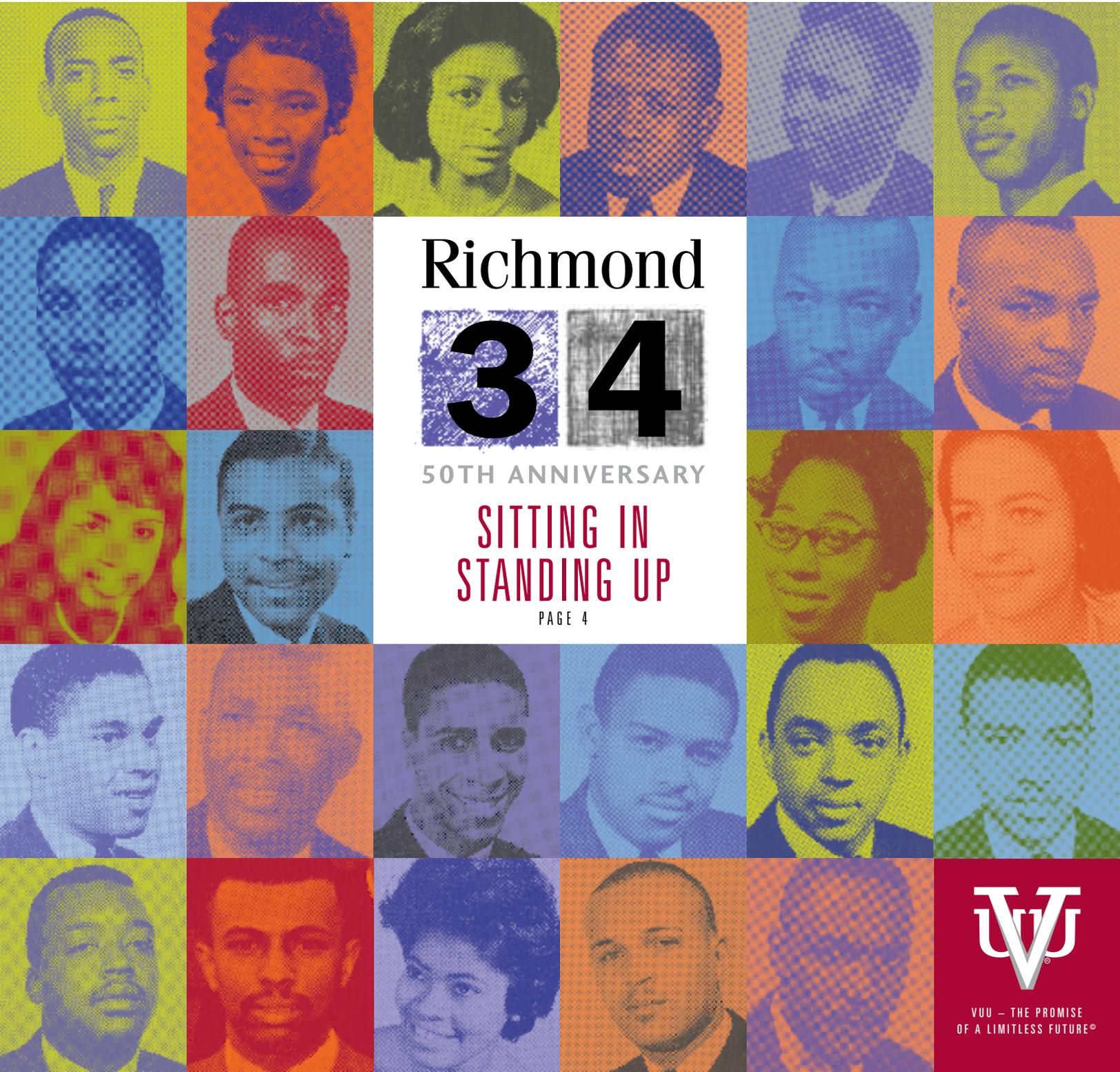


# UNIONITE

VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY

SUMMER 2010 / UNIVERSITY NEWS



Richmond

34

50TH ANNIVERSARY

SITTING IN  
STANDING UP

PAGE 4



VUU - THE PROMISE  
OF A LIMITLESS FUTURE®



# VUU From The President

Dear Alumni and Friends:

January 21, 2009, was the starting date for my tenure at Virginia Union University. Since that time we have been proactively engaged in thoughtful reflections of the university's past history while moving quickly to address the present needs of the institution.

As you have placed your trust in me to steer the university in a positive direction, I am committed to developing "one voice" for the institution that will be a synthesis on thoughtful decisions of which we all can abide.

It is clearly our desire to become a student-centered university where student successes will be the yardstick by which the university will be measured. So the center of all our endeavors will connect directly or indirectly to the intellectual growth and social development of our students.

In our transformative perspective we feel that "little things mean a lot" and the embodiment of all we do should add to the total fabric of our organizational culture. We must therefore take the time to celebrate the successes of our students and faculty in all endeavors and call upon our spiritual foundation as one of the important ingredients that makes Virginia Union University a special place. We must embrace those rituals important to our organizational culture. This will keep our program and practices in the balance with our goals, priorities and mission.

We are making marked improvements to the campus – installing security measures, updating computer labs, and replacing or installing air conditioning in several buildings, including residence halls. We are striving for and achieving continuous quality improvement.

We are making a concerted effort to crystallize our long-held values – service, excellence, integrity, justice and stewardship – so that our University might translate concept into action. In short, we are striving for excellence and working hard to make Virginia Union University into the transcendent institution it can be.

We thank you for your dedication to Virginia Union University and as always, we ask for your support.

Sincerely,

Claude G. Perkins, Ph.D.  
President



VUU – THE PROMISE  
OF A LIMITLESS FUTURE®



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# UNIONITE

VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY

SUMMER 2010 / UNIVERSITY NEWS

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FOUNDERS' DAY:

## Stay Involved In The Joyful Legacy of VUU

**C**elebrating its 145th year of existence, Virginia Union University (VUU) held its annual Founders' Day on March 25, 2010. The speaker for the occasion was Rev. Joe B. Fleming, pastor of the Third Baptist Church in Portsmouth, VA and a graduate of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology.

Taking his message from Luke 6:38 – **Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.** – Fleming exhorted the audience of administrators, students, alumni and guests, to give generously back to Virginia Union.

"When I began to think about how I got here, I am indebted to Virginia Union... When I come back to this place I am overwhelmed with joy. How much I owe!" Fleming shared.

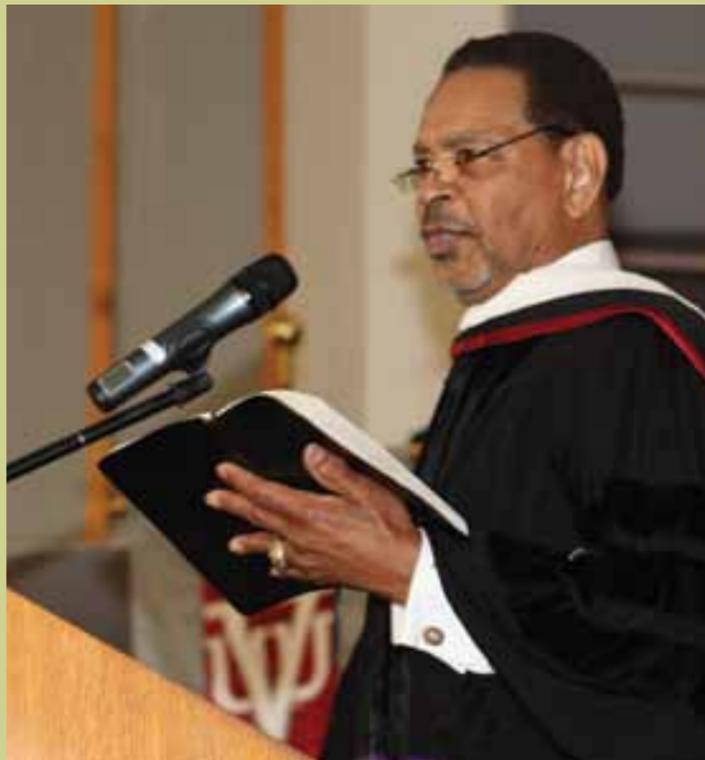
Calling the University the center of his being, Fleming went on to say that Founders' Day was the perfect time to renew dedication to the cause and purposes of Virginia Union.

Virginia Union University was founded in 1865 by the American Baptist Home Mission Society and formed by the merger of four institutions: Richmond Theological Seminary, Wayland Seminary, Hartshorn Memorial College for Women, and Storer College. Each of these institutions was established to educate and advance the former slave population.

From modest beginnings, established on the site of Lumpkin's Jail, a holding cell for runaway slaves, Virginia Union University today, has the distinction of being one of the oldest historically black institutions in the country and one of the oldest continuously operating businesses in the city of Richmond.

VUU also held its 2010 Founders' Day Rally in the Henderson Center, where a number of churches were represented. Several gave financial gifts to the University totaling more than \$40,000 on that day.

**VUU NEEDS YOUR COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT. TO MAKE AN ONGOING DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR STUDENTS, CONTACT THE DIVISION OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT AT (804) 342-3938 OR USE THE ENVELOPE ENCLOSED IN THIS ISSUE FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE.**



**"When I began to think about how I got here, I am indebted to Virginia Union... When I come back to this place I am overwhelmed with joy. How much I owe!"**

– REV. JOE B. FLEMING



VUU – THE PROMISE OF A LIMITLESS FUTURE®

VUU BUILDING DEDICATION:

## VUU's School Of Education Named After Largest Donor

**"IF WE CAN TEACH THEM THIS – TO BE ABLE TO WORK, STUDY, AND LIVE TOGETHER – THE REST WILL COME NATURALLY, BECAUSE GOOD HUMAN RELATIONS IS THE BASIS FOR ALL SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE."**

– DR. EVELYN REID SYPHAX

**V**irginia Union University has named the School of Education, Psychology and Interdisciplinary Studies in honor of the late Dr. Evelyn Reid Syphax, the university's largest individual donor.

Syphax was a 1948 graduate of VUU and former member of the Board of Trustees. Her gift of \$1 million to the University is still the largest ever by an individual. Syphax was a member of the VUU Board of Trustees from 1979 to 1991, when the University honored her by awarding her an honorary doctorate degree.

A renowned educator, Syphax developed the first Montessori program in Arlington, VA, served as Chair of the Arlington County School Board and was an appointee to the State Advisory Council on Vocational Education.



Syphax made a major impression in the education arena in the state of Virginia. Beginning her teaching career in Lynchburg Public Schools, she went on to become founder of the Syphax Child Care Center.

Her focus in life was to teach good human relations to her students. "If we can teach them this – to be able to work, study, and live together – the rest will come naturally, because good human relations is the basis for all success in the future.

The dedication ceremony commemorated Syphax's outstanding contributions to the field of education as well as to Virginia Union University.

**ABOVE: Craig and Archie Syphax, Jr., sons of Dr. Evelyn Reid Syphax hold the picture of their mother that will be displayed in Martin E. Gray Hall.**

**BELOW: Dr. Perkins embraces Mrs. Ethel Reid Walker, sister of Dr. Evelyn Reid Syphax.**



# Sitting in... Standing up

BY: CHARMICA EPPS AND SHENA L. CRITTENDON

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING,  
BUT I KNOW A CHANGE GON' COME...

February 22, 1960... Reverend Leroy Bray remembers himself as a 19 year old freshman walking through the doors of Thalheimer's Department Store to its lunch counter and taking a seat. *"We walked in the door and sat at the lunch counter on the first floor. Some went into the Richmond room. You see the workers becoming busy. I suspect they called the higher ups..."*

I GO TO THE MOVIE AND I GO DOWNTOWN...  
SOMEBODY KEEP TELLING ME  
DON'T HANG AROUND...

*"I saw the police dogs and that really scared me,"* recalled Elizabeth Johnson Rice, one of the 34 arrested. She remembers a brown blur of police uniforms and the nose of a German shepherd at her legs. Rice tried to concentrate her gaze on the signs on the lunch counter – *"I remember the pie being 25 cents a slice"* – and ignore the animosity around her.

I SAY BROTHER, HELP ME PLEASE...BUT HE WINDS UP  
KNOCKING ME BACK DOWN ON MY KNEES...

As Bray worried about what would happen next, he looked up and saw civil-rights lawyer Oliver W. Hill Sr. – who played a crucial role in the U.S. Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954 that outlawed school segregation – going up the escalator. He could understand the words that Hill mouthed to him. *"He said, 'Go on. It'll be all right. We'll be there,' and I felt better. I could see the exit,"* Bray said.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING,  
BUT I KNOW A CHANGE GON' COME...



- LERROY M. BRAY, JR.
- GORDON COLEMAN
- GLORIA C. COLLINS
- ROBERT B. DALTON
- JOSEPH E. ELLISON
- MARISE L. ELLISON
- WENDELL T. FOSTER, JR.
- ANDERSON J. FRANKLIN
- DONALD VINCENT GOODE
- WOODROW B. GRANT
- ALBERT VAN GRAVES, JR.
- GEORGE WENDALL HARRIS, JR.
- THALMA Y. HICKMAN
- JOANNA HINTON
- CAROLYN ANNE HORNE
- RICARDO C. JACKSON
- ELIZABETH PATRICIA JOHNSON
- FORD TUCKER JOHNSON, JR.
- MILTON JOHNSON
- CELIA E. JONES
- CLARENCE A. JONES
- JOHN J. MCCALL
- FRANK GEORGE PINKSTON
- LARRY PRIDGEN
- LEOTIS L. PRYOR
- RAYMOND B. RANDOLPH, JR.
- SAMUEL F. SHAW
- CHARLES MELVIN SHERROD
- VIRGINIA G. SIMMS
- RONALD B. SMITH
- BARBARA A. THORNTON
- RANDOLPH TOBIAS
- PATRICIA A. WASHINGTON
- LOIS B. WHITE

During the celebration of the Richmond 34, plans were announced to create an endowed scholarship in honor of their pursuit of justice and equality. To donate to the Richmond 34 Endowed Scholarship Fund, please mail your contribution to:

**The Office of  
Institutional Advancement  
Virginia Union University  
1500 North Lombardy Street  
Richmond, VA 23220**

For more information,  
call (804) 342-3938.

## PRELUDE

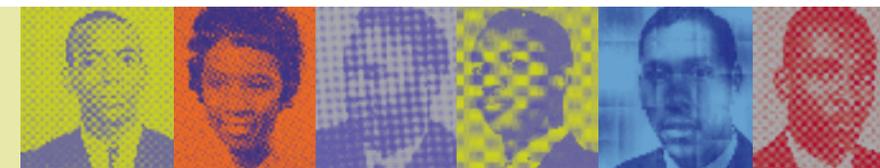
Segregation was heavy throughout the South in 1960 and tension was growing across the states. African-Americans were, "Sick and tired of being sick and tired", says Samuel Shaw, one of the Richmond 34 arrested during the sit-in.

During the year 1960, the civil rights movement was beginning to gain steam with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. visiting several historically black campuses including Virginia Union University. It didn't take long before the non-violent strategy of civil disobedience took flame. Sit-ins, protests, and boycotts were major weapons during this period. The goal was to put an end to racial segregation.

Four freshmen at North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, NC decided to test the waters and staged the first sit-in at Woolworth's Department Store on February 1, 1960.

## MOTIVATION

Inspired by their fellow collegians, students on the campus of Virginia Union University had begun to meet and discuss what they could do to make a change in the city of Richmond. On February 6, 1960, just five days after the Greensboro sit-ins began, three friends met to discuss the recent events happening in North Carolina. Frank Pinkston and Charles Sherrod were graduate students at the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology. The other student, Woodrow Grant, was a senior. It was during these meetings that the men discussed how to mobilize the wider community. A meeting was planned for February 8, on Virginia Union's campus. During this meeting, students agreed to the proposal of the nonviolent action, which would be the basis for their demonstration. Leaders of



the group kept their focus by reminding the participants of a talk by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on the campus the year before. Using the Greensboro sit-ins as motivation, the students began training in nonviolent direct action and held mock demonstrations.

Knowing this could only be done successfully with the help of the wider community, the group reached out to area churches. Pinkston and Sherrod knew they would get the support they needed through area ministers and black congregations. Sunday, February 14, several students visited black congregations throughout Richmond to seek support but, the demonstration was to be kept a secret. Said Samuel Shaw, one of the 34,

"The church was the center of the black community, but we had to keep our plans a secret. Parents didn't even know what their children were planning."

The students decided to focus on downtown Richmond, the hub of shopping. They would address the need to change



ABOVE: **Rev. Leroy Bray, one of the 34, speaking at a chapel service held in their honor.**  
BELOW: **Members of the 34 at the monument dedication ceremony.**

Richmond  
34  
50TH ANNIVERSARY



store policies that prohibited Blacks from trying on clothes, or eating at lunch counters. Failure to change the policies would result in picketing and boycotting the establishments. Picketing, the students felt, would draw attention to the stores and their racist policies. Boycotts would hit them where it hurt – their revenue.

Nat Eggleston, owner of the Eggleston Hotel, grew fond of the group and offered his business as a meeting place for protesters. Eggleston took the initiative to lead in rallying the black businesses in support of the students. Supporters were coming to the aid of the students by offering their services and time. The NAACP and Richmond's black lawyers – especially Martin A. Martin, Oliver W. Hill, and Clarence W. Newsome – joined together to

offer legal counsel, which would later come in handy. The process of arrest and Virginia law were some of the lessons the students would learn. Because of the momentum and support of business people and others in the community, Martin was able to assure that if students were arrested they would be able to be released on bond.

The plan was set as the group grew ready to target four downtown Richmond stores, each with eating facilities. Murphy's, People's Service Drug Store, Thalhimer's, and Woolworth's were the focus, all on Broad Street between Fourth and Sixth streets. Students familiarized themselves with the stores, visiting each of them during the week prior to the planned demonstrations. Said Shaw, "We thought we were ready so we set the date."

### DAY ONE

The date was set. Saturday, February 20, 1960 would be the first day of the Virginia Union students' sit-ins. Students wouldn't have to miss classes on a Saturday and rationalized that the stores would be busier drawing more attention to their demonstration.

Just 19 days after the Woolworths sit-ins in Greensboro, an estimated 200 students took to Lombardy Street at 9:00 a.m. singing and marching toward downtown Richmond. "Singing and marching," remembers Samuel Shaw, "People probably thought we were a choir."

First stop, Woolworths Store at Fifth and Broad Street. Students walked in and took over the thirty-four seats in the

"EVERYONE WAS APPLAUDING,  
HISTORY WAS MADE THAT DAY."

– ELIZABETH RICE



front reserved for whites. The counter was quickly closed by store officials but, students continued to sit and talk amongst themselves. Meanwhile, another group targeted Grant's Department Store. They too closed the lunch counter. Around the same time a larger group of protestors went into Murphy's. They occupied all seventy-four seats in the whites-only lunch counter too was closed.

Around 1:00 p.m. that day managers at Woolworths and Murphy's both announced they were closing their stores. The Virginia Union students then moved to Thalhimer's, at Sixth and Broad and attempted to take seats at all four eating places there. All four places were immediately closed. Personnel from Thalhimer's asked the demonstrators to leave the store and after about forty-five minutes they did. William B. Thalhimer, owner of the store announced that the store would still remain open but the eating facilities were closed for the day.

Moving further along Broad Street to People's Service Drug Store, the group took all the available seats at the counter. The manager didn't hesitate to close the store announcing he would only open for prescription services.

By this time the demonstrations were going strong and the nonviolent approach was putting the managers and owners of these stores in a compromising position. Charles Sherrod spoke for the students making it clear they would not back off – "Our aim is to end segregation, period," he said.

The President of Virginia Union University, Dr. Samuel D. Proctor, noted that the students were acting as individuals

and no disciplinary measure would be taken by the University. "We look at this as part of a total protest on the part of the Negro people against the whole pattern of segregation", he was reported as saying. "This is one fragment of the total protest. I suppose we can expect one form of protest or another perpetually until racism is gone."

### DAY TWO

Thalhimer's was closed Sundays, but bright and early Monday, February 22, 1960 the students returned for their second day of protest with a crowd of nearly 500 people this time. "It was almost like a social fire", described Shaw. Community members and students participated. Both Woolworths and Murphy's kept their eating facilities closed. Students visited the lunch counter at Grant's. The counter later closed. Students sat for half an hour and left. The counter was then reopened. Another group went to People's and were refused service, and as had become routine, they too closed the counter.

Meanwhile some of the students marched on to Thalhimer's. Seventy-five people tried to enter the Richmond Room, a tea room on the fourth floor. Others were at the lunch counter on the first floor. The students holding textbooks, notebooks, and some grasping the American flag were refused service and asked to leave.

The counters were closed for a while but, the Richmond Room remained open for white guests, while officials called for city magistrates and again requested that the students remove themselves from the property. Richmond City Police entered the facility, with their dogs.



"I just kept remembering what I had seen – the dogs, the hoses. I didn't know what was going to happen. I didn't know..." remembers Elizabeth Johnson Rice.

At both the Tea Room and the lunch counter arrests were made. Leroy Bray, a member of the 34 arrested, reported, "The police came in and asked us to leave and if we didn't leave we were going to be arrested."

Thirty-four students were arrested. Those who left the store, walked to the police lockup, on Sixth and Marshall Streets, and waited for their classmates.

Bray was one of the first to be arrested. The students went through booking and were each released on a \$50 bond. Virginia Union's Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. canceled its cotillion and used the funds instead to help the students. VUU Vice President Allix B. James, who would later become the university's president, and his wife, Susie, put up their house as collateral.

The protesters were taken to the Eggleston Hotel, where a celebration awaited, and Elizabeth Rice recalls being greatly relieved to see her parents there, smiling.



TRY THAT WHICH HAS NOT BEEN TESTED. DO NOT BE AFRAID TO TEST THE UNKNOWN.



Rice and other students were worried about how their parents would react to their arrest because some had been warned not to participate.

But “everyone was applauding,” she said. “History was made that day.”

### 50 YEARS LATER

“Dr. Thomas Henderson told us to ‘Try that which has not been tested. Do not be afraid to test the unknown,” said Rev. Bray to a crowd of students in Coburn Hall during chapel service – one of several events held on the campus in February of this year to honor the 34.

Several of the 34 had not been back to the campus since the events 50 years earlier. “What we did was worth it, but

there was still so much pain attached,” said Barbara Thornton.

And yet they gathered at Virginia Union University – February 22, 2010, in front of Martin E. Gray Hall to hear their names called, one by one – to see a monument unveiled in their honor – to hear that their sacrifice had not been forgotten.

“We never celebrated,” said Elizabeth Johnson Rice, “This is the first time, we’ve been together.”

For years, Rice led the drive for recognition of the students’ achievement.

“This brought tears to my eyes,” Rice said. “There was a culmination of this whole thing right there...[Students] ought to be proud to come to this college just because of what we did,” Rice said.



The catalyst for change, members of the 34 saw downtown Richmond end its segregationist practices about a year later following more demonstrations and protests. Their accomplishment and legacy is undeniable. Their peaceful resistance was the first action toward change. Fifty years later the sacrifice, courage and fortitude of 34 Virginia Union students dwells in the minds of those who witnessed, those who participated and those who were honored to hear the story of the Richmond – the Virginia Union 34.

**The President of Virginia Union University, Dr. Samuel D. Proctor, noted that the students were acting as individuals and no disciplinary measure would be taken by the University. “We look at this as part of a total protest on the part of the Negro people against the whole pattern of segregation”, he was reported as saying. “This is one fragment of the total protest. I suppose we can expect one form of protest or another perpetually until racism is gone.”**



## A One of A Kind Gift for A Servant Leader

**W**hat do you give a man who has traveled the world and built an ecumenical legacy that spans from Westchester County, the executive suites of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., to the inner workings of the World Council of Churches?

Grace Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, NY decided that a large check and banquet would not suffice. In honor of Reverend Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson’s 35th pastoral anniversary, the church decided to honor the Virginia Union Board of Trustee member in a strikingly, colorful way. The church voted some years ago to donate eight large, handcrafted, stained-glass windows to Coburn Hall, the university chapel at Virginia Union University, alma mater of Dr. Richardson and his wife, First Lady Inez Richardson.

The one-of-a-kind gift was funded in part by fundraisers related to Dr. Richardson’s 35th anniversary. The works of art were researched and designed by art students and professors at Virginia Union. Each window

was handmade by master craftsmen at the Rolth Stain Glass Company in Mount Vernon.

“The new windows at Virginia Union will tell the story of the University,” said Dr. Richardson with an air of delight and pride. “In 1968 I was a student at Union, and the chapel was set on fire during civil unrest on campus and all through Richmond,” he explained. “I don’t recall how the fire started, but I know that the chapel was completely gutted. The school eventually rebuilt the building, but the windows were never replaced.” Knowing that replacing the windows was not a top priority of the University, Dr. Richardson discussed the concept with church leaders and they agreed that Grace would work to restore the chapel to its original glory.

Coburn Hall, with its two distinguishing towers, houses the University chapel and has a special place in the University’s long history. The building which is named after Maine Governor Abner Coburn, one of the university’s early benefactors.

The chapel named for Dr.

Alex Bledsoe James, the seventh president of the University, has been host to many notable preachers over the years, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. Benjamin Mays, Dr. Adam Clayton Powell, Sr., and Dr. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and Dr. Ralph Abernathy. Even the legendary Dr. W. E. B. Dubois delivered lectures there.

“For me to see those windows [restored] will be a long-time dream come true. To see faith symbolized at the center of the University will reconnect faith and education. It is one of the greatest gifts I have ever received,” said Dr. Richardson who delivered the baccalaureate address to Virginia Union’s class of 2010 in historic Coburn Hall.

Baptist ministers and laypeople committed to educating formally enslaved African Americans formed Virginia Union more than 140 years ago. Over the last century, the small University has grown into one of the most influential historically Black universities in the nation.

Virginia Union’s renowned

Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology has produced scores of Baptist preachers and pastors who lead churches all over the country. In addition to Dr. Richardson, Reverend Shelton Edward Doles, pastor of Grace Baptist Church from 1952-1962, was also educated at Virginia Union.

The gift of the eight stained glass windows for Coburn Hall is estimated to have cost \$200,000. This major gift from Grace Baptist Church given in honor Dr. and Mrs. Richardson solidified the church’s connection and commitment to Virginia Union.

Virginia Union is one of a small number of colleges that remains affiliated with the African American Baptist Church. Deacon Richard Thompson, chair of the Deacon’s Ministry at Grace Baptist said that the installation of the windows made a profound statement. “It is a significant gift. [It] shows how much Pastor Richardson is appreciated here at Grace and at Virginia Union.”

*(Re-printed with permission from Dr. Franklyn W. Richardson & Grace Baptist Church)*

# Commencement 2010

Virginia Union University's class of 2010 gathered under a warm sun and a steady breeze to receive their degrees on May 8, 2010.

Commencement speaker was Melody C. Barnes, Domestic Policy Advisor to President Barack Obama, and a Richmond native.

Barnes warmed up the crowd by telling how she grew up just a few blocks away. "Virginia Union represents home for me."

Barnes said Virginia Union was founded after the Civil War to give former slaves the opportunity of an education. Some early classes were held at Lumpkin's Jail, a former slave pen also known as "The Devil's Half Acre." Barnes applauded the new graduates for taking their degrees "in the bright sunlight."

Whether they teach, build things or participate in a new "clean-energy economy," the graduates can aid society, Barnes said. "The question isn't if, it's how."

She drew applause with a call for more black male teachers.

"Our boys desperately need men who can show them that even if you can't sing, you can't dance, and you can't throw a ball, you are important."

Finally, she urged the graduates to accomplish what only they can do.

"Out there is your courtroom, your operating room, your classroom, your church, your pulpit. It is yours for the taking... We have been waiting for you."

Barnes was given an honorary doctorate of laws degree from the University. Roslyn Brock, VUU alumna and newly elected Chairman of the NAACP Board of Directors also received an honorary degree.



1



2

"WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU"

– MELODY C. BARNES



3



4



5

- 1 Dr. Jeremiah Wright, Board of Trustee member, pictured with Dr. Perkins.
- 2 School of Theology graduates standing to receive their master's and doctorate degrees.
- 3 Dr. Frank Royal, Chair of the Board of Trustees, presents an honorary degree to Melody Barnes.
- 4 Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson delivers the baccalaureate address to the class of 2010.
- 5 Franklin Buisset, undergraduate valedictorian, addresses his fellow graduating seniors.
- 6 Commencement speaker Melody Barnes tells the class of 2010, "We have been waiting for you."
- 7 The class of 1960 was recognized for their golden anniversary at commencement.



7



6

## A True Spirit of Service

IN MARCH, VIRGINIA UNION WAS THE ONLY HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY IN VIRGINIA TO BE RECOGNIZED BY PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA FOR THE PRESIDENT'S HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY SERVICE HONOR ROLL, WHICH DISTINGUISHES INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO AND ACHIEVEMENT IN COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Virginia Union University (VUU) has always been an institution of higher learning with a spirit of service. Under the recent leadership of President Claude G. Perkins, with support from the Board of Trustees, community service has become a mandatory requirement for students who receive scholarships from VUU as a way to pay it forward. Claudia Wall, Director of Community Relations/Community and Student Services is leading the charge to make sure students get the most fulfilling experience.

This is the first year that Union has formalized a community service program where scholarship recipients are required to complete 10 hours of service each month. Wall conducted extensive research to make sure non-profit agencies partnering with the university also had a direct correlation to major programs

**130 VUU students volunteered with Project Homeless Connect, contributing more than 3000 different services.**



**Almost 70 VUU students participated in the Special Olympics Walk-a-Thon.**

offered. Service partners offer students service opportunities at schools, museums, food banks and senior citizens day care facilities, but before students take part in volunteering they are required to participate in orientation so they know what they should and should not expect. "We want to make sure our students are not sweeping the floors or doing busy work," she says. "They must be working in a capacity where they are rendering service to another individual."

As an alumna, Wall understands the importance of giving back and tries to impart that same appreciation and knowledge to the students she works with. The university holds a service fair which is similar to a job fair and allows students the ability to make an informed decision on where they would like to serve. During the service fair, service partners are invited on campus to share information about their

agency with students. This year, despite Wall's skepticism, the Science Museum even brought snakes to capture the students' attention and bring awareness to the unique services they offer. After the fair, students decided which agency they wanted to work with and submitted placement forms to the community relations office.

In March, Virginia Union was the only Historically Black College and University in Virginia to be recognized by President Barack Obama for the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, which distinguishes institutions of higher learning for their commitment to and achievement in community service. The designation from President Obama is very prestigious and allows the university to publicize the honor in recruiting material and on official letterhead. "When you send your work off to be examined by a government agency and they salute you, you know you are on the right track," says Wall. "We are in step with the best schools out there and we know we are making a difference."

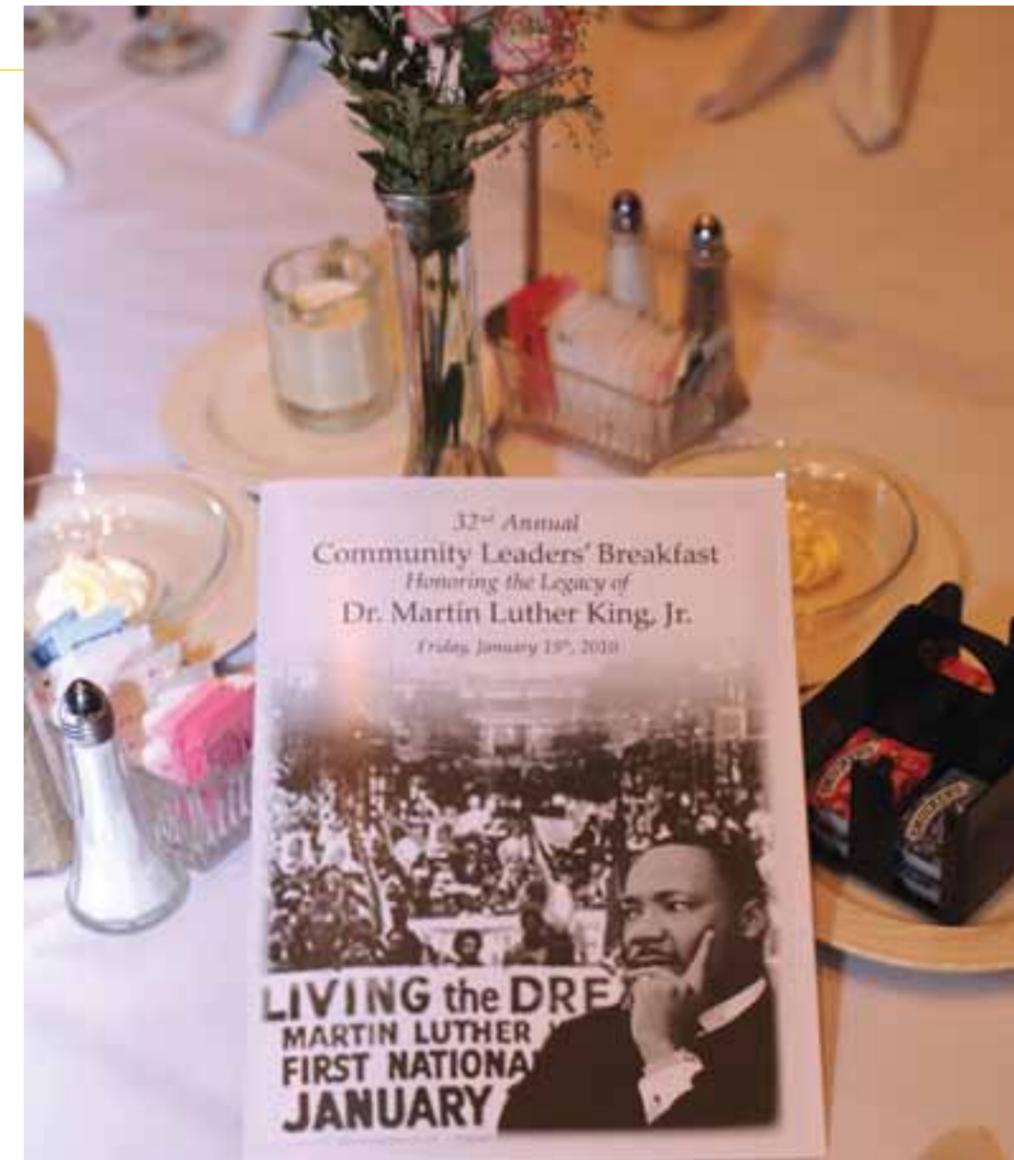
Not only are the students making a difference, but professors at Union also have a spirit of service and often volunteer along side students. This year, 130 students from Union provided more than 3,000 services for Project Homeless Connect – an event where people who are homeless can get one-on-one assistance and find resources for employment, clothes, food, hair care and other items that are necessary



**The University choir performs at the Community Leaders Breakfast.**

for success. Usually, Project Homeless Connect sends outside trainers to prepare students in advance of the event, but this year, Dr. Beverly Aurand, Associate Professor in the Social Work Department and Dr. Jeffery Clark, Professor of Psychology were able to train students because of the hours they have served with the program. "At some point in life, everyone needs to give back," comments Wall. "You never know when you will be on the other end of need." Volunteering for Project Homeless Connect gave VUU students a different perspective on how homelessness can occur. It even showed them that many people who are homeless have masters and doctorate degrees; they have not just given up on life but may have run into hardship.

Wall knows all these experiences develop a life long spirit of giving back. "I try to make sure that whatever I ask the students to do I do as well," she says. Wall volunteers as a docent at the governor's mansion giving tours. She has definitely seen an increase in service and how it directly benefits the community. Last semester, VUU students logged the most hours with Carver Promise, a program that tutors students K-5 in math and reading. Students are also gaining some historical perspective by cleaning up Evergreen Cemetery on the weekends, a historic African-American cemetery in the East End of Richmond, Virginia, dating from 1891



where notable African-Americans such as Maggie L. Walker, John Mitchell, Jr., A. D. Price, and Rev. J. Andrew Bowler are buried.

Upon entering Union, Wall is one of the first people the students interact with. As soon as financial aid sends her the award recipients, she sends out a congratulatory letter welcoming them to the university and notifying them of their commitment to service. Essentially she is involved in their Union experience up until the day they graduate. Wall laughs as she reflects on her interaction with students at Union, "If they are within my sphere of influence, they will be volunteering."



**VUU students helped clean up Evergreen Cemetery, where notable African Americans such as Maggie L. Walker and A.D. Price are buried.**

## Student Elections

BY: SAMANTHA BROWN

As the academic year came to a close, students at Virginia Union elected a new royal court and SGA officers. There is significance in the role of the individuals who are on the royal court – they not only represent themselves; they represent the best of the University. They are role models and leaders and are expected to fulfill all of their tasks with grace and leadership. Royal court and SGA officers symbolize “the head and not the tail” of the University. They are selected because it is believed that they have the ambition and game plan to better the University.

Students who were nominated for positions possessed a passion for the University. They ran their campaigns as if they were running for President of the United States. There were flyers, buttons, and posters. Some students even painted their cars (temporarily) in order to spread the word that they were running.

Union students really turned out to vote, understanding the importance of the election. When all was said and done a new slate of officers had been elected; a new crop of leaders emerging to lead the VUU student body for the 2010-2011 academic year.



IT FEELS GREAT TO HAVE WON THE TITLE OF MISS VUU. I PUT IN A LOT OF WORK AND DEDICATION AND IT PAID OFF. I TAKE PRIDE IN MY POSITION, AND WILL DO MY BEST! MR. VUU – STEPHEN NICHOLSON AND I WANT TO DO MORE PROGRAMS TO INSPIRE, EMPOWER, MOTIVATE AND INFORM THE STUDENT BODY... WE WANT TO BE MORE IN TOUCH."



– NEWLY ELECTED MISS VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY, BRITTINI PALMER

**THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS WILL REPRESENT VIRGINIA UNION FOR THE 2010-2011 ACADEMIC YEAR:**

- Miss Virginia Union University: Brittini Palmer
- Mr. Virginia Union University: Stephen Nicholson
- Mr./Miss Senior: Travis Miles Boyd/ Tequia Cooper
- Mr./Miss Junior: Quentin Cotton/ Shay Moss
- Mr./Miss Sophomore: David Gardner/ Cemone Presely
- SGA Officers:**
  - President: Natashya Jackson
  - Vice President: Simone Winston
  - Executive Secretary: Sherrita Ward
  - Business Manager: Channell Kirkland
  - Senator- at- Large: Donald Wortham
  - Senior Class Senator: Tiara Paige

## VUU Students Attend National Model United Nations NY Conference

Students from Virginia Union University participated along with 5,000+ peers from 340 schools on five continents in the 2010 National Model United Nations-NY (NMUN-NY) conference.

Opening Ceremony remarks were given by H.E. Mr. Kiyotaka Akasaka, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information along with H.E. Mr. Francisco Carrión Mena, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations) and H.E. Ms. Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

Mr. Akasaka shared his own experiences as a Model UN student and encouraged the delegates to dream big and work to achieve those dreams. Ambassador Carrión spoke on the important role of the United Nations and the need for youth participation to achieve future goals. Ambassador Rice extolled the United Nations as “the only institution where 192 nations come together, the way you have today, to advance global security and solve collective problems. At its best, the UN bolsters security, helps to rebuild shattered societies, lays the foundations of democracy and development, and establishes conditions in which people can live in greater dignity and mutual respect.”

The young delegates were encouraged by the dignitaries to become responsible global citizens and to step up to help lead the United States and the world by working hard to understand the complexities of international relations and the interconnected world that they are inheriting.

The welcome by the dignitaries introduced four days of intense debate. Delegates arrive at the conference with months

of rigorous academic preparation on conference topics. The NMUN-New York Conference is held every year in March or April. At this year’s conference, Virginia Union University was the only HBCU to actually represent a country (Grenada) during the debates.

According to Megan Washington, one of the students who attended the NMUN, “The National Model United Nations, (NMUN), is a stepping stone that bring the students (delegates) together from all over the world to learn how to understand the inner-workings of the real United Nations. The NMUN gives the students a sense of real responsibility and leadership skills that can be used to explore the intercultural aspects of life ... Not only does the NMUN serve as an academic pillar, but an understanding of the multilateral diplomacy in international relations.”

The nine Virginia Union students who attended were confidently able to interact with various students from across the globe, bringing them steps closer to their ultimate goals of becoming lawyers, advocates, senators, politicians, and international business women and men.

The following VUU students represented Grenada as delegates in the NMUN: Megan Washington, Eric Scott, Faustina Ayamga, Rhea Watts, Camille Smith, Roderick Ford, Perri Wiggins, Jonathen Freeman, and Vincent Smith. The trip was sponsored by the Center for International Studies under the direction of Dr. David Adewuyi.

The next National Model United Nations Conferences are: NMUN-DC, to be held 29-31 October 2010 in Washington, DC and NMUN-Europe, to be held 21-27 November in the Czech Republic.

Miss Virginia Union University:  
Brittini Palmer and  
Mr. Virginia Union University:  
Stephen Nicholson with  
President Perkins at the  
Art Gallery located in the  
L. Douglas Wilder Library.



# National Championship Winner Named Women's Basketball Coach

**Barvenia Wooten-Collier '83**, is the new head women's basketball coach at her alma mater.

A member of the 1983 Virginia Union National Championship team Wooten-Collier had previously coached at Prince George's (Maryland) Community College and was the 2005-06 Maryland JUCO Coach of the Year.

A four-year starter at Virginia Union, Wooten-Collier graduated in 1983 with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Accounting. During her time at Virginia Union she was named an NCAA All-American. She is also a Virginia Union University Hall of Famer, and was inducted into CIAA Hall of Fame in 1999. She was a practice player for the ABL Philadelphia Rage.

Coach Wooten-Collier enjoys helping develop and enhance the skills of her women's basketball players as well as helping her young women become successful in their endeavors on and off the court.



*VUU Women's Basketball team has a new leader – Head Coach Barvenia Wooten-Collier.*



VUU – THE PROMISE OF A LIMITLESS FUTURE®

## 1983 WOMEN'S TEAM

FRONT ROW: *Karen Hurt, Maria Nicholson, Tina Lewis*, BACK ROW: *Barvenia Wooten, Sylvia Walker, Jackie Glichrist, Valarie Ellis, Veta Williams, Sonya Summerville, Lisa Smith, Paris McWhirter, Wanda Wood, Denise Kizzie.*



Barvenia Wooten-Collier '83

# CIAA 2010:

Although both the men's and women's basketball teams ended their 2010 CIAA

Tournament runs early, Virginia Union alumni and friends enjoyed the "homecoming-like" atmosphere. Make plans now to mix and mingle with old friends, catch Mr. CIAA in action and watch your Panthers come out winners at the 2011 tournament!



# Excellence Dedication Talent

Virginia Union University has a diverse and well-learned faculty. They are leaders in their disciplines, recipients of many distinctions and awards and research savvy. In each issue of the Unionite, we will highlight a few of our faculty members who are the heartbeat of the institution.



Dr. Eve Davis

Both literature and history equally influence Dr. Eve Davis's life. The two disciplines constantly compete for her love and affection because they both capture the essence of elements she reveres, story-telling and historical dates.

Davis believes that history and language are first cousins. She initially thought she wanted to be a history major because she was always good at remembering the sequence

and times of events. It was not until her junior year at Wilberforce University that she embraced her talent for writing and chose to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in Literature that has led her on a journey that truly encompasses both her passions.

Her appreciation for writing and command of the English language is folded into a campus-wide project at Virginia Union University called the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that addresses Writing Across the Curriculum as the university prepares to fulfill its requirements with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation standards.

Davis, Chair of Languages and Literature, serves on the QEP Committee which is comprised of 10 members that includes professors, a student and directors from various programs on campus. When assessing areas of the university that could be improved, writing seemed to be the topic of all conversations. "Writing came out of every department," comments Davis. "We found there was a real weakness here." The committee decided, though it was not a requirement of SACS, to write a book that would be tailored for the needs of students. "The great thing about this book is we can change it if we find that something does not work," she says. "It's not only a reading and writing book but a workbook that addresses different styles of writing outside of English."

The QEP workbook will primarily be geared toward entering freshman. Davis believes underdeveloped writing skills are not just an isolated problem at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, but for students in general because they lack grammar comprehension. "You cannot teach grammar in a vacuum," she says. "Students really have to have a good command of grammar to begin being comfortable with writing."

To take the fear out of writing, Davis simply encourages her students to write.

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## FACULTY UPDATES

**Dr. Randy Fitzgerald**, associate professor of English at Virginia Union University, won a first-place magazine writing award at the Virginia Press Association annual meeting March 20, 2010 in Roanoke, Virginia. Fitzgerald was named state's top magazine columnist.

**Ms. Sarah Colvert**, freshman English and creative writing professor had a short story published in the Spring issue of *The Iowa Review*.

**Dr. Dejenie A. Lakew**, an associate mathematics professor published a book titled *Mathematical Imagery: Hyper Symmetries*

**Dr. Heidi Villanueva**, Chairperson for the Department of Psychology delivered a presentation on Innovative Teaching Strategies "Learning How to Learn – A Biopsychological Approach" at the Virginia Psychological Association's Spring 2010 Convention and Educational Conference on April 23, 2010.

**Dr. Muriel A. Yeboah** published two journal articles in the course of the 2009-2010 academic year, in the *Nordic Journal of African Studies* and *Africa Today*. Dr. Yeboah also won a mini-grant from Virginia Union University to do international research in Ghana during the summer of 2010.

**Rev. Dr. Milton L. Branch Sr.** has started a new church in Culpeper, Virginia. His first sermon was on Easter Sunday.

**Dr. Thomas Fensch**, chair of the Mass Communication department, taught a four-week short course on writing and publishing a book during the month of April. Fensch is the author of 29 non-fiction books. His first book was published in 1970; and his most recent was published in February of this year.

# Patricia Murray

Patricia Murray has been married since 1989. The successful 21 year union between Murray and Virginia Union University (VUU) has seen four university presidents and direct interaction with more than 5,000 students. Yet, Virginia Union University (VUU) continues to offer Murray, an assistant professor in the Sydney Lewis School of Business, opportunities for personal and professional growth.

The first time she ever stepped on Virginia Union's campus in 1987 there was an instant connection. Still a graduate student at Alabama A & M University, Murray says she felt a kindred spirit to VUU and instantly knew she wanted to work for the university. It was that connection that led her to call the dean in the School of Business two years later about available opportunities. "I didn't know anyone," said Murray. "I didn't have any personal connections." Fast forward to 2010 and her connections within the business community and among the VUU family reach far and wide.

"My job is to help students develop professional skills," said Murray. She opens her office to students, mostly freshman, Monday through Wednesday and allows them the opportunity to come in and speak with her on a wide variety of topics. Murray is adamant about preparation. That could be why she prepared students for 17 years as the coach of the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge program (HCASC) – an accomplishment of which Murray is most proud. "VUU has participated in the Honda All-Star Challenge for 20 years," she says. HCASC has only been established for 21 years. Although Murray no longer coaches the team, she uses some of the same tactics in her classroom that she used to prepare students for the Challenge.

Murray is whipping her students into shape for a world that is constantly evolving and that looks very different from the microcosm they are familiar with at VUU. She understands progress will take place with or without them. "It is a very different time. I am more mature so I see things differently now than when I first started," reflects Murray. "By me being more mature, I recognize my responsibility and role in helping [my students] move forward."

In her Ethics & Professional Development course there is heavy emphasis placed on presenting ideas in an orderly clear manner, having confidence in the way you communicate, and projecting a positive presence, which focuses on dressing for success and participating in activities that expose VUU students to other successful people in the business industry. Murray recognizes the challenges that come with each generation of students. "I have to help [my students] meet and exceed the standard, not expect them to have the standard when they arrive. They are my future and I have a responsibility to make my future bright," says Murray.

Murray has a clear vision of success for her students: graduating from VUU, obtaining a job in their area of study, building a family, contributing to society and continuing their quest to learn. However, the wisdom she has gained at Virginia Union allows her to approach her vision differently than she probably would have done as an anxious professor teaching her first class 21 years ago. "It is a true marriage," says Murray, "and I'm in it for the long haul."

Embracing an entrepreneurial spirit

helps to keep Murray relevant as the

needs of her students evolve. She

brings each of her experiences to the

classroom and reminds her students

they are preparing for their success

each day. When she is asked if her

job is overwhelming, she confidently

says no. "I recognize to whom

much is given, much is required."

# Dr. Mary H. Young

“I think my two sisters, my late husband and I were all reared by The Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology,” says Dr. Mary H. Young, Associate Dean in the School of Theology. So it’s no surprise that Young feels a great amount of gratitude towards Virginia Union University (VUU). She accepted the call to ministry in her third year at VUU as a math major but acknowledging that calling did not deter her from obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics. She came back to Union to pursue a Masters in Divinity and later obtained her doctorate from Union Presbyterian School of Christian Education (PSCE), which is slated to be called Union Presbyterian Seminary.

Young’s life combines both her passion for teaching and mathematics which she uses as a tool to meet the needs of students in the School of Theology. “I have been able to use my gifts to initiate conversations with faculty about how we incorporate technology in religion,” she says. In 2002, Young was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, which allowed the School of Theology to experiment with online courses. Today there is online learning that accommodates non-traditional students who are working full-time jobs but take classes in the evenings and on weekends.

In her 17 year career with Union, Young has seen the School of Theology become more attentive to practical aspects of preparing students for ministry. The School of Theology is unique because it accepts students of different denominations. There are students studying from the United Methodist Church, United Church of Christ, Pentecostal Church, Presbyterian Church, and Evangelical Church. The United Methodist Senate has even endorsed VUU as qualified instruction for their students in doctrine and history. Young says that is a huge honor. All seminary students are exposed to an array of theological thoughts and beliefs. “The needs of students are different,” she says. “We are seeing trends that we did not see 10 – 15 years ago. We must respond to that trend. So we are sensitive to how we shape and design the curriculum because we want to ensure students are getting well-balanced training that focuses on psychological and spiritual health.”

The attention to detail and conscious focus on the needs of students is what drew Young to Union in the late 70’s. “I saw my preparation here as an extension of the values my parents instilled in me,” she says. “Next to the upbringing I received, VUU has been a significant staple of support in my professional and personal development.” Young believes that is what draws students to Union and the School of Theology today. To ensure that students continue to be the beneficiaries of Union’s nurturing environment,



Young established an annual scholarship in her late husband’s name in 2007. The Annual Barry T. Young Scholarship awards \$1,000 a year to a seminary student. The first award will be given this year. She also established an Endowed Scholarship in his name in 2008. “We want to ensure there is a legacy here for our appreciation,” comments Young.

As the Associate Dean and an Assistant Professor, Young’s work with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) is also important in helping Union continue its legacy. Young is the first African-American female and only Historically Black College and University representative to serve on the taskforce for ATS. The work they are doing is important because it helps shapes the accrediting standards that schools use for guidance. She also serves as secretary for the Baptist General Convention of Virginia (BGC) – one of four top

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The history of World War II (WWII) has been an important part of Dr. Raymond P. Hylton’s life. The stories he learned from his grandmother in Welch, Virginia were told to him in French, his first language. It wasn’t the bombs or gore that made him inquisitive, but the fact that WWII was largely responsible for how his parents met. His father was a G.I. in the United States military and his mother and grandmother were a part of the French Resistance, which later earned them medals of honor in 1990 for helping Jews during the Holocaust.

Hylton remembers always being interested in the stories. He remembers always wanting to know more. “It’s the perfect discipline,” he exclaims. “It’s the record of human experience. It’s

everything that humans have ever done.” That enthusiasm and curiosity led him to study history at Virginia Commonwealth University and later obtain a masters and doctorate degree in Ireland at the University College Dublin, an experience he describes as intellectually stimulating.

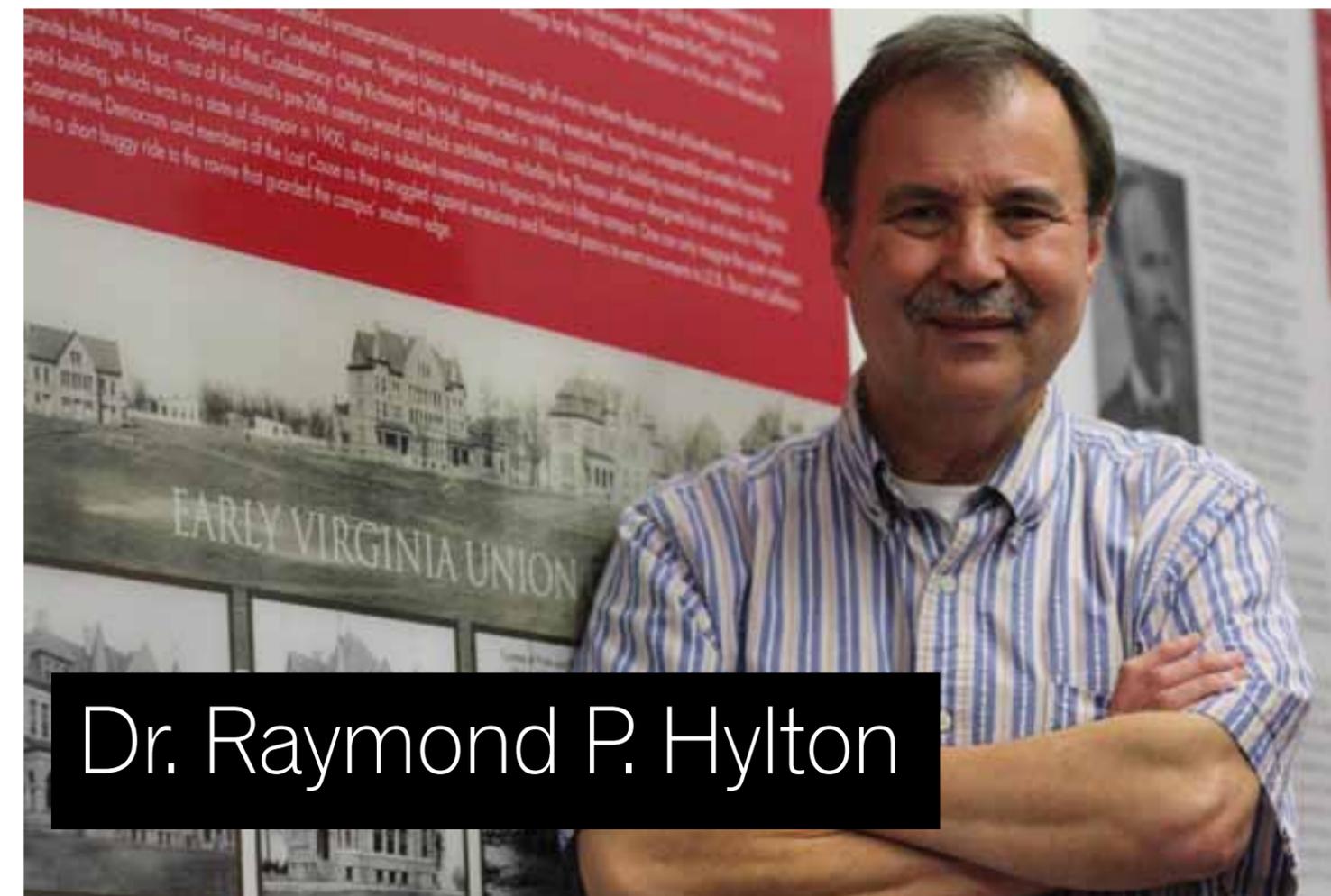
He came to Virginia Union University (VUU) in 1988 as an adjunct professor and permanently joined the faculty in August of 1991 as a professor of history. Hylton is responsible for the most current account of VUU’s history, a history that is full of tradition and legacy. A small portion of VUU’s history had been written in 1924 and 1965, but it was disjointed. Hylton thought the history of VUU might be a good project. He was approached by an alumnus who came up with the idea of a coffee table

book, but life and competing interests did not allow that book to come to fruition. Hylton’s interest in the project did however prompt him to complete VUU’s history which now appears online at [www.vuu.edu](http://www.vuu.edu).

The quest continues to write a comprehensive history of VUU from its inception until now. He’s looking to finish the book in the near future. “We need to make the whole community aware of VUU’s rich history,” says Hylton. “Dr. Claude G. Perkins has been great and very encouraging in this process. His leadership has been very positive.”

What pleases Hylton most about Union and its new administration is the focus on students. That is also his focus. “I don’t want to teach anywhere else,” he says. “I love the students and the atmosphere of family. Our

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# Dr. Raymond P. Hylton

## Small Spaces Can Grow Big Talents

The past several years, Dr. Phillip Archer, Interim Dean for the School for Mathematics, Science & Technology (MST) has been directly involved in helping students from Virginia Union University pursue and obtain PhD's from Cornell University, Yale University, University of California at Berkeley and the Boston School of Medicine. Archer credits the faculty for the program's accomplishments due in large part to embracing students and encouraging them to be successful.

# Dr. Phillip Archer

Faculty members in MST identify potential and establish relationships early with all students that enter the program.

Archer knows how important that support can be and relates to the plight many of his students face while pursuing higher education. "I did not have a full scholarship for undergrad," he says. "It's all about believing in the possibilities and understanding you can move from where you are to where you need to be."

Archer is fully aware of the need for competent, bright scholars in the field of science and technology, particularly students of color. He also understands that many people are misguided to believe that students of color cannot do well in areas of math or science. "Math, science and technology are the way of the future," says Archer. "We cannot escape the need to know math and science in our everyday lives."

Having a father who was a laboratory technician and mother who was a nurse influenced his decision to pursue a career heavily infused with math and science. "It was not what my parents said, but how they lived," he says. After majoring in Biology for undergrad, Archer went on to obtain a masters degree at Central Michigan University in Management and Public Health and later received his doctorate from Howard University in Physiology and Biophysics.

Archer chose Physiology, the study of the mechanical, physical, and biochemical functions of humans in good health, their organs, and the cells of which they are composed because it was the basis for medicine. His passion for his discipline has led him to write a major text book called *Key Concepts of Physiology*. He is also



**Dr. Archer talks two of his students through an experiment.**

currently working on a manuscript regarding infant death and how the environments we live in have a profound impact on our lives. Much of Archer's work is forward thinking and is just now starting to be studied though he predicts with the passage of universal healthcare more people will begin to discuss these factors.

In his role as interim dean, Archer still stays connected to the classroom by teaching Physiology. He tries to give his students a world perspective to which they can relate. "There is a strong sense of ownership in our program among students," says Archer. His teaching not only benefits the program but it also makes him aware of the student culture and processes that will move MST forward.

He is most proud of the students that have been trained through MST and

the group of faculty in the sciences and their commitment to excellence. "There is a need to see our students succeed," says Archer. "We have trained them to think about what they do and what it means. That's what makes them come back and talk to other students and thank us for what we have done."

His focus for the future is obtaining major grants and telling MST's story. Much of that means refocusing and remarketing the strengths of the program, giving special attention to the applied sciences. "We are recruiting new faculty with tremendous backgrounds in research related and applied science fields," comments Archer. He is aware the world is what you make it and right now his goal is to make it the best possible playing field for MST students at Virginia Union University.

# What Union Means to Me

**Dr. Lucille M. Brown**

CLASS OF 1950

"Virginia Union University is an institution of higher education, which served me tremendously well in preparing me in the next step in my life. At Virginia Union I had an excellent educational experience majoring in biology, which prepared me to enter professional school and to be successful in my studies there. Virginia Union also prepared me to function effectively in my career choice which was education. While at Virginia Union I had experiences with outstanding professors who enabled me to be prepared to go to graduate school to major in zoology."



Dr. Lucille M. Brown

**Hilda Yates Warden**

CLASS OF 1935

"Virginia Union University means a great deal to me because it was my ticket to an education. I don't know whether I would have been able to receive my baccalaureate degree if it had not been for Virginia Union."



ONSCREEN: Hilda Yates Warden

**Dr. Edward McCreary**

CLASS OF 1940



Dr. Edward McCreary

"Virginia Union University has been etched in my mind since the age of seven. My father was a student and graduate of this University, both in the college and in the seminary. He drove to Virginia Union every year at commencement with my brother and myself, and I knew the campus and tradition of the school long before I became a student."

**Delegate Mayme Edmondson BaCote**

CLASS OF 1960

"When I first came here I was interested in Political Science even then. I said I have to come here to Virginia Union because my mother had come to Virginia Union it was Hartshorn Hall then, and she played basketball for Hartshorn Hall."



Delegate Mayme BaCote

**Dr. Harold Braxton**

CLASS OF 1955

"Virginia Union means finding ones place in life. There was one professor, Dr. E. D. McCreary, who helped me to find out what my life might turn out to be in my philosophy of life. It was in his class that I wrote it and I stuck to it just about 55 years. Another professor who had a profound influence on me was Dr. Allix B. James, he was our orientation professor. His textbook was finding your way. So, at Virginia Union we began to find our way in life."

**Dr. Russell Busch**

CLASS OF 1962

"Virginia Union is the bottom line. It means everything... I can never forget from whence I came. Union... we're a family. It's a bond. It's amazing that persons coming from such humble beginnings were made what we are because of Virginia Union."

## VUU Alumna Named Chairman of NAACP Board of Directors

**Virginia Union alumna Roslyn M. Brock** made history in February 2010 when she became the youngest ever and fourth woman to serve as Chairman of the National Board of Directors.

Over the past twenty five years, Brock has served the NAACP in several leadership roles. She is a Diamond Life Member of NAACP and joined the Association as a freshman at VUU where she was elected President of the Youth and College Division from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

One year later, she was elected as a Youth Board Member from Region 7 – representing the District of Columbia, Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia. During her tenure as a Youth Board Member and Vice Chairman of the NAACP Board Health Committee, Brock led the policy debate to recognize access to quality health care as a civil rights issue that resulted in the National Board's ratification and inclusion of a Health Committee as a Standing Committee in its Constitution.

In 1989, under the leadership of the late Rev. Dr. Benjamin Lawson Hooks, Brock wrote her Master's Thesis on "Developing a NAACP Health Outreach Program for Minorities." Brock was appointed Chair of the Board Convention Planning Committee in 1999. In this role, she led the Committee to institute fiscal policies that resulted in the Convention becoming a profit center for the Association with average net revenues of \$1 million dollars a year.

With several other young adult members of the NAACP in 2005, Brock

created the Leadership 500 Summit. The Summit's goal is to recruit, train and retain a new generation of civil rights leaders aged 30 – 50 to the NAACP. Since its inception, Leadership 500 has contributed more than \$650,000 to the NAACP National Treasury to support 2009 Centennial activities.

Brock is a member of the Board of Trustees for the Catholic Health Association of the United States of America



BROCK'S GOAL IN LIFE IS EMBODIED IN AN AFRICAN PROVERB "CARE MORE THAN OTHERS THINK IS WISE, RISK MORE THAN OTHERS THINK IS SAFE, DREAM MORE THAN OTHERS THINK IS PRACTICAL AND EXPECT MORE THAN OTHERS THINK IS POSSIBLE."

and the NAACP Special Contributions Fund Board of Trustees. She's served on the boards of community mental health; family and children's services; senior services and faith based community ministries. She's also a member of several professional and civic organizations including the American Public Health Association; American College of Health Services Executives; American Hospital Association's Disparities in Healthcare Task group; Association of Healthcare Philanthropy; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and The Links Incorporated.

Brock is employed as Vice President, Advocacy and Government Relations for Bon Secours Health System, Inc., in Marriottsville, Maryland. Prior to working at Bon Secours, Brock worked 10 years in Health Programs at the W. K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, Michigan.

She graduated magna cum laude from Virginia Union University in 1987; earned a master's degree in health services administration from George Washington University, an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and a Master of Divinity degree from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Theology at Virginia Union University in 2009.

## ALUMNI UPDATES

**Roslyn McCallister Brock '87**, was named Chairman of the National Board of Directors of the NAACP. She is the youngest person ever to hold that post at the country's most prominent civil rights organization.

**Sabrina McMahan '77** published her first children's book titled "Where is my Homework?"

**James E. Hume '71 '06** retired as Judge of the Petersburg Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, in Petersburg, VA on January 1, 2010. He was the recipient of the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy Award and a Resolution from the City Council of the City of Petersburg, Virginia.

**Tisha Y. Lewis '93**, graduated with her Ph.D. in Reading from the University at Albany State in December 2009.

**Ms. Lavern Byrd Smith '48**, published a book title "Pokey The Whale".

**When Dr. Russell Busch '62**, arrived at the University of Virginia (UVA) in 1965 after having earned a bachelor's degree in history education from Virginia Union University, he was met with a bucket of urine being poured on him. This past September, he was honored at the Charlottesville campus for having been one of the first African-American students to attend and graduate from UVA.

The special weekend celebration was entitled, "Living the Promise – Celebrating the Journey!" Busch was recognized along with 17 other former UVA students.

After earning his master of education degree and a doctor of education degree from UVA, Busch went on to make notable achievements in the field of education. During his lengthy career, he has served in various capacities in education, including teacher, coordinator, administrator, national consultant and consultant to the US Department of Education and the United States Congress. He has focused extensively in the area of federal aid to education and educational funding.

A native of Portsmouth, Virginia, Dr. Busch resides in Richmond, and is married to Barbara Jean Siler. He is the father of three daughters and proud grandfather of six grandchildren.

# One Thousand Panthers, One Thousand Dollars Each, One Million Dollars for VUU Campaign.

Several alumni (see list this page) have sent in their contributions to the campaign, which began in July 2009. There is still time left to be part of the list of contributors. The goal of \$1 million dollars has not yet been met but, with additional support from our alumni, it is attainable.

Since 1865, Virginia Union University has been a beacon of educational excellence. In order for Virginia Union University to continue its legacy of academic excellence, your financial support is imperative.

An envelope is enclosed for your convenience to be used for the million dollar campaign or any contribution you would like to make to Virginia Union University.

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The generosity and commitment of VUU alumni have sustained this university over the past 145 years. As we continue to grow and excel, we encourage you to continue your financial support of the University by mailing your Annual Fund contribution today!

Every gift you give to the University, regardless of its size, reflects your ongoing pride for Union's values and traditions. For more information contact Quanda Baker, Director of the Annual Fund at 804-342-3938 or via email at qbaker@vuu.edu.



Dr. Eve Davis

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21



No inhibitions. No rules, initially, just writing. "Writing is a continuous process. I want them to write away their anxieties about what it should look like and we can come back and clean it up later." The committee hopes the workbook will meet the needs of students in this area.

The QEP Committee is just one of the projects

Davis has been involved with in her first year as chair. She also tries to present two papers a year at conferences like the College Language Association (CLA) or the National Council for Teachers Association (NCTA). "Conferences enrich professors in terms of research and scholarship," she says. Most of her work is literature-based, which focuses on African-American authors like Toni Morrison's symbolism. In February, Davis participated in the Richmond 34 Commemoration on the campus. Davis coordinated a call for papers, again finding a way to infuse literature and history. The project brought out participants from as far as Texas to read about their experiences

during segregation. "It was a wonderful experience," she says. "I think the students really enjoyed hearing the stories of people who were either directly affected or touched by segregation."

As Davis looks toward the future of the department, with help from what she describes as an extraordinarily talented staff, her focus remains on research and growing the department by giving the courses a fresh makeover. She is adamant about the department introducing new programs like creative writing and black science fiction writers to lure potential majors to the program.

A self-professed student for life, Davis continues to explore research in presentation and writing. She was recently notified that she will join distinguished professors across the nation at Yale this summer to be a part of slave narrative readings. In order to apply, one had to be a full-time professor with a background in English, history or a related field. It's no surprise Davis was chosen, since her love for both disciplines continues to guide her career.

Dr. Mary H. Young

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24



leadership positions that is a long-term commitment and prepares her to one day serve as president. Her involvement with BGC strategically positions Young to impact recruitment efforts and be a positive voice

for how churches are nurtured to be in relationship with VUU.

Young started her work with BGC back in 1990 before she came to Union. She was awarded a \$350,000 grant from the Lily Foundation to study all the churches in Virginia. She surveyed pastors, conducted face-to-face interviews and analyzed data to assess the needs of churches in rural areas and set a guideline for pastor's salaries. All of her work with these organizations is extremely important to the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology and its future. It's all connected much like Young's career and her ties to the university.

At the end of the day, there is one recurring theme in Young's work and affiliations with Union, "I really want to make a difference with the people's lives I touch."

I want to see Virginia Union succeed," she says. "We have so much to offer, and I want to be a part of changing the world one student at a time."

Dr. Raymond P. Hylton

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25



advisement and counsel of students does not end at graduation."

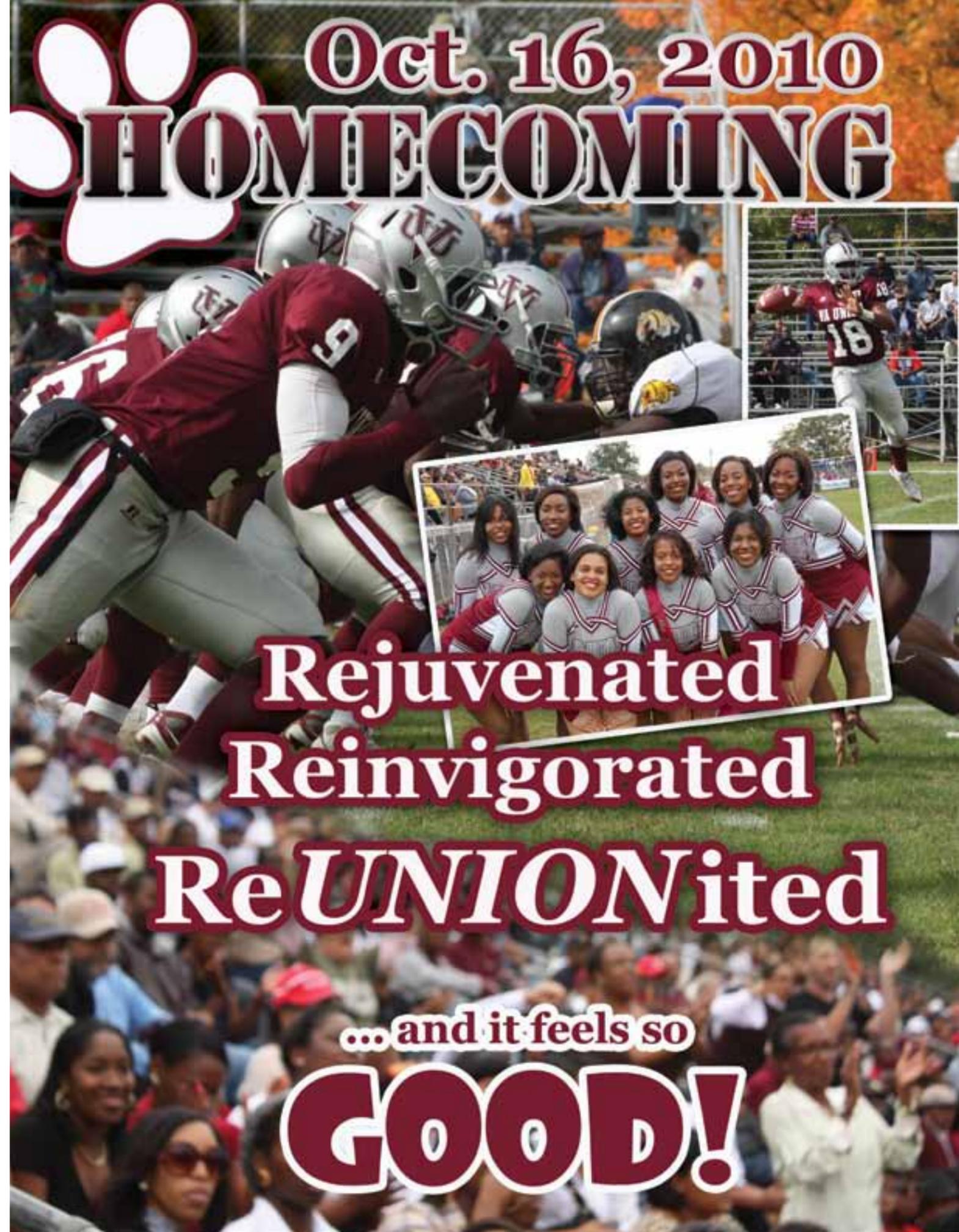
One of his philosophies outside of reading Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is to treat each student as an individual and always listen to them. "If they say something

wrong, correct them, and if they are saying something right, encourage them," says Hylton. He tries to tell students about history the best way he knows how which is similar to the way his grandmother would tell stories. "History is a story and there are all kinds of chapters, twists and turns," he says. "There are heroes, villains and drama. I don't see how history can be anything but exciting and fresh."

While he admits he can sometimes be a bit animated in his quest to tell history's story, he always tells the truth and he always tells it the way it happened. While parts of history may be uncomfortable to talk about, Hylton says it should never be "dumbed down". He challenges his students to question the knowledge they get, even from him. "Students should not only gain knowledge, but learn how to interpret knowledge for themselves," comments Hylton. "That's the difference between high school and college."

Though it's been 22 years, Hylton has seen a tremendous amount of growth in the history department. He observed a growing interest in the civil rights movement as the nation commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Richmond 34. The curiosity of students translates into a growing major that he anticipates will double by next year.

Hylton's enthusiasm about history nor his approach to teaching have changed. He still seeks to impart knowledge to his students and he knows his open approach of embracing different experiences and cultures help them to better understand history. He rejects the notion that history repeats itself. "There are patterns and similarities," he says. "I think people who say that have not gone into depth and studied history. It's kind of cliché and we should not accept clichés, we should always question them."



# Oct. 16, 2010 HOMECOMING

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*in memoriam*

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## Richmond

# 34

50TH ANNIVERSARY

## SITTING IN STANDING UP

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