



INSTITUTE REPORT

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'I Don't Think I Could Ever Repay What I Owe to VMI' More than 300 Cross the Stage at May 16 Commencement Ceremony

By Mary Price

Exhorted to continue their pursuit of lives of service and honor, more than 300 members of the Virginia Military Institute Class of 2016 received degrees in the commencement exercise May 16.

Of this year's graduates, approximately 54 percent have already commissioned in the armed services or will do so by the end of the summer. Nearly a quarter of those graduating earned either Institute Honors, which requires completing a cross-disciplinary honors curriculum and writing an honors thesis, or the designation of distinguished graduate, which is awarded to those with a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher.

This year's keynote speaker, U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine, visited the Institute for the seventh time and addressed a VMI graduating class for the second time. In his remarks, the Virginia senator expressed his concern that the nation has been at war against ISIS since 2014 without congressional authorization – a situation that he feels should not

be possible, as the U.S. Constitution gives Congress, and not the president, specific power to declare war.

Also addressing the graduates was valedictorian Zachary Heard, a mechanical

engineering major from Boca Raton, Fla., who plans to commission in the U.S. Army this summer. Heard gave an emotional

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Marine Corps cadets take their oath during the Joint Commissioning Ceremony in Cameron Hall May 15. For more on commissioning, see page 9 – VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

'Really Technical, Really Fast' Cadets Tackle Worldwide Food Waste for a First in Infrastructure Challenge

By Mary Price

What do you get when you combine four civil engineering majors, an international studies major, and a massive global problem?

Well, one possible outcome is a positive learning experience for all involved, plus a workable solution to the problem, and that's exactly what happened when five VMI cadets took the top spot among four teams at the Collegiate Infrastructure Challenge, held in early April in Charleston, S.C.

Now in its second year, the Collegiate Infrastructure Challenge is part of the Critical Infrastructure Symposium, sponsored by the Society of American Military Engineers. The competition is designed to get college students thinking about what Lt. Col. Steven Hart, instructor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, calls "wicked problems"

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'66 Shatters Reunion Giving Record

By Scott Belliveau '83, VMI Foundation

On April 23, the Class of 1966 presented the Institute with the proceeds of its 50th Reunion Campaign: a record-setting \$40,000,019.66.

With this gift, the Class of 1966 set a new record for 50th reunion campaigns and almost doubled the previous record – \$20,086,063.63 – set by the Class of 1963. Seven families of deceased Brother Rats and 219 members of the class made a gift or commitment during this campaign.

“This resulted from the terrific effort of the 28 members of the Reunion Campaign Committee,” said committee chairman Richard K. Hines V '66. “It was their work that made this happen, and, of course, the transformational size of the gift was made possible by the heartfelt and incredible generosity not only of the class in general but of anonymous donors who enabled us to raise the giving bar to a historic level – a level we are thrilled to set because it means that others will now be impelled to beat it. What a great result for VMI!”

Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62, VMI superintendent, praised the Class of 1966 for its generosity and vision. “With this magnificent gift, the Class of 1966 has done much to ensure that future generations of cadets will receive a thorough full-spectrum education that will prepare them to be active, effective, and honorable citizen-soldiers,” he said. “This gift is transformative, and history will treat it so. I thank every one of the Brother Rats of this class for their dedication to the Institute and for helping to prepare VMI for a brilliant future.”



Edgar J.T. “Turner” Perrow Jr. '96 (far left), president of the VMI Alumni Association, and VMI's superintendent, Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III, accepted the Class of 1966's gift on behalf of the VMI alumni agencies and the Institute. Making the presentation were (from left) Randolph W. Urmston, historian; L. Clark Reifsnider, vice president; Richard K. Hines V, chairman of the Class of 1966 Reunion Campaign Committee and member of the VMI Board of Visitors; and Marshall C. Taylor, president. – VMI Alumni Association Photo by Micalyn Miller.



A Special Presentation

Olga Dunaevskaya, native teaching assistant in Washington and Lee University's German and Russian Department, presents Col. Keith Gibson '77, executive director of the VMI Museum System, with a copy of an article, “Moses Ezeziel: The First Jewish Cadet in the United States,” she wrote for the Russian publication, *Lekhaim*. The article focuses on the famed sculptor Moses Ezeziel, who was wounded in the Battle of New Market and graduated from VMI in 1866. Dunaevskaya visited the VMI Museum May 5. – VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

Beyond 'Do What You Love'

Boxing Coach, Kierkegaard Scholar Challenges Cadets to Explore Their Chosen Paths

By Mary Price

It's not every day that a philosopher, a boxing coach, and an author all visit VMI simultaneously, and it's even rarer that all three are the same person. But that's just what happened when Gordon Marino, professor of philosophy at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., visited VMI in mid-April.

Marino, who taught philosophy and coached boxing at VMI in the early 1990s, not only spoke on his primary research interest, the 19th-century Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, but also talked with members of the boxing team, sharing tips from Mike Tyson, Oscar De La Hoya, and other boxing legends he's worked with.

Marino attended an Institute Honors forum, where he and approximately 10 cadets discussed a New York Times commentary that Marino had written in 2014, "A Life Beyond 'Do What You Love': How Today's Gospel of Self-Fulfillment Severs the Traditional Link Between Work and Duty."

As many of those attending were 1st Class cadets, with the world beyond VMI beckoning in just a few short weeks, the question of whether to follow a passion or take a job that would best serve society sparked a healthy discussion.

Mackenzie Harrmann '16 explored what can happen when individuals let others tell them where their strengths lie.

"The more you get into stuff, the more people tell you you're good at it," she noted.

"I think life should be about doing what you love," said Connor Loken '17. He added that if he'd listened to others about what he should do, he wouldn't have chosen to come to VMI and major in applied mathematics.

As the cadets dove into the topic, Marino listened and offered additional points to consider, asking at one point, "Why don't we talk about the people we want to be instead of what we want to do?"

The consensus of the cadets was that doing is a more tangible concept than being, so it is all too easy to let a major or profession become an identity – and this is not necessarily a good thing.

"My favorite compliment is, 'Oh, I didn't expect that of you,'" said Loken.

It was this type of spirited discussion that Maj. Steven Knepper and Dr. Duncan Richter, both faculty members in the Department of English, Rhetoric, and Humanistic Studies, were hoping for when they invited Marino back to VMI.

"[Marino] is one of a kind," said Knepper, acknowledging his accomplishments as a Kierkegaard scholar, a boxing coach, and a published author on both topics. "He's a great fit for VMI. He's in the spirit of how we do things around here."

Knepper explained that Marino was one of several speakers coming to post this year, all of whom hold humanities degrees and have careers in fields that might not occur to cadets pondering their career choices after VMI. Previous speakers this academic year have included Marcia Childress, professor of medical humanities at the University of Virginia, and Talmadge Stanley, director of Emory & Henry College's Appalachian Center for Community Service.

"One of the things we're trying to do is give [the cadets] a sense that there are a number of different things you can do with a humanities degree," said Knepper.

The honors forum cadets, meanwhile, appreciated Marino's willingness to explore the larger questions of life.

"It was very informative and a very good discussion," said John Cima '17.

"It's an important question for us to ask ourselves ... doing what we need to do versus doing what want to do, because it's a question we all need to answer pretty soon coming up."

Harrmann, who commissioned May 15 in the U.S. Army, was likewise glad Marino had given her a chance to wrestle with questions of purpose and meaning.

"The idea of thinking about who we want to be as people versus what we want to be is also something that we don't concern ourselves with here as much," she commented. "As a general rule, the path we've chosen, we've partially chosen because it's who we want to be. We are defined in our society here on our careers, and we choose our careers partially on who we want to be. I don't think you can separate the two."

The cadets weren't the only ones grateful that Marino had chosen to come to VMI. Marino himself said being back in Lexington recalled happy memories, as he remembered the interactions he'd had with cadets and the close working relationship he'd enjoyed with Col. Gordon Calkins Jr., now emeritus professor of physical education. "He was a great mentor to me," said Marino of Calkins.

"This place feels more like home to me than anyplace else, and I didn't expect that when I came here."



Gordon Marino offers boxing coach Larry Hinojosa some tips as assistant coach Joe Schafer and team members look on. – VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

Collections Tell Story of 1860s Weapons Technology

New Firearms Exhibit to Be Dedicated at New Market Museum this Month

By Mary Price

A new exhibit at the VMI-owned Virginia Museum of the Civil War will give visitors a much broader perspective on the types of weapons available to soldiers in the Civil War.

Now set to be dedicated in June, the Kaminsky Gallery of Civil War Firearms will showcase a wide variety of firearms, from the famous but rare Lemat revolver to the Merrill carbine, a weapon with a unique connection to VMI.



Maj. Troy Marshall inspects a .52-caliber Spencer carbine, one of the pieces in the Kaminsky collection. – Photo courtesy of Maj. Troy Marshall.

The 55-piece firearm collection was donated to VMI in 2014 by Martin Kaminsky, law partner of Joseph Reeder, a member of the VMI Board of Visitors. Now, with a renovation complete at the museum, located at the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park, an exhibit space has been created that will house not only the Kaminsky collection, but also more than 100 additional firearms that the museum hasn't had space to display before.

"When [the Kaminsky collection] came to us, it was so phenomenal," noted Maj. Troy Marshall, site director at the park. "What [Kaminsky] had, we didn't have, and what we had, he didn't have."

The Kaminsky collection shares a "real synergy" with items already owned by VMI, explained Col. Keith Gibson '77, executive director of the VMI Museum System. He admitted that when he'd been asked to look at the Kaminsky pieces, he wasn't sure that they'd fit with items already in the Institute's position – but a trip to Kaminsky's Long Island, N.Y., home resulted in a happy surprise.

"I was amazed when I compared Mr. Kaminsky's collection with the existing VMI collection, how incredibly well they dovetailed, they complemented each other," said Gibson. "There were very few overlapping pieces. It became clear that the two collections together could tell a very detailed and comprehensive story of military weapons technology in the 1860s."

Technology was advancing at a rapid pace in the 1850s and 1860s. Gibson explained that while the traditional soldier's weapon – a muzzle-loading, single-shot longarm – was still the army-issued weapon of choice for both the Union and the Confederacy, individual soldiers and regiments had a wide variety of firearms from which to choose, including many of the carbines and handguns in the Kaminsky collection.

Those include the Lemat revolver, which Gibson described as a "very potent cavalry weapon" that combined the accuracy of a revolving pistol with the firepower of a shotgun.

"We were delighted to add one of those to the collection," he commented.

Likewise, the Merrill carbine fills a niche and even complements an item already in the Institute's possession. Gibson explained that the rusted-out barrel of a Merrill carbine was excavated at the New Market battlefield some years ago, and now the two pieces, the battlefield relic and Kaminsky's entire weapon, will be exhibited together.

And in a way, the Merrill is at home at VMI. Gibson explained that Robert Rodes, a member of the VMI Class of 1848, helped to field test the weapon at VMI for inventor James Merrill. Success came to both parties, as Rodes went on to become a major general in the Confederate Army, and Merrill gained a contract to supply the Union army with his newly invented firearm.

A dedication of the new exhibit is planned sometime this month.



Class Gifts

The Class of 2016 presents two gifts to the Institute, the class gift of \$16,000 and one from their parents, \$50,832. Twenty-two percent of the class contributed to the gift, which, with the parent gift, will be used to establish the unrestricted Class of 2016 Endowment. Making the presentation are Scott A. Beasley, president of the Class of 2016; Carter L. Chatwood, Honor Court vice president and treasurer of the Class of 2016; and Patrick R. Eberhart, regimental commander. Accepting the gifts are John J. Wranek III '85, VMI Foundation vice president of annual and reunion giving, and (not pictured) Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62, VMI superintendent. The presentation took place during the Change of Command ceremony May 14, held in Marshall Hall due to inclement weather. – VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

Commitment and Camaraderie

Running Coach (and Deputy Commandant) Leads Cadets to Pursue Passion, Excellence

By Mary Price

It's been said that good managers never ask their employees to do anything they themselves wouldn't do. If the same can be said of running coaches, Col. L.E. Hurlbut is taking that advice seriously, as she runs alongside the cadets in the VMI Running Club, leading by example.

And judging from the results VMI runners have brought home this year, Hurlbut's example has been an exceptional one.

Josh Orr '18 has qualified for the Boston Marathon, and Hurlbut has high hopes that other cadets will qualify this fall. Alex Warren '18, soon-to-be cadet in charge of the Running Club, likewise has a major event to look forward to, as he's been chosen via lottery to participate in the Marine Corps Marathon, to be held in Arlington, Va., Oct. 30.

Orr has been running since high school, but he'd never entered a marathon until last fall, when he entered the Anthem Marathon in Richmond, Va. There, he found a new passion.

"After my first marathon, I sort of developed this urge to keep doing really long-distance runs," Orr explained. "I wanted to get my time down as much as I could."

In the spring, at the Tobacco Road Marathon in Raleigh, N.C., Orr qualified for Boston, finishing the race with a time of 3:03:42. To run at the Boston Marathon, the most prestigious event in the country, runners must meet a qualifying time based upon their age and gender.

"It'll be a pretty interesting race," said Orr. "I've never run anything that big."

A native of Findlay, Ohio, Orr said that the hills of Lexington have provided him with an extra training edge, and when he returns home to the Buckeye State, he finds he can travel much faster on flat ground.

"I've tried to seek out as many uphill runs as I can," Orr noted.

Warren, who came to VMI from Dallas, Texas, agreed that the hills provide a training ground that's hard to find in his home state. "It's definitely a change," he said. "There's a few hills in Texas, but not many. Here, I can't run more than a quarter mile without going down or up a hill."

For both cadets, running has provided a needed outlet, both physically and socially. Running Club is a "more relaxed environment," said Warren, who added that he enjoys the mix of cadets from all classes and majors. This year, there have been approximately 30 competitive runners in the club, although many recreational runners take part as well.

"Running is an individual sport that you can do with a large group of people," said Orr. "It has the ability for you to see and do some pretty interesting things. You can go places running that you wouldn't be able to go in a vehicle."

The cadets aren't the only ones who feel that way. "Doing things with the cadets is my passion at VMI," said Hurlbut, who is deputy commandant for support in addition to her duties as Running Club coach. "The beauty of it is, since [running is] an individual sport, I can participate with them."

And she's not just out for a leisurely jog. At almost 62, the retired Air Force colonel and grandmother has set her sights on a new goal:



Michaela Wright '16, Joshua Orr '18, and Col. L.E. Hurlbut pause for the camera after one of this year's races. - Photo courtesy of Col. L.E. Hurlbut.

completing her first marathon. She's aiming to do so at the Air Force Marathon, to be held at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio Sept. 17.

"It's taken me a long time to get to the full marathon," said Hurlbut. "It was never really an objective, but as you get older, you start working on your bucket list, and it's on my bucket list now."

Hurlbut has not been a lifelong runner. In fact, she didn't even enter her first race until she was over 50, and even then only because her daughter, Katie Bopp '08, had entered the Air Force Marathon herself and invited her mother along, saying, "Mom, why don't you come do the half-marathon?"

"I'd been doing Jacob's Ladder [a popular local running route] with the cadets as part of our matriculation training," Hurlbut explained. "That's about six miles, or a little over six and a half miles. If I can do six and a half, I can do 13, right?"

That day in September 2007, Bopp qualified for the Boston Marathon and Hurlbut completed her first half-marathon. She's been running ever since, but her level of commitment intensified two years ago, when she took over as coach of the Running Club.

"Running Club is fun," said Hurlbut. "It's a great activity, and it keeps you healthy. It's a great social network. ... I think every Running Club trip we take, everyone enjoys it and we have a good time."

Hurlbut also enjoys the chance to step out of the uniform, if only for day or two, and experience a different relationship with the cadets.

"On the road, I'm coach. I'm not the deputy commandant. It's a whole different relationship I have with the Running Club."



Elliot Hough '16 and Hunter Daniels '16 were among the five cadets on the VMI Collegiate Infrastructure Challenge team. – VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

– problems with no easy solutions and ones that governments often avoid tackling.

“We give [the college students] an incredibly difficult problem and we say, ‘You have 24 hours to come up with a viable solution,’” explained Hart. “Then we turn them loose and see what they come up with.”

At this year’s Collegiate Infrastructure Challenge, given a choice of three such problems, the VMI team decided to take on the issue of food waste. The problem was prompted by a recent article in *National Geographic* magazine that said each year enough edible food is wasted worldwide to feed 2 billion people.

Very quickly, 1st Class cadets Sarah McGinnis, Hunter Daniels, Nick Meier, Ian Westbrook, and Elliot Hough found a way to repurpose all of the bruised apples, forked carrots, and otherwise cosmetically damaged fruits and vegetables that won’t sell in a grocery store. The cadets decided that those items should be processed into a dried bar called a “nutricake” that could be used for humanitarian aid, as well as a food source for people experiencing a natural disaster or other emergency situation.

“Within about 30 seconds we had the idea for nutricakes, and we just ran with it from there,” said Daniels, one of the four civil engineering majors on the team.

As they worked on the problem, Daniels and the other civil engineering majors used a problem-analyzing mnemonic they’d been taught in Hart’s class, *Infrastructure: Foundation of Civilizations*, called “Grizzly Bears Don’t Use Water Closets.” In this phrase, “G” stands for generation, “B” stands for bulk transmission, “D” stands for distribution, “U” stands for use, “W” stands for waste, and “C” stands for coordination and control.

“We broke the problem down, and we focused on the steps where we lost the most food or had the most inefficiency,” explained Daniels.

“The model helped us figure out where the waste was coming from,” added Hough, the international studies major, who is Daniels’ roommate.

Hough said that working with a group of engineers took a bit of getting used to. “As an international studies major, I focus a lot on broad issues and concepts, and they got really technical, really fast,” he noted.

But as he hung with the group and the process, Hough found that problem solving in civil engineering isn’t all that different from problem solving in the social sciences.

“It didn’t take long for me to get into the whole process of how we were going about it,” Hough said. “I realized very quickly that it’s not that different from the problems I try to solve in international studies, my major; it’s just a different flavor.”

Hart noted that Hough was brought on board precisely because he was a non-engineer.

“I sent [the four civil engineering majors] out to find somebody who didn’t look like them,” Hart explained.

If the problem had been strictly an engineering problem, no such input would have been necessary. But that wasn’t the case, the retired Army officer explained.

“They’re not engineering problems,” said Hart. “They’re just problems. If everyone on the team looks the same, you really don’t get very good solutions. These are multidisciplinary problems. You have to have a team that thinks multidisciplinary.”

In the end, Hart said he was pleased not only to see the cadets win the competition, besting The Citadel, the U.S. Military Academy, and the U.S. Air Force Academy, but also develop what he called a “well-rounded” solution to the problem at hand.

“[Their solution] was really good,” Hart said. “Theirs worked because they clearly conveyed that they had thought about all of the dimensions of the problem.”

And perhaps even more importantly, at least one of the cadets had realized that coming up with a 24-hour, permanent solution to the problem was likely impossible.

“While we were working, we were discovering new problems and new things to solve,” said Daniels. “You’re never done with the problem. ... Even if we had 100 years, we’d never be able to come up with the correct solution because there is no correct solution.”



Commandant’s Awards

Col. Bill Wanovich '87, commandant of cadets, awards the Superintendent’s Cup to Company C at the Commandant’s Awards Ceremony May 16 in Jackson Memorial Hall. Company C also won the Company Cup, while Company E won the Commandant’s Cup and Company D won the Garnett Andrews Cup. – VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

'One Day We're Going to Ruin Someone's Season' Friends in the Pool and Out, Water Polo Team Works the Details, Sets Sights High

By Chris Floyd

Around post, the VMI water polo team is sometimes referred to as "The Mafia." There's nothing nefarious about the moniker; the members of the squad earned the nickname because of the team's close-knit nature.

"I think everyone thinks of our team as a family," said Natalie Rivas '18, who scored 54 goals for the Keydets this year and led the team in both assists (36) and blocks (33). "We're all from pretty far away places. I told my mom, 'If I'm going to be away from home, I want to be at this school because the team is a family.' I need a family away from home."

Like Rivas, Cecilya Lundy '17 hails from California. She recalled that the family aspect of the water polo team was the largest contributing factor to her coming to VMI, particularly after meeting two players whose names are all over the VMI record books.

"The first person I met on this team was Mackenzie Perkins '15, and I was welcomed with open arms, like a mom," said Lundy, the team leader in shooting percentage this past season. "Then I met Celine Lazzaro '15, and I was really intimidated. That was what I needed. I realized that I was going to have people who are going to push me, and I was going to have people who would be there to help me. We try really hard to be like a family."

Head coach Ryan Pryor, a four-time All-Big 10 performer at Michigan, joined the team last year, leading the Keydets to 11 victories in his first season. He immediately recognized the tightness of his group, and he has worked hard to maintain that camaraderie, implementing a program he calls "family news."

"[With] family news, people share things that are going on in their lives," said the coach. "I think that helps people get to know each other and understand each other. We try to do a lot of team bonding."

While "The Mafia" did not match last season's winning percentage this year, posting an 8-19 overall record, they are still dreaming big. Pryor noted that his team has its sights set on reaching the Mid-Atlantic Athletic Conference tournament, eventually competing for



Shelby Barkley '18 and goalie Emily Farsakian '16 attempt to block a shot in a match March 1 against George Washington. – Photo courtesy of Athletic Communications.

a conference championship, and he is sure the team will reach that goal in the near future, if the squad sticks to the plan.

"You dream big, but you focus small," he said. "You can't spend too much time thinking about results; focus on the process. Our goal is to give our best effort every day, just get better every day, wherever that takes us."

The future certainly looks bright. Only two graduated from this year's roster, and everyone in the program seems to be excited about incoming players who will join the team next season.

"We took a lot of strides toward the future," said Pryor. "We've got 99 percent of goals scored coming back next year. We've set ourselves up well for the next couple of years and beyond."

The players concur, as long as the family stays together.

"If our team can improve the team aspect as much as it did this year, then I only see [us] going up from here," said Lundy. "One day we are going to ruin someone's season."

Thrower Named Most Outstanding at SoCon Championships

Jordan White '16 was named the Most Outstanding Athlete, and Greg Henderson '17 won two events as VMI scored a runner-up finish at the Southern Conference Outdoor Track and Field Championships May 13 in Cullowhee, N.C.

White placed first in the hammer throw, second in the discus, and third in the shot put to earn the honor as the top male performer at the meet. Meanwhile, Henderson took

the top spot in both the 100-meter and the 200-meter dashes. He also anchored the 4x100 relay team that sprinted to a second-place showing.

VMI had three other athletes win events at the meet. Joel Hoisington '16 was the winner in the shot put.

Avery Martin '16 broke the tape in the 800, while Davon Guerrier '18 was first in the 110 hurdles.

The Keydet women matched their best-ever showing at a conference meet, finishing fifth.

Julia Logan '18 posted VMI's top finish, placing third in the high jump.

Yaa Agyepong-Wiafe '18 placed fourth in the 100 hurdles, setting a new school record for the third time this season, while Kennedy Smith '18 placed fourth in the triple jump.

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VMI Army DMGs and Navy Nukes Tops in Nation

By Kelly Nye

There's a lot of pride coming out of Kilbourne Hall these days. Fifty of the Army ROTC cadets graduating this spring are distinguished military graduates, the most from any school in the nation. And Naval ROTC tied with Virginia Tech for first in the nation in number of cadets selected for the Navy Nuclear Propulsion Program, at 11.

The Army ranks ROTC cadets in its Order of Merit List based 50 percent on academics, 35 percent on leadership skills, and 15 percent on physical fitness. Cadets who score in the top 20 percent nationally are distinguished military graduates.

"Being listed a DMG is one of the few things you get to carry with you in your active duty career," explained Capt. Eric Kupper, Army ROTC assistant professor of military science. It also means those cadets were more likely to get their first branch choice when they commissioned May 15.

Patrick Murray '16 scored in the top 17 percent in the nation. Murray was an international studies major, and, within the Corps of Cadets, the Company A representative in the Officer of the Guard Association.

"This past year we were able to prove that we have the best program out there," Murray said. "I think it serves as an incentive for people to come here."



Ensign Ethan Zebron '16 flashes a smile after his ceremony. - VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

Murray and the other 29 cadets commissioning into the infantry from VMI will go to Fort Benning for the Basic Officer Leadership Course, then to their first active duty stations.

Kupper attributes the success to the quality of the ROTC program at VMI.

"Much of the program is geared toward character development based on ethical and moral decision making, which VMI is very good at helping facilitate," he said.

As for Naval ROTC, most units commission one or two students a year into the Navy Nuclear Propulsion Program; VMI had a quota of four, so 11 selected is an impressive number. Entry into the academically rigorous program involves a technical interview with questions on nuclear theory, calculus, differential equations, thermodynamics, and other topics. The last step in the process is meeting with a four-star admiral in the Navy who then assesses the candidate's character and leadership abilities.

"If you had an intellectual special forces, ... that would be the nukes," said Lt. Bryan Glock, Naval ROTC instructor. "Becoming a nuke is mentally demanding and at times emotionally demanding because of the responsibility they put on people."

But the rewards are high. Not only are Navy nukes well compensated, but, with their level of training and knowledge, they become an asset to any company in the field.



Having taken his oath, 2nd Lt. Patrick Murray '16 has his pin-on ceremony in Marshall Hall. - VMI Photo by Stephen Hanes.

"I would not be entering such a rigorous program unless I saw the benefits of it," said Ethan J. Zebron '16 one of the 11. "By challenging myself with the Navy Nuclear Program, I am strengthening my technical knowledge of how I think and increasing my capacity to learn. Also, I firmly believe that [by] surrounding yourself with like-minded, motivated individuals you become an even better thinker and doer."

Zebron, a civil engineering major, was the Naval ROTC Navy company commander

and also the Company H commander within the Corps of Cadets. He will attend an eight-week Basic Division Officers Course in San Diego, Calif., where he will learn information pertaining to his first ship, stationed in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

"The VMI NROTC program has prepared me by providing the tools to pass the nuclear power interview, allowing for leadership opportunities throughout my four years, and teaching me the basic knowledge to be a successful officer in the U.S. Navy," he said.

As Glock explained, producing Navy nukes is one of the main goals for Naval ROTC.

"We can make aviators, we can make surface warfare officers, we can even find SEALs from athletes in other parts of the country: those are all things we can get outside of ROTC. But making people nukes, finding people who are confident and capable of doing that job, is very hard. That is why being able to commission this many nukes is such a big deal."

Newly Commissioned Officers Look Forward to New Responsibilities

Andrew Starnes '16 had to fight back the tears when he received his pin and his first salute as a second lieutenant in the United States Army following VMI's Joint Commissioning Ceremony May 15.

Facing Starnes was his grandfather, a Korean War veteran, smiling broadly and standing tall as he delivered that salute. It was almost too much for the VMI 1st Class cadet to take.

"It kind of hit me when my grandpa gave me my first-ever salute," Starnes said. "I kind of got a little emotional there. Listening to his stories when I was kid, I ... wanted to follow in his footsteps. This feels like a dream right now."

Starnes, who will report to Fort Sill, Okla., after leaving VMI, summed up the feelings of most of the 149 cadets who took the commissioning oath in Cameron Hall. The group, with a few more who will commission after summer training, represents 54 percent of the Class of 2016.

There was a mixture of emotions, to be sure, ranging from pride to excitement to relief. At the same time, however, those who took the oath were well aware of the responsibilities they had accepted.

"Four years of hard work are finally going to come to an end," said Richard Dromerhauser '16, one of the U.S. Navy's newest ensigns, who will report to Panama City, Fla., to begin training at dive school, "but it's just the beginning."

Scott Hayman '16 took the oath for the U.S. Marine Corps and will report to the Basic School in Quantico with the rest of his fellow second lieutenants after graduation from VMI. He will take with him that sense of higher purpose.

"This is an awesome feeling, knowing the hard work we've put in," Hayman said. "It's a feeling of responsibility, too."

That sense of responsibility was not lost on Domenick Stumpo '16 either. Stumpo, now an officer in the United States Air Force, will begin his training as a pilot at Vance Air Force Base in Texas in April 2017, and while he noted that he was well aware of the amount of responsibility that he now shoulders, Stumpo recognized that he need look no further than the stage at Cameron Hall for a model to follow.

Delivering the oaths in the joint ceremony were four distinguished speakers: Adm. Michelle Howard, vice chief of naval operations and the first African-American woman to command a ship in the U.S. Navy when she took charge of the USS *Rushmore* in 1999; Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, U.S. Army deputy chief of staff; U.S. Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Stephen Neary '88, deputy commanding general with the Marine Corps Combat Development Command; and Air Force Maj. Gen. J. Marcus Hicks '86, chief of staff in the U.S. Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida.

Individual pin-on ceremonies followed the joint ceremony, driven indoors – to Cameron, Jackson Memorial, and Marshall halls – by cool and windy weather.

To see more photos, visit VMINews.tumblr.com, post date May 15, or www.flickr.com/VMIPhotos.

– By Chris Floyd



Family members assist during 2nd Lt. Domenick Stumpo's pin-on ceremony. – VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

POST BRIEFS

Boxing Club Takes Third in Nation

VMI's club boxing team placed third at a recent national championship, while three members won individual championships and four earned All-America honors. Dylan Ceglowski '19 won the 132-pound class, and Jeremiah Sokol '18 took first place at 201 pounds. Evan Thompson '16 rounded out VMI's list of champions in the heavyweight division. All three of those boxers earned All-America distinctions, and they were joined by Jon Winalski '16, who was named an All-American at 178. This event, the national championship of the U.S. Intercollegiate Boxing Association, was held April 7-9 at California State University, Northridge. Next year's championships may be held in Lexington, as VMI has put in a bid to host that competition.

Advertising Cadets Place Second in Contest

Cadets in adjunct professor of economics and business Bruce MacDonald's advertising class placed second out of 12 schools in an intercollegiate contest sponsored by the American Advertising Foundation. This year, the competitors were asked to create the best marketing plan for Snapple, the bottled tea and juice product. The competition consisted of a written plan on marketing and a virtual presentation before four judges. The cadets' plan included taking "selfies" with the product and Natural Bridge, the well-known Rockbridge County landmark, in the background. Visit vminews.tumblr.com, post date May 5, to see photos.

Ethics Team Members Compete at Naval Academy

For the second year in a row, members of VMI's Ethics Team competed at the Military Ethics Case Competition, held in mid-April at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. The Ethics Team, a program of the Center for Leadership and Ethics, debuted at VMI last year, with 10 to 12 cadets involved. Four of them – Rori Stubbs '17, Tom Nanartowich '16, Reagan Goulla '18, and Tyler DeJoe '18 – represented VMI at the Naval Academy competition. Advisers are Dr. Duncan Richter and Maj. Ethan Stoneman, both faculty members in the Department of English, Rhetoric and Humanistic Studies.

Biology Professor Honored by Alma Mater

Col. Wade Bell, professor of biology, recently received the Accomplished Alumnus Award from the University of Vermont for his career achievements in research and education. Bell, whose research specialty is cellular processes in unicellular microorganisms, was recognized for his contributions to scholarship in this field. He was presented with the award during the College of Arts and Sciences Honors Day, held May 20 in Burlington, Vt. At the presentation, Bell addressed an audience of University of Vermont honors students and their families.

New VMI Website

A new VMI website debuted June 1 at www.vmi.edu. The site focuses primarily on prospective students, their parents, and

cadet families, with a secondary focus on others interested in VMI. One page will, for example, be dedicated to information of interest to families of current cadets, providing links to pages on events, visiting, emergency information, and student accounting. Procedures for sending packages to cadets and a link for feedback on the website are also accessible on this page. The site will highlight events and faculty and cadet achievements, and is formatted to display correctly on any device.



Photo and Video Store Closing

The online VMI Photo Store and VMI Video Store will close permanently June 1. Photos of special events, including graduation week events, will be available for free download from the Institute's new Flickr account, www.flickr.com/VMIPhotos. Sometime this summer, videos focusing on the Class of 2016 and the academic year 2015-16 will be available on DVD for sale in the VMI Museum Shop and for viewing free at www.youtube.com/VMIWeb. A documentary on the VMI parade will also be available at the museum shop.

Campaign Raises More Than \$278 Million

As of April 30, the Institute's comprehensive fundraising effort, An Uncommon Purpose: A Glorious Past, A Brilliant Future: The Campaign for VMI, had received more than \$278 million in gifts and commitments since its launch in November 2014. The number of donors has now surpassed 14,000. Funds raised by this campaign will be used to ensure that VMI can hold its educational standards high while pursuing its traditional mission of graduating citizen-soldiers. To track the campaign's progress, visit www.vmi.edu/campaign/progress.

Cadets Attend Officer Women Leadership Symposium

Six cadets attended the Officer Women Leadership Symposium April 22-26 in Arlington, Va. This annual symposium provides an opportunity for military women of the past, present, and future to share their experiences. This year's event, "Empowered by Change for a Stronger Tomorrow," was hosted by Academy Women, a group that supports female military officers from all branches of the service. Those attending were Makayla Diamond '18, Kailey Dixon '18, Ellana Avery '17, Rachel Tanner '17, Gloria Welch '17, and Reagan Goulla '18. Accompanying the cadets to the symposium was Col. L.E. Hurlbut, deputy commandant for support.

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Naval ROTC Conducts Battalion Change of Command

Information provided by Naval ROTC

Brandon Conley '17 took up command of the Naval ROTC battalion in a change of command ceremony held in early May on Alumni Memorial Field. Also taking new positions at the battalion level were Theo Haubold '17, executive officer, and William Thomas '17, sergeant major. This trio will be the driving force behind the battalion during the 2015-16 academic year and will serve as the liaison between the ROTC instructors and the cadets in the unit.

On the Marine Corps side, company officers are Andrew Gazzillo '17, commanding officer; Drake Michalzuk '17, executive officer; and Jake Freiwald '17, first sergeant. Company officers on the Navy side are Emma Nobile '17, commanding officer; Erik Stein '17, executive officer; and John Radtke '18, senior chief petty officer.

Numerous cadets were also recognized at the Naval ROTC detachment-level awards ceremony. Among those recognized were Amy Hardbower '16, who received the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States, the Sergeant Clarence E. Sutton 1890 Award, and the Major General William P. Upshur Award for earning the highest cumulative grade point average in Naval Science classes; and Thaddeus Kieser '16, who received the Matthew Fontaine Maury Award and the Lieutenant Cary D. Langhorne 1894 Award for outstanding scholastic performance.

James Vaus '16 received the Marine Corps League Award for excellence in academics, physical fitness, military aptitude, and active participation in the Semper Fi Society, presented by Tom McCraw. Connor Culley '16 and Augustus Sortino '16 received the



Naval ROTC cadets prepare for the battalion change of command ceremony. – VMI Photo by John Robertson IV.

Order of the Founders and Patriots of America Award for superior accomplishments in military and academic endeavors, presented by Thomas Sail. Stephen Guse '16 and Calvin Makfinsky '16 received the American Veterans Award for diligence in the discharge of their duties and willingness to serve God and country, presented by Anthony Rulli. A number of others were recognized at the ceremony.



Air Force ROTC Training

Preparing for summer field training, cadets from Air Force ROTC units at Virginia Tech, University of Virginia, and James Madison and Liberty universities train with VMI cadets during the VMI unit's annual Field Training Preparation Day. Forty cadets from two other detachments joined the VMI cadets to prepare for summer field training, completion of which is required for entry into the U.S. Air Force Professional Officer Course. The grueling day-long exercise included drill, formal inspections, and flight leadership challenges, as well as room and dining facility procedures, obstacle course training, and squad tactics. – Photo Courtesy of Air Force ROTC.



Taking First

Nate Whitmer '17 and Kyle Harrell '17 work on their hydroponic system in Morgan Hall. They were among nine cadets from VMI's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering who traveled earlier this semester to the Virginia Water Environment Association conference in Richmond, where their team won first place and another cadet team won second place. – VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

Cadet EMTs Earn First Responder Certification

By Kelly Nye

VMI Emergency Medical Technicians are on the sidelines of every game, every parade, and every physical challenge. They are ready in the event of an emergency, and now they are better prepared to serve the needs of the VMI community than ever before. They recently became certified by the commonwealth of Virginia as a licensed non-transport first responder Emergency Medical Services agency.

This qualifies them for dispatch on a 911 call.

“It grants us some legitimacy in the eyes of the state, and it also opens up better training opportunities for cadets. It helps us organize and record our activities so we can improve ourselves more,” said John Wainwright '16, EMT cadet in charge.

The first step in getting this certification came with the creation of a part-time staff position to guide the cadet-run organization. Donnie McBrayer was hired as the assistant adviser to the EMTs after volunteering with them for the last three years.

“We had the mock inspection where Donnie and [Lexington Fire Department] Chief Ty Dickerson came to inspect us to see if we were ready to go,” explained Wainwright. “So we had them go through our vehicle and go through our paperwork like it was the real thing. ... I think all of us cadets were just totally overwhelmed at the depth of knowledge that you need to run an organization.”

It was that experience that led Wainwright to request a leadership position that would give McBrayer more avenues to guide the squad.

“He is the perfect person for it because he’s been volunteering, he understands how VMI works, he understands how EMS works, and he’s an absolute saint to have around,” explained Wainwright.

The next steps involved a lot of paperwork. The cadets had to fill out applications, get signatures, and make sure each cadet had his or her EMT and CPR certification. Several of the cadets also have an Emergency Vehicle Operator Course or EVOC certification. And all of their equipment had to be up to date.

“One of the issues we started to run into was some of the stuff we originally purchased was starting to expire,” said Garrett Manarin '17, a cadet EMT. The group needed new backboards, splints, and suction units. A lot of equipment was donated by other volunteer agencies in the community.

Now that they have their certification, the VMI EMTs will become part of the 911 dispatch system in Lexington and Rockbridge County.

“It will enable us to respond to 911 emergencies on post involving medical circumstances. And we would provide first aid until Lexington Fire and Rescue could respond with an ambulance,” explained Manarin.

The immediate response is critical. If visitors come to VMI and witness a medical emergency, they instinctively call 911 instead of the guard room. In the past this meant the victim could be waiting several minutes for first responders from the city of Lexington instead of receiving assistance immediately from the VMI EMTs. Now whether called from the guard room or from 911, the VMI EMTs will be the first responders to all calls for assistance on post.

“For someone who goes into cardiac arrest, for every minute that is delayed, their chance of survival decreases between 3 and 10 percent,” said McBrayer. “You need to be assessed really quickly to get the proper help.”

And, with their radios and a paging system on their cell phones, the VMI EMTs will be ready.

Said McBrayer, “We’ll have two EMTs on call every day, seven days a week, during the school year.”



The cadet EMTs pose with Donnie McBrayer after receiving their first responder certification. – VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.



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ECE Capstone Concludes Multistage Robot Project

By Mary Price

At first glance, the task assigned to cadets enrolled in System Design Validation, the capstone course for electrical and computer engineering, seems doable: build an autonomously moving robot that can travel toward a set of wooden blocks when asked to do so.

Doable the task may be, but the cadets involved will tell anyone who asks that it's not simple. The assignment, though, is but a vehicle for teaching lessons invaluable to a budding engineer: work smarter, not harder. Don't reinvent the wheel. Listen to others. And when something's just plain not working, it's best to move on and try another tactic.

That's what the six 1st Class cadets enrolled in this year's electrical and computer engineering capstone said they'd learned after they built just such a robot – and had the satisfaction of seeing their creation place in the top four out of 41 schools at the 2016 I-EEE SoutheastCon Hardware Competition, held March 30-April 3 in Norfolk, Va.

Cadets have been attending this competition for the past 30 years or so and have placed in the top quarter on many occasions, but this year marked VMI's highest placing since the mid-1980s. This was also the best-funded year ever, as the cadets were awarded \$500 from the Virginia Mountain Section of the I-EEE and over \$2,000 in travel funding from the VMI Center for Undergraduate Research.

Later, in mid-April, the cadets earned another accolade when they were awarded first place in the oral presentation in engineering category at the VMI Undergraduate Research Symposium.

This spring's successes were the culmination of more than a year of work for cadets Joseph LaMagna, Dillon Blackburn-Jones, Dominic Romeo, Devon Florendo, Daniel Wanamaker, and Matt Hodapp. They'd begun accruing the necessary knowledge as early as their 4th Class year, but the robot project had kicked into high gear in March 2015, when the instructions for the next year's competition were released. At that point, the six were enrolled in Col. Dave Livingston's microelectronics course, where they learned about the circuitry necessary to control a robot.

In the fall of 2015, while enrolled in Senior Design I, the cadets built their robot – and rebuilt it, as they found out what worked, what didn't, and what could and should work better. That left the systems validation course, taught each year in the spring, for refining their creation and tweaking its performance in the weeks leading up to the competition.

"Year after year, this [robot] thing has gotten more complicated," explained Col. Dan Barr '74, professor of electrical and computer engineering, who teaches systems validation. "It involves radio waves. It involves microprocessors. It involves power. It involves mechanical."

And with that degree of complexity came the need for outside assistance. With the help of mechanical engineering majors Cody Damewood '16 and Zach Heard '16, the cadets were able to use the Department of Mechanical Engineering's 3-D printer to fabricate plastic parts for the robot's chassis. Rick Amenell, electronics technician for the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, earned kudos from the cadets for his assistance with the 3-D printer and also for ordering specialized parts that were hard to find.

"In order to learn how to use it and print out stuff, we had to learn how to use a specific program called SolidWorks, which basically lets you design a 3-D part," explained LaMagna, who served as project manager. "It was an interesting, good experience – a new tool in the toolbox, so to speak."

Romeo, who served as technical and software lead on the project, also said he'd learned new skills. "This was my big job, as the software lead, to develop the first-level of software so they could come in with the sensors and stuff," said Romeo. "I had to do the research to figure out what software libraries were needed to support the sensors and the motors."

In the end, Romeo wound up using the computer programming languages C and C++ to control an Arduino Mega microcontroller board and thus tell the robot what to do and when to do it.

In the final weeks before the competition, Romeo found his patience and skills challenged when he and others realized that the robot's sensors weren't working properly. The new sensors didn't get installed until the week before the competition.

"That was the best thing we learned – when it's not going to work, move on, try to find something else, and don't waste your time," said Romeo.

Hodapp also recalled flexibility as key to the project's success. Halfway through the semester last fall, he explained, the group had to do a complete redesign, as the original wasn't sturdy enough.

"We had to adapt a lot of different things," said Hodapp, who serves as president of the VMI chapter of I-EEE. "You can have a plan, but adaptation is key when you're doing a huge project like this."

It's lessons such as these that the project is designed to teach, said Barr. He explained that the systems validation course is crucial to the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering's continued accreditation by ABET, an industry group that accredits post-secondary programs in applied science and engineering. ABET's standards, Barr noted, are driven by industry demands.

"This process, of sending [the cadets] through this teamwork exercise, where they use all of the skills in the curriculum, readies them to better make a transition to the working world."



Cadets Joseph LaMagna '16 (left) and Dominic Romeo '16 show the robot to VMI Board of Visitors members Conrad M. Hall '65 (left) and Bruce C. Gottwald Jr. '81. – VMI Photo by H. Lockwood McLaughlin.

Scholarship Sets Cadet on Road to Medical School

By Chris Floyd

Hayden Alford '16 came to VMI on a football scholarship. He's leaving with one of another type.

Alford, a chemistry major, was recently awarded the Southern Conference's Dave Hart Postgraduate Scholarship, a \$2,000 grant given to 10 of the league's athletes who plan on pursuing their education at the graduate level. Alford will use his as he sets his sights on medical school.

"I'm just grateful to be nominated," said Alford, who plans to attend the Quillen College of Medicine at East Tennessee State University. "Just the fact that I got it, I was pretty shocked."

Alford may have been surprised that he received the scholar-



Hayden Alford '16 punts the ball during a home game last fall. – Photo courtesy of VMI Athletic Communications.

ship, but others at VMI certainly were not. The Tennessee native is a distinguished graduate, with a 3.93 grade point average. During his time at VMI, Alford was a member of the Phi Eta Sigma National Freshman Honor Society and the Gamma Sigma Epsilon National Chemistry Honor Society. He also was the recipient of the Ritchey Third Class Award, given to the top organic chemistry student at VMI, and the James Lewis Howe Award as the top chemistry student in his class.

"Hayden is a man who has the ability to perform under pressure," said VMI head football coach Scott Wachenheim. "Hayden's poise and concern for others will serve him well in medical school and the medical profession. He will earn the respect of his fellow students and professors and, therefore, quickly rise to a leadership position."

On the football field, Alford served as the backup quarterback and punter. He appeared in just two games under center this past season, but he averaged nearly 40 yards per kick, helping VMI go from 112th nationally in yards per punt return to 35th in the country this season.

While he may not boast the gaudiest of statistics, Alford knows that if not for football and VMI, he would not be where he is today.

"If I could express one thing, it's how thankful I am for the opportunity to play football here," he said. "Without that scholarship, I never would have been here. It has literally opened so many doors. I've made so many connections here. For that, I'm extremely grateful."

Coming out of high school, the last college on Alford's mind was VMI. In fact, he had never heard of the Institute until former football coach Sparky Woods made a recruiting visit. Alford decided to make an official visit to Lexington, staying in barracks and observing a real sweat party, and though he began leaning toward VMI at that point, he received an extra little push from his mother.

"I was looking at a couple of other places," said Alford, "and my mom told me one day, 'Hayden, your granddad went to VMI.' I guess I had a connection."

As it turns out, that connection was tenuous at best. A few weeks into his first semester, Alford got a call from his mother and received news he was not expecting.

"I get two months into the Rat Line, and my mom calls me," he said. "She said, 'Oh, yeah, I found out your granddad went to VPI.'"

"But I wouldn't change it," Alford continued. "It hasn't always been the most fun here, but hopefully it will all be worth it."

In addition to his many honors, Alford has volunteered his time in Rockbridge County at the local SPCA. When he returned to Tennessee, he spent time shadowing doctors at a local hospital and served as a quarterback mentor for his former high school coach.

It always seems to come back to football.

"Football teaches you so much: discipline, time management, teamwork, how to be accountable for something much bigger than yourself, which I think parallels very well with medicine," said Alford. "That shaped who I am today probably more than anything else I've done."

While football was important in his development, the fact that he attended VMI isn't lost on Alford. He is sure that had he been anywhere else, he would not be as prepared for the future as he is right now.

"VMI has prepared me for the real world better than any other school. The structure, the routine, the little things you don't get at any other school prepared me better," he said. "I look at a lot of people I graduated high school with, [and] I feel like I'm head and shoulders above them."

Taps – Stacey Nadeau

Stacey Nadeau, an employee of the Virginia Museum of the Civil War in New Market, died April 25. Miss Nadeau had worked at New Market since 2003, first in a part-time capacity and since 2006 as a full-time employee. She died following a lengthy illness. She was 45 years old.

As the supervisor for historical interpretation, Miss Nadeau coordinated programming that introduced the story of the Battle of New Market, the VMI cadets who fought in the battle, and life on a 19th-century farmstead to thousands of students, travelers, and cadets. In 2014, she authored *Mother Bushong's Sponge Cake*, a cookbook based on 19th-century recipes from the family that occupied the site of the 1864 Battle of New Market.

Among Miss Nadeau's survivors are her parents, Frank and Peggy Nadeau.

farewell not only to his Brother Rats but to the entire VMI community, noting, “The people at VMI make it the phenomenal institution that it is.”

Before the ceremony, two other members of the VMI Class of 2016 expressed gratitude for all that the Institute had given them.

Growing up in Keene, N.H., Army 2nd Lt. Matt Tonkinson didn’t know any VMI alumni personally, nor did he come from a military family. But the path his life was to take was strongly influenced by the legacy of one of VMI’s most famous alumni, Keene native Jonathan Daniels ’61, who gave his life so that of a young African-American girl might be saved during the struggle for civil rights in Alabama in 1965.

As a young child, Tonkinson attended Jonathan M. Daniels (elementary) School, where he learned the story of Daniels’ life. “If I hadn’t known where Jonathan Daniels went to school, I wouldn’t have known that VMI is a big military college with a great academic program and such,” explained Tonkinson.

During his cadetship, Tonkinson took full advantage of VMI’s academic offerings. He graduated with Institute Honors, earning a bachelor of science in psychology and a minor in national security. He’s now serving with the Army Medical Service Corps and hopes to someday become a clinical psychologist.

Away from academics, Tonkinson played the trumpet with Band Company and the bass drum with the Pipe Band. During his 1st Class year, he served as editor in chief of *The Cadet*, VMI’s cadet-run newspaper.

All of those responsibilities, he admitted, led to some late nights, but they also led to some life lessons.

“That’s one thing that VMI teaches really well, how to manage your time,” said Tonkinson. “You learn that even when you have a lot of things on your plate, you have the ability to get them all done.”

Also getting a lot done was Army 2nd Lt. Jarod Krug, an international studies major who earned a minor in German.

As the son of one alumnus, Patrick Krug ’91, and the nephew of another, Andrew Krug ’92, Army 2nd Lt. Jarod Krug had been coming to reunions and other special events at VMI from his hometown of Loretto, Pa., for as long as he could remember. A family photograph even shows a young Jarod, age 4 or 5, with a

June 2016



Jarod Krug receives congratulations and his diploma from VMI superintendent Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III '62. – VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.

grin on his face as he peers over one of the lecterns in Jackson Memorial Hall.

When the time came to choose a college, VMI “was really the only place I wanted to go,” said Krug. He explained that from the time he’d been a small child, he’d seen cadets and wondered if he, too, could wear the uniform and live up to the Institute’s strict standards.

“I never would have been happy if I hadn’t been able to answer that question,” he noted.

After coming to VMI on a four-year Army scholarship, Krug found that both the ROTC and the Institute itself could open doors he’d never thought possible. At the start of his 3rd Class year, Krug had never left the continental United States, except for a brief trip to the Canadian Niagara Falls. As of graduation, he’d been to more than 16 foreign countries.

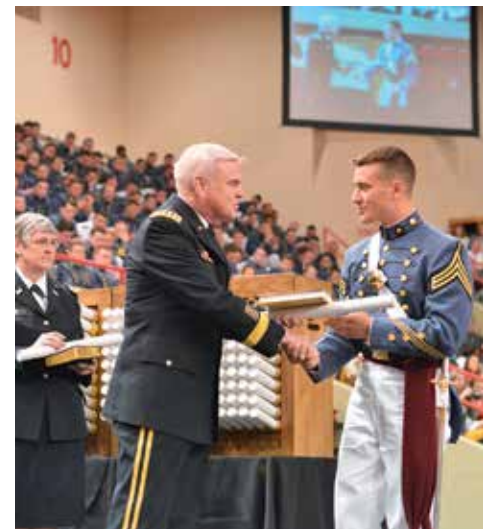
Those travel experiences included a semester spent abroad at Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg in Germany. No sooner was Krug home from Germany than he departed for Guyana, where he participated in jungle warfare training through Army ROTC.

“It was a huge transition for me,” recalled Krug. “There I was on the champagne and crepes circuit in Germany with these diplomats and everything. Just coming back from that to VMI would have been a system shock to me. But there I was eating frog legs in Guyana.”

Krug expressed great appreciation for all of the opportunities VMI and the Army ROTC had provided, especially in the area of travel.

“The mindset here is that if someone else can do it, I can do it too,” he said. “And even if it hasn’t been done before, I can do that, because I’ve somehow been prepared for it. ... As much as I’d like to give back to this place someday, I don’t think I could ever repay what I owe to VMI.”

To see more photos, visit VMINews.tumblr.com, post date May 16, or www.flickr.com/VMIPhotos.



Matthew Tonkinson accepts his diploma on the Cameron Hall stage. – VMI Photo by Kelly Nye.



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VMI Foundation Makes Ring Figure Gift to 3rd Class

By Scott Belliveau '83, *VMI Foundation*

The VMI Foundation presented the Class of 2018 with a facsimile check representing the support of alumni and friends for the class's upcoming Ring Figure. John J. Wranek III '85, the VMI Foundation's vice president of annual and reunion giving, made the presentation April 14 to the class officers, Joey Brown, president; Henry Wiswall, vice president; and Ben Washechek, historian.

Besides remarks from Wranek, the 3rd Class also heard from Eric Hunter '08, who works as the VMI Alumni Association's placement officer. Hunter urged the cadets to develop an appreciation for the many relationships that they will form during their years in barracks and to do everything possible to maintain and strengthen them after graduation.

Given through the VMI Foundation's Barracks Program, the gift of \$40,418 combines \$2,018, to be placed in the Class of 2018 fund that will support its preparations for Ring Figure, with a \$100 credit toward the cost of the ring for each member of the Class of 2018.

"Alumni and friends help every cadet every day they are in barracks through their generous support of the Institute," said Wranek. "Through this donation, the VMI Foundation is not only directly helping the Class of 2018 properly commemorate this milestone in its history, but also reminding the cadets of the fact

that there is nothing they will do as cadets that is not touched by the generosity of the VMI family."



Accepting the VMI Foundation's gift in support of their Ring Figure are the three leaders of the Class of 2018 (from left), Joey Brown, president; Ben Washechek, historian; and Henry Wiswall, vice president. – Photo courtesy of the VMI Foundation.