



# INSTITUTE REPORT

Volume 52, Number 1, September 2023

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50TH ANNIVERSARY



# Institute Report Approaches 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

By Marianne Hause and Mary Price

As the year 1973 entered its waning days, the United States had a new vice president, Gerald Ford. NASA's post-lunar space explorations were yielding fascinating images, as the spacecraft Pioneer 10 sent back its first close-up photos of the planet Jupiter.

And on VMI post, a small, four-page publication titled the Institute Report (IR) made its first appearance. It was Dec. 14, 1973, and Maj. Gen. Richard L. Irby, then-superintendent, had approved the creation of a newsletter informing faculty of each other's research and scholarly achievements.

The early issues of the IR were a far cry from the glossy, colorful, and feature-filled publication familiar to readers today. In the 1970s, the IR was black and white, four pages in length, and printed by The News-Gazette's print shop. Funding for the twice-a-month publication came from a grant from the VMI Foundation.

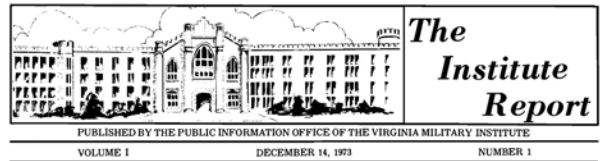
To celebrate the Institute Report's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, milestones, unique news features, and Institute and program enhancements covered throughout the five decades will be highlighted in each issue of the IR during the 2023-24 academic year. Each upcoming issue will feature a specific topic that may include technology, construction, or special guests.

Past issues of the Institute Report can be found at [www.vmi.edu/IRarchives](http://www.vmi.edu/IRarchives).

For history buffs who want to test their memories, several trivia questions will be asked in each issue. Answers are found on the inside of the back cover.

## Trivia Questions

1. Twenty-two cadets served as honor guard in 1976 in Charlottesville for which monarch?
2. What popular destination for the VMI community, the public, and tourists was opened with a formal ribbon-cutting ceremony in November 1981?
3. What baseball legend visited post for the dedication of Patchin Field in April 1988?
4. What year did VMI get its first website?
5. How many superintendents have served VMI since 1973? Name them.



## General Irby Speaks on State of the Institute

### VMI Begins Spending Cuts

In compliance with Governor Linwood Holton's recent directive to all state agencies to reduce spending by 5 percent of 1972-1974 General Fund expenditures, the Virginia Military Institute has effected a program of minimum spending for the remainder of this biennium. The announcement was made by Maj. Gen. Richard L. Irby, VMI superintendent.

The emergency cut in spending was directed by the Governor after review of revised estimates by the Division of the Budget indicated that State General Fund revenues would fall short by approximately \$4 million.

VMI's economy measures will trim spending to the lowest level possible between now and the end of the 1973-74 fiscal year next June 30. These measures will lead to the reversion of \$185,000 in appropriated money to the state's general fund, or 14.5 percent of the appropriation for all items other than personnel services.

The savings would represent 3.9 per cent of the total amount the General Assembly appropriated for VMI for the 1972-1974 biennium.

Gen. Irby explained that the reduction in expenditures will affect all aspects of the Institute, but he emphasized that all essential academic and other operations at the Institute will continue.

The Superintendent said the reduction in expenditures will not result in any salary reductions or reductions in current personnel. But, he explained, various restrictions on employment will also be implemented, if necessary, in order to meet the requirement for a full 5 percent reduction. These would include reductions in overtime, not filling positions which



Maj. Gen. Richard L. Irby VMI Superintendent.

become vacant, and further reduction of temporary, part-time, or seasonal employment.

The announcement of the reduction in expenditures was made at a general meeting of the VMI faculty and staff in which the Governor's directive on the need for the state to live within its budget was explained.

Gen. Irby stated, "It will be extremely difficult to make equitable reductions in all areas, but in view of the serious nature of the problem as outlined by the Governor, the Institute will make every effort to comply with both the spirit and the letter of the order."

Specific ways in which savings are to be accomplished, Irby said, include restrictions on in-state and out-of-state travel by faculty and staff, reduction in the purchase of office equipment, laboratory supplies, and books for the library, and curtailment of printing and other services not essential to the operation of the Institute.

On this, the 134th anniversary of the founding of the VMI, I have the honor of reporting to you on the major developments at the Institute since Founders Day, 1972.

In preface to my remarks, it should be said that developments at VMI over the past year must be viewed in the perspective of conditions and forces affecting higher education in Virginia and in the nation as a whole.

Many colleges are experiencing the effects of a decline in the number of college age young people associated with the end of the post-World War II baby boom. The long-range effects of a continuing decline in the U. S. birth rate increases the concern of educators and government leaders.

The nation's uncertain economic life is leading an increasing number of students to take a year or so off to work or travel or to try alternatives to traditional degree programs. Even the benefits of higher education are under question.

What does VMI stress in November, 1973? At VMI, we continue to stress that it is not enough in the education of a young man to give him intellectual training alone. Our entire system of cadet life is based on a conviction that the development of a man's abilities as are the contents of the textbooks that he may study. Today, VMI continues to follow the citizen-soldier concept as it has since 1819. Nevertheless, in our demanding society, the primary justification for a military college cannot be military. To be successful, a military college must have an outstanding academic program.

The Virginia Military Institute is known for its academic program. The most recent survey published almost a year ago by the American Council on Education

(continued on page 2, column 1)

The first issue of the Institute Report came out in mid-December 1973. Past issues of the Institute Report can be found at the QR code below.—Photo courtesy of VMI Archives.



# INSTITUTE REPORT

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The Institute Report, VMI's news magazine, publishes eight issues during each academic year. Inquiries, suggestions, news items, and address changes should be directed to Editor, Institute Report, VMI Communications and Marketing, Lexington, VA 24450-0304; 540-464-7207; or [VMIReport@vmi.edu](mailto:VMIReport@vmi.edu).

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Career opportunities are available across post. Learn more about faculty, staff, and hourly career opportunities at [www.vmi.edu/jobs](http://www.vmi.edu/jobs).




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On the cover: Cadet leaders climb House Mountain with Company D rats on Aug. 22.—VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.


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For the most accurate information and event updates, please visit [www.vmi.edu](http://www.vmi.edu).

# Casper and Facemire Bring VMI Experiences to Chaplain Roles

By Marianne Hause

The Office of the Chaplain has some familiar faces as the new academic year kicks off. Col. Robert “Bob” Phillips ’87 retired in the spring after serving as Institute chaplain for seven years and Lt. Col. John P. Casper ’04, who served as the Institute’s first associate chaplain for nine years, has been promoted to the rank of colonel and assumed the duties as Institute chaplain to the Corps of Cadets. The associate chaplain role was filled over the summer by Capt. Eli B. Facemire ’19, a cadet chaplain during his 1<sup>st</sup> Class year.

Casper majored in English, made the dean’s list and the National Dean’s List multiple times, served as vice president of the Officer of the Guard Association, served on the Ring Figure committee and was a member of the ceremonial drill team.

Casper renewed his faith during his 1<sup>st</sup> Class year, when Col. James Park was Institute chaplain. After graduating in 2004, Casper wanted to remain at VMI and become involved with cadet ministry. He was hired to work in the admissions office. “I loved my job in admissions, but my heart was really with ministry to cadets,” he said.

Casper recalls clearly when he felt the call to go to seminary in 2009. “I was sitting in that pew,” he said as he pointed to the 7<sup>th</sup> pew back, west side of Memorial Hall chapel.

“Chaplain Park was giving a message on Peter walking on water. I had heard the story many times before, but this time was different. I sensed the call to trust God and step out in faith toward full-time ministry.” Within two weeks, Casper submitted his resignation to VMI, put his house on the market, and he and his wife, Lauren, moved to Virginia Beach where he attended seminary at Regent University and served as pastor to young adults at Avalon Hills Bible Church.

While living in Virginia Beach, Casper and Lauren became parents. Their son, Mareto joined the family in 2011, followed by their daughter, Arsemawit, who completed their family in 2012. Later that year, Park invited Casper to speak at VMI. Being back on post, Casper was struck by how much he missed the Institute. “I remember chatting with a group of VMI leaders in the chaplain’s quarters and someone suggested the need for an associate chaplain.” The idea

was explored and eventually a generous donation from a benefactor secured the position. “I applied and was offered the job in December 2013. It was a dream come true,” shared Casper.

Phillips became chaplain when Park retired in 2016. “Coming into the chaplain position is so special for me, because I look up to Chaplain Park and Chaplain Phillips so much,” said Casper. He con-

fessed that stepping into Phillips’ shadow weighs heavily on him because Phillips’ influence was strong, not only on Casper, but on the Corps and the VMI community. However, he is buoyed by the benefit of having observed both men and their approaches to cadet ministry for nearly ten years. “VMI is a fast-paced environment and ministry is too,” he said.

Reflecting on his new role, Casper realizes he must be his own person, but plans no immediate significant changes. “We will continue going on service trips during spring furlough. It has a tremendous impact on the cadets who go,” he stated. He wants to place more emphasis on communion in chapel, and hopes to revitalize the worship team. He also wants to make a concentrated effort to reach out to cadets outside the Christian faith. “We have a growing

population of Jewish and Muslim cadets. As the diversity of cadets increases, so does the diversity of thought, faith and religion. The primary mission of the chaplain’s office is to ensure the free exercise of religion, so I want to plug cadets into their faith in meaningful ways,” he stated.

Casper recently completed his doctorate from Liberty University. The concentration of his research was on college student bereavement, and how colleges and universities take care of students who have lost loved ones. “It is very much an emerging field, and research indicates that colleges and universities struggle balancing care for the student with institutional responsibilities. A lot of our cadets experience death for the first time while they are here. The majority are grandparents, but every year we have parents and



Col. John Casper ’04 and Capt. Eli Facemire ’19 speak to matriculants and their families during a prayer service on Aug. 19.—VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

*Continued on next page*

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siblings who pass away, and those are significant losses. Coming alongside the cadets and supporting them can make all the difference," he said.

Casper, who has a clear devotion for VMI and the cadets, shared that he cannot imagine himself doing anything else other than ministering to them. "No matter who sits in the chaplain chair, ministry and outreach will be accomplished, and to be that person is humbling. I feel overwhelmingly blessed to have this opportunity," he revealed.

Phillips shared that Casper is uniquely qualified to be chaplain. "He knows VMI. His love for serving cadets is unmatched. He is a man of deep-seated faith, and cadets, faculty and staff know and respect him," he said.

Allen Stewart '24, one of the four cadet chaplains for the academic year, is excited to be working under Casper. "He is very caring and is willing to do anything to help you, whether that may be from a religious crisis standpoint or just someone to talk to," he said.

Casper, Lauren, Mareto, Arsemawit, and their dog "Trudy" will move into the chaplain's quarters in the fall.

Facemire majored in psychology; held rank his 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class years; served on the general committee as class president; sang with a capella group, Men in Grey; and was a cadre corporal.

Facemire first felt a strong call to go into ministry during the fall of his 1<sup>st</sup> Class year, while on a retreat with the chaplain's office at Eagle Eyrie Conference Center in Lynchburg. "It doesn't happen that way for everyone, but it was a dramatic epiphany for me," he said.

After graduating from VMI, he attended seminary at Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity in Lynchburg where he earned his Master of Divinity (M.Div.) in professional chaplaincy: military. During his last semester of seminary, he interned with the chaplain at Carilion New River Valley Medical Center in Christiansburg. "That experience was invaluable in confirming my desire to be a chaplain, and I grew while providing emotional and spiritual support to patients, family members, and staff. I also built a relationship with the chaplain there, who provided me with guidance and encouragement," he recalled. During his time in seminary, he also worked at Calvary Baptist Church in Radford, where he was involved with college ministry, leading worship with music, and assimilating new members.

Knowing he wanted to be a military chaplain, Facemire considered all the different branches in trying to decide which would be the best fit for him. Throughout that contemplation, he kept in the

back of his mind the idea of returning to VMI if a position ever became available. "It was amazing timing because just a few months after I finished seminary, Chaplain Phillips announced his retirement. I was still in Virginia because several unforeseen circumstances occurred that kept me home. I am so thankful to be back at VMI. This place had such a huge impact on me as a cadet. It changed my life. VMI highlights your good qualities and chisels away at your bad ones," he said with a smile.

Facemire believes his experiences as a cadet will help with his new job in every way. "I have been through everything the rats and cadets go through. Being at VMI is a unique experience. You won't find it anywhere else. A lot of what Chaplain Casper and I share in Bible studies and in chapel services, and especially with one-on-one relationships, incorporates our experiences. Students ask so many questions like: 'What was it like for you?' and 'What can I expect?' so



Col. Robert "Bob" Phillips '87, Col. Charles Caudill, Col. James Park, and now-Col. John Casper '04 pose as they celebrate Phillips at the retirement parade.—VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

having the familiarity to share with them is invaluable. There will be times when I will need to help the cadets through difficult issues, but that's why I took the job, that's what I want to do. There is a huge focus on the physical and academics on post, but if you neglect the emotional and spiritual, then your experience here will be more difficult and you will miss so many lessons about life," he stated.

Casper knew Facemire when he was a cadet. "I am thrilled to have Eli as the associate chaplain to the Corps of Cadets! He is highly qualified and capable for excelling in the position. But, beyond that, he is just a substantial individual. He is unparalleled in his ability to connect with other people and is one of the most caring people I know. He loves cadets, he is deep-seated in his personal faith, and he is passionate about ensuring the free exercise of religion among the Corps. I am excited for the future of our office and know he will be invaluable in supporting cadets," he said. ✨

# Beloved Civil Engineer Professor Retires

By Marianne Hause

Capt. John E. “Ned” Riester Jr. ’78, professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE), has retired after 29 years. With his larger-than-life personality, jovial attitude, and talent for recounting funny and memorable stories, Riester has been an enduring favorite among cadets, faculty, and staff.

Riester majored in civil engineering (CE) at VMI, held rank, was on the Navy pistol team, and was a distinguished graduate. He commissioned into the Navy and served 10 years active duty on submarines and submarine tenders (ships that provide repair services to submarines) and at a submarine training center. After retiring from the Navy, he earned his master’s degree in mechanical engineering and doctorate degree in civil engineering from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

Riester returned to VMI in 1993 to teach engineering classes such as fluid mechanics, hydraulics, fundamentals of engineering, surveying, infrastructures and labs, and was department head for 11 years. During the academic year of 2001–02 he taught at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, as part of their distinguished visiting professor program. Each summer from 1998 to 2005, he ran a week-long engineering camp for middle school students. He served in advisory roles for many cadet organizations including the Honor Court, community service projects, and VMI Theatre, where he was also seen performing on stage. He was the class advisor for the Classes of 1997 and 2021, and was director of the Summer Transition Program (STP) for incoming matriculants for 17 years. He recognized the value of getting involved in the lives of the cadets outside the classroom, and encouraged his colleagues to do the same. “I found that these extra duties were fun, and you get to know a lot of people you wouldn’t otherwise,” he said. He also

accumulated a wealth of stories. So much so, that he has written a book to be published in the future titled, “All Right Sir” referring to the response cadets gave during stick-checks when he had officer-in-charge barracks duty. “During barracks duty, I’d hit each door with a stick and if everybody was all right in the room, the cadets would call out, ‘All right, sir.’ The book includes a lot of stories from when I had barracks duty, as well as some of the crazy things that happened in class,” shared Riester.

“Barracks duty involved going around barracks after Taps and tapping on each



Capt. John E. “Ned” Riester Jr. ’78 receives congratulations from cadets after the retirement parade in April.—VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

of the doors, counting heads and ensuring everyone who is supposed to be in the room is accounted for, that no one is missing, and no one extra is in the room. One incident involved a room on second stoop, and two baseball players from the Class of 1996 I’ll refer to as ‘P’ and ‘M’, who were civil engineering majors. I had them in my fluids class and they were studying for a test I was giving the next morning. I look in their door, and there are three guys in there: ‘P’, ‘M’ and another CE major I’ll call ‘S’. So I go in their room and say, ‘oh S, I think you’re visiting.’ He said, ‘oh yes sir, I’m in here getting ready for the test.’ Then knowing that if I go by his room and find him missing, that he is in big trouble, asks me, “Which direction did you come from?” I told him that was his problem to figure out. So I took off running toward

his room to try to beat him there, but I still had to hit all the doors in between. The corporal who was assisting me was running behind me, checking off all the door numbers as I did stick-check. It was dark, and as we ran around the corner, I hit a first sergeant’s desk that was out on the stoop and flew head-over-heels. I’m lying on the ground and from behind me ‘S’ leaps over me and says with a big smirk on his face, ‘have a nice evening, sir,’” laughed Riester.

Another way Riester has endeared himself to the Corps was by starting a tradition of sending out emails on parade days.

“Classes used to be held on Saturdays, but on one particular Saturday, classes had been canceled. Another faculty member and I offered to schedule a help session for cadets who may have needed extra tutoring. But the cadets balked at the idea because they wanted their rare Saturday off, so the help session didn’t occur. Instead, parade practice was scheduled at the last minute, ruining their holiday. When I found out, I sent an email to all my students which simply said, ‘Gotta Love a Parade’ in big, bold letters, and got a lot of discontented replies. I sent a similar one the next parade day, and received even more annoyed replies,” he mused. Through the years he has added weather reports, and countdowns to special events like Ring Figure and Family Weekend. He’d offer little digs about the cadets having to shine their shoes and roll up their hay, but always included a sincere reminder that the experiences they are going through now are forming the precious memories that they will one day call “the good ole days.” But he’d always close the emails with his tagline, “You Gotta Love a Parade.”

Lt. Matthew Frazier ’23 who majored in civil engineering credits Riester for his decision to attend VMI. “When I came to an admissions open house as a high school student, he was the most fun and entertaining professor I ever imagined, and I wanted to come to VMI just in hopes of having a class with him. He was unlike anyone else, and

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## STP

More than 100 incoming cadets gave up a few weeks of their summer break to participate in the Summer Transition Program (STP). This voluntary program allows them to live in barracks, eat in Crozet Hall, and work on their physical fitness prior to matriculation. Participants also completed one academic course and attended a picnic hosted by the Chaplain's Office.—VMI  
*Photos by Kelly Nye.*





# Cadets Conduct Summer Research

By Marianne Hause

The Summer Undergraduate Research Institute (SURI) provides a structured program and financial support for research projects conducted during the summer while offering course credit. Cadets engage in comprehensive research with their faculty mentor for either a 5-week or a 10-week experience. More than 30 cadets conducted research on post this summer.

Riley Malone '25, a history major, examined the government policy on service members, and how their First Amendment rights have changed from 1900 to the present in his 10-week SURI project titled, "True Faith and Allegiance: The First Amendment in the Military."

Malone, who has a vested interest in military law since he plans to commission into the Army upon graduating, became interested in the subject when he took a class called U.S. Constitutional History, taught by Lt. Col. Mark Boonshoft, associate professor and holder of the Conrad M. Hall '65 Chair in American Constitutional History. "Before I took the class, I had not been aware of the differences between military and civil law. There are a lot of articles in the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) that I didn't understand, so I began to look into the history of it," explained Malone.

According to Malone, the UCMJ puts restrictions on First Amendment rights such as speech and freedom of religion. "Officers can be charged for speaking ill of certain officials, including the president of the United States, elected state officials, and superior officers. Enlisted personnel can be charged for saying anything that violates 'good order and discipline' within the military. Such broad and restrictive laws would not be permissible in a civilian setting," he said.

The military places heavy restrictions on fundamental rights for several reasons. It argues that UCMJ laws are fundamental to national security, and helps maintain civil-military relations, citing that it is vital the military remains subordinate to the civilian government, preventing conflict and a politicized military. Military and civilian courts have recently begun calling this reasoning into question.

"I found it amazing that someone off duty can say something political, like any ordinary person, but since they are a part-time soldier, they can be punished and sentenced to hard labor," said Malone. Though he concedes charges and convictions don't happen often, since modern courts have become more lenient, when it does happen, it is significant. "The most recent example I have looked at

so far happened in 2003 when an Army officer refused to deploy for his unit's assigned rotation to Operation Iraqi Freedom, and accused President Bush of starting the war illegally. The officer was charged with speaking ill of an elected official and disobeying a direct order."

More recent cases he examined included the January 6, 2021, incident at the U.S. Capitol building, where many veterans were in attendance, as well as a smaller group of active or reserve military members and national guardsmen. "Some of them were charged with conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman or violating the no politics rule, and I want to see how that gets resolved," said Malone.

Boonshoft, who served as Malone's advisor for the project, said, "Malone identified a question of perennial importance, but which is understudied by scholars. This research will make an important and timely contribution. Malone possesses a keen ability to pick up the nuances in judicial reasoning and a sharp sense for placing legal changes within their historical context, necessary skills for a project traversing law and history."

Malone said he had additional questions after the 10-week SURI session was over, so he plans to incorporate the project into his capstone and thesis for the Institute Honors program.

Malone, who is from Staunton, is the training sergeant for VMI's EMT agency,

a member of the Ethics team, and vice president of the Phi Alpha Theta history honors society. Upon graduating, he hopes to become an aviation or infantry officer in the Army. Constitutional history is an area he would like to focus on after his military career.

Lawrence Porter '24, a civil engineering major, conducted a 10-week project titled, "The Serviceability Response of a VMI Footbridge on the Chessie Trail." The Chessie Nature Trail, which runs along the Maury River from Lexington to Buena Vista, is a mecca to tourists, hikers, bikers, and nature lovers. It is owned by VMI and often used by cadets for physical training. It consists of seven miles of level path including several pedestrian bridges.

The bridge he selected to study is one of many on the trail susceptible to deflections and vibrations that can be emitted by foot traffic (e.g., marching, running, and walking by individuals, teams, races, and military units). "While I studied this particular bridge, a long-term goal for the civil engineering department is to examine



Riley Malone '25 drafts out notes from his research on the impact of government policies on service members.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

*Continued on next page*





Lawrence Porter '24 sets up equipment to run tests on the serviceability of a footbridge on the Chessie Nature Trail.—VMI Photo by Marianne Hause.

all the bridges on the trail. We will measure the deflections and vibrations caused by different loads acting on each bridge, looking at both vertical and lateral (side sway) displacement. The data collected from these tests can indicate the current serviceability state of each bridge. We are still investigating how old the bridge is and where the two steel beams came from. They are exactly the same size, which is rare. The bridge beams were likely reserviced from another structure and put into place with new wood decking for this pedestrian bridge,” said Porter.

Porter referred to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) for guidelines pertaining to steel structures.

In addition, he used a displacement measuring device called a wire potentiometer (wire pot); cable to run down from the steel beams to the wire pot to measure all the deflections; a magnetic hook attached to the steel beams on which to connect the wire; an accelerometer, which measures vibrations; a generator to power the equipment; ladders to reach to beams; and laptop to analyze his data.

Serviceability, defined for this study, is not a measurement of safety, but rather the perception of safety on the

part of the person crossing the bridge. A bridge can be functionally safe, but if it appears unsafe or if the vibrations and deflections caused by moving across it result in fear and anxiety to a person, then there is a serviceability issue. To test perception, Porter surveyed people crossing the bridge.

Porter’s advisor on the project, Maj. Kacie D’Alessandro, assistant professor of civil engineering, said that as civil engineers, their utmost priority is focused on the safety and well-being of those impacted by their designs. “By focusing on serviceability of local pedestrian bridges along the Chessie Nature Trail, Porter has gained first-hand experience with how engineering impacts a community. It has been interesting to see how he has looked into loading scenarios, such as rucking in groups, that are unique to VMI and our local trails,” she said.

Porter will present his findings at the VMI Undergraduate Research Symposium in April. From West Point, he is the son of Sandy and Tracy Porter ’87. Upon graduating, he plans to commission into the Army National Guard as an officer in the Corps of Engineers.

Brian Tavenner ’25, an electrical and computer engineering major, conducted a five-week research project titled, “Target Altitude Project,” in which he designed and built a fiberglass rocket to reach the exact height of 1,023 feet using a F-engine motor.

Tavenner chose the research project in order to enhance his engineering skills including electrical and mechanical design, documenta-

tion, construction, and debugging. In addition, he wanted to lay the foundation for a VMI rocketry club to compete with other colleges.

According to Tavenner, many major colleges and universities including The Citadel, MIT, and Georgia Tech sponsor student-led rocketry clubs as chapters of the National Rocketry Association. “I propose to create a high-power rocketry club for VMI, and lead a team to enter a rocket combination competition in the annual national intercollegiate Battle of the Rockets, Target Altitude Event,” he said. The height of 1,023 is a requirement of the competition to be held in April. The team with the closest altitude to 1,023 wins.

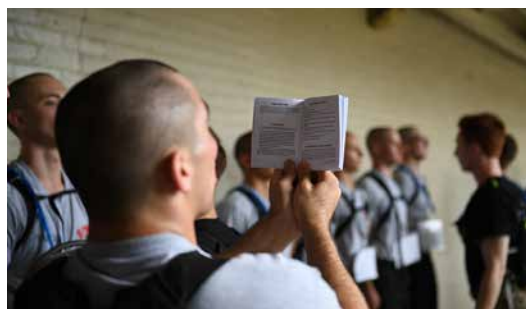
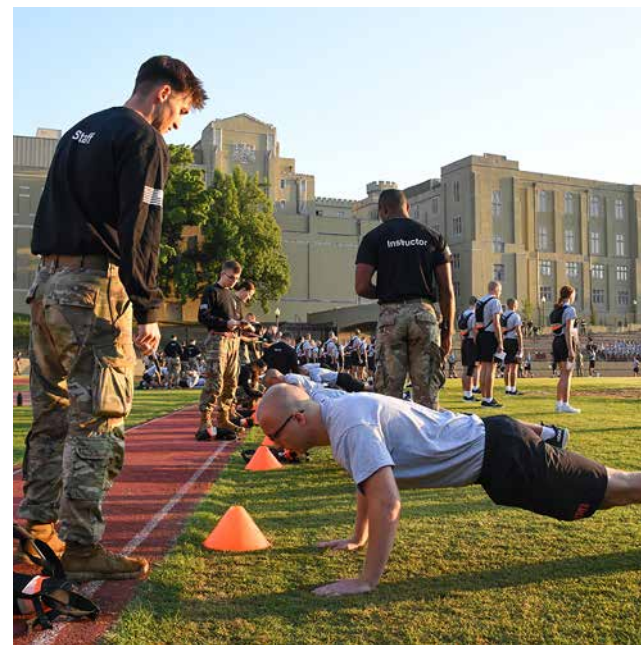
Tavenner pointed out that all the measurements in the design of the rocket must be perfectly accurate to



Brian Tavenner ’25 works on components of a rocket for his Summer Undergraduate Research Institute project.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

See Summer Research, page 17





### Matriculation Week

Matriculants and their families arrived at VMI throughout the morning of Aug. 19 to visit the Matriculation Fair, get fitted for uniforms, drop off their items in barracks, meet with professors and other VMI administration, and sign the Matriculation Book. Following the ceremony, the matriculants were led up to barracks to meet their cadre. The Rat Line training began immediately with a busy schedule of the week before classes started, including a climb up House Mountain.—VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin, Kelly Nye, and Andrew Partridge '24.





# VMI Matriculates Rat Mass

By Marianne Hause

Matriculation Day was held Saturday, Aug. 19, beginning the Rat Line for the new academic year. This year marks the 184<sup>th</sup> year of the Institute.

The day included a fair in Cocke Hall where the students and their families were able to meet with various VMI agencies, local bankers, churches, and other community organizations. Also part of the process was a uniform fitting and issuing of their physical training uniform in Cameron Hall, and completion of paperwork, meeting department faculty, and the traditional signing of the Matriculation Book in the Corps Physical Training Facility. Throughout the morning, the barracks were teeming with parents assisting their students moving into their rooms, and meeting their roommates.

In the afternoon, the Chaplain's Prayer, an optional non-denominational prayer session for matriculants and their families, was held in Memorial Hall, followed by the Superintendent's Welcome in Cameron Hall.

Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins '85 addressed the incoming 491 matriculants and their families, and the matriculants took an oath during the ceremony. With hugs, cheers, and a few tears, they bid good-bye to their families, formed up with their companies for the first time, and marched up to barracks where they met their cadre, a group of cadets holding rank in each company, and are chosen based on performance and ability to serve as instructors for the Rat Mass.

This year's Rat Mass comes from 39 states and five foreign countries, with 57% from

Virginia and 43% from out of state. Seventy-one are female, and 176 are recruited NCAA athletes. Forty-nine percent have selected a major in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines and 51% are majoring in the liberal arts.

This year, two families who already have

am excited to see their transformation from individuals to a class," he said.

The Hagans are part of a legacy family at VMI, who include their father, Joseph Addison "Add" Hagan IV '97; their grandfather, Joseph Addison "Ad" Hagan III '68; their great-grandfather, Joseph Addison

"Add" Hagan Jr. '42; and their great-great grandfather, Joseph Addison "Addi" Hagan Sr., VMI Class of 1916. In addition, they have multiple cousins, and uncles who graduated from VMI.

According to Add '97, his three children, Addison, Lucy, and Tyler, have all grown up with great respect for the Institute and its mission of producing educated and honorable citizen-soldiers willing to contribute to society. "But there is a considerable difference between appreciating and attending VMI, and I never anticipated any—much less all—of my children would choose this less-traveled path. As a VMI graduate and as a parent, it is fulfilling to see my children choose this more challenging endeavor for themselves. Having witnessed the incredibly positive impact of three years at VMI on our oldest, I am eager to see our younger two embrace, and benefit from, the same system. This is going to be a fun year, as we get to see the book-ends of the life of a cadet through our three children's experiences," he said.

The Townsend family from Crozier now have four children at VMI. Alice and Mark '96

witnessed their son, David, and daughter, Margaret matriculate this year. They joined their older sisters, Anne Townsend '24, a civil engineering major and Band Company commander, and Virginia Townsend '24, a chemistry major and regimental S2 captain. "We are excited for Margaret and David to be here this year! VMI already feels like a



Lucy and Tyler Hagan pose at the Matriculation Book on Aug. 19—VMI Photo by Marianne Hause.

cadets at VMI sent two siblings to join them. Lucy and Tyler Hagan, sister and brother from Richmond, signed the Matriculation Book and joined their older brother, Joseph Addison Hagan V '24, a civil engineering major and member of the cadre. "I am excited to see my siblings be tested, endure hardship, and develop the same strong friendships that I have enjoyed. I look forward to watching them earn my full respect through their efforts in the Rat Line, and I

*Continued on next page*

family, and with them here, it will even more,” said Virginia.

The Townsend parents love having all four of their children at VMI. “We are blessed with four talented kids who were given all the encouragement in the world to choose a college that meets their needs, and each of them applied early decision to VMI. There is no way that we can take credit for their choice. VMI gets all the credit for recruiting them, and supporting their educational goals and dreams,” they said.

In addition to the Hagan and Townsend families, the Ahrens family welcomed a third sibling on post. Brothers Owen Ahrens '24 and Noah Ahrens '25 from Lynchburg, welcomed their sister Tess as



Margaret and David Townsend join their two older sisters at VMI as they sign the Matriculation Book on Aug. 19—VMI Photo by Marianne Hause.

an incoming rat. “VMI is special. But there is a difference between knowing something is special from the outside, and experiencing it from within the walls of barracks. I could not be prouder of my sister’s decision to choose this special experience that will always hold a place in our family’s legacy,” said Owen.

Noah agrees. “Entering VMI the year after my brother has brought joy few siblings are able to share. VMI is more than a college, and I am happy to have our sister join us to share this unique experience,” he said.

The matriculation process continued throughout the week with the cadre leading the new arrivals in military drills and physical training, culminating with the Rat Crucible on Sunday, Aug. 27. The Rat Mass will officially become the Class of 2027 in the spring semester, after Breakout.

Members of the Old Corps returned Sunday, Aug. 27, and classes began Tuesday, Aug. 29. 🦡

## Summer Construction

Over the summer, there were several construction and beautification projects taking place on post. In Cameron Hall, 576 new retractable seats were installed in the red seat section. In addition, the court floor was rescreened which involves sanding and buffing, and the application of two new coats of finish.

A new fixed-digit scoreboard capable of supporting both soccer and lacrosse was installed at Patchin Field, replacing the 24-year-old scoreboard.

Gray-Minor Stadium is getting artificial turf, new field drainage, underground stormwater management, field grading, and a dugout expansion thanks to donations from Michael Lamore '85. When completed, with a target date in November, the field will be named Lamore Field at Gray-Minor Stadium.

Around the statue of George C. Marshall in front of barracks, clay was replaced for better soil for grass growth, then resodded. The boxwoods struggling with fungal blight were replaced with hardier plants, maintaining the historical nod to the European hedgerows through which the troops in WWII fought.—VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin and courtesy of VMI Athletics.





# VMI Receives Funding to Attract Pell Grant Recipients

By Marianne Hause

Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins '85, superintendent, has signed a memorandum of understanding with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), that provides VMI nearly \$4 million over four years to boost enrollment and success of low income and Pell Grant-eligible cadets at the Institute.

State funding for approved activities is intended to both demonstrate the commonwealth's dedicated commitment to the broader purpose and to assist VMI with implementation of activities that may otherwise not take place or experience delayed implementation.

Included in the budget for each of the four years are scholarships for the Summer Transition Program, designed to improve the academic and physical fitness and to assimilate appointed high school students into the VMI experience. Those scholarships cover most of the costs for in-state students. In addition, there will be an office dedicated to strategic enrollment, academic support coordinators, interactive online post tours to assist those unable to travel to Lexington, and travel vouchers for families to attend admissions



Pell Grant-eligible students can benefit from recent state funding that includes scholarships for STP and academic support programs.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

open house events who are unable to afford the trip otherwise. Emergency financial assistance for cadets will also be available on a case-by-case basis.

According to Lt. Col. Shannon Eskam, director of financial aid, VMI is implementing a holistic approach in expanding college and degree access to the eligible students. "We are very excited about this funding opportunity. This will give VMI the flexibility to implement some short- and long-term initiatives related to the recruitment and retention of cadets," she said.

Lt. Col. Joe Hagy, director of admissions, stated that while cost remains the primary barrier to

college entry, progression, and completion for low-income students and families, it is rarely the only barrier they face. "This funding opportunity will allow VMI to implement new strategies to assist more Pell-eligible cadets, thus creating a more socio-economically diverse class of matriculants each year. In partnership with SCHEV, we are excited to move forward with a bold plan and new strategies that align with the Institute's strategic plan and SCHEV's goals of closing access and completion gaps, lowering costs to students, and expanding prosperity across the commonwealth," he said. ❀

## CEE Professor Retires *continued from page 6*

his unique style always made me excited for class, which is not an easy feat," said Frazier.

Dr. Melissa Krawiec '01, Institute physician, has known Riester since she was a cadet. "He is as hilarious as he is warm-hearted. He cares deeply about the cadets and their success. Riester is as authentic as a human can be, and he leads with all his heart. He has blessed generations of cadets with that positivity without compromising the VMI experience," she said.

Krawiec's roommate at VMI, Kelly Sullivan '01, who majored in mechanical engineering, recalls a funny account about Riester. "One story that circled the halls of Nichols Engineering Building was that he would take a stack of fluids engineering textbooks, throw them down the stairwell and take questions for the final exam from

the pages that were open when the books landed. That was more than a little intimidating to cadets getting ready to take his classes," she said. Sullivan also shared Riester's tender side stating that he loved VMI, was a phenomenal teacher and mentor, and wanted all his students to be successful.

Johnny Partin '14, current mayor of Hopewell, Virginia, who wrote the forward to Riester's book shared, "My brother rats and I often joked that he was the best salesman and recruiter for the CEE program. I learned a tremendous amount from him. He was by far one of my favorite professors and over the years he continued to serve as a wonderful mentor, and we have become even better friends."

Asked what he will miss most about VMI, Riester replied, "The cadets. They fed me

energy. As soon as I walk into class, it was like a switch turning on. The year COVID-19 hit, the cadets didn't come back from spring break, and about two weeks into it, I found myself exhausted and thought I was sick. My assistant reminded me I wasn't getting any energy from the kids, and she was right. That's why I plan to continue to teach in my retirement, to get my energy. I'll miss the faculty as well. I'll miss STP—the energy the kids give off, and me running my mouth and harassing them."

Riester will teach in his retirement as an adjunct professor in civil engineering at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. His wife Denise is a retired high school teacher who taught for 37 years. They have two bluetick coonhounds, Blue and Rae. ❀

## Summer Global Experiences

Over the summer, several groups of cadets traveled abroad to immerse themselves in a foreign culture, earn class credits, and build relationships with other military college cadets.

Some traveled to Alcalá de Henares, Spain to study Spanish at the University of Alcalá. They toured Toledo, Madrid, Barcelona, Granada, Seville, and Cordoba.

Another group traveled to Rome, Italy, to study engineering at John Cabot University—Guarini Campus. While there, they visited the Leonardo Da Vinci Museum, the Italian Space Agency, the European Space Agency, and met with the Italian Corps of Engineers.

Several traveled to Tuscany, Italy, to be emersed in Italian culture and to study mathematics. They stayed in a converted 14<sup>th</sup>-century monastery called Residence Le Santucce in Castiglion Fiorentino.

Still others traveled to Paris, France, where they embraced the rich tapestry of French language and culture in the heart of the City of Light.

In Ireland, cadets took biology courses at the University College Dublin. They traveled to the Dingle Peninsula, on Ireland's southwest Atlantic coast, where several scenes from the "Star Wars" franchise movies were filmed.

A few cadets spent time in Taiwan through Project GO (Global Officer), which is funded by the Defense Language and National Security Education Office, and administered by the Institute of International Education. The cadets visited the National Taiwan Museum and the National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall.

A group joined cadets from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and the Royal Military College Saint-Jean in a trip to Israel for the Israel Strategy & Policy Tour (I-SAP). The MirYam Institute initiated the tour in partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense to deepen the understanding of shared values and history between the U.S. and Israel, especially for future military officers.

Seven members of the Institute Brass traveled to Germany in July to perform in honor of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The group also performed at the nearby Edelweiss Armed Forces Recreation Center.—Photos courtesy of Col. Wade Bell, Col. John Brodie, Nicholas Feher '26, Col. Jeff Kendrick, Dr. Sabrina Laroussi, and Dr. Laura Xie.







## Cadre Week

Cadre returned to post a week prior to matriculation to prepare to lead the incoming Rat Mass. Cadre are hand-picked, trusted, and experienced upper-class cadets responsible for new cadet instruction and military training, guiding the rats each year. Their goal is to teach discipline, precision, humility, obeying orders, and self-control. The schedule included uniform inspections, practice for the matriculation ceremony, briefs from leadership, policy reviews, and Blue Book training. Other activities included saber manual, practice parades, and room inspection protocol. —VMI Photos by H. Lockwood McLaughlin and Kelly Nye.





## Col. Doug Humphries

Col. Paul Douglas “Doug” Humphries, adjunct professor in the Department of International Studies and Political Science, passed away July 13 after a battle with cancer. Humphries came to VMI in 2019 after his 30-year career with the Central Intelligence Agency. He also retired as colonel with 30 years combined active and reserve duty with the U.S. Army. Despite his cancer diagnosis, he and his

wife settled in Rockbridge County and built their dream home. During the summer of 2022, Humphries mentored a Summer Undergraduate Research Institute project focused on U.S. intelligence. He was described as a professor who made the topic so exciting that it was impossible to lose focus.

## Col. Jim Joyner

Col. James “Jim” Nurney Joyner Jr. ’67 died July 4. He served in various positions at VMI, both during his military career and after his retirement from the Army. He was assigned to VMI’s ROTC department as a captain from 1975 to 1978 and as a colonel and department head from 1989 to 1993. After his retirement from the Army, Joyner returned to VMI in 1995 as director of cadet affairs and then commandant of cadets. He was commandant when women matriculated in 1997. After the first co-ed class broke out in the spring semester of

1998, Joyner was featured in a news story sharing with readers that the bar was not lowered, and women proved themselves equal. His last role at VMI was director of auxiliary services before he retired in 2011. He was awarded the VMI Meritorious Service Medal and received an award for distinguished service during the 2011 Institute Awards ceremony. He had 27 years of service to the U.S. Army and was a decorated combat veteran of the Vietnam War. He and his wife remained in Lexington and were active in the community. ✪

## Summer Research *continued from page 9*

achieve the specific height. “Even if it’s off just a little bit, it just won’t work. It must be perfect. The hard part is determining how much higher the rocket will glide up on its own once I stop the engine and the nose cone has popped off. That will require a lot of test flights,” he said.

From North Prince George, Tavenner is a NCAA long-distance track and cross country runner. He plays the viola in the strings club and studies Japanese independently through online courses. He is part of a large family legacy at VMI. He is the son of James Tavenner ’91, who majored in math and played baseball for VMI. His two uncles, Cloyd Tavenner ’88, an electrical engineering major, and Dave Tavenner ’03, a history major, as well as his two brothers, Jamie Tavenner ’16 and Thomas Tavenner ’19, who both majored in civil engineering, are all alumni. His cousin, Molly matriculated in August.

Brijesh Regeti ’24, a biology major, and Talli Tarring ’24, a physics major, worked together on their five-week project titled, “Data Analysis of United Way Donors” to research ways the United Way



Brijesh Regeti '24 and Talli Tarring '24 conduct data analysis to provide the United Way with insight to attract new donors.—VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

of Rockbridge, Lexington, and Buena Vista (UWR) can attract new donors in a slow-moving economy, after the nonprofit’s board of directors approached VMI for assistance from cadets.

According to its mission statement, the UWR “provides a leadership role in improving the quality of life of the people in the cities, towns, and unincorporated areas of Rockbridge County by assessing needs, raising and allocating funds for charitable purposes, and ensuring the appropriate use of those resources. These purposes should ensure equity as to education, health, and financial well-being without

regard to race, ethnicity, or gender in furtherance of achieving an inclusive community in which there is dignity and equal opportunity for all.”

Regeti and Tarring determined that as older and more generous long-term benefactors pass away, it takes a rigorous and consistent influx of new contributors to maintain the capital assets needed for

*See Summer Research, page 18*



# POST BRIEFS

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## VMI Receives 4.5 Stars from Money Magazine

VMI has been rated a 4.5-star college in Money magazine's Best Colleges in America list for 2023. Using a new system this year, Money assigns colleges a rating on a five-star scale, with five stars being the best. More than 730 colleges were scored based on 26 factors in three main categories: quality, which looks at the six-year graduation rate; affordability, which looks at both short- and long-term affordability, the net price of a degree,

and the amount students typically borrow through federal programs; and outcomes, which is based on earnings and employment data 10 years after enrolling in the school. Money reports that in early career earnings, VMI graduates have median salaries of \$77,000. The full Best Colleges list, along with the methodology and additional sublists, can be found at [www.money.com/bestcolleges](http://www.money.com/bestcolleges).

## History Professor Presents Rare Archival Find of Love Letters

The 1718 San Antonio Founding Families and Descendants Organization invited Maj. Liz Elizondo Schroepfer, assistant professor of history, to discuss her recent article, "Love, Infidelity, and Correspondence in Spanish Texas, 1734–1737," published in the distinguished Journal of Women's History. The organization is composed of scholars and descendants of founding families and soldiers who established the first Spanish

settlement in San Antonio, Texas. Her presentation showcased two love letters she uncovered at the Archive of the Nation in Mexico City. She discussed the rarity of such correspondence for the period and region and presented on the insights these missives reveal about Spanish colonial society in San Antonio.

## Yemelianova Receives Bulls ROTC Fellowship

Anna Yemelianova '25, an international studies major, has been named a fellow in the Iris Burton Bulls ROTC Fellowship Program. The program is part of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO) and supports a select group of ROTC cadets and midshipmen participating in National Security Education Program initiatives to

incorporate language, regional expertise, and culture training as a key aspect of their leadership roles, and named after the late retired Army Lt. Col. Iris Burton Bulls in recognition for her outstanding contributions to the Department of Defense.

## Alumnus Receives Fulbright Award

Michael Piemonte '16, an alumnus who majored in international studies and commissioned into the U.S. Army as an intelligence officer, has received a Fulbright U.S. Student Program award in international relations to Italy for the 2023–24 academic year from the U.S. Department of State and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. Piemonte received the Fulbright-Luiss Award for MA Program in Business, Government, Law, and Political

Economics, supporting his pursuit of a master's degree in international relations at Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli (Free International University of Social Studies), known as Luiss Guido Carli, in Rome. The award covers tuition, housing, and international travel for two academic years and provides an annual meal stipend.

## Ahanj Receives Prestigious Boren Award

Antonio Ahanj '24, an international studies major, has been awarded a Boren Scholarship to study Arabic in Jordan during the 2023–24 academic year at Middlebury School in the Middle East: Jordan in Amman. The David L. Boren Scholarships and Fellowships are sponsored by the National Security Education Program (NSEP), a component of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO). NSEP is a federal initiative designed to build a broader and more qualified pool of

U.S. citizens with foreign language and international skills. Boren Awards provide U.S. undergraduate and graduate students with resources and encouragement to acquire language skills and experience in countries critical to the future security and stability of the United States. In exchange for funding, Boren award recipients agree to work in the federal government for a period of at least one year. 🌿

## Summer Research *continued from page 17*

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the UWR to carry on its work. "We found that there was a spike in 2017 of 27 new supporters. Since then, there is an average of 15 to 18 new donors annually," said Regeti.

Tarring added that another issue they discovered that would aid in increasing donorship is the use of email. "By using data analysis, we found that if the UWR faithfully collected email addresses from all interested subscribers, and use those addresses to disseminate information regularly, that their donations should increase substantially," she said.

The pair also created a four-tiered ranking system to encourage patrons to aspire for higher contribution goals.

Maj. Blain Patterson, assistant professor in applied mathematics and project mentor to the two cadets, said, "Tarring and Regeti worked diligently to provide the United Way with insight into their donation revenue. The results of their research may provide the United Way with information to increase donations for years to come."

Both Regeti and Tarring are from Warrenton. 🌿

# EMT Skills Save Distressed Civilian

By Marianne Hause

Hayden Rose '26, a computer science major, used the skills he learned as a VMI emergency medical technician (EMT) to save a woman's life over the summer while embedded with the 91<sup>st</sup> cyber brigade for a military activity at Camp Pendleton, the Virginia National Guard State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach.

According to Donnie McBrayer, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) advisor, Rose was one of 21 students who attended an EMT class held in June at VMI, taught by Mountain Gateway Community College. "The students go through five weeks (150 hours) of training to become an EMT. They teach and prepare the students to handle medical and trauma patients who they might encounter on an emergency scene. The training goes through medical issues such as cardiac arrest, chest pain, stroke, diabetic episodes, breathing problems, and other medical issues. With trauma, they are taught how to handle bleeding control, minor injuries to severely traumatic injured patients. The VMI EMS is a Virginia department of EMS non-transport agency that runs 911 emergency services on VMI property. It provides coverage for any cadet-related function that needs EMS support, such as rat activities, parades, NCAA events, and ROTC exercises. VMI has 58 EMTs, and when cadets are on post, there is an in-county officer (ICO) and guard EMT who provide 911 coverage to any medical or injured patient. Lexington Fire Department EMTs are only called if the patient needs transportation to a hospital. Most often, cadet injuries and illnesses can be treated on post," said McBrayer.

The woman Rose aided at Camp Pendleton was a civilian employee of a major telecommunications company who was also

participating in the cybersecurity exercise called "Cyber Fortress." Following a morning briefing, a group of participants were walking from one building to another,



Hayden Rose '26

when Rose noticed her looking confused, but initially thought her confusion stemmed from being in new surroundings. Suddenly, he heard a Marine yell for medical assistance, and saw the woman face down on the ground bleeding. Without hesitation, he ran over to her, knowing that he was the nearest person to her with medical emergency training. A member of the 91<sup>st</sup> brigade, along with four Marines, who were on base for a

different exercise, also gathered round her to help. "I knew my training, and knew it was something I could help with. I assessed her, and found that she wasn't breathing and didn't have a pulse. I knew right away we had to start CPR. None of the other service members helping were certified in CPR, so part of my job was instructing them in proper CPR technique. We all took turns performing CPR, and I kept reassessing her to make sure we were doing everything we could to save her life until the ambulance arrived," related Rose. Focused on his patient, he was unsure how long it took for the ambulance to arrive, but some people there estimated they performed CPR for 20 minutes. The ambulance transported her to the hospital.

A representative from the telecommunications company visited Camp Pendleton a few days later to thank Rose and the others who helped, and reported that the woman was still in the hospital and in critical condition.

Rose's quick action did not go unnoticed by the commandant to the Corps of Cadets, Col. Adrian T. Bogart III '81 who said, "Rose's calmness under pressure and quick thinking is a great example of the citizen-soldiers developed at Virginia Military Institute. He demonstrated the values which VMI produces of a high-quality, well-trained, service-minded individual who does not hesitate to assist others."

From Cedarburg, Wisconsin, where he attended Cedarburg High School, Rose is a member of the VMI NCAA swim team, and a member of Band Company as a trombonist. He is the son of Matthew Rose of Heartland, Wisconsin, and Kirstin Collins of Grafton, Wisconsin. After graduation he plans to commission into the Army. 🇺🇸

## Trivia Answers from Page 2

1. Queen Elizabeth II
2. The Chessie Nature Trail
3. Joe DiMaggio
4. 1995
5. Six: Maj. Gen. Richard L. Irby '39, (1971–81); Gen. Sam S. Walker '45, (1981–88); Lt. Gen. John W. Knapp '54, (1989–95); Lt. Gen. Josiah Bunting III '63, (1995–2002); Gen. J. H. Binford Peay III '62, (2003–20); Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins '85 (2021–present)





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## VMI Community Theatre Presents "A Fitting Confusion"

The VMI Community Theatre presented George Feydeau's French farce, "A Fitting Confusion" several evenings in late July in Gillis Theater. Written in 1886 and later translated by Norman R. Shapiro, "A Fitting Confusion" was intended for popular audiences and is enormously ingenious and complex. Somehow, Feydeau's characters manage to disturb each other's comfortable lives in a pattern of crazy crossings and coincidences. It seems that everybody knows, or was once the lover of, or was married to everybody else, and all are destined to meet in the same place at the same inconvenient time, with unusual and often unfortunate results.

Heading the cast was Tom Oxendine as Balthasar Moulineaux, a fashionable society doctor; Victoria "Tori" Wright '24, who plays Yvonne, Moulineaux's naïve young wife; and Sue Ann Huger who plays Suzanne, Moulineaux's mistress. The cast was rounded out by Laura Holt, Jack Page, Tim Price, Andrew Hartless, Linda Gorman, Maria Quillin, and Paula Oxendine. The play was directed by long-time VMI Theatre director, Joellen Bland, assisted by Linda Gorman, with support from Command Sgt. Maj. Suzanne Rubenstein.—*VMI Photo by Marianne Hause.*

