University.

We thank you in advance for your support. Together, we are decreasing the financial burden for our students.
CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2019

Virginia Union University has a rich history of producing successful and world-renowned leaders. There are 61% of our 2019 graduating class that have already accepted an employment offer or have been accepted to graduate school. They will make their mark on the world, following in the footsteps of leaders who have come before them. Graduates from Virginia Union University go on to make their marks across the nation and the world.

These 360 students are on-track to graduate from the university on Saturday, May 11, 2019. They have spent countless hours studying and learning. Their paths to the future are as diverse as they are.

A Passion for Education

SGA President Jamon Phenix '19 is focused on making his mark in the field of education. He will receive a bachelor’s degree in History and Political Science.

Phenix has accepted a position with Teach for America and will be based in Chicago, IL. He will learn, first-hand, the successes and challenges facing public schools. His focus will be on ways of eradicating educational inequities in urban public school systems. After his two-year commitment, Phenix plans to enroll in law school. His future goal is to become a civil rights attorney and to work in higher education administration.

“This is an amazing opportunity that will help me focus on my long-term goal of serving a diverse and marginalized community while also supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities. My experience as both a student and leader at Virginia Union University has sparked a new commitment in me to make a difference by helping first generation college students succeed at minority-serving institutions; becoming a steward for HBCUs by helping them sustain beyond the 21st Century; and, preserving the rich historical legacy of these universities.”

—Jamon Phenix '19

Commitment to Saving Lives

Miss 1865 Ryana Sutton ’19 has her goals set on serving our country and helping to save lives. She will receive a bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice and Natural Science.

Sutton will enter the U.S. Army and plans to work in the medical field with a focus on becoming a nurse.

A Financial Steward

Allan Day ’19 has a solid understanding of how to account for incoming and outgoing cash flow while remaining profitable. He will receive a bachelor’s degree in Finance & Banking.

Day has accepted a position as Assistant Golf Professional at Salisbury Golf & Country Club. He is planning to eventually work in the business/finance operations of the club.

Queen of Information

Miss VUU Trinity Gaskins ’19 will return to her native Washington, DC as her career launches her into cyberspace. She will receive a bachelor’s degree in Cyber Security with a minor in Digital Forensics.

Gaskins is deciding between two job offers in our Nation’s Capital where she plans to become an information and security analyst. In the future, she plans to create employment opportunities for VUU students like herself. She says life at VUU has been transformative.
HONORARY DEGREES

Barbara R. Grey
Barbara R. Grey will receive the honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters. Grey is the beloved director of the VUU Museum Art Galleries and a VUU graduate from the Class of 1947, earning a bachelor’s degree in English/Elementary Education. Her professional career spans more than seven decades beginning in 1948 as a teacher of grades 1-7 in a one-room school and included a three-year stint teaching in Europe, and also rising through the ranks of teacher to principal in the Richmond Public School System from 1952-1999. Grey is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the Richmond Links, Inc., and the Commonwealth Society.

Rev. Dr. Earl F. Miller
Rev. Dr. Earl F. Miller will receive the honorary degree, Doctor of Divinity. He is an unsolicited ambassador for Virginia Union University and the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology (STVU). He is a “Father in Ministry” to more than 50 ministers, including 14 who were trained at STVU. Dr. Miller served as Dean of Student Affairs at VUU from 1972-1976 and as Director of Field Education and a Teacher at STVU from 1976-1977. After moving to St. Paul, Minnesota, he planted a new church which would be named Progressive Baptist Church. During his 25 years as pastor, the church grew to more than 1500 members. Dr. Miller retired in 2017 and now serves the church as Pastor Emeritus.