

APRIL 2021 / UNIVERSITY NEWS

# UNIONITE EXPRESS

VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY

Virginia Union University Announces

# ANTHONY ANDERSON

as the 2021 Commencement Speaker



# UNION•ish COLLECTION

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## ANTHONY ANDERSON: COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER AND HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT

Virginia Union University has announced that Anthony Anderson, the star and executive producer of ABC's multi-award nominated sitcom "black-ish," will deliver the 122nd commencement address on May 8, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. The ceremony will be held virtually on VUU Facebook and on YouTube VUU TV. After the ceremony, students are invited to virtually attend separate school-based celebrations with their classmates, Deans, and faculty.

"Our students' lives mirror many of the themes characterized in the show black-ish. Anthony Anderson will bring the perfect message filled with honesty and humor as our students begin the next phase of their life," said Dr. Hakim J. Lucas, President & CEO of Virginia Union University. "I am thrilled our graduates will have the opportunity to hear from him especially after a year of COVID-19 and calls for social justice reform."

Emmy and Golden Globe nominated actor Anthony Anderson has brought his talent and humor to the small screen and in theatres. He is in his seventh season of "black-ish" portraying Andre "Dre" Johnson, a family man who struggles to gain a sense of cultural identity while raising his kids in a predominantly white, upper-middle class neighborhood. He is also host of the ABC game show "To Tell the Truth;" producer of the shows "grown-ish" for Freeform and "mixed-ish" for ABC, both "black-ish" spin-offs; and executive producer of "Road Trippin" with Rickey Thompson and Denzel Dion which airs on SnapChat. On the big screen, he has appeared in "Transformers", Oscar-winning film "The Departed", and the "Barbershop" franchise to name a few. Most recently, he starred in and was the executive producer of Netflix's film "BEATS", alongside Uzo Aduba and newcomer Khalil Everage.

Active in his community as an advocate and philanthropist, Anderson will host his fourth annual Anthony Anderson Celebrity Golf Classic next year, benefiting the American Diabetes Association, Los Angeles Mission and Boys & Girls Club of America. He also proudly serves on the GOOD+ Foundation's Fatherhood Leadership Council and was inducted into the Class of 2017 Boys & Girls Club of America National Alumni Hall of Fame. Anderson has Type 2 diabetes and is an advocate for diabetes awareness and a spokesperson for the "Getting Real About Diabetes" campaign. Anderson has always been a supporter of his hometown, Compton, California. He has partnered with the City of Compton in holiday food giveaways in the city where they provided food to over 1,000 residents. Last year, he emceed the Los Angeles Dodgers' Ground-Breaking Event to support local youths. In the battle against Covid-19, Anderson joined Mayor Garcetti at a South L.A. clinic to urge communities of color to seek COVID-19 testing. He also co-hosted the "Saving Our Selves: A BET COVID-19 Relief Effort" special, to support African Americans impacted by coronavirus. And in lieu of participating in the Veteran's Day Parade due to Covid-19, he co-hosted "The 2020 National Memorial Day Parade: America Stands Tall" television special.

Born in 1970, Anderson pursued his acting career as he continued his education by attending Hollywood High School for the Performing Arts, where he earned first place in the NAACP's ACTSO Awards with his performance of the classic monologue from "The Great White Hope." That performance, along with his dedication to his craft, earned him an arts scholarship to Howard University.



*"Anthony Anderson will bring the perfect message filled with honesty and humor as our students begin the next phase of their life."*

*—Dr. Hakim J. Lucas  
VUU President & CEO*

## COMMUNITY-BASED VACCINATION SITE

AT VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY  
In Partnership with the Virginia Department of Health

Fridays, beginning May 7th-June 11, Virginia Union University will offer free vaccinations to anyone 16 years and older.

For more information, contact  
(804) 342-6746 or [service@vuu.edu](mailto:service@vuu.edu)



Click here to schedule your appointment!

### VACCINE SITE

Virginia Union University and the Virginia Department of Health are excited to announce the collaboration to provide a Community-Based Vaccination Site on the campus of VUU to provide Covid-19 vaccinations.

"This is what we envisioned when we said we were unveiling a new Virginia Union University", said Dr. Hakim Lucas President and CEO of Virginia Union University. "We are a university dedicated to serving the community. We dropped prices to ensure education was more affordable. We have a Capital Area Health Network (CAHN) on campus that is open to the community for their health care needs, and now we are going to get vaccines to residents that surround our university".

Beginning Friday May 7th, Virginia Union will serve as a vaccination site for eligible residents of group 1c free of charge. As the Commonwealth returns to its operational state, The Governor has rolled out a phased vaccination plan. As Phase 1 continues, vaccinations have been broken down into groups 1a, 1b, and 1c. Per the Virginia Department of Health, Phase 1c workers are in sectors essential to the functioning of society and/or are at higher risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2.

## LOCKAMY, BARKLEY NOMINATED FOR LOWES' AWARD

Virginia Union University's Bianca Lockamy and Alkin Barkley have been nominated for the 2021 Lowes' Senior Class Award, it was announced on Wednesday, February 10.

Lockamy, a junior guard on the Lady Panthers' women's basketball team majoring in Biology, is on course to graduate in May and has been a solid student, maintaining a 3.8 GPA throughout her collegiate career. She has been named to the National Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and during her four seasons on campus, Bianca and her teammates have participated in a variety of community initiatives including Thanksgiving food banks for families in need.

"We are so proud of Bianca for all of her achievements, but especially for earning this opportunity to represent Virginia Union for the Lowes Scholar Award," said VUU Athletic Director Felicia Johnson. "She truly exemplifies what a student-athlete is. Her leadership is what any University would be proud of."

Barkley is a junior on the VUU Golf Team and is majoring in Business Accounting. He is on course to graduate in May and has been a solid student, maintaining a 3.96 GPA throughout his collegiate career. Barkley was a member of the VUU Golf Team which was awarded the President's Special Academic Recognition from the Golf Coaches Association of America. Virginia Union's Golf Team was also awarded the CIAA High GPA Award in 2019. He was a member of the VUU Golf Team which captured its first CIAA Championship in 48 years when the Panthers took the crown in 2019. The team placed 8th at the 2019 NCAA Regionals. The team also finished fifth at the Virginia State Golf Association Intercollegiate Championship in 2019.

"I continue to be proud of Alkin's performance on the course and in the classroom," said VUU Head Golf Coach E. Lee Coble. "He truly exemplifies the term "Student-Athlete."

The winner of the Lowes Senior Class Award will be announced during the CIAA Virtual Tournament February 23-27.



## PANTHERS RETURN TO GRACE THE NEW HOME TURF

Virginia Union University's football team will return to the field on September 4 when the Panthers travel to Hampton, Va., for a rematch with Hampton University in the kickoff of the 2021 season.

VUU defeated Hampton 36-17 in the opening game of the 2019 football season. Virginia Union had the 2020 season canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We are excited about the Fall 2021 season, lots of preparation will need to go into getting ready for an extremely challenging schedule," said VUU Head Football Coach Dr. Alvin Parker.

The Panthers will christen the new FieldTurf surface on Willie Lanier Field at Hovey Stadium when VUU faces #5 Valdosta State University at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 11.

"Playing top level competition is always our goal, everyone involved in our program understands the expectations and are up for the task," said Parker.

Homecoming 2021 will see the VUU play host to the Lions of Lincoln University on Saturday, October 9.

"Opening the season against an FCS opponent followed by a program who recently won the national championship gives us an opportunity to find out what type of team we are early, this along with a tough slate of CIAA contests will definitely provide the Panther faithful some excitement this fall," Parker said.

The Willard Bailey Classic will feature VUU against Virginia University at Lynchburg at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 18, while the Panthers will face Virginia State University on Senior Day at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 6.

## VINEY SELECTED FOR NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION & COLLEGE HALL OF FAME

Virginia Union University's Robert Viney has been selected to achieve membership in the National Football Foundation & College Football Hall of Fame Hampshire Honor Society, it was announced on Thursday, April 15.

Viney, a 6'3", 315 lb., offensive tackle from Hampton, Va., graduated with a degree in Criminal Justice with a 3.27 cumulative grade point average.

Fifty-nine total football student-athletes representing 20 schools from out of 321 NCAA Division II football programs were selected. Viney is the only CIAA player represented in the 2021 class.

"We are very excited to have Robert receive such a prestigious honor," said VUU Head Football Coach Dr. Alvin Parker. "We preach the importance of academics and having Robert being a part of the Hampshire honor society speaks volumes about the level of academic achievement our student-athletes look to obtain. This award makes me an extremely excited coach."

The National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame (NFF) is comprised of college football players from all divisions of play who each maintained a cumulative 3.2 GPA or better throughout their college careers.

Nominated by their respective schools, members of the NFF Hampshire Honor Society must have:

- Completed their final year of playing eligibility in Fall 2020 or Spring 2021; graduated players, who have remaining eligibility but will not return to collegiate play (e.g. declared for NFL Draft or retired from football), may also be nominated.
- Attained a minimum undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.2 (4.0 scale);
- Met all NCAA/NAIA-mandated progress towards degree requirements; and
- Been starters or significant contributors throughout the 2020-21 season.

## LOCKAMY NAMED TO NATIONAL SAAC BOARD

Virginia Union University's Bianca Lockamy has been named to the National Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) it was announced recently.

Lockamy, a 5-7 junior guard from Greenville, N.C., carries a 3.8 cumulative grade point average and averaged 7.0 points per game for the VUU women's basketball team in 2018-19.

Lockamy sat out the 2019-20 season due to an injury.

Lockamy also served as VUU and CIAA SAAC President in 2020-21. She is the first Virginia Union student-athlete to be named to the SAAC National Board.

"We are extremely proud of Bianca," said Virginia Union University Director of Compliance and Senior Woman Administrator Jocelyn Logan. "She continues to make Virginia Union Athletics proud. Being selected on a national level is a great honor and we have no doubt that she will serve well."

"I'm just extremely blessed," Lockamy told Virginia Union University's Nicholas Dingle in a podcast in October. "Honestly, this honor could have gone to anybody in the CIAA. The fact that God continues to bless me and makes me the person who I am to receive these positions is just amazing."

Lockamy will represent the CIAA on the National SAAC Board, and will represent the interests of student-athletes from the CIAA member schools.



**VUU PROFESSOR AND THREE STUDENTS EMBARK ON RESEARCH EXCURSION WITH THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA)**

Virginia Union University took part in the PIRATA Northeast Extension (PNE)/AEROSE research campaign on the NOAA Ronald H. Brown research ship. Three VUU Physics and Engineering Students participated in the research experience. Christopher Thompson '22, Jordan Porter '22, and Arianna Burford '24, comprised The VUU team led by Dr. Francis Mensah, Associate Professor of Physics in the Department of Natural Sciences within the School of Arts and Sciences. The ship departed from the U.S. Coast Guard base, in Miami with NOAA scientists on January 15 and returned on February 24th. This project required around the clock operations and participation while the ship made its journey to and from the West African coast near Cape Verdean Island.

The team worked on several research instruments aboard the ship, collecting data, performing analyses, and taking sampling among other duties. Data will be shared with NOAA and other government agencies and research institutions including VUU for analysis and better forecasting of the weather.



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 ANNUAL FUND CAMPAIGN

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 You can give through *Payroll Deduction*  
 or an online gift at [www.vuu.edu](http://www.vuu.edu)

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**ALWAYS A PANTHER!**

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**VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY FACULTY SPOTLIGHT**

**Dr. Adelaja O. Odutola** is an Associate Professor of Economics and Finance in the Sydney Lewis School of Business, Virginia Union University. Dr. Odutola received a PhD in Monetary Economics and International Trade from Howard University, a Doctor of Biblical Exegesis, and a Doctor of Divinity from The Frederic L. Ray Biblical Institute. He received an M.A in Managerial Economics from Virginia State University, and a Bachelor of Bus. Admin. from The College of William and Mary. Dr. Odutola is a high-level strategic thinker. Under his leadership as a former dean, Virginia Union University was selected as a primary HBCU Institution under Global Resource Solution's, Inc.'s Mentor-Protégé Agreement with the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) in 2012. Dr. Odutola was a recipient of the "Dean of Distinction" from the VUU National Alumni Association in 2007. Dr. Odutola has thirty-seven years of work experience in teaching, research, and program management in higher education. His teaching strategies and learning resources were published on CourseHero.com, an online learning platform accessible to over 25 million course-specific study resource contributed by professionals from all over the world (2020). Dr. Odutola co-authored "The Federal Government Spending and The United States' Economy: An Empirical Case Study of 2008-2017, published in the Hampton University Quarterly Journal (2019). Dr. Odutola co-sponsored a 2-day, professional training "Creativity and Innovation in the Global Marketplace" for leadership and employees at Convergent Solution Incorporated (September 2015, April 2016). Dr. Odutola is a Co-Editor of the Handbook and Guideline to Student Success for Virginia Union University (Wadsworth Publishing Co., June 1997). He received the Dominion Higher Educational Partnership Grant: Six Sigma Credentialing and Program Enhancement (SSCPE)" (2010-2011). He also received a 3-year grant from the Ford Corporation (2006-2009), to implement "Transition into the Real World", an after-school program at Henrico High School. Dr. Odutola presented a paper "The Eternal Nature of God" at The Lord's Church, Ettrick, Va. (April 25, 2016). He received The Spiritual Hero Award from The Fredrick L. Ray Biblical Institute in 2016-2017, and 2017-2018,



Dr. Adelaja Odutola

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**OCTOBER 9, 2021**

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 Thursdays at 12N EST



**DR. DARIUS BEECHUM,  
ASSISTANT PROVOST OF STUDENT SUCCESS**

The Division of Academic Affairs announces that Dr. Darius Beechaum has been appointed Assistant Provost of Student Success at Virginia Union University. He officially assumes this new role on March 1, 2021.

In this role, Dr. Beechaum will work closely with the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs, Deans, and Assistant Deans to ensure that all students have equitable access to resources needed to achieve, excel, persist, and graduate. He will identify, develop, and lead innovative initiatives to improve student success, following the Division's commitment to data-driven decisionmaking. He will oversee several areas including advising, TRiO, and K-12 partnerships, to name a few.

**VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY RECEIVES \$25,000 STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR THE SCHOOL OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDIES/ UNIVERSIDAD**

Virginia Union University has received a gift of \$25,000 to endow a scholarship for students who enroll at the university after completing the Scholars Latino Initiative (SLI) or any early-college program in high school. SLI prepares Hispanic/Latino(a) students for admission and success in college. It offers post-secondary readiness programs in writing, analysis, and leadership. The students also receive mentorship and participate in community service activities.

The School of Latin American and Caribbean Studies/Universidad (SLACS/ Universidad) was launched at VUU in Fall 2019 and is led by Dr. Ingrid Bircann-Barkey, Dean. VUU is the first HBCU in the country to open a school dedicated to teaching, learning, and research related to the peoples and cultures of Latin America, the Caribbean, and U.S. Latino communities. Students recruited from the SLI program will help the University as it works towards achieving Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status.

SLI was founded in 2001 at the University of North Carolina by Dr. Peter Iver Kaufman. It has served students in Virginia since 2008 with chapters in Harrisonburg, Winchester, and Richmond. SLI prepares high-achieving Latino students to gain access and succeed at colleges and to create educational opportunities for a new generation of Latino leaders in Richmond and aspire to create stronger, more equitable communities in the state.

To learn more about SLI, visit <https://vasli.org>. To learn more about VUU's School of Latin American and Caribbean Studies/ Universidad, click <https://www.vuu.edu/academics/schools/universidad-virginia-union>.

**VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY**

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**GRADUATE PROGRAM OFFERINGS**

- A strong foundation
- A well-defined curriculum
- A refined learning methodology
- An excellent roster of partners in learning

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- CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION
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- DIVINITY
- DOCTORATE OF MINISTRY
- EXECUTIVE MBA
- HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT
- POLITICAL SCIENCE
- PUBLIC HEALTH
- SOCIAL WORK

**VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY FACULTY SPOTLIGHT**

Dr. Yung Suk Kim, Associate Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Virginia Union University has just published a new book entitled 'How to Read Paul: A Brief Introduction to His Theology, Writings, and World'. (Fortress, 2021).

This read is ideal for the classroom, pastor study, and advanced adult bible study and comes aqeupt with a user-friendly format and two introductory chapters the first on Paul and his writings and the second explores the 7 key themes (Gospel, Righteousness/Justification, Faithfulness, Freedom, New Life/New Creation, the Body of Christ, and the Holy Spirit) which also come with questions for reflection.

Dr. Kim received a PhD in New Testament study from Vanderbilt University and an M.Div from McCormick Theological Seminary. He was a recipient of the Lilly Theological Scholars Grant for research on John's Gospel in the context of pluralism (2011) and also received a research fellowship from Wabash Center and researched transformation and the Bible. In 2013, he also received a presidential citation for outstanding service and unselfish commitment from VUU (2013).

He also received the Scott & Stringfellow Outstanding Professor Award from Virginia Union University (2019). Dr. Kim is the author of 15 books and edited two volumes, including the aforementioned 'Paul'.



Dr. Yung Suk Kim



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

**CONGRATULATIONS VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY**

for winning \$10,000 in book scholarships from the KLM Scholarship Foundation!



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Students can apply for a book scholarship beginning May 1 through June 30!



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VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY

The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation has bestowed \$250K upon the university to support Industrial Hall renovations!



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**VUUNAA 2021 NATIONAL ALUMNI CONVENTION**

Mark your calendars for this virtual event!  
June 24 - 27, 2021

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