SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

New Degree Programs, Grants, Distinguished Lectures, and more!
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AWARDED 5 YEAR GRANT

The office of Student Support Services, headed by Dr. Darius Beechaum, have been awarded a grant totaling $1.3M over a 5-year period.

The SSS Program was implemented to increase the retention and graduation rates of students who participate in the program. It will foster a support a climate conducive to providing academic support to low income, first generational students, and students with disabilities. Furthermore, SSS tracks and monitors academic progress, provides personal and social support, and assists with obtaining financial resources.

The grant awarded will provide opportunities for academic development and assist students with basic college requirements including academic tutoring, advisement, financial aid/scholarships applications assistance.

Staying aligned with the university mission, the grant will also assist with counseling services designed to improve the financial and economic comprehension for students in an effort to break generational cycles of financial illiteracy.

For more information on Student Success Services contact Dr. Beechaum, Director for Student Support Services by phone at 804.342.6758 or email debeechaum@vuu.edu.

STVU RECEIVES HISTORICAL BLACK THEOLOGY GRANT

The Virginia Union University School of Theology (STVU) was selected as the recipient of the Historic Black Theological Program Grant. The grant totals $1 million and will be distributed through the Lilly Endowment Incorporation.

“We are extremely pleased that the prestigious Lilly Endowment has awarded Virginia Union’s highly-regarded Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology this significant grant addressing global injustices and fighting oppressions,” said Dr. Terrell Strayhorn, Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs. “Innovation, spiritual formation, and equity/diversity are three of our core values at Union and they align with the focus of this important work. We are grateful to Lilly for its generosity in supporting our vision for a limitless future.”

The funds will be used toward the development and operations of a STVU based center that addresses global injustices through the gift of prophetic preaching and cultural immersion/engagement. In addition, scholarship support will be offered to STVU doctoral students in the concentrations of preaching and social concerns, global leadership, institutional reform, community health and sustainability.

The center will demonstrate the effectiveness of prophetic preaching and black theological education in shaping discourse that addresses and transforms communities subject to injustices and oppression of every kind. VUU students will be better prepared to make global impact in the work of justice led by the faith community. Primary activities will initially take place virtually with future campus-based activities and global cultural immersion opportunities forthcoming.
VUU OFFERING THREE NEW MASTER DEGREES JANUARY 2021

RICHMOND VA - The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission (SACSCOC) has approved Virginia Union University to offer three new Master’s Degree programs, each set to debut spring 2021.

“How exciting is it, that during a time of such uncertainty, we are certain, that Virginia Union will continues to grow and expand,” said Dr. Hakim Lucas, President and CEO of Virginia Union University. “This is what we do it for. Each of the VPs, the directors, the faculty and staff. We are here to see, that students from all walks of life will come to VUU, receive a quality education, and earn jobs in some of the most competitive fields in the industry.”

The first program unveiled is the Political Science, Masters of Arts degree. The 30-credit hour program has a thesis and non-thesis option, which include specialized track models in the areas of American Government, American Legal System, and International Relations. Students in the thesis option are required to pass an oral examination of the thesis through a faculty committee. The non-thesis option requires two research papers the student must defend through faculty committee-led oral examinations.

“The new graduate program in political science is an important addition to the academic curriculum and demonstrates the University’s commitment to delivering critical opportunities for our students,” said Dean Ted Ritter JD, PhD. “A Master’s degree in Political Science will give students the option of pursuing a career in many fields, including government and research, or continuing their education with a doctorate program. The most popular major of law school candidates is political science. However, it also prepares students for a variety of other careers including government and advocacy, teaching, journalism and business. As recent events have demonstrated, issues related to social justice, criminal justice reform, healthcare, education, and income equality need dedicated and well-informed responses. This program will provide a foundation for students who are inspired to impact these issues and make a difference in our communities and the world”.

The second program is a Master’s of Science in Hospitality Management. A 36-credit hour program is focused on the theoretical and practical application of the Hospitality industry; whereby, learners will be able to analyze problems from a diverse perspective in order, to make meaningful executive decisions.

It is designed for bachelor-prepared individuals who wish to develop and enhance their operational, organizational, leadership, hospitality analytics, revenue management, decision-making and data analysis research skills. The program encompasses the study of assessing and evaluating various business entities; in order, to understand the impact of how social, cultural and ethical decision-making may also affect cross-functional environments and the profitability of the hospitality management industry.

“This adds to our growing suite of high-quality graduate programs at VUU, but also offers our students expansive opportunities to learn from prominent faculty and researchers in a number of key areas in the hospitality industry and politics,” said Dr. Terrell Strayhorn, Provost & Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs. “We will prepare the next generation of scholars, and those trained to use evidence and theory to solve core problems in both the public and private sectors.”

The most recent program to be approved by the SACSCOC is the Masters of Science in Biology. The 39-credit hour program, also offers a thesis and non-thesis option. The thesis option requires an oral examination through a faculty committee. The non-thesis option requires advanced coursework in a specified sub-discipline.

The addition of these programs brings the total number of degree programs at Virginia Union to 37 bachelors, 5 masters, and doctoral degrees.

For more information, please contact the Division of Academic Affairs, Office of the Provost, at academic_affairs@vuu.edu or (804) 354-5609.
Athletic Director, Felicia Johnson, Named to the Nominating Committee

Virginia Union University’s Athletic Director, Felicia Johnson, has been named to the nominating committee of the Women Leaders in College Sports, it was announced on Thursday, October 15.

“I am extremely delighted to be selected to serve on the Nominating Committee,” said Johnson. “It’s truly an honor to continue supporting the great work of those women leaders that laid the blueprint before me. Women leaders in college athletics are an essential component to all programs as we develop, connect, and advance women leadership in intercollegiate athletics. I look forward to the duties and responsibilities needed to serve on this distinguished committee.”

The membership has elected the following to serve on the Nominating Committee along with Johnson: Sarah Dehring, director of athletics at Alma College; Maggie McKinley, executive senior associate athletics director/senior woman administrator (SWA) at University of Cincinnati; and Ashley Reid, associate athletics director/SWA at The College of Wooster. These four will serve on the committee for a two-year term with the opportunity for re-election to a second, two-year term before rotating off the committee for at least two years.

Johnson is entering her second season as the athletic director at VUU. The Mappsville, Va. native is a 2003 honors graduate of Virginia Union University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems. During her undergraduate tenure at VUU, Johnson lettered in volleyball, softball and bowling.

Johnson earned All-CIAA honors in softball.

In 2007 Johnson earned her Master of Science Degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in Sports Leadership. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.
PRESIDENTIAL DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES FEATURES ROLAND MARTIN

VUU Global is a new distance learning venture, bringing the “HBCU Experience” to the cloud. Our new initiative provides high-quality opportunities and continuing education experiences to learners across the globe and is part of a broader strategy to remove barriers to educational opportunity in hopes of uniting communities, creating change.

Our first program, Presidential Distinguished Lecture Series, provides learners with access to world-class lectures on a diverse range of topics and disciplines vital to our world today taught by distinguished thought leaders across multiple industries. Housed within the Center for the Study of HBCUs at Virginia Union University, the virtual sessions will give learners the opportunity to participate in an educational experience with the perks and flexibility of enrollment without the full-time commitment.

This year’s distinguished lecturers include notable personalities journalist Roland Martin; Larry Miller, Former President of Jordan Brand, Nike, Inc.; author Michael Eric Dyson, Professor, Vanderbilt University; prominent attorney Will Stute; gospel artist and musician Charles Jenkins; athlete and sports analyst Jalen Rose.

Roland Martin will kick off the series with two sessions held on Wednesday, October 21 and Wednesday, October 28 at 12:00 PM ET entitled “The Past, Present and Future of Black-Owned Media.” In addition to that topic, Martin will also cover politics, Election 2020, racial injustice in the United States and the importance of HBCUs. Subsequent lectures from the slate of guest lecturers also include business, politics, music, law, and sports.

Mission: To develop a global learning platform that enhances student achievement and prepares students to be successful in education, the workforce, and to become the Best in Class in a global society of professionals.

Learn more at www.vuu.edu/VUU-Global
VUU ALUMNA MARTIN-O’MEALLY ’68 RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

WASHINGTON, D.C. – According to The National Association of Social Workers Foundation (NASWF), VUU Alumna Patricia Martin-O’Meally is set to receive the Knee/Wittman Lifetime Achievement Award for 52 years of service.

“Here is yet another example of the type of people that come to VUU and go on to change the world. For 52 years, Patricia Martin-O’Meally has continuously strived to be a change agent in the lives of millions.”

Following her graduation from VUU, Martin-O’Meally went on to Howard University to receive her MSW in 1979. Initially she began work in the geriatric field before a 30-year stint at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital, where she held a number of supervisory and management positions.

Martin-O’Meally was a pioneer and trailblazer throughout her 52 year tenure. She developed programs to aid mentally ill individual’s transition to community living, established services for long term institutionalized patients, and serving as President of the St. Elizabeth’s Hospital Social Work Club as well as serving as a voting member of the Executive Board of the NASW’s DC Chapter.

She was also able to establish the Social Work Bargaining Unit enabling social workers to take part in terms of contract negotiation, in addition to developing the Dixon Training Program, a training program responsible for preparing professionals for community-based care giving.

Furthermore, Ms. Martin-O’Meally served as Commissioner of Price George County, Maryland, Vice President of the Prince Georges County Tenant Federation, Founder of the Life Studies Institute, and still serves as an active member of the NASW Social Work Pioneers®. In 2018, Martin-O’Meally retired from Howard University’s School of Social Work after 24 years of teaching and advising students that will go on to continue her legacy.

From all of us here at Virginia Union University, we would like to say Thank you, and congratulations on receiving the Knee/Wittman Lifetime Achievement Award and bettering the lives countless individuals.